

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting  
Agenda Item F-2  
January 28, 2015  
City Commission Chambers  
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Jim Cason  
Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.  
Commissioner Pat Keon  
Commissioner Vince Lago  
Commissioner Frank Quesada**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark  
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen  
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman  
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia  
Public Works Director, Glenn Kephart  
Public Works Assistant Director, Jessica Keller**

**Public Speaker(s)**

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Agenda Item F-2 [Start: 10:20:27 a.m.]

Update on the crosswalk from Riviera Drive to Ingraham Park, as well as the pedestrian crossings around Cartagena Circle with added focus on the location of bus stops. Commissioner Pat Keon

Mayor Cason: Let's move on to F-2, Commissioner Keon this is the update on the crosswalk from Riviera Drive to Ingraham Park, as well as the pedestrian crossings around Cartagena Circle.

Commissioner Quesada: Commissioner, I'm glad you put this on here.

Commissioner Keon: I was thinking that is your park.

Mayor Cason: Glenn you are going to discuss this, why don't you come on up.

Commissioner Keon: The park is really – has been so successful and it really is just beautiful, it's just beautiful. So now people ask me a lot about or talk a lot about the problems in crossing LeJeune and getting to it. I also understand that there are some real problems with where the bus drops off some of the housekeepers and people that work in that area and that have to cross LeJeune Road or maneuver Coco Plum Circle, that it's dangerous or perceived to be dangerous or difficult for them, but the residents and the people that come to work in our City negotiating that is a little difficult. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: So enlighten us.

Mr. Kephart: OK. Well thank you Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners, I can provide somewhat of an update and as you point out this is an area of our City that currently is challenged from a pedestrian standpoint to get from where you are and where you need to go. I'll start with the Cartagena Plaza project, which is the circle which is a county project to reconfigure that circle, as you are well aware, to channelize it and have the traffic flow better and there has been a few iterations; and what I want to start with is the drawing here on your left, is what the original project was and it changed a little bit, because as Commissioner Keon pointed out, we had some issues with the full pedestrian access. Currently on Sunset Drive there is a bus-stop just before you enter the plaza, and a lot of those people use the bus then to access Coco Plum and there isn't a great way to get from the bus-stop to Coco Plum as a pedestrian because you have to get across Old Cutler Road and there are some site distance issues there, and there is not a pedestrian path. As the project was originally proposed, that issue still existed and we are talking to the County about a couple of options; one is, that there needs to either be a pedestrian path and there should be a pedestrian path, not even either, there should be a pedestrian path all the way around the circle, not just for that issue but in general, but if for some reason they couldn't do that at the very least they need to move the bus-stop to the northeast corner of the circle so that as people are dropped off they have access to our communities. What the County agreed with us and they came back and you will see now on Sunset, this area that they are proposing that it does have a pedestrian way and also a crosswalk across Old Cutler Road, and as the project is proposed now there will be a pedestrian way all the way around the circle and crosswalk. So I believe that issue is addressed.

Mayor Cason: A question – will they be able to link the Cutler bike paths to the bike paths as well?

Mr. Kephart: Yes – these intersect. At this point right here along Old Cutler, this is where the Commodore trail comes and makes a right around the circle and then connects on to the

pedestrian bridge. So the pedestrian path around the circle will connect to the Commodore trail, right Jessica.

Commissioner Keon: That's great.

Mr. Kephart: So that's where that project is. I gave you an update yesterday on this because when we talked to the County last fall, they said they were getting ready to enter procurement and they expect it to be under construction this spring, March. The latest schedule with us has pushed that back, they still think they are another 4-6 months out, they decided to add some drainage to it, which requires some additional surveys, and they also have – they are receiving some opposition from the property owner that they are working through on the southwest corner of the circle where the path would be.

Mayor Cason: So basically they are doing the physical work and we are putting in the irrigation, landscaping, beautification part, so it's a joint project.

Mr. Kephart: It is a joint project. Yes, the City actually funded in the CIP to make this, because it would have been just a traffic concrete island and I think you guys said that's not enough, let's make this beautiful and we are putting in landscaping, trees, irrigation, lighting in the landscape islands to make this attractive. You can see here the green areas that these would have been concrete islands had it not been for the City saying, that's not...

