

City of Coral Gables City Commission
August 25, 2015
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada
Commissioner Patricia Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Commissioner Patricia Slesnick

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Planning & Zoning Director, Ramon Trias

Public Speaker(s)

Chuck Boll
Unidentified Speaker

[Start:

Mayor Cason: OK, I think we should start with -- then with H.-2.

Commissioner Slesnick: Welcome.

Ramon Trias: Hello. Good afternoon.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Actually, one second. Mr. Mayor, wasn't the MPO language in here for an ex-officio?

Commissioner Keon: We've moved it. We moved it, didn't we?

Mayor Cason: We're going to be doing

Vice Mayor Quesada: Oh, that was the item that was pulled, OK.

Mayor Cason: You guys want to -- we're going to do H.-2, then F.-, and then F.-2. They all go together. But I think the presentation should be for the F.-1 and F.-2. Go ahead.

Mr. Trias: Thank you, Mayor. We're here to discuss the North Ponce Workshop, which, as you know, took place June 12 and 13, and it was sponsored by the City; and the City had a consultant, Chuck Boll, who is standing here. So, both of us are going to give you a brief PowerPoint that describes the process and begins to explain some of the possible recommendations, but I want to stress that this is a public effort that focus on getting public input, and my recommendation is to see it as a preliminary discussion and to try to continue to get information from everybody who wants to participate and to try to incorporate it into a document as we move on. So if I can have the PowerPoint. Thank you very much. Great. The report that was provided to you is a preliminary report that I believe covers most of the content of what was discussed, and also has some maps, some reference materials, and some photographs of the process to give a good comprehensive view of what went on. This type of planning is that type of planning that I encourage everyone to participate in, and the one that I've done for many years with my work, which tries to get ideas from the public and tries to incorporate them into the policy positions and discussions that take place later on in the Commission. The Coral Gables Television did a fantastic job when they did a video, so I'm going to show it to you, if it works. I think we need to have the TV (Television) folks to start it, I think, or maybe not.

Mayor Cason: Can you go on without it, or do you want to --?

Mr. Trias: Well, I can go on. I can go on. It's something -- I can go on. It's -- PowerPoints sometimes or videos don't work very well. So basically, what I would do is emphasize that we

had significant ... average. We had special town hall E-news. We also advertised the workshop in the regular E-news. We had it on the web site, on the “Upcoming Events” section, which has grown, and it's being used by many of our citizens. We also sent emails to all the registered homeowners in the association that were ... in the study area. And we have fliers that we gave to the local businesses. Coral Gables Television also had promotions, and we had newspaper advertisements. So with that, I will let Chuck continue.

Chuck Boll: Thank you, Ramon. Thank you, Mayor Cason and Commissioners. This will be an overview of the public process, and we'll get into the recommendations. It's a pretty lengthy report, and so we're going to hit the highlights for you. You'll have plenty of time to dig into details. The workshop agenda -- I wanted to emphasize, as Ramon just doing, that this was not a charrette. This was a short workshop to restart a dialogue, I think, about this portion of the City. We previously looked at the North Ponce district, specifically at part of the 2002 charrette, which I was the lead organizer for the School of Architecture for, and this is -- seen as the City -- it's an opportunity to revisit some of that, engage in a public dialogue, and have an updated discussion. And there was clearly an interest in planning and managing the ongoing changes within the study area since then. Some images from the workshop, and you can see some of the activities there. The team members included reaching back to some of those folks from ... Elizabeth Plater Zyberk, who was the dean of the School of Architecture at the time, extensive experience in urban design and planning; George Hernandez, who's well-known in the City, an architect, but also heads our historic preservation program. George had just completed a survey of the neighborhood historic properties a year earlier. He also serves as a trustee for the National Historic Trust for Preservation; and Joanna Lumbar, who's also on the faculty and brings in healthy neighborhoods' perspectives. She has a joint appointment with the School of Architecture and the School of Medicine. And if I had had fewer faculty on the team, we would have written a shorter report, but as it was, we had tremendous input from all three of them, and the City report is very detailed. Some maps of the study area that were used. The study area -- you know, we think we know the study area until we get back into it, we get out on foot. Certainly, the trolley tour and the walking tour really brought the participants into that study area on the ground, and you can make first-hand observations that you can't when you're just driving

through on a daily basis. The basic structure of this area, it's structured by the major commercial corridors: LeJeune on one side, Douglas on the other, and then Ponce the other major commercial corridor through this study area, and Alhambra to the south; the east/west streets, the residential neighborhood streets, as well as Salzedo and Galliano, which are primarily residential streets, north/south streets. And then there's a couple special diagonal streets: East Ponce Boulevard, which gets a lot of attention in this report, and then the eastern diagonal section of Alhambra Circle that comes up from the downtown to -- and out to Douglas. Neighborhood fabric, commercial uses along the major corridors, including some newer buildings that were important as part of the walking tour and to really observe how those newer buildings are coming on Ponce and encroaching into the neighborhood; a mix of older two- to four-story residential, largely rental buildings between the north/south commercial corridors. This is between those Ponce and LeJeune, in particular; lot of neighborhood fabric that we spent a lot of time looking at and discussing; some historic buildings, and George has helped identify some of those, but a larger number of '50s to '80s era are multifamily buildings; blocks about 450-foot lengths within getting longer on the east side of Ponce to 600 foot or more. And then for parks, primarily folks park, but other potentially good public space that also gets a lot of attention in this report, and then significant civic buildings; of course, Douglas entrance ... Club, Coral Gables Elementary School are primary ones. The -- in terms of the demographics of the study area, I made a passing reference in the draft report that this is clearly a diverse -- different demographic in the City, and of course, one of my teams said, "Well, what are the statistics on it? What are the numbers?" So that added a day of work. And we looked at the census tract of the study area and compared it to the demographics of the City as a whole, and a couple of things popped out that reinforced that this is a -- kind of a -- it's a different part of the City. Residents are younger than the City's population as a whole, with a much larger percentage of people aged 22 to 45. They are much more likely to be single and live in small household sizes, one- or two-person households. They are more diverse, including a much larger percentage of residents of Hispanic and Latino origin and slightly more mixed race in the City. They are working age, so much more likely to be engaged in the labor force than the City's population as a whole. And then lower household income, which really reflects the fact that these are smaller, often single-income households, so they are younger, working, probably more professional population than the City as a whole.

Mayor Cason: Did the census data include how many cars they had? Because I know the census data in general breaks it down, how many cars per person in the Gables, but I'm just wondering with that demographic, are those people who probably have fewer cars and maybe work downtown. Is that why they're there?

Mr. Boll: Yeah. The -- so there's tons of demographic data, and more than we got into for this snap shop, so there's a table in the report that had some information. We could definitely go back to commuting and patterns and car ownership and things like that, but the area is challenging as well, so from 2010 census to today, you've seen more people moving into the area, and it's kind of a moving target at this point.

Mayor Cason: But it's primarily rental, right?

Mr. Boll: It is primarily rental, yes. So that's clear in -- that is in the snap shot of the demographics for the area.

Commissioner Lago: Do you have --? I don't know if the census really took this into account, but do you have a lot more singles living in that area --

Mr. Boll: Yes, many more Singles --

Commissioner Lago: -- less children?

Vice Mayor Quesada: You know, it's interesting here, the study is very specific in the sense that there are more singles, but there are more divorced or separated people living in that area. It's like 25 percent more.

Mr. Boll: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I thought that was very interesting you even asked that question in the study.

Mr. Boll: We didn't draw any conclusions.

Commissioner Lago: What would you say in reference to the housing makeup here; is it more one bedrooms, two bedrooms?

Mr. Boll: So, I mean, many of these -- the participants lived and worked in the study area, the vast majority of participants. So we had them firsthand and throughout the report you're getting, their quotes and feedback on, you know, why are you living here, what are you looking for, what types of uses, and other things. But their -- primarily, they're there because they want to be -- they like the scale of the neighborhood. They like that two- to four-story scale, but they also like the fact that there's shops and services available that they can walk to, that they can access on a daily basis. They -- so the participants ranged from as little of a month in the neighborhood working there to as much as 41 years living and working in the neighborhood. And averaged, you know, in that five- to eight-year time frame, people who lived, worked, and lived and worked in the neighborhood, which is another kind of unique aspect of downtown. There's people there who are there to live and work in the same neighborhood, so their commute is to come downstairs or to go into their living room or to go downtown to work. There -- so the different methods of getting public input included a variety of things. These one-word cards asks about current conditions, as well as what they would like to see in the future. A quick snapshot to -- kind of get people's impressions of the area and look to the future. Different terms that's popped out, and when they're repeated, they pop out larger. We do do word clouds for existing conditions. Did include character. They think there is an existing character to this neighborhood that's -- that they want to see protected, but also improved. They liked the diversity of the area. This is another one of the words that pops out repeatedly. And they liked the -- some of the Mediterranean aspects. "Promising" was another word that came up. At the same time, the description of "current" included in cohesive, neglected, hodgepodge, treeless, ordinary, bland, cold, confused, so there was good and bad in the current view of existing conditions. And then

the one-word snapshot of what they'd like to see it become and evolve into. The big words that popped out, the repeated ones were "walkable" and "bikable."

