

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items F-5, F-6, F-7, and F-8 are related
September 28, 2021
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias

Parking Director, Kevin Kinney

Public Speaker(s)

Stephen McGaughey

Lauren Coll

Cristina Coll

Henry Peraza

Agenda Items F-5, F-6, F-7, and F-8 are related [0:00:00 a.m.]

An Ordinance of the City Commission amending the Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process", Section 14-213, "Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments", and Small-Scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment procedures (ss. 163.3187, Florida Statutes), changing the land use designation for certain properties located at Lots 19A & 20 Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables Florida from Multi-Family Duplex Density to Hospital Use; and

City Commission Meeting

September 28, 2021

Agenda Items F-3 and F-10 are related - Ordinance amending the City of Coral Gables Code by amending Chapter 2 Article IZ "Sponsorship Program," and resolution of the City Commission directing the City Manager and City Staff to establish sponsorship packages for certain City events and further directing staff to secure sponsorship for those events.

assigning a land use designation of same, Hospital Use for the abutting property legally described as that portion of the un-dug University Waterway in Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (LEGAL DESCRIPTION ON FILE)

(Lobbyist: Alessandria San Roman)

(Lobbyist: Alexandra Villoch)

(Lobbyist: Joseph G. Goldstein)

An Ordinance of the City Commission making zoning district boundary changes pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process", Section 14-212, "Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments", for certain properties located at Lots 19A & 20 Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables Florida from Multi-Family 1 Duplex (MF1) District to Special Use (S) District; and assigning a Zoning Designation of same, Special Use (S) District for the abutting property legally described as that portion of the un-dug University Waterway in Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (LEGAL DESCRIPTION ON FILE)

(Lobbyist: Alessandria San Roman)

(Lobbyist: Alexandra Villoch)

(Lobbyist: Joseph G. Goldstein)

A Resolution of the City Commission approving the Tentative Plat entitled "Doctors Hospital Annex" pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, Section 14-210, "Platting/Subdivision," being a re-plat of approximately 45,635 square feet on the property legally as Lots 19A & 20 and that portion of the un-dug University Waterway in Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables, Florida (5151 University Drive) providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (LEGAL DESCRIPTION ON FILE)

(Lobbyist: Alessandria San Roman)

(Lobbyist: Alexandra Villoch)

(Lobbyist: Joseph G. Goldstein)

A Resolution of the City Commission approving Conditional Use review pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process" Section 14-203, "Conditional Uses" for a proposed Parking as an Accessory Use to a Hospital on the property legally described as Lots 19A & 20 and that portion of the un-dug University Waterway in Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables, Florida (5151 University Drive); including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (LEGAL DESCRIPTION ON FILE)

(This Resolution is not for consideration at this time and will be included with the above ordinances on Second Reading if approved on First Reading.)

(Lobbyist: Alessandria San Roman)

(Lobbyist: Alexandra Villoch)

(Lobbyist: Joseph G. Goldstein)

Commissioner Anderson: It's time for lunch, right?

Mayor Lago: No. It's the last one. We're going to hear this through if everybody would like because I think we could finish at 1:30. We got a few items left. You want to finish up?

Commissioner Menendez: Yeah.

Commissioner Anderson: Let's go.

Mayor Lago: Okay, starting F-5, F-6, F-7, and F-8.

City Attorney Ramos: Yes, Mayor. So, I'm going to read all four items into the record. We can consolidate the public hearing, and Mr. Clerk will need to swear in anyone who wishes to speak. F-5 is an ordinance of the City Commission amending the Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process", Section 14-213, "Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments", and Small-Scale Comprehensive Plan

procedures, changing the revised -- changing the land use designation for certain properties located at Lots 19A & 20 Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables Florida from Multi-Family Duplex Density to Hospital Use; and assigning a land use designation of the same, Hospital Use for the abutting property legally described as a portion of the un-dug University Waterway in Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. F-5 (sic) is an ordinance of the City Commission making zoning district boundary changes pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process", Section 14-212, "Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments", for certain properties located at Lots 19A & 20 Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables Florida from Multi-Family 1 Duplex District to Special Use District; and assigning a Zoning Designation of Special Use District for the abutting property legally described as a portion of the un-dug Waterway at University in Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. The two corresponding resolutions, F-8 is not for a vote today. Resolution F-7 is a resolution of the City Commission approving the Tentative Plat entitled "Doctors Hospital Annex" pursuant to the Zoning Code Article 14, Section 14-210, "Platting/Subdivision," being a re-plat of approximately 45,634 square feet on the property legally described as Lots 19A & 20 and that portion of the un-dug University Waterway in Block 56 of the Revised Plat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 4, Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. Mr. Trias. Actually, I'm sorry, Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Trias, before you proceed, for those who will be testifying on this item today, please stand and raise the right hand. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I do.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Thank you. Mayor and Commissioners, thank you very much for organizing the meeting yesterday that we had with the neighbors. They've been patiently waiting. They're in the front row. I suppose they may want to speak. Today, we have four items -- or actually, we have two items for today and two additional items for the second reading to formalize an existing condition. There's really nothing significant being done today. It's -- we're simply formalizing a parking lot that has been in place for several decades. I recently saw an area photograph from 1957 and there was parking there already, so I can assure you that it's been a while. Now, what happens is that in addition, if you look at the actual property line and so on and the relationship with the University Waterway and University Drive, there are some issues with the platting of the parcel that should be corrected. The current zoning is duplex and so is the land use, which is what happens if you keep going north on University Drive. You have duplexes all the way up. So, to formalize the current conditions, you have to do four things. You have to change the land use, you have to change this zoning, you have to enhance the plat, and then there has to be a conditional use because it just so happens that hospital -- an in this case, the accessory, which is parking accessory to a hospital -- will be a conditional use. Complicated, but nothing really changes except the landscape. The change of the land use, changing to land use hospital, which is the blue. It's the same as is across the street. The change of zoning, changing to special use, again, the same as the hospital across the street. The tentative plat, hard to see, but basically it creates a parcel, a very clearly defined parcel for the parking lot. Right now, it's a little bit unclear. And then finally, the fact that this is a conditional use within S, you will have to deal with the next time. This is the site plan. You're not approving that today. You're just approving the land use and the zoning. And the site plan, as you can see, tries to increase the landscape, the landscape next to the canal. It also rearranges parking, so it works better from a design point of view. It's 102 spaces total as proposed. And this gives you a general sense of the landscape once it's installed and some walls that provide buffers from neighbors et cetera. That is the ultimate design. It's here just for illustration purposes today. There is some question about what could be do in the -- what kind of development can happen with S zoning. And of course, the technical requirement is that there's a need to have 35 percent open space and only .35 FAR, so in theory,

very little can be done. In practice, it would require Commission approval, so the reality is that what's there now enhanced with the proper landscaping and the proper parking lot design is what is proposed. The request to have neighborhood meetings. It went to the Board of Architects. Planning and Zoning reviewed it. And today is the first reading for the City Commission. Letters to property owners were sent within 1,500 feet because it's a change of land use, so all the neighbors were informed, and several meetings were -- took place with the neighbors. Three times letters to property owners were sent. There was a posting of the property for Planning and Zoning, and also a website posting three times, and the required advertisement for Planning and Zoning in the newspaper. Staff has determined that the application is consistent with the comprehensive plan, and staff recommends approval. There are some conditions of approval that the property shall remain a surface parking lot and that the proposed project shall follow the site plan as reviewed by staff and as prepared by the applicant. Thank you very much. And if there are any questions, I'll be happy to assist.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay. Unless there's any comments, we can go down to public comment.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay. So, the first speaker is Ms. Lauren Coll.

