

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-3
October 10, 2017
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Commissioner Frank Quesada
Commissioner Michael Mena

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Amal Costa, Coral Gables Resident
Sue Kawalerski, President of the Riviera Neighborhood Association
Deborah Register, Coral Gables Resident
Marlin Ebbert, Coral Gables Resident

Agenda Item G-3 [11:23:28 a.m.]

A discussion regarding the U.S.-1 corridor study
(Sponsored by Commissioner Lago)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The next item is G-3, discussion regarding the U.S.-1 corridor study, Commissioner Lago.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you. I want to see if I can have a chance City Manager, I'm going to reserve my comments to the end. I want to hear either from the public or from staff in reference to what is the objective moving forward in reference to the U.S.-1 corridor and the study that I had requested. My last meeting in reference to this was with, excuse me, my last meeting in reference to this was with the Manager where I was notified that this study had been called off

and I want to understand what is the City's proposed plan moving forward and also give the public an opportunity to voice their opinion.

Commissioner Quesada: Before we jump into that I think it's incumbent on me to explain my involvement in that. When that study was going on I heard a lot of complaints from residents that they didn't like that it's happening. So, I asked staff to say maybe we should hold off on this because we are hearing a lot of residents that were upset with that. Since that I've heard that they were not upset with the study, they were upset with the process. So, I want to be clear on that. I'm very much in favor of restarting, reigniting it, but let's make sure that we are clear on the process so that the residents are in tune with that. Again, we are trying to bring people together to reach a common goal and if people feel like they are being shortchanged then obviously we need to take a step back and listen to see how we can improve on that.

Commissioner Lago: I just have one last comment. I don't need an explanation from you because I know who you are, so I knew that was your intent all along without you even voicing or explaining yourself today.

Commissioner Quesada: Oh, but I wasn't doing it as an excuse, I just wanted to be clear to everyone what happened.

Commissioner Lago: Because you are one of the most transparent people I know, so it's not an issue.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think when it was, when that meeting was held, that first meeting or the individuals that were leading that conversation or discourse stated a number of urban design theories that came out of the University of Miami and I think because of the involvement of the University of Miami in some of the projects along there, it wasn't done in a way that it should have been done. There would have been probably better choices and so I think at this time it was good that it was stopped where it was stopped and I think more direction can be given to staff to go forward, because I think it is very important that we do the planning study for U.S.-1, just like we did in the North Gables and went through and really looked at it and had a number of meetings that were with a lot of input and whatever else. So, I think it was just kind of bad timing, maybe not the best choices of people or whatever else. I'm glad you brought it up; because I think it needs to go forward.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, what we'll do is we'll meet with Planning, Development Services, Economic Development, and come back with an updated scope and plan, we'll bring it to you, and we'll circulate it to the community as well.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think it will be a good thing to have people that would discuss the whole issue that maybe come from other than just UM. There are a lot of very good urban planners that can be available to us.

Commissioner Lago: And I agree with the Vice Mayor. I think there should be a group of individuals who, number one, represent the community; people who live in the neighborhood, people who do business in the neighborhood. Again, I don't think there is anything wrong with having a person who's maybe a landowner of a certain portion of commercial property, but there has to be a presence, when I mean a presence it has to be at the top in reference to the residents. I want to know what the residents and what the people who conduct business on that strip want. I'm going to save the rest of my comments to the end, because I have other issues in the way that this transpired, I'm going to be very clear, because I have minutes that I'm going to give to every single person here on this Board and we need to be a lot more thorough as a Commission and as a City, we need to be very, very transparent, I think that's where we falter. If I may Mayor, I want some of the residents to speak, before I do that I was completely and utterly caught off guard. I went to meet with the residents from the RNA and it was probably 20-25 people in the room, and I was notified, from what I remember, I was notified that this study had been cancelled without my knowledge, and I didn't know at that moment face the residents, because I didn't have all the information. So, I want them to speak their mind in reference to what they want to see in regards to the U.S.-1 corridor, and by the way, I want to put on the record I voted in favor of Paseo de Riviera, so we are not discussing that issue. This is about doing what the Vice Mayor did in reference to North Gables. I want to spearhead a real holistic approach on how to address the U.S.-1 corridor, because there are one to two properties that right now are not on the front burner, but they will be on the front burner forthcoming, issues with leases, long existing leases that will affect that community. So Mayor, if we may, I'd like to hear from some of the residents.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Any other comments from the Commission?