Vice Mayor Quesada: Livable, livability.

Mr. Boll: And then --

Vice Chair Quesada: I've had some of that quite a bit.

Mr. Boll: -- livable, attractive, green, greenery, preservation, harmonious, diversity again, healthy, so that's just kind of the quick snapshot. What are in the PowerPoints are just examples, the cards, with lots and lots of these cards. And then the community survey forms asked a series of questions, one of which was, "What should be changed," and some quotes from those. These are -- the words are residents. They really focused on three areas: public realm topics, so what should change. They want more street trees, especially shade trees, improved lighting, better streetscapes, parks. The focus -- there was a lot of focus on streets, and the comments that there are two-car dominated, two ride, cars speed through, including cut-through traffic. And then in terms of the buildings, the quality of small multifamily buildings. That was something they felt should be changed. Frontage types and setbacks should be inviting. And then another question was, "What should be added to North Ponce?" And you'll hear some things repeated, like parks, canopy trees, pedestrian and bike routes. And then uses -- and this is interesting, and I think speaks to the composition of the demographic -- they want more coffee shops, cafés, restaurants. They want bed and breakfast -- they -- places. They want -- they're comfortable with more residential, in particular, live/work buildings, because so many of them are there living and working in the district.

Mayor Cason: Why do they want more bed and breakfast? I mean, they're living there. They don't --

Mr. Boll: There's none. And they like the idea that these older buildings, especially the historic buildings, could be adapted and reused as the bed and breakfast.

Mayor Cason: Part of diversity is bringing new people in.

Mr. Boll: It helps. So there was a lot of discussion of how do we preserve the historic buildings, and one solution -- or one discussion was "adaptive reuse."

Commissioner Slesnick: You know, it's very interesting. Do we have -- we have an ordinance - - we don't have one for a bed and breakfast.

Commissioner Keon: No.

Mayor Cason: No.

Commissioner Slesnick: I mean, it's hotel or motel or --

Commissioner Keon: Right, so --

Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark: I think we do have one for bed and breakfast, but it's not utilized, and it's only for this area.

Commissioner Slesnick: For which area, this area?

Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark: The North Gables.

Commissioner Slesnick: Well, it's very interesting --

Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark: I think that it may be cumbersome, and so you may want to look at that.

Mr. Boll: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Right, because we have an ordinance against short-term rentals, which we found that -- I think at one point, we had over 10 or 15 people that were renting their homes out on daily basis, even in some gated communities, 10 or 15, and I think Code Enforcement looked into it and found out they were violating our Code. So --

Mr. Boll: I mean, the single family --

Mayor Cason: -- bed and breakfast is -- would be a little different, but --

Mr. Boll: Right.

Mayor Cason: It's ... they'd be interested in that. Any of them ask for more parking?

Mr. Boll: parking was a topic that came up a lot as a concern, but also -- especially the sides of parking structures in relation to new construction, but also as an impediment to small-scaled development. There's a whole thread on small scale, because they want the small-scale development, the two- to four-story, but there was long, repeated discussion and examples when we're on the walking tour about why it can't happen or what's holding it back. They also want more of these small shops, cafés, and services --

Commissioner Lago: And what were the reasons why? What were the reasons why it can't happen?

Commissioner Keon: Parking, the parking requirements.

Mayor Cason: Parking, so much parking.

Mr. Boll: Parking. Parking is one issue, but there's a whole series of --

Vice Mayor Quesada: And also because of affordability.

Mr. Boll: Yeah, there's this -- there's a series of Code-related issues that make the infill on a 50-by-a hundred lot --

Mayor Cason: ... and parking --

Mr. Boll: -- challenging.

Mayor Cason: -- sort of go together.

Vice Mayor Quesada: There's a huge challenge --

Commissioner Lago: For development.

Vice Chair Quesada: -- for a number of different -- there are a number of different variables why, in my opinion, that this neighborhood doesn't feel like the rest of Coral Gables. Yeah, the Code, the depth of the lots, the location. You know, I was surprised to see that there are -- over 80 percent of that population, they're renters. I'm not surprised. When you drive through and then you walk through there, I guess you sort of feel it. And you have a lot of historical homes; you had some pictures, and you haven't gotten to it yet here, but I saw it in the report --

Mr. Boll: We're going.

Vice Mayor Quesada: -- where you had the little stickers of green, red, and yellow. I thought that was very helpful, because we have a lot of old buildings that, in my opinion, in there, they have no preservation quality. And I guess I'm looking at Donna. But there's no historical significant in my eyes. There's two perfect examples right there, so --

Mr. Boll:

Vice Mayor Quesada: Those are two ... buildings, but if you go back to the previous slide -- no. The one on the top, I think we all would really love that.

Mr. Boll: It really pops out, and so there's a visual preference ... These are the single sheets, so there were multiple sheets for each of these images.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And so it's us -- we got to find a way --

Mr. Boll: And that's -- that really did show a preference for the historical ... --

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah. We got to find a way to keep the good ones, get rid of the bad ones.

Mr. Boll: ... that middle century --

Mayor Cason: Seventies and eighties when they came in and started building all kinds of --

Commissioner Keon: ... to architecture is pretty ugly.

Mr. Boll: There are several strategies at the end of the presentation that --

Vice Mayor Quesada: Sorry to cut you off.

Mr. Boll: ... yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: But one of the biggest factors also, which I was trying to get to, which Commissioner Lago just said it, but a few people were speaking, so I think -- I just want to make

sure it's heard. There's also the affordability, what land value goes there for. So, if we're going to encourage -- if we're going to create something to encourage the kind of development we want to see there, the kind of projects, the end result we want to see there, we have to be mindful on we're not going to attract developers -- the types of developers that we want, the types of projects that we want, you know, if the numbers don't make sense to them. They still have to -- I mean, they -- to be honest with you, most developers, I would imagine, don't care either way. They just want to make sure it makes money for them, and we want to make sure they're building the kind of project that amplifies the neighborhood, so I think that's where the disconnect is, just because the prices were so high, so, obviously, we got to work with that, and that's why --

Mayor Cason: And that's how -- and that's --

Vice Mayor Quesada: That's why you guys are here.

Mayor Cason: ...

Vice Mayor Quesada: ... do that.

Mayor Cason: There was a series of articles in the Miami Herald about the dearth of rental. The reason we have so much traffic is people move away, south to find affordable house --

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah.

Mayor Cason: -- then to drive to work. So, really, it's affordability which links into density and then the parking, all three, I think, come together.

Mr. Boll: And also related to -- for those small buildings, two-, three-story buildings. Unit sizes are preventing redevelopment of those properties as well. And this can be sorted out and -- what need to be sorted out as we get into the later recommendations of the large scale, which is what happens on the commercial corridors versus the small scale, which is very different when you

talk about numbers like density and unit sizes and things. For a three-story building, that was very different than for a tall building on Ponce. So there's at least two major themes that were coming out. One was how do we manage development along the corridor so that it transitions smoothly into the residential neighborhood and the residential neighborhoods are protected, but then how do we encourage infill at a two-to-four square scale that people want? So ...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Is that really applicable here? Because if you look at the land use map and you look at the future land use map, I mean, you have commercial along Ponce on both sides of Ponce and you have MF-2 all around it, so you don't have the traditional single -- I find this area to be unique, because it's encapsulated by the City of Miami, you know, where all around us we're unincorporated Miami-Dade County. And there's no single-family homes --

Mr. Boll: No, It's not single family.

Commissioner Keon: No

Mr. Boll: They're two to four stories.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Oh, two --

Mr. Boll:

Vice Mayor Quesada: -- you're talking about the MF-2.

Commissioner Keon: It's MM 2.

Mr. Boll: Urban town homes, road houses.

Commissioner Keon: Instead of high-rise.

Mr. Boll: Small apartment buildings.

