

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

-MEMORANDUM-

TO: PATRICK SALERNO
CITY MANAGER

DATE: JULY 1, 2009

FROM: R. ALBERTO DELGADO, P.E.
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: ORDINANCE -
ALLEY VACATION, CORAL
GABLES MUSEUM

BACKGROUND

The attached Ordinance provides for the proposed vacation and closure of a portion of the western most 20-foot wide alley within the 200-block north of Aragon Avenue and south of Giralda Avenue. The purpose of the proposed vacation is to assemble the adjacent properties in order to proceed with the unified development of the Coral Gables Museum. The City is the applicant for the alley vacation and closure, owning the adjacent properties on both sides of the alley. A public easement underlying the property within the vacated alley will be dedicated by the City for the purpose of maintenance of existing utilities and utility access.

The proposed alley vacation and closure has gone through several required review processes. On May 8, 2009, the proposed alley vacation was presented to the Development Review Committee (DRC) at a public meeting. Upon listening to all comments and hearing no objections to the vacation, the DRC unanimously endorsed the alley vacation. On May 13, 2009, after property owners within 1,000 feet of the proposed alley vacation were notified by letter of the City's intent to vacate and close the alley, the subject vacation was heard before the Planning and Zoning Board (P&ZB). The P&ZB unanimously recommended the alley vacation and closure for approval. A first reading of the attached Ordinance was also approved by the City Commission on May 26, 2009.

In connection with the various Committee recommendations and City Commission approval, the following mandatory notices were mailed or distributed: (1) notification letters describing the City's intent to vacate the alley along with the invitation to attend public meeting(s) were sent to property owners within 1,000 feet of the proposed alley vacation; (2) letters of consent from various utility companies and certain government agencies were solicited; and (3) copies of the application were sent to City departments and offices for review and comment in accordance with Section 62-262 of the City Code. Upon receipt of all comments and recommendations from the various agencies, boards, property owners and City departments, the Public Works Department developed the following findings and recommendations:

1. The subject right-of-way is not considered a useful part of the City street system. The same alley does not exist in other City blocks to the east or west of the subject right-of-way or remaining public alley. In addition, the recent

installation of the raised center median in Ponce de Leon Boulevard does not provide for access between the north bound lanes on Ponce de Leon Boulevard and the alley.

2. A study of the geographic area within 2,500 feet of the proposed vacation indicates that the vacation would not impact properties and traffic movements other than the immediate properties to the east of the proposed vacation. Proposed actions to mitigate such impacts include (1) the dedication of a turnaround at the easterly side of the private property (Lots 42 through 44) to facilitate vehicular traffic movements, (2) the dedication of two 16-foot wide public access easements on Lots 12 -16, Block 34, located east of the vacated alley to accommodate alternate public access to the remaining portions of the alley, and (3) the dedication of the underlying property within the vacated alley as a public utility easement. Access and private property activities such as deliveries should remain unaffected as a result of the above stated measures. Ingress and egress between the alley and Giralda Avenue used by customers of the Bank of America building at the easterly end of the alley will be unaffected by the alley vacation.
3. The proposed alley vacation and closure will not impede emergency vehicular access to adjacent alley properties or solid waste pick-up arrangements within the remaining public alley.
4. A traffic study was not required for the alley vacation and closure as the closure will not impact the surrounding street system.

RECOMMENDATION

The Public Works Department recommends the enactment of the attached Ordinance vacating and closing a portion of the existing alley in conjunction with the assembling of properties for construction of the Coral Gables Museum subject to the following conditions as provided in the attached Ordinance:

1. Establishment of a new vehicle turnaround on lots 42 through 44 of Block 34, Coral Gables Section "K";
2. The creation of two 16-foot wide public access easements on Lots 12 through 16 of Block 34, Coral Gables Section "K" to accommodate alternate public access to the remaining portion of the alley; and
3. The dedication of the underlying property within the vacated portion of the alley as a public utility easement.

C: Eric Riel, Planning Director
Maria Alberro Jimenez, Assistant City Manager
Kara Kautz, Historic Preservation Officer