Commissioner Lago: I'll reserve my other comments for after.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: OK. Amal Costa. Good morning.

Mr. Costa: Good morning, Honorable Mayor and Honorable Commissioners. My name is Amal Costa also known as a la Costa. I am a professional electrical engineer and a certified Florida electrical contractor. I've been living at 1225 South Alhambra Circle since 1996 and my wife and I decided to buy there, because it was a quiet neighborhood and with enough short distance to the park, to the Publix, etc., and to the two parks that we have. In the past in that neighborhood, thanks to an organization that was founded called the Riviera Neighborhood

Association, several commercial attempts were made which, thank God, the RNA was able to fight and win. I will not mention all of them because the list is too long, but suffice to say that RNA raised \$50,000 for a visioning study by the University of Miami Urban Studies Department. This had experts, not only from the university, but also in traffic, in urban design, and aesthetics, etc., etc., very important we had an expert in traffic. So, out of that came this study. This study, I know that two Commissioners, Commissioner Quesada and Commissioner Lago have seen. I believe it is on the website of the RNA, if it isn't there I will make copies available for whoever requests them. Now in 2006, the Commission at that time heard a presentation and they took a vote and unanimously decided to adopt this. This other lady a little while ago was talking about things that are decided by the Commission and later are ignored. I know that with the new leadership that we have on the Commission that will not happen again. What we thought it meant was that any new development in the area will follow the guidelines in here and they were followed until Paseo de Prado came. Now there are several projects on the back burner, actually one is in the present burner, and that's the Rena Project right in the neighborhood of Commissioner Mena. So, what I'm requesting is that this new study for U.S.-1 corridor be conducted in a very professional manner. What do I mean by that? No hanky-panky like on the last study. It was a shame that the City conducted that study. The first exercise that we had was to look perhaps at 200 pictures and identify them as to where we were positive or negative. Most of the people in there objected to high-rises, however that meeting was packed with developers and attorneys and staff that worked for the developers; and of course it came out that supposedly what the citizens wanted was high-rises. Now you have a new opportunity under the leadership of Commissioner Lago. I think that his idea of having enough people for the neighborhood and also from business is very good. I know that for once, if you want a member of that Commission and if you so decide, I am willing to work in that group, but there are many others and you have many other choices. I look forward to the new leadership and to the new study. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you sir.

Commissioner Quesada: You know you say something and it brings up a thought is, maybe we do separate meetings and one of those meetings is residential homeowners who live in the neighborhood and we have a meeting with whatever pictures and whatever exercises are typically done in these sessions; and then we do the same thing for other interested parties but that are not residents, maybe we do something like that so it's a little bit clearer. I don't know, it's just a thought that came to mind.

Vice Mayor Keon: Well I think it's a public meeting, so anybody who wants to come is going to come. I went to the one meeting, I think it was the first meeting that was held at the Holiday Inn and I thought to myself, Oh no, this is not working. When I saw that I said, Oh no.

Commissioner Quesada: There's got to be a way that we can do it that we can open up to everyone, which may be on different nights or different days, so that it's clearer.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think maybe you have to identify yourself, like who you are; residents will identify themselves with one color, developers could, I don't know, but I think there is a way that...

Commissioner Quesada: But, obviously the mixing of all together did not work.

Vice Mayor Keon: Well I don't think it was the mix of all together, because I don't know that it was the mix of all together, because what happened is it just kind of blew up and no decisions were really made. They put some things up there and it was at that moment in time there were a lot of open wounds and it was like throwing salt on an open wound. So nothing good came of it, so I think that...

Mr. Costa: With all due respect Commissioner Keon, I remember you being there and I remember you seeing what was taking place and yet you did nothing to stop it.

Vice Mayor Keon: Well no, I talked to our staff. It was not my meeting, but I talked to our staff afterwards and had a very long discussion with those staff after the meeting, because it wasn't....

Mr. Costa:...with the Manager, nothing, she did nothing either.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes they did, they stopped it.

Commissioner Lago: Mayor if I may, you know the great thing about today is that we are moving forward. I don't like to dwell too much in the past, just to learn, we like to learn a little bit from the past, it's important so you don't make those mistakes ever again, but I don't want to make this about the past. I want to make this about what we can do....