Commissioner Keon: As opposed to high rise.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I will tell you, even the way it's currently designed -- the way we currently have the zoning map -- and someone put it in one of the comments here -- and I brought this -- we've discussed it at a previous meeting. I hate what's happening on Bird Road just east of Coral Gables, all those buildings that are coming up there, because it feels like you're driving in the middle of a canyon.

Unidentified Speaker: Brickell.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah.

Mayor Cason: Yeah.

Commissioner Keon: Yeah.

Unidentified Speaker: ... drive on Brickell.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I think it feels worse -- to be honest with you, I think it feels worst on Bird Road, because it feels like the buildings are right on top of you, because the City of Miami doesn't have the setbacks that Coral Gables has. So that experience, you know, when you drive east of Merrick Park, I mean, that's not the experience you want. And I'm not saying that our current zoning Code -- let's assume right now our zoning Code. Yeah, that's what I'm referring to. Of all the red line of the commercial on Ponce, if all that was built out to its max -- let's say everything -- every project was Mediterranean and it was built fully 16 stories, I would hate driving down that street, to a certain extent. I think there's got to be something with the setbacks that we do. Or maybe if we're going to continue along that high-rise, maybe even mid-block so that when you're driving down Ponce, you don't feel it; or you're walking down Ponce, you don't

feel it. So it's almost -- I don't want to say tucked away, but I think designed a little bit -- I mean, in my opinion, I'm ... urban planner. I could be saying everything that's contrary to good urban planning. I just ... that experience, if you're driving along Ponce, I think it's nicer to have the smaller buildings and then its scale up in the middle, if it was going to scale up, if it was.

Commissioner Keon: Well, let him finish, because it's interesting.

Vice Chair Quesada: Sorry.

Commissioner Keon: The decisions -- some of the things that they came up with were very interesting; some of the recommendations.

Mr. Boll: Yeah. So far in this report and what --

Multiple speakers: Unintelligible.

Mr. Boll: ...what the participants had to say and --

Vice Mayor Quesada: I just get excited.

Mr. Boll: What ... living and working in the neighborhood, especially the people living don't want -- see, they don't want the hype, which back up into the neighborhood. They want the hype to be on the corridors and to transition down into the scale of the neighborhoods. So that was a clear message...

Mr. Trias: Having said all that, let's keep in mind, we're talking about one block -- or two blocks, so it's not like a lot of room to do a lot of things.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, of course.

Commissioner Keon: It's also --

Mr. Trias: We could be realistic about this.

Commissioner Keon: It's also how far -- how deep into that block; it was also a very big issue, so it's how deep that building on Ponce is into the street. And so, at what point should we -- you know, how far -- because people are assembling large parcels and they're going all the -- they can go almost from Ponce almost to Galliano. So it's -- you know, do you allow that to be one parcel and do you allow it to go that big? So it's merely, you know, how deep into, you know, or how deep from Ponce should they develop and where there should be breaks in the street and whatever. So it's really interesting. It was a very interesting discussion, and the recommendations really addressed the concerns that were raised.

Mayor Cason: What other points were raised, before we get into the recommendations?

Mr. Boll: OK, so just to wrap up that section, the community input and some quotes from the survey that I think round out this --

Commissioner Lago: Walkability was a major issue, right?

Mr. Boll: Sorry?

Commissioner Lago: Walkability.

Mr. Boll: Walkability was --

Commissioner Lago: Due to the obvious nature of the block.

Mr. Boll: Major issue. So -- absolutely, so in the comfort of being a block. The quotes on what character should North Ponce have in the future from the participants included an urban

residential neighborhood, vibrant street width, diverse styles and heights, historic and non-historic buildings, mostly residential off Ponce. So when you get off Ponce, mostly residential. Keep tall buildings on the Ponce corridor, pockets of density/mixed use mingling with residential, respect the history, retain the Mediterranean flavor but allow for a healthy mix of historic and modern Mediterranean, and then encourage small incremental development in the character of the best 1920s examples that we're seeing in the visual preference survey, the four-plex, they say eight-plex, eight units through ... parking. So part of what's been happening, when you can't viably infill or redevelop or rehab a property within the -- that meets the market that's financially feasible, those properties are being aggregated and sometimes into entire blocks that then a proposal comes in for a very large-scale development, so kind of a major conclusion coming out of this is if you want to pursue small-scale infill development and preserve -- and make that a character of that neighborhood, you're going to have to update the Code to let that happen, to encourage that to happen.

Mr. Trias: And let me explain the simple big picture of the Code. The Code basically says, if you have less than 20,000 square feet in this ..., you can only do 45 feet of height. If you do parking, ... parking, so on, then it's going to be unrealistic to do 4 stories. So then the Code is saying, go ahead and sample 20,000 square feet at a minimum to be able to do a significant project. So it really interferes with the small scale infill, with historic preservation, with all of those things. So that's what the current Code says.

Commissioner Lago: And you have --

Mayor Cason: So parking -- so the parking basically obligates you to aggregate and build up parking requirements?

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Mr. Trias: Yes. And one of the things is -- that the Code also says is that in the downtown, there are no parking requirements if you have less than 1.4 FAR (floor area ratio), which is very good.

It encourages preservation and redevelopment, so those ideas were also proposed for this area, so.

Mr. Boll: So you have ... we'll get into the recommendations. I'll interject.

Mr. Trias: Yeah, absolutely. Before we do that, if you don't mind, let's watch the video, because Coral Gables TV did a great job, and leaves a good sense of the -- of what happened during the workshops, so as soon as he's ready, please show it.

Note for the Record: An audio-video was presented at this time.

Mr. Trias: ... walk you through the recommendations now, and perhaps -- let's see we can get back to the PowerPoint.

Mr. Boll: And just to set it up, there's, I think, four major areas: One was historic preservation; two was -- had to do with public space, streets, pedestrian-friendly design. In that, there were two special areas of interest: East Ponce Boulevard and then the Alhambra Circle corridor, the diagonal. Then the third area was management of large-scale developments along the major commercial corridors: LeJeune, Ponce, and Douglas, as well as large-scale development coming north of Alhambra on the plaza and circle. And then fourth was this topic of support for small scale infill and redevelopment. Those are the major areas.

Mr. Trias: Yeah. That's pages 54 through 57 in the report. Let me see if I can get to that real quick. There you go.

Mr. Boll: So these were further broken down into short-term and long-term action steps into these topics. There's a lot more detail in the report, but these are some of the highlights that were picked out to present.

Mr. Trias: And maybe I can go over them very quickly. There's some historic preservation issues that I think are pretty straightforward, such as updating maps and so on. I think we're making that already. That's a great effort. Then, as far as public space, Elizabeth Plater Zyberk indicated to me that she wanted to do a studio this fall centered around the Ponce de Leon corridor to try to see what opportunities were there, so I thought that was a great idea, so we plan to work with her on that.

Mr. Boll: And just to emphasize that, I mean, all the way back to the charrette, the 2002 charrette, that intersection of Ponce and east Ponce with the park there was highlighted as a major opportunity for a significant public space in this portion of the City, and it's still there. It hasn't changed really. And then that corridor, east Ponce that goes up to the Women's Club, to Douglas entrance, it's an extremely important street within the City, and currently needs attention.

Commissioner Keon: It has the potential to be just beautiful, just beautiful, and it's currently not. But it can be beautiful.

Mr. Boll: We walked that entire thing.

Mr. Trias: I worked with Liz, and that is what I hope we can have by the December, some really great ideas about how beautiful it can be, so that's hopefully working on fine. Then the other thing that we're trying to do is identify four neighborhood parks that can be included in the capital improvement program with the City. We've done some preliminary mapping -- be more helpful if we can keep the PowerPoint on. We've done some maps that begin to identify some opportunities and also opportunities for parking, because as you said, the issue with parking and infill is the minimum requirements that we have that make it very difficult to build small buildings or to fix the ones we have. Now, if there could be some public parking provided that could be shared, then it would be so much easier to encourage redevelopment. So we've done some mapping exercises, but I think we need to refine this further. It's not as easy as it appear. We were certainly work on that. Then --

Mr. Boll: Since the 2002 charrette, the southern portion of Ponce have seen some improvements, streetscape improvements, from there up. Really nothing. So it's -- when you look at the public comments, it's, you know, viewed as a very harsh, unfriendly, dangerous place to walk, and as you -- and I passed through -- I actually drove it up and down, back and forth, across -- take a drive through different streets in the study area and try to find speed limit signs, try to find speed limit signs. Just finding the posted speed for the side streets, not easy to do, and we think there's room to probably bring down the posted speed certainly through the residential areas in the neighborhood.