Stephen McGaughey: Thank you very much. My name is Stephen McGaughey. I live at 5106 Granada Boulevard. I've lived in that house for approximately 20 years. My house -- the back side of my house is on the canal, and that is absolutely the narrowest canal I think in Coral Gables. I learned from the Mayor in fact yesterday that George Merrick himself had ordered the -- that particular segment of the canal. So, we live quite close to the existing parking lots of Doctors Hospital, and it's been under a lease from the City for many, many years, 50, 60, I don't know total number of years. And I must say that we are quite pleased with the current arrangement because there's a large, very dense green area, which has been established thanks to Coral Gables between the parking lot and the canal and our houses. And we are very concerned about -- and we're very pleased with the existing situation. So, if anything changes, we hope that we would end up having as nice a situation as we have right now. Several of my neighbors are here. There are not many

houses, but there a dozen houses or so, which is in that segment of the area. Now, the new landscaping, we're concerned that the sale of the property will end up maintaining the value of both our properties and of that property by many -- maintaining a dense, capable green area that keeps the light, the noise, and the traffic away from our houses. It's working right now. To continue with the landscaping itself will end up eliminating the current green area. And according to the plan that was just mentioned, it will take 20 -- 15 to 25 years to grow back. So, over the next 10 years, next decade, we're going to be living with the noise, the light, and the traffic of Doctors Hospital coming from this building, coming from the cars, coming from the vehicles, all the time. So, we are concerned that in the sale of the property, which I understand is still being negotiated, it is our view that this process that we're presenting today is a step too far. It's taking the cart before the horse. First, we suggest that that deal needs to be completed in terms of amount, in terms of the obligation of Doctors Hospital to maintain a solid green area facing our properties over the coming years, and that they do not build or they're not capable of building a parking garage. Those are the two fundamental problems that we have with -- we had problems with the sale of the property, but that's a decision that the Commission has made and we're living with it. So, these are the fundamental comments that we have on this -- the changes that are being made now. We hope that we're not taking the cart before the horse, that there will be an opportunity to reinforce the contract between the City and Doctors Hospital so that there is a solid landscaping in the future, and so that we don't face a parking garage or a mechanical car list in that property in the coming years.

Mayor Lago: Sir.

Mr. McGaughey: Thank you very much. First off, thank you. I'd like to respond to you if I may. I was in a meeting yesterday. I got visited by the two ladies who will probably speak any moment now, or maybe I missed out when I went to the bathroom, and they had spoken already. They brought to my attention some concerns that they had in regards to the property. I immediately called a meeting with staff. In the meeting was the City Manager, the City Attorney, Mr. Diaz, Suramy was in the meeting -- Ms. Cabrera was in the meeting. We had all the top level staff at

this meeting. This meeting happened within 24 hours of me meeting with these two ladies, okay. I left the meeting after 45 minutes. I had to go to another meeting. I know that the meeting probably lasted another 15, 20 minutes potentially. I want to be very clear, as part of the plans, if you haven't reviewed them or in detail, there will be a six-foot wall be built around the parking lot facing the waterway that doesn't currently exist. That serves two purposes. Number one, it would be a barrier for light. Number two, it will be a barrier for noise, and it'll be a security barrier also. And that will be going not only on the water, but also to the adjacent property which abuts the current parking lot. That's number one. Number two, the gentleman is correct. The tree plan is a full growth 15 to 20 years. I have told the gentleman very clearly, and I'm asking you, and I know that all of you will back me up on this, I would like to expedite that to five years, if possible, have the applicant require -- and they're good neighbors. But forget I live two blocks away from this property, and I voted no on multiple times in regards to the sale of this property unless we purchased land like parks so that we continue adding to our portfolio and not selling assets -- not only selling assets; we like to buy assets also. And I gave him my word that meeting, and I gave my word on the record here that I will only vote in favor of this if we're able to get the applicant - - the buyer, excuse me, to reduce that from 15, 20 to five years and have it -- have, you know, significant trees be purchased. But I also want to put on the record the residents in that neighborhood did not want to cut down the Australian pines, which as you know are an invasive species, which are being cut down all over South Florida as a result of them being invasive. And we -- and correct me if I'm wrong -- have said that they stay.

City Manager Iglesias: That's right, Mayor.

Mayor Lago: That those Australian pines can stay, even though they should be cut down, and they're going to stay, and that is a significant barrier both for sound, for light and requires -- and provides that privacy, that much needed privacy. So, let's talk about the issue of the parking garage. There are two potential covenants that we've discussed that could potentially be used or applied to this piece of property. I will not invoke -- I will not vote in favor of this -- and I remember -- we've been discussing this for three years now -- that one of the main things that I

was opposed to was a parking structure or any structure being built on this piece of property. You have a surface parking lot already, which is a free-for-all right now, and is in my opinion and the opinion of many, responsible for some of the traffic that happens on that street. This would build a nice parking -- surface parking lot, like we see have just been -- currently being built in the downtown, and it would offer a lot of relief and would offer actual parking spaces meeting the current Code for people who are valeting their cars to be able to use. I will not support this project, and neither will any of my colleagues in the Commission -- and I'm speaking for them -- if a parking garage is being considered, or if a building is considered, or a vacation of the street is being considered to build another building. That will not happen. I will not allow that to happen, and I'm willing to put it into a covenant with our City Attorney to ensure that doesn't happen. Okay, so we've addressed the issue with the trees. We've addressed issue with security and quality of life, and now we've addressed the issue with a building, a parking structure -- what else do you want to call it? -- helicopter pad, anything being built potentially on that piece of property. That property will only be meant to be used as a surface parking lot. If it's used for anything else but a surface parking lot, I don't have a problem putting a reverter clause. It will go back to the City. I don't have a problem putting a covenant, whatever you'd like for me to put. I just don't want there to be misinformation. I don't want there to be that we didn't have meetings. We had multiple meetings. The Manager has all these on record. I want to be very clear and concise. Oh, there are currently two appraisals. They're outdated because we've been using these for three years already. In an effort to save money, you don't just go continue, you know, updating appraisals. That costs money to update appraisals. When we're ready to sell the property, we will update the two appraisals, and I will not vote for the sale of this property unless we get the best price for this property. If the property has gone up by 25 percent, they will pay the additional 25 percent if they want this property. So, I think that I've met every single one of your conditions that we discussed in the meeting, and if I felt short on any, please remind me because I came into the meeting -- to this discussion a few seconds late because I went to the bathroom.

Mr. McGaughey: No, I appreciate very much your response. And I think it's very desirable that the City take a strong view with protecting that environment which exists now. I mean, this is a

beautiful green area. It's maybe not the best vegetation that we would pick if we were allowed to reconstruct it from anew, but it serves its purpose. And you know, I agree that a strong covenant is essential for this purpose.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Mr. McGaughey: And absolutely, I have no fundamental disagreement. I appreciate the City Manager's willingness to discuss it, further discuss the landscaping. We do have some questions with the wall. We have some doubts about that because of the incline, landing clines there, whether would a wall would be as effective or not under these circumstances. That's something to be discussed. We can discuss...

Mayor Lago: Well, I'm very familiar with that site. I'm very familiar as I've walked that site with my daughters, and I've been in that area, you know, for the last 10 years since I moved there, so I know exactly that area very well. I go to the green space across the street. And I've walked that canal, fished in that canal when you're not supposed to fish in that canal. So, at the end of the day, I know the topography of that area very well. And in my opinion, you can build a wall there easily that will serve as retention, that will be a safety barrier that will stop the light. Because right now, I don't care how many trees you put there, a wall will stop the light versus any trees, six-foot wall, and it will give you a privacy along with the landscaping that will go in front of it. And I give you my word that we will not have 20 years; it will be a five-year growth potential. So, if I may, I'd like to go on to the next person so we can discuss it.