Mr. Costa: The water is over the dam.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I would like to call Sue Kawalerski, thank you. You have three minutes.

Ms. Kawalerski: Pardon me?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Three minutes.

Ms. Kawalerski: I'll try to speak fast. For the record and I want to get this in, I'm the President of the Riviera Neighborhood Association and I'm here to say that the RNA is definitely for reconvening a U.S.-1 corridor study with a much better process and a much more legitimate process and what I mean by that I will just speak of the past for a moment. I want to go on record as saying that the RNA and the public did not kibosh that public hearing, this was a public hearing.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Did not what?

Ms. Kawalerski: Did not kibosh, did not "tank", I'm using colloquialisms here, did not basically force this study to shut down. What we did was provide legitimate public comment and particularly public comment about the process that we thought was very flawed, very juvenile, and truthfully insulting to the neighbors. We were against the process not the study. So much to our surprise, I found out from a consultant that they were let go and that's how I informed Commissioner Lago, and by the way, Commissioner Lago, thank you very much for your leadership on this, and we hope that this study goes forward. Moving forward, this is what we would like to see. The Riviera Neighborhood is comprised of a very large area in Coral Gables; the parameters are LeJeune, U.S.-1, Red Road, and Sunset Road, that's a pretty large chunk of Coral Gables. We represent residents who can't be here, who don't have the time to go to public meetings, but they let us know via e-mail or phone calls what they want for the neighborhood; and what they want is very thoughtful and considerate development of U.S.-1, particularly as it engages the Riviera Neighborhood from LeJeune to Red Road. We know that there are a number of parcels that are significant that are coming up and what we would not like to see is what happened with Paseo where an individual project that comes up and its decided as a per piece project. We want to see the corridor look beautiful and has some rhyme and reason to what's being put there and also in consideration of the single family neighborhood group we represent. So, we want the U.S.-1 corridor study to maybe start up again, maybe with a new consultant, maybe with better direction on how we would like it to go, so that we don't have this contentiousness; and number two, the advisory committee that will consider the public input has to have equal representation of residents to the developers and special interest who were the only people that were on the original advisory committee in the original study. I had e-mailed Javier Betancourt about this and he had agreed that we would have equal representation on that advisory committee and then all of a sudden we didn't hear anything more. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, thank you very much.

Commissioner Quesada: Can you bullet point those ideas and e-mail them to us on the process?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Deborah Register.

Ms. Register: Hi, my name is Deborah Register and thank you for bringing this subject back Commissioner Lago, but thank you Mayor for making this time specific for those of us who could attend. Sue and Al have basically said a lot of things that I wanted to say, but I think this goes beyond Coral Gables, it goes beyond LeJeune, it goes beyond Red. This is a U.S.-1 from south to north and I would like to request somehow that this Commission reach out to the other Commissioners of various neighborhoods – Pinecrest, Cutler Bay, Palmetto that we all have a consensus of what we are going to do. It's not we are going to build a twelve-story, because they are building twelve-stories. We all need to look at how is this going to impact us as now, as we get older, as time goes on. We only have so many roads and we know from the County we are not getting the mass transit we hoped we would get. So we as citizens, you as the Commissioners, the Mayors, the Vice Mayors, have to reach out to our other neighbors so that we can control what is happening, but have it as a thoughtful process, U.S.-1 corridor can we extend it farther, can we work with them, so that we can make sure that our roads in our neighborhoods are not overloaded with cars, because we in the south like our cars, that's just the way it is, it's hot, its humid, it rains, so I don't think you are going to take a car away from anybody who lives here in South Florida. Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you very much.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you ma'am, thank you very much. Marlin Ebbert – hello.

Ms. Ebbert: Good morning. For the record my name is Marlin Ebbert, I live at 6510 San Vicente Street, and I think you all know me pretty well and you all know that my heart is in the right place. I also think that we can learn from our mistakes. My children always accuse me of keeping e-mails too long. Well this morning in anticipation of this meeting, I went back to the very original notice that I got about this U.S.-1 corridor study, and it was in a City E-NEWS, it was dated July 15th, which was a Wednesday of 2015; and it was about a notice that was happening two days later on a Friday night – Friday night, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., only two days' notice. Now maybe some of the neighbors that work closer to that area were noticed, but I wasn't. So it was a Friday night, 6:30 to 8:30, and Saturday morning. Well people are busy and make plans, but I went Friday evening and it also said in the message that it was going to be a conversation and it had a little video and it was, I think of the North Gables visioning session, where people were sitting at tables, they were pouring over plans, and it said in the little video that our meeting would be interactive. Well we arrived and we were only allowed to text our