Mr. Trias: So --

Mr. Boll: I think we can find the signs.

Mr. Trias: So building number three. That's one of the issues. There's a lot of individuals who talk about traffic being a challenge, so traffic has two aspects, I think. One is the design of the street. There's too much asphalt in many of the streets, so there's an opportunity to have less asphalt. And when you have narrower streets, then speeds go down. That's just a natural development. So what we're trying to find at least two streets as a short-term goal where that could happen, where there could be enhanced landscape, which will make the City more beautiful and maybe even improve some of the traffic performance. So that's one thing. Obviously, there's a chance to do better enforcement and better signage and so on, but I do believe in design as one of the major tools. Chuck, why don't you talk about number four, the Alhambra Circle corridor?

Mr. Boll: OK. And then just one last point on the -- following up on what Ramon was just saying about large areas of asphalt. There's island. There's little islands. There's one where the trolley stop is up on Ponce right near that park that is literally a little triangle in the middle of roads, so if you go out and stand there, you feel very dangerously isolated in the middle of the streets, and there's another one further up that corridor. So number four, Alhambra Circle

corridor and quadrant. Here, we recommend reviewing proposed changes that are in this report of land use and zoning based on input from this workshop, and then propose land uses for the North Ponce located along the CBD should not exceed the commercial high rises. There's a lot of -- so this is one of the hot spots, right, in the study area. There was concern with high rise development being extended to other blocks north, getting closer to the elementary school in that area. The public input and actually the workshop team did not recommend doing that, and there was a lot of attention on that Alhambra Circle diagonal as it goes up towards the really nice entrance on Douglas. That's going to change as you get -- as you go above where the new development has already; there's older buildings there. So that needs some attention, and making sure that the zoning and form that's going to happen there is consistent with the City's vision and what input we're going to hear. So, for example, that's an area where you have an entire block that was developed as one building, and it has the parking tucked in underneath. That was an example brought up, and it was laid out there to be revisited. Is this a good example? Is this the way the City would like parking handled in the future? Do you want properties consolidated into this scale, or do you want to retain smaller scales? You know, all of those questions were raised by looking at this study area.

Commissioner Slesnick: What, roughly, address is that? What the address where the parking underneath.

Mr. Boll: It's right at the bottom of the -- Alhambra Circle. It's on the east side.

Commissioner Keon: ... Michelle.

Mr. Trias: ... across from 33 Alhambra.

Commissioner Slesnick: Near Lapoma (phonetic)?

Commissioner Keon: It's across on 33 Alhambra, right before 33 Alhambra. West of --

Mr. Trias: ...north...

Commissioner Keon: West of 33 Alhambra.

Mr. Trias: It's just --

Commissioner Keon: Right?

Mr. Trias: Yeah. It's on the northbound. Just north --

Mr. Boll: And that's of a scale that is certainly consistent with the mid rise, but it's a question of is that the form, is that the character, you know

Mr. Trias: ... there are two issues. One is what is the appropriate land use, and generally, anything more than commercial mid rise didn't just -- didn't make any sense in that area. The second issue is how does one deal with enhancing the pedestrian connectivity and making that part of the requirements? So that's ... one of the long-term plan -- idea is to have an overlay that makes those features required. That's very similar to what happens with the mixed use -- it's normal. It's an overlay, but it -- the way that it could be implemented is as a conditional use so there's more control by the Commission in terms of adding some very specific recommendations that deal with design, so all that I think is possible, and all that is likely. And the current Code has many of those ideas already. It's just that not in this area.

Mr. Boll: So Alhambra Circle, that diagonal again going up to Douglas, was seen as it could become a really -- a true boulevard, you know, a really enhanced street. And then the question is, do you want it to continue to be purely residential. Would you consider galleries, some kind of live-work along that particular corridor? Do you -- the input from the workshop was it should not go -- should definitely not go heavy commercial, shouldn't go high rise, but people were open to the idea that you might have galleries and small shops and cafés and things, so -- but that's just another area that was opened for future discussion.

Mr. Trias: And then finally, there's a long-term strategies. I think that the idea of affordable housing, I think that's really a historic preservation issue. The preservation of the existing buildings is a very good strategy to maintain and preserve affordable housing. I think we need to develop an effective master plan also for neighborhood parks and public space, and that's something that, hopefully with the design/work at the academic level with the studio, can begin. Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: From the affordable housing perspective, the way I had envisioned it, something that the City Manager and I -- actually, it was the City Manager's idea, but something I really tried to run with, because I think it's tremendous -- and this goes back to the school issues that we've been discussing. How can we better improve our public schools, and I think it all starts with having the best and brightest teachers, educators. And how could we attract the best and brightest educators to teach at our schools? Give them incentive: If you teach at one of our public schools, you have access to one of these workforce housing units in our City. So you know, we're going to incentivize work for Coral Gables public school, and we can say, look, if you have your master's and PhD and you're teaching at Carver or at Sunset Elementary, Gables rep, or any one of the public schools in Coral Gables, you automatically qualify for one of those, you know, for reduced rental rates there. And I think -- I don't think we've ever done that before, and I applaud the City Manager for coming up with the idea. But I don't think -- I've never heard of anyone doing that nationwide. If we can do something like that -- I mean, think about it. If you had your choice of living somewhere else other than Coral Gables -- I know we're all bias. You can say we all live in Coral Gables. But I just think it's a tremendous benefit, and I want that really tied in -- as part of this discussion as we continue moving forward, any kind of conversation related to workforce housing, I want each one of you to be thinking about that as well, because I think we have an opportunity. And if this is something that we're doing now -- and something the City Manager and I have discussed is what's the best way of implementing that? You can either force it on a developer or you can treat it as a bonus, the way we treat the Mediterranean bonus. You know, maybe it's additional units, maybe it's parking reduction. I don't know what it is. I don't know how to exactly -- how to phrase it just yet, but I'm just

saying, just keep that in mind, because I think it's something that benefits -- it achieves a goal that -- something that we all want, and I think this is a creative way of getting there in an effective way.

Commissioner Lago: I agree.

Mayor Cason: Good point.

Mr. Trias: And I think we probably need to have as many strategies as we can come up with. The more strategies, the better, so that's a very good one. And, finally, like I said, maybe that can be achieved through an overlay that also includes ideas such as shared parking, a reasonable way to deal with ground-level parking requirements, and then the kinds of things that encourage the pedestrian environment and high-quality urban development that you, as a Commission ...

Mayor Cason: And take a look at live/work, which we addressed in --

Mr. Trias: Yeah.

Mayor Cason: -- ... residences as a way to both provide a buffer as you move in towards the residential areas, and against commercial ... used to live there. So I mean, there's some other possibilities.

Mr. Trias: Yeah. Live/work is already in the Code, so that -- to promote that idea would be a very good thing.

Mayor Cason: Are you planning -- as you move forward, this is an opportunity to maybe do a -- send something to the residents who didn't come to the sessions, but send them a questionnaire based on the conclusions that this reached, and see if they have any other -- sort of would strengthen the community resolve, if you could have a vast majority of people weighing in. Send

them a stamp with a self-addressed envelope informal that checks the boxes. Do you agree with this or something to get their input.

Commissioner Lago: I think that's a great idea.

Commissioner Keon: Or even to have a follow-up meeting or something with all of the people that were involved or to send it out -- back to them to go over the recommendations with the public.

Commissioner Lago: Ramon, let me ask --

Commissioner Slesnick: I think this is a fabulous, fabulous presentation. And I was just -- Vince -- Commissioner Lago, go ahead. I'm sorry.

Commissioner Lago: No, no, no. I don't mind. My next question was just based on exactly what we were talking about. OK, now, what's the next step?

Commissioner Slesnick: I really think looking at the videos and so forth, I know 95 percent of the people that attended, and I wondered if you had addresses of the people that were there. I mean, I'd say there's only maybe 14 people that actually live in the North Ponce area that I recognize. I mean, it's four or five people that I don't where they live, but they were interviewed and so forth. Is that we really need to have a mailing into it, into that area, or especially to get them to do a survey, complete a survey, do a mailing into the area of what they prefer, and also have it online, that they could fill it out on online and send it back in to just really have a much more diverse group of people responding, but the ideas are fabulous, and I think everyone living there would appreciate all that we're -- that you've come up with. I mean, it's fabulous, fabulous ideas, but we need more input.