Mr. McGaughey: Thank you.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay, Ms. Lauren Coll.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Lauren Coll: First, I'd like to thank the Mayor for arranging the meeting that we had yesterday. It was very helpful and for supporting the neighbors in our efforts to retain our value in our homes as they are. My name is Lauren Coll. I represent 5100 Granada Boulevard LLC. It was my mother's home. What I'm asking for today in view of the light that we are going ahead and looking at a replat and a rezone is that we continue this until we're able to put into place the covenants that we have been discussing. We primarily need two covenants: one with the City directly reflecting what the Mayor has just discussed. This would be a covenant between the City of Coral Gables and the residents affected by this zoning and re-platting change. And the second covenant would be between us -- again, the residents -- and Doctors Hospital. We're already looking at an amendment where we're calling it the Doctors Hospital Annex. We are doing this prior to getting the updated appraisals. I think it would be in the best interest of the City and the residents just to wait to see what the values come in at as well. And so, what we're asking for here is that we get a continuance of these issues. We're willing to work with you. We want to work with you, but we want to make sure that, you know, our rights are preserved, you know, our land values are preserved, you know, the entire environment is preserved from that standpoint, so that is very important to us. I don't know if you want to talk now you want to -- the only other thing that I was going to mention -- and I am going to mention this -- is that I understand there's a lease. The lease that exists is -- was never really well done. It was not legally done by the previous Commission. I know that the parking -- surface parking area has been there for many years. But that said, it's still not something that was legally done, and we seem to be doing a correction for something that some of us questioned the legality of it. I know the City has a different position on that. The other thing is that one of the things that were mentioned in previous sale agreements, or the concept of a sale agreement was that the City might be gaining by making this a taxable lot, but the hospital itself gets a huge exemption, so it will never really be a taxable lot. The hospital is valued at 35 - - this is by property tax assessor's records -- \$35 million. It has a \$31 million exemption and basically pays approximately \$90,000 in real estate taxes, which is truthfully less than I pay for the properties I have in Coral Gables. So, I don't know how much money it will be gaining with that. So, we have some questions on the sale because right now there isn't a sale agreement really with the hospital. We question the legality of the lease itself and wonder is an issue whether it

shouldn't be brought up for public bidding in general. So, I just want to throw that out there. But that said, you know, we would definitely like to at least if we're going to pursue this avenue, get a covenant. You're already talking about in the budget with the City Manager's items, you had Item I-2, which talks about the sale proceeds of Doctors Hospital lot, which I thought was a little premature given the fact that there's not even a sale agreement that has been approved by the Commission. So, this is all premature, and this is why I think we need a continuance of this replatting since really there isn't even a sale agreement in place, and we do have to put these covenants in place with the residents should we pursue that. And that is basically my, you know, thoughts on this issue. But again, thank you, Mayor Lago. I appreciate all your help on this.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. I'd like to respond in regards to our City Attorney. She's requesting a continuance on this issue, saying this is a little premature, but what we're doing today has nothing to do with the actual sale, correct?

City Attorney Ramos: So, this lot -- for whatever reason -- this has been a -- this was a City-owned lot that was a...

Mayor Lago: But I'm saying...

City Attorney Ramos: Surface parking...

Mayor Lago: What I'm saying is by the changes -- by voting today, are we in any way selling this property?

City Attorney Ramos: No, you're legalizing a use that has existed for like 60-something years. In this process, we discovered that it had never been done, so you're bringing the property into compliance.

Mayor Lago: I'm making a point.

Ms. L. Coll: With all due respect is, it's being rezoned for hospital use. It's not -- like you're not just doing a parking lot because this was explained to us by the Zoning Director. You can't do a zoning for a parking lot, so I understand that. But it's being used. It's actually being zoned today for hospital use without any of the covenants that we are requesting, which means that all of these things that were presented by the Zoning Director can be done. So, if you want to do a building that's 45...

Vice Mayor Mena: But we own it.

Mayor Lago: But wait, but we own the -- this is like my point.

Vice Mayor Mena: But we own the lot.

Mayor Lago: My point is that none of that will happen, will even be considered...

Vice Mayor Mena: If we wanted to do that -- if we wanted to build a 40 -- we would just build it, but we're not -- we don't want to do that.

Ms. L. Coll: You can't because right now it's zoned today...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Ms. L. Coll: No, today it's zoned multifamily.

Vice Mayor Mena: But we don't want to do that.

Mayor Lago: But we don't want to do that.

Vice Mayor Mena: So...

Mayor Lago: That's why I'm telling you that I'm not going to sell the lot.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mayor Lago: I'm not going to...

Ms. L. Coll: That's why I'm asking for a continuous so that we can get the covenants in place prior to this rezoning.

Mayor Lago: But you will.

City Attorney Ramos: Let's remember there's still a covenant in place for the next two and a half years.

Mayor Lago: You will.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Ms. L. Coll: But it's only for two and a half years.

Mayor Lago: No, but...

Ms. L. Coll: And that doesn't affect the lot. That goes to the -- no. That covenant, what it went to -- if I understand it correctly...

Mayor Lago: If you let me respond to you one second.

Ms. L. Coll: I'm sorry.

Mayor Lago: Just -- it's okay. No, no, it's fine. I just want to...

Ms. L. Coll: No, I'm sorry.

Mayor Lago: No, I think we're going back and forth, and we're both on the same page. What we're going to do today has nothing to do with the sale. There's already a covenant in place, like the City Attorney just said for the next two and a half years. I told you that before this comes again for sale, which would probably come -- what do you think, in the next three, four months?

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, Mayor. Hopefully, before the end of the year, maybe not because the T-plat may take longer.

Mayor Lago: Okay, so let's say six months. Six months, we're going to have a covenant in place that meets your needs and the needs of the neighborhood. We're going to address the issue of the landscaping. We're going to address the issue, obviously, of the two appraisals because if the property went up, I want them to pay more. By the way, this is not the first time we do this. In regards to Greco, we had an appraisal and we requested that -- I requested, along with my colleagues, that the property price be increased by \$50,000 to meet the top appraisal and not the lower appraisal, the top appraisal. We'll deal with the landscaping. We'll deal with the covenants. We'll deal with the appraisals, and we'll ensure that all the loose ends are addressed before we even consider selling this property, and we'll present it to the buyer to ensure that they understand our requirements and our needs. If not, I will vote no to sell this. I don't have a problem voting no. I vote no. I just vote -- right now, you have a use in place that is not allowed, and it's been being used for 60 years, and it's not like if we're going to call them tomorrow and say, "Hey, listen, you can't park your cars there." We have a lease with them. We're the City. We granted that lease to them. So, this is just a cleanup, procedural cleanup issue, but I promise you that before this comes up for sale, we will address it, and I promise you all your requests will be met.

Ms. L. Coll: Okay, I'm just -- what I would like to do -- and this is why I'm asking for the continuance is that we -- for 30 -- for some 37 years, you've had it as multifamily, and you've used it as parking. So, can we just postpone it a little longer until we have our...

Vice Mayor Mena: You want multifamily?

Ms. L. Coll: That's not -- that's not the issue.

Vice Mayor Mena: I guess I'm trying to reconcile...

Ms. L. Coll: What I'm addressing right now is the continuance so that we can go ahead and just do the covenant.

Vice Mayor Mena: But you're basing it on this point that it's been zoned multi-family and...

Ms. L. Coll: It has been zoned multifamily.

Vice Mayor Mena: You don't want multifamily there, right? Neither do we. So, what...

Ms. L. Coll: I can't say that I don't want multifamily there.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Ms. L. Coll: I'd have to see what's there. I mean, in all fairness, I...

Vice Mayor Mena: No, I'm trying to under -- no, if -- I understood from the prior gentleman -- maybe you guys don't see eye to eye.

Ms. L. Coll: But I want to address what the Mayor is saying.

Vice Mayor Mena: Go ahead.

Ms. L. Coll: And what I'm -- and all I'm saying is, could we just continue it so that we have the covenants in place at the same time as the rezoning?

Vice Mayor Mena: But there's not going to be a point in time where there's no covenant place because we have a covenant for two and a half years.

Ms. L. Coll: No, the covenant is -- no.

Vice Mayor Mena: Before we sell, we'll have another one.

Ms. L. Coll: The covenant is with us and the hospital.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Ms. L. Coll: It's not with the City. We need two additional covenants, one with the City, so that when you sell that land, you restrict the use, exactly what Mayor Lago is saying.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, we're committed to doing that.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Ms. L. Coll: So, I'm asking if you could please just do a continuance of this particular issue so that we can put the covenant in place at the exact same time as it is rezoned.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, I'm just not...

Ms. L. Coll: You're approving that.

Vice Mayor Mena: I'm just not hearing like a terrific reason for that. Like I understand what you're asking for, but I'm not -- there's no concern that we're remedying by doing that because we already have the covenant.

Commissioner Fors: I think...