questions, there was no conversation at all. The woman sitting next to me said, I don't know how to text, so that her conversation, her questions were never heard. So, I think in your planning please consider the residents and have it more like the North Gables where they were City leaders, there were planners and there were pouring over plans on tables and there really was a true conversation, and I think everybody has been pleased with the North Gables, right? - with that visioning session, so that's what I'd like to say. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much ma'am, thank you – Commissioner Lago.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you. What I'd like to do is I'd like to hand out some meeting minutes for your review. These are critical because when I went to this RNA meeting and I had the pleasure of sitting down, I think it was close to probably about two hours, it was supposed to be 30 minutes but we ended up spending two hours. One of the things that caught me off guard was the fact that the City Commission was being blamed for basically, like you said, quashing the study, and I at that moment I kind of, I feel like my memory is maybe failing me as I get older, because I have a lot on my mind, as we all do, but I thought I was sure that I had called for this study or we had at least voted for this study. So, I couldn't really find out exactly until I came here and spoke with the City Manager and the City Manager told me that I had not called for the U.S.-1 study, but it had been Vice Mayor Keon who had called for it; and I was pretty certain that maybe she was confused with the Vice Mayor because she's been instrumental in leading the North Gables effort, along with many other things, but that was her zoning endeavor at that point. So, I did a little bit of recon on my own and I had it to you right now, January 26, 2016 where I ended up on the 6th page, as you can tell, there is a very brief synopsis where I mentioned what I would like to see on the U.S.-1 corridor in reference to zoning. I also mentioned there in reference to pedestrian and bike accessibility, I also mentioned there in regards to parks, I mentioned about future development. I want to make sure that anybody who considers purchasing a piece of property in that area of U.S.-1 that they really understand what they are getting themselves into. You have a comment?

Commissioner Quesada: No – finish.

Commissioner Lago: No, go ahead.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Just that there weren't enough copies of...

Commissioner Lago: You can have mine.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I have it.

Commissioner Lago: So, then I also gave you a copy from February 23rd where if you go onto the 5th page, it calls why I make a motion in reference to calling the U.S.-1 study, and it's pretty lengthy and detailed the comments that I made there and I even referenced Ramon Trias' efforts where he continuously puts down a list of every possible checkpoint that he does when we are analyzing a project before it comes to the Commission. I even stated that I'd like to have an extensive outreach where we have three, maybe even four public meetings, so that everybody has an opportunity to voice their opinion. Then if you turnaround on the fourth page, I reiterate the same statement again, about public meetings and how instrumental it is that we do this. The issue to me is not only the fact that this was cancelled, was that I called for the study and I didn't approve that it was cancelled. But, it doesn't really matter if Commissioner Mena or Vice Mayor Keon or the Mayor decides that something should be cancelled, that's not the issue here. If we as a Commission vote on anything that comes before this Commission, either a resolution or an ordinance, it has to come back to the Commission before being cancelled, Miriam am I correct?

City Attorney Leen: Can I tell you?

Commissioner Lago: Yes, you can tell me.

City Attorney Leen: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: So that's a failure, that's a failure on management here in the City, because from the last time I checked there were four of us that were just recently elected here four months ago, and we do the work of the residents who live in this community. So, when I have to stand before the RNA, before 20 people in someone's home and they tell me, hey look, this study was cancelled, and by the way it was cancelled and the company that did the two studies was paid, from what I heard, I don't have any actual proof, \$50,000 that's taxpayer money that was paid; and if you look at my minutes very clearly I say, make sure that it's not 2, 3, 4, as many as many are necessary and if it has to be done over an eight month period there's no rush, let's get this right, the minutes are here, it's very clear. So several things; number one, and I reiterate, failure to represent this community appropriately; number two, the use of taxpayer money frivolously, \$50,000, and they were arguing by the way and we are getting pushback over several years over this Commission having a \$5,000 budget to do outreach; and the third and final issue is, who is the Commission?- are we the Commissioners?- or are we not Commissioners? I think that s' a basic failure that's clearly written in the Charter and if you need assistance with that, I did, because I didn't know it, I just obviously assumed it, Craig and our Deputy City Attorney can assist us with that.