Commissioner Quesada: So this is the proposed design that staff is recommending?

Mr. Kephart: This is the proposed design – yes, this is the proposed design that staff is recommending with the addition. This one has the addition – it's a little harder to see, this was the county's...addition of the path.

Commissioner Quesada: I'll tell you and I'm sure – I think at one point or another we've all sort of lived in that area, so we know it well. My concern is – so the crosswalk, I'd say the dangerous point is crossing right here.

Commissioner Keon: Which road is that?

Commissioner Quesada: This is LeJeune Road.

Commissioner Keon: LeJeune.

Commissioner Quesada: With vehicle bridges and that sidewalk is narrow and you have a lot of cyclists, a lot of walkers. If you ever walk down that sidewalk you feel it, even though you are on the sidewalk, so I like the fact that they pulled it out a little bit and then I was looking here and I just want to make sure that the vision is still to keep it coming out the pedestrian crosswalk rather than having this marked up area here. But if it's possible, if you walk in front of Fresh Market in Coconut Grove, is that Bayshore Drive?

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Quesada: Have you seen the cross that they have there – there is a pedestrian crossing, there's lights that are flashing. I don't know if it's something that we can implement just because it really jumps out, it really stops the drivers, because the vehicles that are travelling south on this road. They are moving quick, even though they are being funneled in, they'll slow down, I mean they are looking to speed into the circle and I've had a number of close calls, so if you guys just keep that in mind. Whatever signage we have here, it really is eye-catching to whatever driver is coming through.

Commissioner Lago: Glenn can I ask you a quick question?

Mr. Kephart: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: If you see – if you are coming on Sunset and getting to the circle you obviously have to make that right to go around the circle, if you want to head toward the pedestrian bridge, yes, that location exactly. You know obviously, we have a lot of cars that queue back there because it just takes some time because the cars are coming off the bridge. They are coming around the circle, there is kind of a little bit of indecision from drivers. How are we going to address that to see if maybe traffic can move a little bit quicker, safer.

Mr. Kephart: The project is designed to take away some of that indecision by making it clear where you are supposed to be, and if you look at the area you are talking now, where this is sort of wide open and where it's supposed to be and where the other cars are going, all that thought process is happening. Now as you are approaching this, if you are going to get around the circle, you are in the left lane, if you are going to go onto Old Cutler, you are on the right lane.

Commissioner Lago: When you have an individual waiting on Sunset to make that right turn, what occurs is you are kind of wondering, OK, is the person coming toward me going down Sunset?- or are they going to head down Old Cutler?- what is their plan?

Mr. Kephart: You don't know.

Commissioner Lago: So they really don't know, so basically traffic just queue bad because everybody is being so careful because they don't want to get hit by a car that eventually says, you know what, they are not going to go down Sunset, they are going to go down Old Cutler.

Mr. Kephart: Yes, that's a good point and that is the purpose of the project. Commissioner Quesada, to your point, I think really the most important thing about this crossing is that now the way it's set up, because you have a median refuge, you only have to cross one direction of traffic at a time, which makes it so much easier. You can catch a cab, you can catch a driver's eye, you can get through there, if you are only doing one direction of traffic, instead of trying to get across two, and you get stuck in the middle. So I think it's going to be a significant improvement that way.

Mayor Cason: Can I use this opportunity to ask you the same problem at De Soto – cars coming in De Soto Fountain, going around all different which ways, where does that stand?- more or less the same sort of...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: We are doing that, right?

Mr. Kephart: Yes – that is a project that is included in the NRP. David Plummer has done some preliminary designs on that. Where that stands to be quite honest with you, that isn't a project that has come back to my desk in the last six months that I've been working on, it's a NRP, so we haven't done anything recently on that. I know Plummer did the initial designs and that's a project on the books, it's a project in the CIP, but it's not quite ready.

Commissioner Keon: OK. But it's still in progress.

Mr. Kephart: It is in progress.

Commissioner Keon: OK. You know what I noticed also on LeJeune as you – it's in the swale of the park itself, it's always cut up by traffic, it looks like either for some reason cars are always taking out the grass on that little portion of the swale. Is it for stacking to make the right turn on to Ingraham Highway?- or is it...why is that?

Mr. Kephart: Let me get the other slide maybe you can show us. The other issue that may relate to what you are talking about is a pedestrian crossing north of the...so you are talking about...