Mr. Trias: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: I think one of the --

Commissioner Keon: I think that we have -- I think that we have the names of some groups of residents in that area who have been meeting with everybody, but in -- there's some different like homeowner association groups and things that have made themselves known to us that I'm sure -- because they still call and want to know where we are, but haven't seen this. So I think it would be great to reach back out to those people and try and get them, you know, to come and go through these sorts of things. But what's interesting is everything that's said here is the same thing that's been said in the couple of charrette that have been done, and you know, shame on us for not having moved forward with it. I mean, that we... haven't really -- you know, we haven't gotten behind it, you know, as a government or as a body to push for these changes in these areas, and you know, this a piece of our City that is -- has remained affordable. It has -- it's kind of its own flavor, it has its own kind of vibe, it's own feel, and we really -- if we are out and try to development, we have the ability to plan how this area will develop, and it has -- when you walk through there and you talk with the people, it has a very urban feel, and they really want -- they want, you know, nice sidewalks with some lighting so they can walk at night, they want shade trees, so you're not -- you know, you're not burning on the sidewalks, and they want bike paths, and you know, bicycle lanes, and those streets are relatively wide. You know, the Galliano and Salzedo are relatively wide there that we should be able able to put in bike lanes there and really create a really urban residential neighborhood, you know, in that community that people -- you know, that people are really looking for. I think we have -- you know, if we can give direction to our Planning Department, you know, to work with these people and come up with exactly what we want to see and some timelines on it so that we can, you know, look at our Code and see what needs to be changed or redacted or if an overlay is the best answer and get them -- and do it. I mean, we need to, you know, sit with the Planning and Zoning Board and do the things that we want to do so it doesn't, you know, just happen sporadically. We really have an opportunity now to really help this area to grow, you know, with a real vision.

Mayor Cason: And this place really is ripe for more parks. I mean, this is really -- a real shortage of parks.

Commissioner Keon: Absolutely.

Mayor Cason: ... parks -- I mean, the one park there that's not always that well maintained anyway.

Commissioner Keon: No, but this -- that one area of Ponce, that has the potential as Ponce -- where Ponce, you know, branches off a little bit. Is it east Ponce or whatever goes up there. That -- there is a potential to make a really -- a lovely park in that area, a beautiful park in that area.

Commissioner Lago: Ramon, let me ask you a quick question, and Madam City Manager. Like Commissioner Keon said, we've had several of these charrette. In my opinion, I think the next step is to have a sunshine meeting with the Commission, and if the public wants to attend, they're obviously more than welcomed, and we start basically giving our input in reference to what we see as the future of this area. I don't know what my colleagues -- what their opinion is --

Mayor Cason: I agree.

Commissioner Keon: I agree.

Commissioner Lago: Because before -- I came here today obviously to really listen to what this -- I'm eager to see what's going on in north Gables. I mean, I've been receiving a lot of phone calls. I've met with several developers. I've met with several architects. There is a lot of interest in reference to north Gables, and like Commissioner Keon said, let's -- we're ahead of the curb, but I have my own ideas, and I'm going to be sending all of my colleagues some ideas that I have in reference to this area in a memo that I've been working on, how to split the areas up, you know, different ideas in regards to density and intensity, height increases, because -- I mean, we're all -- it's obvious. You know, a lot of what is proposed for this area doesn't work, because like Vice Mayor said, the current cost of units makes it impossible to redevelop any of the

projects. When you have a project that has existing six units and the units are selling for \$150,000 a unit and those units are from the 1970s, 1960s, but it's zoned for nine units, in between demolishing and rebuilding, there's no way you can get your money out of the deal.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah. This would just be an academic discussion the whole way through.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And nothing ever come of it.

Commissioner Lago: That's why I want to avoid that. So action has to happen, or let's be honest with ourselves; let's leave it the way it is.

Mayor Cason: But I think your -- I think we have the intermediate step of this survey to the rest -- because we only had a handful of ... when you think about it of the -- how many people live up there? I think it's on your --

Vice Mayor Quesada: 2,518.

Mayor Cason: So we had 50. So I think that you can take what you've done, quickly do a survey, make it easier for people to respond, and make sure they -- that is a consensus, and then go to the -- and then we go to ...

Commissioner Lago: And that's what I was mentioning before. I think everyone has mentioned it on this dais. It would be a spectacular idea. Send them a simple postcard.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, but you know something? It's more than that. And I'm all about residents giving input, but I'm looking at page 15 of the report, and this is what causes me concern --

Commissioner Lago: Fifty?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Page one five, 15. The biggest concern for me is 85.1 percent of the residents --

Commissioner Keon: They're residents.

Vice Chair Quesada: -- are transient -- are residents.

Commissioner Keon: Renters.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Not transient. My word.

Mayor Cason: Twenty-one years transients.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Wrong term. That's true, that's true. So it's impossible for us to find out if people are renting, you know, a year at a time and then they're out, or if they've been there 41 years, so I -- we'll never know.

Commissioner Slesnick: But they still deserve --

Vice Mayor Quesada: Absolutely.

Mayor Cason: ...voice.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Absolutely. I'm not saying no.

Mr. Boll: But there are also -- remember, look at -- but they're also long-time residents, so there's people who have lived there ...

Commissioner Lago: I think --

Mr. Boll: -- 20, 30 years.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah. No, I know. I agree.

Multiple speakers.

Vice Chair Quesada: And Commissioner Slesnick --

Commissioner Lago: Twenty-eight years.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And Commissioner Slesnick said that.

Mr. Boll: And I think some are just in between matrimony, so -- ...

Mayor Cason: One of the ways you could do this would be to try to show the results up to now and then see if they agree with it. You could --

Vice Mayor Quesada: But at the same --

Mayor Cason: -- ... questions.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes. I'll -- I guess what I'm trying to say, if you also look at page 15, you know, the median income is significantly lower in that area than the rest of our city, and the population is significantly lower than the rest of the City. You know, more than 50 percent of the residents are 22 to 44. You know, I moved a few times between --

Unidentified Speaker: That's a good age.

Vice Mayor Quesada: -- 22 and 35.

Commissioner Lago: You have a lot of professionals, you have a lot of uncertainties ...

Vice Mayor Quesada: I'm saying ... So, it's -- we're -- it's a -- I want everyone to be aware we're dealing with a different type of Coral Gables resident here, for the most part. I'm sure we have a lot of the same.

Mr. Boll: I think the survey idea is a really good one, but I also think engaging the people who work downtown --

Vice Mayor Quesada: Agreed.

Mr. Boll: -- as potential residents for this area --

Vice Mayor Quesada: And that's what I was getting at.

Mr. Boll: -- is another angle, because --

Vice Mayor Quesada: That's what ...

Mr. Boll: ... questionnaire.

Multiple speakers.

Mr. Boll: There was a miss-match --

Mayor Cason: ... live/work in the Gables or did you just --

Vice Mayor Quesada: And that's a great point. That's what I was building up to.

Commissioner Keon: But how do you find them?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Just because -- well, you have the businesses there. I think we try to hit the surveys of the people that work in the area as well. We try to target them as well.

Commissioner Keon: Like in the restaurants and so forth.

Commissioner Slesnick: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah. Maybe we do something in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce. Maybe we get some volunteers, or maybe we give some sort of stipend to have them go walk store to store: Oh, do you work here? Can you please fill this out? Because what we've seen -- my neighborhood -- I live -- I live just outside of downtown. I mean, I'm between Miracle Mile and Merrick Park, and I've noticed in my neighborhood a lot of young professionals are moving in. They're sacrificing having a big yard and having a bigger house to be closer to work, and the vast majority of the people -- at least just on my block --

Commissioner Keon:affordability...

Vice Mayor Quesada: It's not representative sample. But what -- the turnover I've seen in two years that I've been there is about eight homes. My wife and I counted other day -- eight homes ...turn over. They have young families, and the husband or the wife or both either work in Merrick Park or in downtown Coral Gables or on Alhambra, and they did it because they want to be closer, so I think we're also catering to that type of demographic.

Commissioner Slesnick: And to use the trolley.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And to use the trolley as well.

Commissioner Lago: Right.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So I just think it's a little bit different. So I think maybe the survey, it shouldn't only be open to the North Ponce area, but also, you know, the residents, but also the businesses as well the people who work in those businesses, and maybe a little bit outside. Maybe a little bit further south --

Commissioner Lago:

Vice Mayor Quesada: -- I would say the same type of mentality of the resident.

Commissioner Lago: This is my reasoning behind calling for a sunshine meeting. I just want you to -- want all of you to remember. We have a current moratorium on any development in north Gables, so --

Commissioner Keon: No, only --

Mayor Cason: No, we have ... until the day.