Ms. L. Coll: The concern is that you -- there is no specific...

Commissioner Fors: You want to put it in writing, right? You want us to put it in writing before we rezone it.

Ms. L. Coll: Yes, and I would just ask that you do it at the same time...

Commissioner Fors: That we're not going to rezone it.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think that would be...

Ms. L. Coll: No, no, no, no.

Vice Mayor Mena: A worse result though.

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: Because I think the result then, taking you at what you said is that you have a multifamily zoned lot and I don't want multifamily there, and I don't think the neighbors want multifamily there for the most part.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: So...

Commissioner Anderson: And there's no way we're going to let this property go without a covenant in place...

Vice Mayor Mena: Of course.

Commissioner Anderson: To prevent this, you know -- I mean, we can protect the trees with this, which we can't ordinarily do. There's a lot that we can do with that, but this process of rezoning this is a multistage process.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: It's got to go to the State.

Ms. L. Coll: Right, but I don't understand -- I mean, if the intention is really to leave it as it is, I mean to do it as a surface parking lot, then what is the downside of just giving us a continuance to have the covenants at the same time as you do the rezoning?

Vice Mayor Mena: When you say if the intention...

Ms. L. Coll: That's what I'm saying.

Vice Mayor Mena: No if. We're -- this is the stated goal and will of the Commission that will vote on that item in the next at most six months, so there is no if.

Ms. L. Coll: Well, then, I guess what you're saying is that you're denying the continuance and then we will trust you to do the right thing, that's all. I...

Vice Mayor Mena: I think you make -- I know you've made clear you don't...

Ms. L. Coll: That's it.

Mayor Lago: I'm going to make it...

Vice Mayor Mena: Trust us a lot.

Ms. L. Coll: I mean...

Vice Mayor Mena: And I understand that...

Ms. L. Coll: You have to understand...

Vice Mayor Mena: From your meeting. But whether you do or don't trust us, that's -- you have no obligation to do so. I can only give you my word and so can my colleagues.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: And I have to vote based on the trust...

Mayor Lago: My conscience.

Vice Mayor Mena: That I have in myself and my colleagues.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

City Commission Meeting

September 28, 2021

Agenda Items F-3 and F-10 are related - Ordinance amending the City of Coral Gables Code by amending Chapter 2 Article IZ "Sponsorship Program," and resolution of the City Commission directing the City Manager and City Staff to establish sponsorship packages for certain City events and further directing staff to secure sponsorship for those events.

Vice Mayor Mena: And I know we're going to do the right thing. I know what -- we've been talking about this for years now. By the way, we deal with surface parking lots all the time, and we routinely require that there be barriers put in place and landscaping, and we talk about the maturity of the trees that will go in place, and we try to work with the neighbors as we just did with the prior gentleman to work out those issues, and I know we're going to do that here. So, I'm really not sure -- you know, it sounds like we're trying...

Ms. L. Coll: I think...

Vice Mayor Mena: To achieve all the desired results.

Ms. L. Coll: I think you understand that, you know, the public in general, given the history of politicians, we always want to, you know, have belts and suspenders just in case because we're told a lot of things sometimes that, you know, circumstances change, that's all.

Mayor Lago: So...

Vice Mayor Mena: Sure.

Mayor Lago: So, you would say -- and I'm sorry, I take offense to that. I'm sorry. I take so much offense to that.

Ms. L. Coll: Now, I've -- look, I've known...

Mayor Lago: I take so much offense to that, and I'm sorry and I'm sorry. And I never say that because you came to my open office hours, and I've been doing it for seven years...

Ms. L. Coll: You know...

Mayor Lago: Sitting there in my office for seven years for hours on hours and hours.

Ms. L. Coll: I'm going to respond to that.

Mayor Lago: Lasting until 7 o'clock at in certain instances, starting at 2 o'clock, taking time away from my family and from my business.

Ms. L. Coll: I'm going to respond to that.

Mayor Lago: And I just think that you have a Commission that is open, that is transparent, that is interested, that is saying on the record -- I've said it 15 times on the record here. As a matter of fact, the Vice Mayor was mentioning before the issue of another surface parking lot and called them predators because that's what they are. They're predators on this community, on people like my mom, who has a little bit of impaired vision and was having a surgery and she was disabled at that moment, and they took advantage of her for parking in a space. We do not shy away from sticking up for the constituency or for the person who is -- has the short end of the stick. We're here to advocate on your behalf and to do what's right. But by having one more hindrance, like for example, a vote that we don't take today because that'll stop them from doing another vote, that's not the way that it works. The way that it works is that we have to continue to do the business at hand, and I gave you my word. I'm not going to go back on my word on anywhere either in public or in private and lie to you, and then say, "No, I'm going to do a favor for big business."

Ms. L. Coll: I'm just going to respond to that in two ways. Number one, I've known you for years, and I know you're a man of your word, and I'm not worried about you. I don't -- I -- no offense to the rest of the Commission. I just don't know.

Mayor Lago: We're among my colleagues. They're men and ladies of their word too. Don't worry.

Ms. L. Coll: I don't know your colleagues. I've known you for a long time. And the only other thing I want to say is that there have been other Mayors in this City who will remain nameless who have promised me one thing and delivered another. So, I, unfortunately, want you to, you know - - I've been burned by previous Administrations. But I've known you for many years, and I trust you when you tell me that, you know, we can count on you, and that's...

Vice Mayor Mena: And by the way...

Ms. L. Coll: That's all I can do.

Mayor Lago: Have faith.

Vice Mayor Mena: And by the way, if we defer today, as you're asking -- if we're these, you know, not to be trusted weasels who are going to go back on our word, we can do that anyway. We're just telling you we're not going to do that, and so what -- even if we defer today, we can do a total 180 and then betray everything we've said today.

Ms. L. Coll: Say as such true.

Vice Mayor Mena: That's not the goal.

Ms. L. Coll: That would be...

Vice Mayor Mena: The goal is to do the right thing here.

Ms. L. Coll: I agree. I agree with that.

Vice Mayor Mena: That's what we're going to do.

Ms. L. Coll: I think that's (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Lago: I remembered -- if I may -- and I don't know if this gentleman remembers. I remember going to this gentleman's house when I was walking door to the door, and I sat there, and we had a conversation about the neighborhood. I don't gain anything by voting against what I've already voted against on multiple occasions. You know, saying, "Now I'm going to go with the hospital," versus -- and make this sale happen with not a covenant, without addressing the issue of landscaping, without getting two appraisals. We're fiduciaries at the end of the day, and I would be going against what I signed up for and why we make all this money as elected officials. That's a joke. We can -- no, no. trying to laugh a little bit here. My jokes are almost as bad as yours, Commissioner.

Commissioner Menendez: We can work on that together.

Mayor Lago: At least we get a good laugh in.

Commissioner Menendez: There's a workshop they're going to prepare.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, yeah.

Commissioner Menendez: The Comedy Store. The Mayor clearly has stated -- and I think you have acknowledged he's gone above and beyond to address your concerns and issues. I think they're very valid solutions to noise and everything that's there. I think we've proven ourselves the last few months that we listen, we do what's right. If anybody wants to know -- wants to see a Commission in inaction, just watch some of the other cities in Dade County. I won't mention names, but you know, that's a problem. I wouldn't, you know -- we're all on the same page. We all want to get there for the right reasons, to protect you, and then make sure that's a surface parking lot, and it does not impede in your enjoyment of your time. Besides the covenant, the Mayor

earlier mentioned going forward a reverter clause. I would like that to be considered as well, just to put some teeth in whatever agreement there is.

Ms. L. Coll: I appreciate that.

Commissioner Menendez: With that reverter...

Ms. L. Coll: I thank you.

Commissioner Menendez: That's about as tight a bite you can possibly have.

Ms. L. Coll: Well, I thank you.

Commissioner Menendez: But you know, please, I can vouch for everyone here, and I can vouch for all of you. We really want to do what's right. And when the day comes that we can't trust each other, let us know. But so far, I think so far, we're doing a decent job.

Ms. L. Coll: Well, my trust is in you, and I thank you all for your time.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Ms. L. Coll: And I thank you, Mayor Lago.