City Attorney Leen: If I could just add. This is something that really the City Manager should speak to, it could have very well been a mistake, but sometimes people – these things come up in

discussions and there is follow up and you speak to one of you and it doesn't happen, but the main point is, in the new Commissioner ordinance we've made it very clear for all of us, because this issue has come up several times now, where its either City Manager, City Attorney, an individual Commissioner. The Commission as-a-whole is the governing body, if there is a disagreement between the City Manager and one of you, or me and one of you, then it needs to be brought to the Commission as-a-whole, the Commission's will is supreme.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Comments – go ahead.

Commissioner Lago: And, one of the final last comments I wanted to make and I spoke to Commissioner Suarez and he just texted me a few moments ago, saying that he was watching. The hope of delivering on the U.S.-1 corridor is not just for the City of Coral Gables, it was for the County, because as you look at my comments, I wanted to also address transit and he wanted to play a role because he has been a huge proponent over the last 7-8 years, everybody now is talking about transit, everybody is talking about we need to extend transit, we need to make the SMART plan viable, and finally we have a seat at the table, but he was looking forward to having this U.S.-1 corridor be one piece in the puzzle, so that he can really push forward his transit agenda. So, when he found out and I had to tell him it was cancelled and that I was going to try to speak to the Commission and potentially do in the future, he was extremely disappointed and wanted to voice his opinion and also his support on the U.S.-1 corridor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Keon: I remember when we were talking about the North Gables and at the time there was a lot of development happening being proposed in the North Gables and I said I really would like to do a study, so that we don't look at these buildings and all of this one building at a time, because what happens is that all of a sudden you begin to see what you don't want to see when we do one thing at a time, so it's better if you would look at it. I think there were at least ten studies that were quite old, much like what you are talking with your Riviera Neighborhood, there were a dozen studies that had been done on the North Gables and although they were accepted, they were never acted on, and so I think that does happen often, is that we study things, we accept them, but we don't act on them. So I think in the North Gables, finally we asked them to go back and look at all of those studies whatever, and let's put the items together....

Commissioner Lago: Similar to what's gone on the Mile.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes, you know let's do it – and so then we created the different ordinances and the development issues, a lot of those different things. I do remember saying at that time when we were talking about it, we really need to take a look at U.S.-1 and Sunset because that is

the next opportunity where people are developing, we really need to take a holistic look at U.S.-1 and Sunset. So, I do remember making that comment, I do remember talking about it, did I ask for the study? - no, I think you more formalized it later, so whoever talked about it or whatever anybody said, whatever. With regard to it being cancelled, now it was my understanding – I know after going to that meeting, I called the Manager and said to her, I think you need to find better facilitators or different facilitators for this other than what you have, because this is not going to work. The response from the neighbors and the people who live there that lived in that area were exceedingly offended by the presentation and the way it was being conducted, this is not going to work, and I spoke to Javier that same night. So is it my role to cancel it?- no, it's not my role to cancel it; is it my role to talk to staff about it?- yes; and it was my understanding at that time that they were going to postpone it and relook at who they were utilizing for this. I never had the sense that it was – maybe it was cancelled, you may be right, I don't really know. What I was told was is that, yes we need to continue to look at it; yes there is a lot of activity and opportunity for redevelopment in that area and that they were going to relook at who they were going to use to facilitate this discussion and this particular planning effort. So, that's what I remember.

Commissioner Quesada: In my conversation with staff who is consistent with what the Vice Mayor is saying, so if there is any blame to throw out it's at me not at staff. The conversation was, look, we are getting so many complaints from these meeting that we have to put some pause and figure this out.

Commissioner Lago: I don't have a problem whatsoever. When you mentioned before about the zoning and the way that certain buildings were coming before the Commission, I'm getting tired of that same endeavor myself, where a developer comes here, knows what the code is and then says hey, let's overshoot and then we'll end up at the Commission just settling for a lot more than would have been allowed by the code anyway, it's a great idea. Everybody knows the recipe, they know how to do it, it's simple. We are going to see it pretty soon constantly; we've already been seeing it constantly. But let's go back to your comments; I agree with you. First off I have here if you want a copy, it was not ended, it was terminated, I have the termination letter in reference to the study, its right here if anybody wants to look at it.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think they terminated the individual...terminated the study. OK. I understand, go ahead.