Commissioner Keon: Only -- yes, until today. But it was also only for things -- only for properties that were not as of right, so -- I mean, you can still -- you know, you build according - - you know, as of right, go ahead. It's if it's not as of right.

Commissioner Lago: But as I ... for, we don't have any as-of-right projects coming before the City in this area, am I correct or --?

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mr. Trias: Right, right.

Commissioner Lago: OK, so that's not -- that doesn't --

Commissioner Keon: You need to inspire them.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah. Well, the problem with inspiring is it just doesn't make any financial sense currently, let's be honest. It's just the cost of construction and the zoning is -- you know, it's cost prohibitive.

Mr. Trias: The issue is MF.-2 doesn't work.

Commissioner Lago: I know it does. I know -- it doesn't work, so I think that we -- I would like to just sit down, all of us and, you know, have our own charrette, have our own, you know, sunshine meet; invite the public, if they want to come. They're more than welcomed, and really, you know, use the study maybe after we've researched and discussed with the residents and the individuals who were in the CBD (Central Business District) or in the downtown area, but basically, I think we have to move in that direction. I think we have to put our own ideas and our own vision on paper.

Mayor Cason: How quickly could you do a survey of the sort that we discussed where you would indicate I live -- I work, I live/work -- I mean, so you could divide the responses to get at some of these questions. And if it makes it easy, it shouldn't be that long for people to come back with more information, and then we can hold that meeting.

Mr. Trias: We could do this semester, because I'm actually taking that class on that topic ... make it part of...PhD. So what happens is that -- I've learned a lot of about those things recently, and I think that we can probably do a professional survey that is properly analyzed with your help -- by the way, you're a PhD in social sciences, so you're able to do that. So, hopefully, in the next two or three months, do you think?

Mr. Boll: I think -- and I'd be happy to try to help with...if that's what the Commissioner would like to pursue. I think a final point on this is there is a miss-match between the demographic and the types of people looking to live downtown, and things like unit sizes and the types of housing stock units that the people who work on Alhambra in the office buildings are looking for in terms of where they want to live. So, if I'm a single person working in a bank on Alhambra, I'm not looking for a two ...

Commissioner Lago: Two bedrooms.

Mr. Boll: -- ... square foot unit, two or three bedroom unit in the north Gables, and you know --

Commissioner Lago: ... to be seen.

Mr. Boll: -- ... cost factor, per se; it's a lifestyle factor. It's --

Mr. Trias: What I will say is this, we know what the problems are, and we have some pretty good ideas for solutions. We just need the right process to that have conversation, like Commissioner Lago was explaining. If we have the process --

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, because that goes -- what Chuck is saying goes back to the main discussion at hand, which is these are non as-of-right projects, so we need to address this currently. If we don't address it --

Mr. Trias: If you have that conversation among yourselves with the proper input, you can make those decisions. It's not, you know --

Commissioner Lago: I'm ready to call for a sunshine meeting, if my colleagues are willing and able. I don't know how -

Vice Mayor Quesada: Is it a sunshine or is it a workshop?

Commissioner Keon: It's a workshop.

Commissioner Lago: Again, whatever you recommend.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Same effect.

Mr. Leen: The difference is, if you call a workshop and legislative action can ensue, you can take action, but you also have to take public comment, if there's never been public comment on the issue.

Vice Mayor Quesada: But I don't think the intent -- I don't what your intent is.

Mr. Leen: A sunshine meeting --

Commissioner Lago: The intent is --

Vice Chair Quesada: Well, look, all of us can voice our opinions...

Commissioner Lago: My intent is just to sit amongst our colleagues and discuss this issue with the input from the professionals, but again, if anybody from the public would like to give input, we're as transparent as possible; they're always welcomed, but like let's focus on the workshop. I think the workshop makes a lot of sense.

Mr. Leen: But just to finish. Sunshine meeting would mean the Commission doesn't take action. It just discusses.

Commissioner Lago: I would prefer a workshop.

Mr. Leen: OK.

Commissioner Keon: So we can take action. But I think --

Commissioner Lago: Legislative action, as you mentioned.

Commissioner Keon: -- in the meantime, you know, you can tell us what kind of -- what process do you need in other to make this work. So what do you need?

Mr. Trias: We are -- what I would recommend is to work a little bit on the recommendations and finalize them; bring it to you, and then you prioritize the issues that are important to you as a Commission, and then we can take them through the Planning and Zoning process and eventually through the ... --

Commissioner Keon: Right. But I --

Commissioner Lago: What are we looking at? What are we looking at -- excuse me, Commissioner. What are we looking at in regards to the time frame for you to provide those deliverables so that we could have our workshop?

Mr. Trias: I mean, I would prefer to do it soon. I mean, I --

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, me too.

Mr. Trias: You know, if we could do it --

Commissioner Keon: OK. So when --

Commissioner Lago: ... your workload is and -- or your staff.

Mr. Trias: And the workload is impossible, but it doesn't matter ...

Commissioner Lago: But I'm being considerate.

Mr. Trias: You know, and I thank you very much, but I mean, the important thing is to get it done, so I think that ideally, in the next 30 days or so, you should be able to take some actions on those things. I think there are some things that are easier, so things are more complicated. Don't have to solve all the problems at once.

Commissioner Keon: No. The things that deal with, you know, the creation of parks and the streets, like east Ponce and those sorts of things, those are already our property. We can -- you know, we don't -- we can -- you know, if you do a workshop -- I mean, Liz does a workshop. You can work on those. Those are -- we already have control over those. I think the thing that I have some concern over are the properties that we don't control; they're private properties, and so what do we -- you know, the ones that are coming in asking for variances or whatever to build what is not as of right, you know, how do we evaluate that? What are the -- you know, give us the tools to evaluate those projects to the betterment and the overall good of that area, if that's how we want to see this area developed. I mean the things that bike lanes --

Mr. Trias: ...

Commissioner Keon: -- and all those other things. We can deal with that later. I know I have an issue -- I have an item on here about parking and mixed use developments along, you know, Ponce, which is exactly what you're saying. There are -- some of the mixed-use buildings that are there and the ground floor of those buildings have been sold as condominiums and people have purchased them and they haven't been able to lease them out for different uses because of our parking requirements when --

Mr. Trias: Can I deal with that issue?

Commissioner Keon: And I think that we really need to deal with that.

Mr. Trias: I mean, that issue is not complicated. What it is is that in the past, there was a blended requirement for the whole building. That was taken away for some uses, specifically restaurants. So today, it's impossible -- basically impossible to meet the parking requirements for a restaurant as a change of use.

Commissioner Keon: But we need to differentiate between a restaurant and a coffee shop. We need to differentiate between a restaurant and a sandwich shop or a deli or a bakery or that sort of thing that -- you know, just because people consume food there doesn't -- there's a huge difference in the type of restaurant that is. And so I -- I mean, I know in the one particular building that I got a number of calls about is -- there was -- a deli wanted to go in there, and that's not a -- you know, and it serves people working in the area. They, you know, walk over, get their sandwich. People that live in the building, it is exactly the kind of use, exactly the kind of use that we want to see in that area, and yet, they were prohibited from doing it. We -- that, we need to change now.

Mr. Trias: Yeah. And this Commission -- not this Commission, but the Commission made the decision to make the requirements for restaurants three-times more than retail some years ago. Well, maybe...

Commissioner Keon: OK, but we need to re-deal with that issue.

Commissioner Lago: That's what I'm saying.

Mr. Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: But also importance of the City Manager having this workshop.

Mr. Trias: Right.

Commissioner Lago:going to be issues that will be highlighted, and hopefully, we'll deal with the issues, because, I mean, again, a lot of these deli's -- I mean, that's -- all that food is produced offsite and brought onto the actual facility.

Mr. Boll: That's what people want. They want --

Commissioner Lago: So there should be --

Mr. Trias: -- ...cafés and deli's and

Commissioner Keon: That's what we want.

Mr. Leen: We have --

Commissioner Keon: And we need

Mr. Leen: I'm sorry --

Commissioner Keon: Go ahead. I'm sorry.

Mr. Leen: I just want you to know, we have worked with like Misha's Cupcakes. We've worked with couple of bakeries. We've worked with people who come to us --

Commissioner Lago: Craig, but -- I'm sorry to interrupt you.

Mr. Leen: ... but --

Commissioner Lago: You're working at this piecemeal.

Mr. Leen: No, I agree. And so I think it would be useful, just from a legal perspective, if we had more specific designations, and I think the Planning & Zoning director would agree, but I just want you to know we have been meeting with people. We recognize the issue. We know the Commission's view on this, and we've been trying to work with them.