Commissioner Anderson: Just one last note on the covenant. City Attorney, just the protection of the trees as well since, you know, we don't have that ability otherwise.

City Attorney Ramos: So, the tree protection I think is going to be set forth in the site plan that you'll approve.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

City Attorney Ramos: Not in the actual covenant, but we can certainly make sure that the site plan is tight.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay, thank you.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The conditional approval has conditions and that's where you can do it and that's next time -- next meeting.

Commissioner Menendez: And by the way, if we can, you know, once we get to that point -- I know the Mayor will be open for it -- we can circle back once we get to that stage and meet with the good folks that are here today, and just let them know, you know, where we're at, you know, an update before it comes to the Commission for a vote. I think that's the way we can maintain the lines of communication to maintain that trust.

Mayor Lago: Yes, ma'am. The floor is yours.

Cristina Coll: Good morning. My name is Cris Coll. I represent 5100 Granada LLC. And I'm also going to ask that we defer F-5, F-6, F-7, and F-8. And it has very little to do with trust because I trust you all completely. There's a well-established principle in appraising that if we change the zoning, we affect the value of the land. You are fiduciaries. You've said this all throughout, and you want the best value, the absolute best value of the land. That's what we want to negotiate. Right now, there are two appraisals that are going to be updated. How do you think when you change that zoning, which essentially limits it to one buyer, that appraisal -- those people that are

appraising, how do you think that's going to impact the land? You think it's going to improve the land value?

Vice Mayor Mena: Actually, and I'll give you all the time you need. I disagree with the premise that the only goal here is to maximize the value of the sale. That's actually not true.

Ms. C. Coll: So, what is the goal?

Vice Mayor Mena: No, it's actually not true because it's to do that within the context of keeping the property as a surface lot that doesn't adversely impact the value of the residents next door because they have...

Ms. C. Coll: We agree. I agree.

Vice Mayor Mena: So -- well, so but that's important...

Ms. C. Coll: I agree with you.

Vice Mayor Mena: In the context of what you're saying.

Ms. C. Coll: Let's put it in context.

Vice Mayor Mena: A multifamily development project there probably would sell for more.

Ms. C. Coll: I agree with you. If you were selling...

Vice Mayor Mena: But that's not what we want to do...

Ms. C. Coll: If you were...

Vice Mayor Mena: Because we want to do right by you all.

Ms. C. Coll: I agree with you. If you are selling a parking lot -- okay? -- and we know that there are issues that are debatable as to how we can enforce a lease that was done improperly and has no legal basis, maybe the University of Miami wants to bid, maybe somebody else wants to bid. But right here, you've already -- without the sale -- are calling it the Doctors Hospital Annex. Wow, I mean, that would scare me from bidding, okay? And the only thing I'm asking -- and I don't think it's unreasonable -- is that you recognize that when you don't postpone this, when you don't continue it, when you change the zoning, without the appraisals being completed, it may impact in a negative way in the value of the land. And you have a fiduciary duty -- okay? -- to take care of us and to see that within the context the value of the land and the -- is the best possible. And I don't see this leading to it, unless we all assume and take on the shoes of appraisal -- of appraisers and say by doing this change of zoning, we recognize that we are giving this -- this effect will have the best value of the land. That's my problem. I know I trust you and my -- and we don't have -- and one thing that does concern me is when the Mayor said to us at the meeting, he said, "You will have a covenant between the neighbors and the City that restrict the use" -- okay? -- "on the land." If we die, obviously, it's with the land because if we die -- you know. Okay, running with the land. We asked the City Attorney, and she said, "I have to check with the hospital." That held a scary...

Mayor Lago: Can we -- can you -- can we just -- can we take a -- can we take...

City Attorney Ramos: I think it's a condition of the purchase and sale agreement. If they don't agree to it, I can't impose it.

Ms. C. Coll: No, no, this wasn't closing. This was just doing just the covenant, then there was a misunderstanding. What is of importance to the neighbors is that we actually can do -- okay? -- a covenant running with the land, where we are signatories, where we have skin in the game, and

we can defend ourselves when you are no longer here. I'm a landlord and I can offer my tenants everything and anything, and if they say to me something, I say, "Wait a minute. I'm offended. You don't trust me?" Guess what, they're going to want it in writing just in case I die two days on the road.

Vice Mayor Mena: Of course.

Ms. C. Coll: Okay, and that is what I'm trying to tell you. That's one aspect of it. The second of it -- aspect of it is I'm coming in as a taxpayer, and I'm saying to you, "Please reconsider taking a decision on zoning that may impact negatively when you put it into an appraisal," and we've had to update appraisals. And I am concerned because when I went -- and the Mayor has been very kind to have received us, okay? -- I pointed out that, yes, you have used old appraisals in the past because there are resolutions signed by the previous Mayor that used appraisals that are three years old. Okay, that's serious. And that has been...

Vice Mayor Mena: That's not a contract.

Ms. C. Coll: I beg your pardon, sir?

Vice Mayor Mena: But that's not a sales contract; that's just a resolution.

Ms. C. Coll: No, I know, but it's still being used.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Ms. C. Coll: I mean, you know, last I heard...

Vice Mayor Mena: I think you -- I think the Mayor...

Ms. C. Coll: Last I heard, you didn't make the distinction. You just don't use old appraisals.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think the Mayor just explained, until you -- when we go to close on a transition...

Ms. C. Coll: I fully understand.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Ms. C. Coll: But in negotiations of anything, I wouldn't use old appraisals. Now, maybe you do...

Vice Mayor Mena: We agree.

Ms. C. Coll: And you say not until it's final.

Vice Mayor Mena: We just said we agree.

Mayor Lago: But we agree.

Ms. C. Coll: Okay.

Vice Mayor Mena: And we're going to get a new appraisal before we close.

Ms. C. Coll: Exactly, exactly but you will have rezoned the property, rezoned it, so now the appraiser has to deal with that new zoning, which essentially guarantees that you can only sell to one entity.

Vice Mayor Mena: But we know we're only going to sell to...

Ms. C. Coll: And that's Doctors.

Vice Mayor Mena: One entity.

Ms. C. Coll: Really?

Vice Mayor Mena: We know that. Yeah, let's be honest. I mean...

Ms. C. Coll: No, I don't know that. (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Mena: Who else wants a surface parking lot next to Doctors Hospital?

Ms. C. Coll: Maybe the University of Miami...

Vice Mayor Mena: With no development rights.

Ms. C. Coll: Maybe the Uni -- maybe someone, maybe a developer wants to develop that land with -- well, you...

Vice Mayor Mena: And if they do, then this zoning will be consistent with that.

Ms. C. Coll: Then you can predetermine already...

Vice Mayor Mena: If they do, this will be consistent with that though, so...

Ms. C. Coll: No.

Vice Mayor Mena: Listen, again, I go back to the issue is there's...

Ms. C. Coll: You have told me who else could have an interest.

Vice Mayor Mena: Dueling interests here.

Ms. C. Coll: But you have told...

Vice Mayor Mena: It's not just the taxpayer and the value.

Ms. C. Coll: Exactly.

Vice Mayor Mena: It's also limiting what can be built there.

Ms. C. Coll: Of course, it's limiting...

Vice Mayor Mena: So...

Ms. C. Coll: What can be built there, but there are other -- look, this is being even done without a traffic study.

Vice Mayor Mena: I'm sorry. I couldn't hear you because of the car for a second.

Ms. C. Coll: That's okay. This is -- rezoning is being done without a traffic study or a parking study, and you have people begging you for this because of the congestion, and you are increasing the number of parking in that area.

Mayor Lago: Wait, wait. Let's stop.

Vice Mayor Mena: It's already a parking lot.

Mayor Lago: Wait, wait, wait. But let's stop that.

Ms. C. Coll: Yes.

Mayor Lago: We need to be careful. We're on the record here.

Ms. C. Coll: I hope I don't offend you this time.

Mayor Lago: No, no, no, no. You're not offending me.

Ms. C. Coll: You could tell me...

Mayor Lago: You're not offending me, but you're...

