

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item I-2
May 14, 2019
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Historic Preservation Officer, Dona Spain

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item I-2 [12:56:22 p.m.]

A Resolution authorizing \$500,000 in the FY2019-2020 budget to be used for a matching grant application to the Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources for the restoration and rehabilitation of the “Gondola Building” located on the Biltmore Golf Course at 1200 Anastasia Avenue.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let’s go onto I-2, Mr. City Manager.

City Manager Iglesias: I-2 is a \$500,000 matching grant for the “Gondola Building” at the Biltmore. This would probably take two years to get, to obtain this grant, and Dona Spain, our Historical Director has further information on it.

Historical Preservation Officer Spain: So, the special category grants that are offered by the State of Florida are now up to \$500,000, so I thought it was appropriate for us to apply for the maximum that we can get from them. On this building, we did an assessment...did an assessment on the building and his assessment was \$670,000 to restore it. That did not include any type of adaptive

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reuse, its just the shell of the building, so there's no plumbing, there's no electricity, there is nothing out there. I would like to show you the PowerPoint. This is the location; this is a historic photograph showing the location along the waterway, in comparison to the Biltmore Hotel. This was a building that housed the gondolas and, in those days, they took the gondolas from the Biltmore Hotel out to Tahiti Beach. Here's another photograph of the gondolas. These are real gondolas from Venice. I love this photograph. This was in front of Nautilus Hotel now Mount Sinai Hospital. This is what it looks like today. It's a beautiful little building, has wonderful detailing that's fallen into disrepair and is sitting in the middle of the Biltmore Golf Course. So, it really needs to be restored. It was on the 2019 Dade Heritage Trust endangered buildings and I think its important that it be restored.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Commissioner Mena: I'll second for discussion. Does the Biltmore have any ideas of sort of use?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: I have had that discussion with them. They are thinking possibly, maybe they should be speaking to this, but I've discussed with them possibly even at night for a venue after the golfers are gone. It's a beautiful little building that can be used for some type of special dinner, something, but it needs bathrooms.

Vice Mayor Lago: \$500,000 is just for the exterior?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: It's a match for the special category we are in; and I believe since it's a historic property there needs to be some type of adaptive reuse, or it's just going to fall into disrepair again. We are working on the grant now and I think we certainly can get up to a million dollars on this, because of everything that we will have to do to it to make it usable.

Vice Mayor Lago: Did you review the structural integrity of the building, because it looks like it has some structural cracks on the interior.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Yes. That was part of the assessment.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. Will you call the roll please?

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes

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Commissioner Mena: Yes
Commissioner Fors: Yes
Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes
(Vote: 5-0)

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Thank you very much.

[End: 12:59:49 p.m.]