Commissioner Lago: They terminated the firm that was doing the study, case in point, they terminated the study, it's not that difficult guys, it's not that difficult. Look at the minutes, I provided you with the minutes. This is why we are shorthanded, this is why I have to go outside resources, the County, my friends at the City, we don't have the resources here. We have one

person who is helping Commissioner Quesada and myself, we have one person helping Commissioner Mena, and the Vice Mayor and the Mayor has one or two people, OK, one. We have to depend on the Manager and by the way, please let me be very, very clear, staff does an exceptional job, we have to depend on the Manager for everything. So, when the Manager tells me that Commissioner Keon was the one that called for the U.S.-1 corridor, if I don't do this public records request, I don't have an ability to find out. So, I have to do a public records request, research it myself with my great assistant who does an exceptional job with the resources that she has, and then I have to move further and find out about the study and find out whether it was terminated, when was it terminated, pull people's e-mails, I feel like I'm not serving my community, that's not what a Commissioner's job is. So, are you going to allow me to do a U.S.-1 study and finish the study or are you going to take those powers away from me also and at the end of the day act like the City Manager and also act like a legislator. You have to make a decision on what you are going to do here in the City, but in this case right now, we spent \$50,000 and now we are going to do another study, we terminated that study now we are going to do another study. The whole point of getting these studies done is to implement them. Before this Commission came along, Vice Mayor Keon and Commissioner Quesada, I take great pride in the fact that we, Commissioner Mena and Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli, we as a group said we were going to do something and we get it done; Miracle Mile we are going to do something, we got it done. People talked about it for 30 years. We are going to do something about North Gables, we got it done, even if I may not have agreed on the density, but we got something done. We are going to fix the sidewalks, we are going to get it done; we are going to buy parks, we got it done. I'm telling you these things, because you have to empower the Commission, not take power away from the Commission, especially when you are before residents and the residents are notifying me that a project has been terminated. It's just embarrassing, it's embarrassing. This is my last comment. I made it a point to bring it up, I don't know how many times till I'm blue in the face. The Sunshine does not work in the City, it does not work. It precludes us as Commissioners from getting our jobs done. We depend on the Manager for everything, so if only a certain piece of information is given to one Commissioner versus another, we are out in the cold, and I can't do my job, or I find out about things six months after or five months after its been terminated, that's just not appropriate. That's why I have to do things like, for example, everything has to be a resolution, everything has to be an ordinance. Every single item now has to go on a pre-agenda log, so I can see what the progress is on my projects. If I need to hold the County accountable or the State accountable, I want to make sure that I have somebody that I can call at the County and say hey, why isn't this project progressing, staff is telling me that we are waiting on some sort of approval from the County.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you Commissioner. Commissioner Mena you want to say something?

Commissioner Mena: Look, obviously I wasn't here when this was proposed or passed, but I think it's been pretty clear that it wasn't well received and the manner in which it was executed. I think you said earlier, Commissioner Lago, let's move forward. To your point on this, obviously it's not a coincidence that you also brought a resolution today to have this log of any pending items that we have.

Commissioner Lago: That was done six months ago too and nothing came of it, that's a memo I sent out.

Commissioner Mena: So, hopefully that will resolve the issue that you face here. Listen, we've all been there where we hear about something and we didn't know about it and it's frustrating; and so, I think that the log that we approved earlier obviously will be a big step in curing that, because then we'll have access to a status on every project that we have pending. So, I think that's a good idea and I commend you for proposing it. Look, I think we need to figure out before we commit to hiring another consultant or engineer, we need to figure out what the residents would like to see, who is going to have input, who's not, before we commit to any contract or anything like that, so we can avoid on spending tax dollars you described earlier in a manner that was not efficient. So let's get this right, let's move forward with getting it done right and let's make sure that we execute it in a way that everybody feels comfortable with so that we can, as you just described, get things done, that's what we are here to do.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Anything the Commission wants to accomplish, it was a very fruitful discussion I think, and if there is nothing else we'll go onto the next item.