Ms. C. Coll: Because I trust you completely.

Mayor Lago: Making statements about a neighborhood that I live in, that I know, very, very well that I'm in that area constantly. I use that street every single day, okay. What you have there is not congestion from University of Miami or from West Lab or from the neighborhood. What you have there is the valet parkers that sometimes there's not enough manpower, and you have cars that back up. So, the whole point of this is to set up a queuing system that will make the parking more efficient, so that is what is being addressed with this parking lot. That's number one, please. Number two was your statement of -- what was your --? You had a statement about queuing, about parking, about increasing parking. Mr. City Manager, how many parking spaces are currently allowed -- not currently allowed, are currently available for use on the parking lot?

City Manager Iglesias: I believe this increases to 102, and I think it's about -- Mr. Trias, do you recall?

Mayor Lago: Because I want to be very careful because at the conversation that we were having yesterday, someone said, "No, no, it's going to allow for 150 parking spaces." Now, we're down to 102.

City Manager Iglesias: No, it's 102.

Mayor Lago: No, no, but it wasn't staff.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, and I think it was about 90...

Mayor Lago: It wasn't staff. It wasn't staff. We have to be very careful with the facts, very careful with the facts because that's how we get the misinformation. So, somebody said, "No, no, it's going to allow for 150 parking spaces." No, it's 102. What are currently allowed in the space? Not currently allowed, excuse me, are currently used.

City Manager Iglesias: And as we discussed, Mayor, it's a very poorly designed parking where the queuing will be terrible. Accessing cars will take longer. So, from a working perspective of a valet, this is a much more efficient operation. It would also take the parking lot out of the right-of-way, which is currently in the right-of-way, and it should not be there, so there's...

Mayor Lago: And by the way...

City Manager Iglesias: A number of issues.

Mayor Lago: The purpose is not only to resolve certain issues that we're having. It was to alleviate the congestion resulting from the valets coming from...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mayor Lago: The hospital and to deliver the cars.

Ms. C. Coll: Mayor Lago...

Mayor Lago: I don't have a problem -- I don't have a problem at all putting writing in the language -- in the contract that says -- or in the covenant that if we continue to have issues with congestion and we can prove that there's issues with congestion and that the valet issue is not resolved, you need to have, again -- these are just numbers that I'm pulling out of thin air -- you need to have eight valet drivers, six valet drivers, ten valet drivers, whatever the number is going to be to ensure that the proper flow of cars are taken off that street and that people are going into the queueing system.

City Attorney Ramos: So, that can be...

City Manager Iglesias: This is a...

City Attorney Ramos: Maybe one of conditions in the conditional use approval.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, and this is a much more efficient parking. And again, it will take it off the right-of-way. The current parking is on the right-of-way. You'll have -- it'll have a wall for abatement of the cars as they come in. We will have -- that's a six-foot wall, by the way. It'll have extensive landscaping, and it will be a much better designed parking lot that will help with the queuing. How long it takes a valet driver to get in and out is a huge issue, as you know, Mayor. And this will help as far that queuing is concerned. The current parking lot is really not very well designed.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Kinney.

Parking Director Kinney: Just so everybody knows, the current layout, there's officially 94 parking spaces. But they -- when they do valet, they actually park quite a few more cars on the lot than 94. So, 102 designed...

Mayor Lago: So, let's talk about that. Okay, this is what I wanted to get to. So, while they can have 94 parking spaces -- correct? Is it how many spaces?

Vice Mayor Mena: 94.

Parking Director Kinney: 94 officially marked.

Mayor Lago: So, it's not 150. Now, we're down to 102.

Vice Mayor Mena: 94 is what they have now.

Mayor Lago: No, no, but I'm saying you see how we're dropping down? You see how we're dropping down to the real numbers? So, we're talking about if we were to legally park -- which is what they're going to be required to do because now it's going to be a designated parking lot with the appropriate parking spaces as acquired by the Code, the appropriate sizes of parking spaces -- you're going to be able to park 102 cars. So, that's an additional eight vehicles.

Unidentified Speaker: Seven.

Mayor Lago: Eight vehicles, okay, because 94. And we all know -- I didn't want to say it. I wanted our Parking Director to say it, that they're not parking 94 vehicles there. What they end up doing is they fill all the parking spaces and then they start ramming cars as much as they possibly can, and they have to move the vehicles around, and that's where the valet drivers get stuck. Because when you have to move one vehicle to access Commissioner Menendez's vehicle who's blocked by three vehicles and Commissioner -- and Vice Mayor, you know, Mena has to

move, it takes time to move all those vehicles around to get one car out. So, now it's going to be a real official parking lot, which -- so the sole purpose of that is to address issues of congestion. So, that congestion is happening, and the reason why there's a lack of valet drivers to get someone's car, and the reason why cars are queuing up down the street is because they're all moving vehicles trying to get cars out of the way because they're slamming all the cars in there. So, while I wish and I tried to see if the University of Miami would come to an agreement with Doctors Hospital to allow them to use some of those parking spaces, I failed in that endeavor. So, what we have is a situation where if we sell that lot to somebody else -- let's talk candidly -- and Baptist doesn't have access to that lot, what's going to happen to all those cars that are coming to the hospital? What are we going to do? Where are they going to park?

Ms. C. Coll: But we don't -- but...

Mayor Lago: Oh, no, but that's a real question.

Ms. C. Coll: It is a very good question.

Mayor Lago: So, let's say we did what you wanted.

Ms. C. Coll: (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Lago: Let's say we sold that lot to somebody else.

Ms. C. Coll: No, no. I'm not saying that.

Mayor Lago: No, no, but let's consider that. Let's consider that.

Ms. C. Coll: No, what I'm considering is that the rezoning impacts the value of land.

Mayor Lago: Okay, well, let's...

Vice Mayor Mena: Our goal -- our -- no, but it's that the zoning reflects the desired use of the property, and it's our desired use of the property that will drive the value.

Ms. C. Coll: (INAUDIBLE) -- let me ask you...

Vice Mayor Mena: The zoning is consistent with what we're trying to do on the property.

Ms. C. Coll: Let me ask you this if it's okay. We've lived without selling the land and rezoning it to Doctors Hospital. You mean to tell me that the only remedy that you have is that one? That you cannot redo that parking lot, that you cannot continue and achieve the goals you want unless you rezone in favor of Doctors Hospital?

Vice Mayor Mena: No, we can't...

Ms. C. Coll: Is that what we're saying?

Vice Mayor Mena: The transaction -- in order to engage in the sale transaction...

Ms. C. Coll: No, no, no. Is that what we're saying, so I understand it?

Mayor Lago: No.

Vice Mayor Mena: No.

Mayor Lago: It's not what we're saying.

Ms. C. Coll: Okay, then what are you saying? Because the way that I view it is you don't have to sell to the -- to Doctors Hospital. You don't have to rezone.

Vice Mayor Mena: We don't have to sell at all.

Ms. C. Coll: No, no, no -- correct. You can go ahead and achieve the same things that the Mayor has just said by keeping the property and doing it and remedying it. You don't -- that is not your only option. And this is why we're saying...

Vice Mayor Mena: Agreed.

Ms. C. Coll: Please, please, continue this and don't just zone it in favor -- without a sale that will impact the fair market value because you don't have an appraisal right now that isn't five years old, with comps from 2014 and 2015.

Vice Mayor Mena: We're not going to sell based on that.

Ms. C. Coll: I understand that, but you are rezoning. You are...

Commissioner Fors: But nobody is...

Ms. C. Coll: Who else can buy it after you've re-zoned?

Commissioner Fors: But ma'am, nobody's going to pay...

Ms. C. Coll: Who else can buy it?

Vice Mayor Mena: But we're not trying to sell it to anybody else.

Ms. C. Coll: I understand, but you don't have to sell it at all.

Vice Mayor Mena: You're right, that's true.

Ms. C. Coll: You don't have to...

Vice Mayor Mena: That is true. We don't...

Ms. C. Coll: Sell it at all.

Vice Mayor Mena: Have to sell it at all, but we are going to.

Ms. C. Coll: Why?

Vice Mayor Mena: Because we made the decision to do so.