Commissioner Keon: North of the bridge...[inaudible]

Mr. Kephart: This is LeJeune, this is Ingraham.

Commissioner Keon: Right – it's right there.

Mr. Kephart: Right in this area here?

Commissioner Keon: Yes – that bottom corner of the swale is always – the grass is always torn up and it's always kind of muddy and whatever and it looks like for whatever reason it's being used by cars and trucks or whatever, are sliding over that. I don't know and then others are trying to turn, so it may stack up, so to avoid sitting behind somebody that's going straight they cut over the swale or they cut over the grass. I don't why it is, but it is.

Ms. Keller: And has that only just increased since the park was built...?

Commissioner Keon: I only noticed it since the park was built, because the grass and everything is now so well maintained that you see it. It probably was maybe there before and because it wasn't as well maintained, you had such nice grass and such whatever probably didn't notice it.

Mr. Kephart: We'll look into that. I imagine the stacking...

Commissioner Keon: Maybe when you are down there just look at it; it may be just a stacking issue.

Mr. Kephart: It's probably a stacking....

Commissioner Keon....so maybe when you're...you can look at that when you are doing all those...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Talk to us about that other issue though, because I lived on Riviera Drive and I never, I don't live there now, but I never could get across, never and of course there is a light there and it's just disjointed, right there as people come off Riviera Drive and try to get over to the park. So what are we doing there as far as that?

Commissioner Keon: Yes, that's a huge problem.

Mr. Kephart: So you have the traffic signal here at Ingraham and LeJeune; we worked with the County on a design that traffic engineers think is acceptable, that design has – it's closer to San Vicente, you have Riviera down here that the crossing is just north of the light on LeJeune and there is a residential property on that corner...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: OK.

Mr. Kephart:....and then we built an ADA (Americans with Disability Act) pad on the other side that accepts the pedestrians and then they cross Ingraham into the median island as a refuge, and then across the ramp into the park. That's a design that seems to work, it gets you to the park, we recognize that as a real need of the neighborhoods on the side trying to get across.

Commissioner Keon: Is there a way to sort of reduce the size of those things and put it in the E-NEWS to tell people what the traffic improvements coming to the neighborhood? Seems like not a big space....but if you could somehow just show that.

Commissioner Quesada: You can do a simple small picture and a link and it opens up to a page.

Commissioner Keon: OK or something – right. Just so people can see. So many people ask about that, in particular crossing LeJeune is difficult, crossing that east/west movement in that area is very difficult and those are great plans. So it's a great thing, I think people would be really excited to hear that.

Commissioner Quesada: Where you live on that corner there, those buildings -- remember I used to live on 90, you live on 60 Edgewater, you lived in 10...

Commissioner Lago: Lived in 100 Edgewater.

Commissioner Quesada: 100 Edgewater – those buildings have 2-mail lists, so if you just ask the association they'll give it to you and maybe we can just make sure that they are on the list so that they know what's coming.

Commissioner Keon: OK.

Mr. Kephart: If I could add on this one because LeJeune is a County road in this area, since all is within the county's jurisdiction, but we believe and I think the County will work with us, we take the lead to make this project happen under permit with the County, I believe we'll get it done quicker than we will if we just wait for the County to program the project, and I think they've been responsive to – they would work with us on that. The one piece of it that we do need the County on is the signal modification, the signal heads, but the fact that you've asked the question and we are talking about it today helps us with our efforts to help the county move these things along.

Commissioner Keon: It's a real safety issue crossing...and the park is really – so all of you that were here before I was here, thank you for that park. It is just beautiful and every time I walk on that sidewalk I am so grateful to Ernesto Pino, I say it all the time, I want to put a sign there that says “Ernesto Pino Way” on that little sidewalk that connects the sidewalk to the park. It's wonderful now. I see people with caretakers that are being pushed in wheelchairs, that go up and they sit at the park. I see people in their own motorized wheelchairs now can use the sidewalk and get all the way to the park. It's wonderful. Ernesto could figure out how to make that connection. It seemed like it took so long and was so difficult and he did so easily and so readily. I really – I think of him every time I walk on that stretch.

Mr. Kephart: Thank you for saying that.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Thank you.

[End: 10:37:17 a.m.]