Commissioner Lago: ... meeting exceptions ... like in a variance. What are we doing?

Mr. Leen: No, no. What we're doing is trying to fit them into the Code, and we're taking a broad interpretation of the Code. So, for example, one of the -- Mr. Truce, I remember one of the ones we recently addressed. It was whether they had a full kitchen or not. And so, we said that if they didn't have a full industrial kitchen -- they had less kitchen -- it could fit into -- they could go into that building. I know we've made interpretations.

Commissioner Keon: Right. But that's only if the person knows that they can come to you and they can come to the -- whatever, or they know someone on the Commission. That's -- was like the woman who lived -- wanted to have the coffee bar in the building on Catalonia and Ponce. You know, she was buying six parking spaces that were nowhere near where that was, because she was required to have six parking spaces.

Mr. Boll: And for everyone that comes to talk to you, 6 to 10 --

Commissioner Keon: That -- you know, that needs to stop.

Mr. Boll: -- have moved on ...--

Commissioner Keon: You know, we need --

Mr. Boll: -- ... somewhere else.

Commissioner Keon: -- to end -- to find a solution to that now.

Mr. Trias: Yeah, we have a text amendment ready for you, so if you have that workshop, we can give it to you and you decide.

Commissioner Keon: OK.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Spoken like a new ex-officio member of the chamber. Love it.

Mayor Cason: Do we have any other --

Commissioner Slesnick: I just have -- Mr. Mayor, if I could just ask a couple more questions --

Mr. Trias: Yes, ma'am.

Commissioner Slesnick: -- of Ramon. Ramon, I think part of the workshop that we had, it was delightful, but people didn't know about it. And you say you sent registered letters to homeowners associations. How many homeowners associations do you have there?

Mr. Trias: I don't remember, but we can check that.

Commissioner Slesnick: Like two or three?

Mr. Trias: Not too many, not too many.

Commissioner Slesnick: OK. And also, how you advertised it; in the Miami Daily Business Review again?

Mr. Trias: It was mostly in news

Commissioner Slesnick: Because I just don't think it reached enough people just --

Mr. Trias: Yeah. Keep many mind, we did this really fast in the summer.

Commissioner Slesnick: I know, and I appreciate that, because we talked about -- Another thing on --

Mayor Cason: On that matter, regardless of when we end up holding the workshop, I still think it's worthwhile to notify the rest of the residents of what's happened, get engaged; here's where you can go and see what we've been talking about today. You can see the film. Get engaged; give us your ideas.

Commissioner Lago: It's similar to what I mentioned when Diane was speaking in reference to putting these delinquent garbage fees on our tax roll. We notify the resident as much as possible. We did the best that we could. Everybody, you know, has a stake in you know, in what we're trying to do, so --

Mr. Trias: We keep doing it. This is a process. I don't think --

Mayor Cason: Because if you don't, they'll say, well, I didn't know anything about it.

Commissioner Lago: I wasn't notified.

Mayor Cason: We hear that on every issue.

Commissioner Lago: You were notified.

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Commissioner Slesnick: Like the Mayor says, if we give them hyperlinks to the web site to different things that they could look at, and then tell them, here's -- and if we can even have a better survey to send out to them. That way, they'd at least be notified.

Commissioner Lago: Make it as easy as possible. We'll ...

Mr. Trias: I know.

Commissioner Lago: -- cost them sending back the postcard.

Mayor Cason: It's worth doing. Let me suggest one thing since Jessica ... has to leave at four, and we have H.1. Let's do H.1 and then we have to come back to the related issue of this --

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, but --

Mayor Cason: -- which is parking.

Commissioner Lago: Can we just -- can we get a workshop date in the books or no? Or we're going to --

Mr. Trias: Yeah, I -- please --

Commissioner Lago: Can I --

Mr. Trias: And parking is easy.

Commissioner Keon: Do we need a motion?

Mr. Trias: We're ready to give you an ordinance for the parking.

Mayor Cason: This was just a discussion item.

Commissioner Lago: Do you feel comfortable with three weeks?

Mr. Trias: Yes, sure.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Well, the question really is, if we're doing a workshop, that question really should be directed at us, Commissioner Keon, Lago, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Cason: ...think?

Commissioner Keon: Yeah.

Vice Chair Quesada: Is three weeks enough time for us to organize our thoughts, to put our -- sort of our -- what our needs and wants are for this area? Right? Is that your idea of the workshop?

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Mayor Cason: That would --

Commissioner Lago: A month.

Commissioner Slesnick: A month is better.

Mayor Cason: A month would be better.

Commissioner Keon: The end of September.

Mayor Cason: A month would be better.

Commissioner Lago: So the end of September.

Mayor Cason: End of September.

Unidentified Speaker: Mr. Mayor ... some things said based on that.

Mr. Boll: Thank you.

Unidentified Speaker: Now, I've been engaged in -- issue of north Gables 20 years, maybe more. There was a famous ... report wanted ...to make this area independent ... good. Anyhow, one thing which I have noticed -- excuse me.

Commissioner Lago: Mr. Bolls [sic].

Unidentified Speaker: Mr. Bolls [sic].

Commissioner Keon: Dr. Bolls [sic].

Unidentified Speaker: I want to say something about you. Please, don't refer anymore to 2002 charrette. That was one of the biggest wasted -- there 52 recommendations; not a single one was ... let alone ... OK, anyway, one ... which is necessary, and I would like to mention to you, is developers. What is feasible -- I think Mr. Lago referred very briefly to it. What is feasible for this area? I think this area has changed in -- when I arrived here for the first time... last time 1961, I ... about months in that very area. Ethnically, that area has changed completely. Today's entirely different. But it is going to be developed in ... historic... I think what Frank said, that many of the buildings there... and I putting down -- old buildings have no preservation quality, whatsoever. That is absolutely true. And I think everyone knows it. So you have to get a developer, someone who is willing to get involved in creating something new. Of course, not ... with the wishes of your people. But people can wish all kinds of things. There's no one who is

going to put the money, nothing's going to happen. So this is a very important element in this process. Whatever you want, who's going to provide the money. Because we cannot provide you money.

Mayor Cason: That's why we have developers ...

Unidentified Speaker: All development could be maybe -- could be this area, could be -- maybe have billion dollars and we certainly don't have it, so please take this...

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: There's a lot of issues that we can address. For example, Workforce housing. Are we going to implement that in every development? Are we going to put a park fund? Are we going to --

Unidentified Speaker: ... you are ... most of you know a progressive ... and talk to developers, and they could be part of this. Bring them in... ... getting together with the people who -- some of them make some ... which are not very realistic. As I mentioned the charrette of 2002, 52 recommendations; with a single one was ... one my street on Alhambra ... on Alhambra, which is the total nonsense. Total nonsense. It was a waste of about half a million dollars in today's money. Well, anyhow, get some developers. Some of them are -- have their fee on the ground.

Mayor Cason: Some of them are behind you. Let me ask Jessica Keller to come up and do H.1, and then we'll go back to F.2 and continue the discussion. Jessica.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And Commissioner Slesnick just leaned over to me. September 29 potentially works on her calendar, works on mine. Can you guys check it out, staff?

Commissioner Lago: That works for me. I'm flexible.

Vice Mayor Quesada: It's a Tuesday.

Commissioner Lago: Whatever the Vice Mayor says.

Mayor Cason: Check. OK, go ahead.

Ms. Jessica: Good afternoon. This is easy. We should get through this very quickly. This is a feel-good resolution. This is a resolution of the Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, endorsing the Mayor's climate action pledge affirming support for the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact. All of that means is that we are going to join forces with our neighbors, over 20 other municipalities and our -- Miami-Dade, Monroe County, Palm Beach County, and Broward County to work together to help formulate mitigation efforts for climate change. And I actually will let Matt take it from here. He is leading this charge.

Mr. Matt: Thank you, Jessica. Yeah, a brief history of the South Florida Regional Climate Compact. There was -- it was executed in 2010, partnering Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe and Palm Beach counties to coordinate their mitigation and adaptation activities across county lines. The compact represents a new form of regional climate governance designed to allow local governments to set the agenda for adaptation while providing sufficient means for State and Federal agencies to engage with technical assistance and support. The compact calls for counties and municipalities to work cooperatively to develop annual legislative programs and jointly advocate for State and Federal policies and funding, dedicate staff time and resources to implement, in whole or in part, the South Florida Regional Climate Action Plan to include mitigation and adaptation strategies and to meet annually in regional climate summits to mark progress and identify emerging issues. Benefits of the City joining obviously to date: More than 25 mayors have signed on representing municipalities in the region. City staff is currently participating informally in municipal -- Miami-Dade municipal working group, and by formally joining the Southwest Regional Climate Contract, it gives Coral Gables a seat at the table when it comes to local climate changes and sea level rise conversations and input in coming up with solutions and adaptation strategies to such complex issues, and also joining coincides perfectly

with our development of our sustainability master plan. There was actually a recommendation coming out of the climate resilience focus area, and it's supported by the Sustainability Advisory Board so.