Ms. C. Coll: Who made the decision to do it?

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

Ms. C. Coll: Okay, and based on what is that decision?

Vice Mayor Mena: But now within the confines of that discussion...

Ms. C. Coll: But what...

Vice Mayor Mena: We're trying to achieve...

Ms. C. Coll: Decision? What (INAUDIBLE)...

Vice Mayor Mena: The intended result.

Ms. C. Coll: Then you've already decided to sell, and you've already decided to rezone, and frankly, what am I doing standing here?

Vice Mayor Mena: You're having a conversation which has led to a lot of positive results and covenants will be put in place.

Ms. C. Coll: Really, I don't see one positive result right now. I'm sorry.

Vice Mayor Mena: I understand.

Ms. C. Coll: I don't know because...

Vice Mayor Mena: I don't think you had -- I don't think it was your goal to see positive results to be...

Ms. C. Coll: I beg, sir?

Vice Mayor Mena: Honest with you.

Ms. C. Coll: I beg your pardon, sir?

Vice Mayor Mena: Seems to me like your goal is to express some sort of angst towards us...

Ms. C. Coll: No, my goal is to protect my...

Vice Mayor Mena: About something...

Ms. C. Coll: Interests of 5100.

Vice Mayor Mena: We agree with you. We're trying to do that.

Ms. C. Coll: Our goal is to have a covenant running with the land...

Vice Mayor Mena: Which we agreed to.

Ms. C. Coll: Between the City and us...

Mayor Lago: Which we agreed to.

Vice Mayor Mena: We agreed to.

Mayor Lago: We agreed to.

Ms. C. Coll: And to make it longer than 30 years. We would really like to make it longer than 30 years because we've already had one. Our goal is to go ahead and extend the covenant that we have with the hospital. Right now, the only thing that exists in that covenant that she talks about is between the hospital and the Commission. We've really been left out.

Vice Mayor Mena: We've already told you that we're going to put those covenants in place.

Ms. C. Coll: Okay, go ahead and put that in, and I look forward to having it...

Vice Mayor Mena: The goal is.

Ms. C. Coll: Extended so that we can do it for a very long time. If we could do it for 50 years, that would be great.

Commissioner Anderson: Wouldn't this be a permanent covenant with the sale, permanent?

Vice Mayor Mena: With the sale, I believe it...

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Would be or we add a reverter.

City Attorney Ramos: So, covenants are limited to 30 years.

Vice Mayor Mena: There you go.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay.

Ms. C. Coll: So, can we do 30 plus 10?

City Attorney Ramos: No, you can do 30 plus the two and a half you have left.

Mayor Lago: What about the reverter?

City Attorney Ramos: So, we'll end up with 33. The reverter, we'll look at. That's a new issue.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

City Attorney Ramos: And we'll also discuss it with Doctors. They ...

Vice Mayor Mena: We're going to do as much as we can.

Ms. C. Coll: The reverter is essential.

City Attorney Ramos: Doctors may be out of the game at that point. They may say forget it.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

City Attorney Ramos: We'll keep our lease.

Mayor Lago: That's fine.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Ms. C. Coll: The reverter is essential and thank you for bringing it up.

Commissioner Menendez: I have a quick question, sorry. In terms of the zoning/rezoning, so it's multifamily now, going to surface -- What's the new zoning?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It's duplex now, multifamily duplex.

Commissioner Menendez: Right. And we're switching it to...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: To S.

Commissioner Menendez: What it should be, which is?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: S.

City Attorney Ramos: Special Use.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Special Use.

Commissioner Menendez: Special Use. Question, if we discovered that any other City-owned property had the wrong land use, we would go about correcting it, right? So, it's not specifically this property, we would apply the same rules to any City property.

City Attorney Ramos: Yes.

Ms. C. Coll: Well, you wouldn't name it Doctors Hospital Annex, right? I mean, it's already (INAUDIBLE).

Commissioner Menendez: By the way, I agree with you...

Ms. C. Coll: It's already (INAUDIBLE).

Commissioner Menendez: In the sense that sometimes the way we label things or way we express ourselves creates confusion and misunderstanding. So, I personally probably would have named it differently, so I agree with you with that point. But it doesn't take away from the fact from the work that's actually trying -- we're trying to accomplish.

Ms. C. Coll: I understand.

Commissioner Menendez: But I do agree it's a distraction and it's...

Vice Mayor Mena: But we're also not trying to pull the wool over anybody's eyes.

Commissioner Menendez: No, no, exactly.

Vice Mayor Mena: We're being actually fully transparent.

Commissioner Menendez: Well, it's a great point.

Vice Mayor Mena: We're being fully transparent about the fact that we all know who the interested party in it...

Ms. C. Coll: I apologize (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Mena: We all know who the interested party is in buying this. We all know who the intended sale is to happen with. We're going to try to do it at the maximum value possible. We've talked about that. But I -- like I get the point you're making.

Commissioner Menendez: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: Like maybe it shouldn't be called that. But I also don't want to make it a secret that what -- who we're talking to here is Doctors Hospital. Everybody knows that. And it makes it not a secret.

Commissioner Menendez: He makes a great point.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Commissioner Menendez: Because in the past when the City does not label perhaps, then other residents -- not yourself-- say, "Ah, you didn't notify us that you were talking, thinking," so it's a balancing act. But we should be maybe more careful going forward.

Ms. C. Coll: (INAUDIBLE) confusion comes in that...

Mayor Lago: Excuse me.

Ms. C. Coll: Go ahead.

Mayor Lago: And if I may. Again, it's interesting because this would have never happened under any other Mayor, this back and forth. This is interesting, isn't it? And then people say there's not enough transparency. And the previous Mayor, you used to get a minute and then you would sit down. But we're actually having discourse back and forth, which is good, very interesting. But then they say they have lack of faith and trust in the elected officials. But we can do this all night, I'm fine. We haven't had lunch yet. How many years are left in the lease?

City Manager Iglesias: The lease expires in 2047.

Mayor Lago: Okay, how many people would buy a lease right now, right now at the price that we're asking for.

Ms. C. Coll: I would, I would. I'd buy that lease maybe because I could probably set it aside because...

Mayor Lago: Well, I think...

Ms. C. Coll: It's not a legal lease. So, I might take a shot. How do you like it?

Mayor Lago: But I...

Ms. C. Coll: Me -- that's how I make my money. I make my money investing in real estate, so I might do that.

Mayor Lago: Oh, I understand. But I mean -- but that's why I asked the question. That's why I asked the question because I knew you were interested.

Ms. C. Coll: I might do it.

Mayor Lago: Because you mentioned that the other day.

Ms. C. Coll: I don't have an interest...

Mayor Lago: And I found it interesting that...

Ms. C. Coll: In purchasing that land.

Mayor Lago: You were -- I found it interesting that you...

Ms. C. Coll: I don't have an interest in purchasing that land. Let me state that right now in front of everyone.

Mayor Lago: But I thought you just said you did.

Ms. C. Coll: No, no, no, no, no. You were saying hypothetically, hypothetically.

Mayor Lago: No, but you did mention the other day...

Ms. C. Coll: Someone like me, I have no interest in purchasing that land, the same as I have no interest when people have approached me about selling the properties, I have, okay? So, let's make that very clear, you and me.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Ms. C. Coll: Now, the only thing that I am asking again is how will it impact on an appraisal, this rezoning. I haven't gotten...

Mayor Lago: But there is no impact.

Ms. C. Coll: There's no impact?

Commissioner Fors: There's no impacts because...

Mayor Lago: No impact.

Ms. C. Coll: Alright.

Commissioner Fors: Nobody is going to...

Ms. C. Coll: I'll take your word for it.

Commissioner Fors: Doctor's Hospital knows that we'll only...

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Commissioner Fors: Permit it to be used as a parking lot, so they're not going to pay multifamily prices for it, right?

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Fors: I mean, nobody's going to pay multifamily prices for it when...

Vice Mayor Mena: And to...

Commissioner Fors: They know that it will only be able to be used as parking.

Ms. C. Coll: No, but...

Vice Mayor Mena: And Commissioner Menendez's point...