Vice Mayor Keon: But, we are going to move forward with – Commissioner Quesada asked that you bullet point for us what you wanted...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Why don't we have a proposal, let's study it, have a proposal brought before us at the next meeting.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think that we should now, we should take it back up, we should take the U.S.-1 study back up and you go forward with a process and put people in place...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Why don't we have staff make a proposal to us as to what to do, allow us the chance to have our input and let's discuss it in this public meeting at our next Commission meeting, which is two weeks from now.

Commissioner Lago: You want to also address the issue of the monies that was spent?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You address it.

Commissioner Lago: I addressed it, but I haven't heard a response, so I'm waiting on a response either from the City Attorney in reference to the monies that was spent and obviously, I called them, I made a motion in reference to an item and obviously wasn't notified, which again, if the Manager is going to quash or stop a motion or an ordinance made by the Commission, it has to come back to the Commission, correct?- for reconsideration.

City Attorney Leen: I believe it was a direction, equivalent to a resolution, and I think the City Manager should respond before I speak.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And I'm happy to. First of all, Commissioner, you and I spoke last week when you raised the issue of the 6.20.16 that I apologized, because when I asked staff to find out who started the U.S.-1 corridor study the request, it did show up in 2015 that Commissioner Keon had requested it from Douglas Road to Red Road; and so, I did not ask, now I realize, give me a full legislative history of anytime the U.S.-1 corridor was raised, because knowing now, I would have had a lot more information and I would have handled the situation differently. On the issue of selecting that consultant, how much money was spent, we budgeted for \$150,000, is it?- we budgeted for \$150,000. That money was known in the budget as a line item moving forward and when I heard back the results of the meetings, it was really clear that we were not going to get the productive, collaborative results, and we looked back at, did we notify the Commission of the action?- was it something that slipped through the cracks?- was it genuine in intention?- absolutely; and on my desk in every place I work it says the buck stops here; and so if staff made errors in the process, if staff made unintentional errors in the formation of the committees and how to shape it, in the selection of the consultant, how it was acted, how it was researched, I get it, and I take responsibility for it. Was it deliberate?- no; was it intentional to harm either Riviera Neighborhood Association or anybody else as a part of a community conversation dialogue?- no. Will we learn from this and move forward?- absolutely, but I look back and I appreciate the hard work that our staff does. I know that it's well-intended and sometimes we miss the mark and obviously this was one of those, but it wasn't with ill-will and it wasn't with disrespect. On the issue of the \$50,000, which officially is still within my authority, we closed it because you can throw more money out of a bad situation that will not mount to the positive, collaborative productive results that you want. Is it fundable to reinstate the study?- sure; will we do it differently?- yes; will we bring forward whoever the consultants are to Commission to comment?- will we bring forward whoever the advisory committee should be?- surely; will we bring forward a schedule of elements that should be included in the planning study and a recap of the past studies that have been done?- absolutely; and do I think that we'll get a very good result?- I do. I think the fact that Paseo is a closed issue now legally; it allows the freedom to look at that corridor. I love Deborah Register's suggestion of having communities

along the corridor also, so that can be another meeting that Commission can convene to get the thoughts, the inputs of County, Pinecrest, South Miami, Miami, all of the corridor cities to observe and collaborate, because it's never been a collaborative effort before. So, I know that we'll come back to you with a game plan, we'll learn from the bullets that are submitted and I believe that the results will speak for itself at the end with a better plan that is implementable and accomplishes the desires of the Commission.

Commissioner Lago: Well I appreciate and I'm grateful for your apology. Like I said before, this is the third time I say, I'm extremely indebted and grateful for the work that our staff does every single day, every single day, I always say that. I don't blame staff for anything. Again, like everybody says, the buck stops with the Commission. We are the people here who legislate, we are the people – you are supposed to implement on behalf of the Commission. Very clearly, we don't have to continue with this discussion, but on page 4, I say, 3, 4, 5, 6 different public meetings, we keep going back and forth. At that point the City Manager should have changed gears and you should have found a new way not shut it down; and I did a very simple word search, it took me ten minutes to get this done and I found all this information. Moving forward it's not that difficult to get this done. I think we should, again, be very methodical, that's also written here in the minutes, be very methodical moving forward and engage a company who will provide us with the best outcome in regards to the U.S.-1 corridor and that every stakeholder has a shot to voice their opinion. So in closing, I thank you for your time and I apologize it took so much time, and I'm really grateful for the work that our staff has done for a fourth time.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much Commissioner, thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

[End: 12:08:15 p.m.]