Commissioner Lago: All right. It's a move in the right direction.

Mayor Cason: Yep.

Commissioner Keon: Great.

Mayor Cason: Just ... remind, I'll be going in October to Manchester, New Hampshire; invited with a number of mayors ... sea level rise and adaptation by municipalities to what's coming, so this would fit in. I --

Mr. Matt: And their next regional climate summit's actually taking place in December so.

Mayor Cason: OK.

Commissioner Lago: ... excited --

Mayor Cason: Do we have --

Commissioner Lago: -- make sure you give us a recap when you come back.

Mayor Cason: Will do.

Commissioner Lago: Should be interesting.

Mayor Cason: Do we have a motion on H.1?

Commissioner Keon: I make a motion.

Commissioner Lago: I'll second the motion.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon makes the motion; Commissioner Lago seconds. City Clerk.

Mr. Foeman: Commissioner Keon?

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Mr. Foeman: Commissioner Lago?

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mr. Foeman: Vice Mayor Quesada?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Mr. Foeman: Commissioner Slesnick?

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes.

Mr. Foeman: Mayor Cason?

Mayor Cason: Yes. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Let's go on to F.-2, which is remanded to the previous discussion. Parking requirements for businesses and mixed use developments upon North Ponce de Leon Boulevard.

Commissioner Keon: Same issue.

Mr. Trias: So -- the issue here is that currently, the parking requirements are calculated individually per use, so what happens is that we have three pages of uses that have parking requirements. And talking about restaurants, Commissioner Keon, we have two categories for restaurants, and they have the same parking requirements, so what is the point, right? And what happens is that from a practical point of view, restaurant is what's creating the problem because restaurant is much higher. It's about three-times higher than retail. So when a mixed use project is built, let's say, of the average of retail in terms of parking, when a change of use takes place at the ground level and you want to do a restaurant, for example, the parking is not there. We have an ordinance ready for you. As I said, generally, what it says is that once a mixed use project is built, there would be no need to calculate individually the change of use activity that goes on on the ground level if it is encouraging pedestrian activity and if it's the type of use that the City Commission wants to encourage, so that's generally it. So I think, if you're OK with that idea, we can probably bring it to you for action at the workshop.

Commissioner Keon: The next meeting?

Mr. Trias: Yeah. Well, the next meeting that is available. But I think the workshop, probably, is the next meeting.

Mayor Cason: ... break down restaurant into subcategories, like ice cream shop and -- or just put them all under shared use -- under mixed use.

Mr. Trias: We can give you a couple of options in that, but I -- my opinion is that we should really simplify the parking requirements. We should have parking and parking -- and we have a

lot of parking in the City, but if we make it overly complicated, it doesn't add any value to the projects, particularly when we're talking about large mixed use projects. And shared parking, by the way, is one of the issues that I think we should encourage also in the context of mixed use.

Mr. Leen: Mr. Mayor, can I add one thing here? Like this is an example of one of the things that we've been working on: Bakeries come in and they're not really restaurants. They might have one chair, but they have been treated as restaurants, so now we're treating them as retail, which decreases the parking requirement. That may be something you want to do. You may want to look at moving these things to retail. But the issue I wanted to raise with you is that the - - at your workshop, what I would suggest is that you give direction, through the form of resolutions perhaps, telling staff what you want them to come back with in terms of comp plan changes and things like that, because all those still have to go through our whole process, because they have to go through the Planning & Zoning Board, under the current Code as it exist. Then they have to come to the Commission. But these could be City-sponsored items. As opposed to developer-sponsored items, they could be City-sponsored items, and you can direct staff as to what you would like after listening to recommendations. But I don't think that we can just -- at the workshop, I don't think legally, under the Code, we can just adopt these provisions. They're going to have to be --

Mr. Trias: They have to go to Planning & Zoning --

Mr. Leen: Exactly.

Mr. Trias: -- ... process. However, I am -- I intend to bring a strike-through with no additional text of a significant portion of -- particularly on F.-2 and some other things, which, at this point, if you -- once I get a chance to explain it to you, it's astonishing how complex it is.

Commissioner Lago: That's what I'm looking forward to.

Mr. Trias: So I think a simpler Code would be much better for the community.

Mayor Cason: All right.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you. All right, F.-1. As you recall, back -- when was it? Cathy, was it three months ago --

Commissioner Keon: Yeah. --

Mayor Cason: -- when we discussed this?

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mayor Cason: I was the final vote, which I went along with two other Commissioners to have a stay at, I think was the word we used --

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mayor Cason: -- of this -- of applications moving to Planning & Zoning, in that area, until we either had the workshop and this discussion. And my... that time to -- was to bring it back again for another vote and see whether we're allowed to go forward. Whatever projects go forward, obviously, will have to go through Planning & Zoning and have to -- and if they're attuned, we'll have listened to this discussion and maybe make some modifications, but it's up to them. They're going to take a risk if they want to go forward. But I think -- my position is not to have anymore hardship with them. Let them come forward with their best foot forward and -- so -- and that's

Commissioner Keon: I would move to --

Vice Mayor Quesada: Well, I was pretty vocal at that meeting --

Mayor Cason: Right, I know.

Vice Chair Quesada: -- basically saying that, you know, if we don't like the project, we vote against it. But I just -- I hate putting any kind of burden on anyone ... sort of the process, because obviously, for anyone to do any kind of project, it just cost just to hold the land. So, again, you know, obviously, we're thinking different things with this area now, based on what we heard today, and I attended one of those presentations that Ramon and Chuck Boll -- I forgot his name there -- had discussed. So I -- I mean, at this point, I used to have the same position that I had at that point. I don't want to hold anything up. And if we don't like it, we don't like it; we vote against it or we modify it as we normally do with other projects.

Mayor Cason: So why don't you make a motion?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Oh, so I'm going to move to remove the temporary abatement, but this is only specific to one project. There was the 33 Alhambra project.

Mayor Cason: Right.

Commissioner Keon: Well, I think that there was actually another project that was also north -- the 33 Alhambra is one of them, but I think there's one down on Ponce.

Vice Mayor Quesada: As of right, there was never an abatement. There was never this --

Commissioner Keon: No....

Mr. Leen: There was an abatement as to all non as-of-right projects.

Commissioner Keon: It's only as of right.

Mr. Leen: There was a motion to relieve 33 Alhambra from that, and that's what the motion for reconsideration. Now, you may want to remove it for everybody.

Vice Mayor Quesada: But that was -- oh, so that was the motion -- I made the motion and I -- but I did not prevail on the motion.

Mr. Leen: Exactly. And now the Mayor's ask that it be put back on for reconsideration.

Vice Mayor Quesada: For reconsideration.

Mayor Cason: Reconsideration.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So that I cannot make a motion for reconsideration.

Commissioner Keon: OK. I'll --

Mayor Cason: No, no, it's a separate vote.

Mr. Leen: The Mayor can. The Mayor --

Commissioner Keon: I can make it.

Vice Mayor Quesada: The Mayor can.

Mr. Leen: The Mayor's the sponsor, but it's not truly reconsideration. You can always reconsider an abatement at any time. It's not a true motion for reconsideration.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Understood.

Mr. Leen: It's just you're ending in abatement.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So that I would move to end the abatement.

Mayor Cason: OK. Do we have a second?

Commissioner Keon: I'll second it.

Commissioner Lago: I'll second it.

Commissioner Keon: No, go ahead.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon seconds. City Clerk.

Mr. Foeman: Commissioner Lago?

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mr. Foeman: Vice Mayor Quesada?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Mr. Foeman: Commissioner Slesnick?

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes.

Mr. Foeman: Commissioner Keon?

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Mr. Foeman: Mayor Cason?

Mayor Cason: Yes.

Mr. Leen: So Mr. Mayor, just to clarify, that end the abatement for everything.

Commissioner Keon: Everything.

Mayor Cason: OK. Yes.

Commissioner Keon: OK. The only thing that I would ask is now that we have this information and we want to make some decisions as to how this area develops is that we take some of these recommendations and these considerations into light as we go forward in granting any variances to these projects.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: All right, let's move to H.-3.