Ms. C. Coll: Someone might be interested...

Vice Mayor Mena: It's being done to fix the incorrect zoning right now.

Mayor Lago: It's curing an issue.

Vice Mayor Mena: It's curing an issue, and it's making it consistent with what is actually in use there today, which has a correct and proper...

Ms. C. Coll: Well, I think there are other ways of doing it.

Vice Mayor Mena: Which is the correct and proper thing to do.

Commissioner Menendez: It may monetarily not make sense, but perhaps legally and ethically, I think we're obligated as a government to correct things that are...

Vice Mayor Mena: We're not going to do it the wrong way...

Ms. C. Coll: I absolutely agree with you.

Vice Mayor Mena: To maximize value.

Ms. C. Coll: I agree with you...

City Manager Iglesias: Let me...

Ms. C. Coll: A hundred percent.

City Manager Iglesias: Let me just say that the...

Ms. C. Coll: Where we diverge is in the remedy. I don't know that you necessarily have to correct it in the manner that you have to correct it. And by correcting it in this manner, I don't know that we're doing -- that we're looking at the best value for the land, that's all.

City Manager Iglesias: If...

Mayor Lago: Mr. Manager.

City Manager Iglesias: If I may say that right now, we are looking at it as multifamily, yet the new appraisals will continue to be multifamily. We have a deal that's substantially beyond those appraisals, and so we will continue with those land values. So, that's something that I've just discussed with our Asset Manager, and those appraisals will be updated based on the appraisal as they were submitted.

Ms. C. Coll: And that is why I'm confused because you see in the reality you're rezoning, so they're going ahead -- now you're asking them to continue in a manner that no longer exists because you're rezoning. You're (INAUDIBLE).

City Manager Iglesias: I believe that that's consistent...

Ms. C. Coll: I'm very confused.

City Manager Iglesias: With what we've discussed with the hospital, and the current price that we have of \$3.5 million is consistent with what their need for that property is.

Commissioner Fors: Are we going to -- aren't we going to appraise it both ways? We can appraise it both ways.

City Manager Iglesias: We can. We intended to, as I said...

Commissioner Fors: Yeah, in the end, everybody knows that...

City Manager Iglesias: We intended to go with the highest appraisal.

Commissioner Fors: The seller and the purchaser here only intend to do a parking lot. But...

Vice Mayor Mena: And we're not going to sell unless there are covenants that restrict it to that. So...

Mayor Lago: Along with a...

Vice Mayor Mena: A reverter...

Mayor Lago: Covenants...

Vice Mayor Mena: And all the things we've talked about...

Mayor Lago: Two appraisals...

Vice Mayor Mena: So...

Mayor Lago: The landscaping, the five-year plan for the landscaping, so I mean, we can go around in circles.

Vice Mayor Mena: This isn't -- I'm open...

Mayor Lago: I'm willing to have this conversation all day, if you like, but I think that we should move on, and this gentleman probably wants to speak.

Ms. C. Coll: I don't want to take up any more of your time.

City Manager Iglesias: And let me say...

Ms. C. Coll: I don't.

Mayor Lago: No, I don't have a problem. I'm here for you.

Ms. C. Coll: No, no. I don't want to take up any more of your time.

Mayor Lago: I work for you.

City Manager Iglesias: And if I can say something, Mayor, is that the T-plat -- to move the T-plat forward, the rezoning needs to be done.

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

City Manager Iglesias: The T-plat has to go to Dade County. It may be looked at before December, maybe not. If it gets to December, it'll go to the following year, so we're trying to move that as fast as we can.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, if we're going to go much longer, I'm going to ask that we break for lunch.

Mayor Lago: Well, we have one more gentleman that would like to speak, so you have something else you'd like to say?

Ms. C. Coll: One more thing.

Mayor Lago: One more thing.

Ms. C. Coll: And I thank you...

Mayor Lago: Of course.

Ms. C. Coll: Thank you for humoring me, okay. While the City owns this -- right? -- while the City owns this property, I know that forever nothing is going to change unless we have something like this. But when a hospital owns the property, we're given a covenant that expires in 30 years, only three decades. And for us that are old, we know how short a time that is, okay? And so, this is a material difference for us and one that is extremely important. And I don't see a reconciliation in that way. And that's why you see me fighting so hard to protect 5100 Granada Boulevard and the lifestyle of my neighbors. But while you own it -- and I think that you can do exactly what you want to do without rezoning it and selling it -- you protect us forever. Here, we're forced to

do a short contract. I don't know when you intend on doing that covenant, but that covenant will expire, and it puts us in a much worse position than if you keep that land. That's unequivocal.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.

Ms. C. Coll: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Sir, the floor is yours.

Henry Peraza: Thank you. I'll try and keep it brief. I know we've been here for quite a long time. My name is Henry Peraza, and I live at 4991-95 University Drive, which is Lot 21, adjacent -- I live 10 feet from the parking lot. I've been here for 25 years. I've seen the good and the bad. I think that if we address the issue of the covenant, I'm perfectly happy with that. You know, if they put what the Mayor said -- and what -- into our meetings was very reassuring. Indeed, if you can get that as long as it's a contract between -- as everybody here said -- between the residents and the hospital. Otherwise, it loses some of its teeth, and I think you would agree with that. Mr. Mena, you made a comment earlier that nobody wants residential multifamily built there. I would love to have a multifamily next to me instead of a parking lot where all day long the valet parkers when they need to locate cars, they hit the alarms to find their cars. It happens all the time. So, I don't see why we could not have residential multifamily there. In fact, we know we recognize in the City of Coral Gables there's a lack of housing of (INAUDIBLE) land. So, I think we should be fighting for those kinds of things. And I think it would be a great idea if we could build a park there, as the gentleman here has heard before, but I know it's not going to happen. But the reality is, is that, you know, we need that covenant. And I trust you and I take you -- everything you said, and I know you're going to do the right thing. I know you're working for our interest. I've absolutely no doubt about that. As to the congestion issue, there are times when I can't even get in or out of my parking lot -- I mean, my driveway, I'm sorry, because of the backup. Now, it could be because of the valets being inefficient or a whole other bunch of reasons, but the reality is, is that Mr. Iglesias, what they're doing now, they're actually parking their cars in the same way

that you said they're going to be parking. Instead of diagonally, they're already parking in -- you know, straight in and out, all the way down. Not only that, but they just pack that parking lot with a lot of cars in between, which adds to the problem. So, the landscaping issue is an important issue, no doubt about it, but this is also a public safety issue. There's a lot of students that live up and down University Drive that walk back and forth from campus. And when that traffic backs up on University, it creates a liability issue. You got ambulances coming down. You got people speeding. You got (INAUDIBLE), and like I said, there's times that I cannot even get into my driveway because of the congestion that is caused. So, as an outside looking in, when this all first came to me, I said, "Well, they're going to put a garage in here." They're going to do this. They're going to increase it. You know, the -- it's going to have a very, very negative impact on the quality of life for people there. So, I hope you will take that into consideration. I know Mr. Mayor said, "Well, what's the difference if you built a multifamily with eight units?" Why is that going to increase the congestion? Well, we're talking about...

Mayor Lago: Do you agree with my argument or no?

Mr. Peraza: Well, I'm talking about the 500 cars that come in and out of that parking lot, not just eight residents.

Vice Mayor Mena: But that demands...

Mayor Lago: But I can use that example.

Vice Mayor Mena: But so -- but that is driven by demand by the hospital -- right? -- people coming to and from, visitors, et cetera.

Mr. Peraza. Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Just because you build multifamily there doesn't mean that demand goes away. Those people are going to park somewhere in the area.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: They're still going to drive through those streets.

Mayor Lago: I said yesterday...

Vice Mayor Mena: But now...

Mayor Lago: That's exactly what I said yesterday.

Vice Mayor Mena: But now...

Mr. Peraza: You mean to the hospital?

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: The hundred cars that park there every day are still coming...

Mayor Lago: They're still coming.

Vice Mayor Mena: To the hospital.

Commissioner Fors: They're going to park in the swales, the middle of the street.

Vice Mayor Mena: They're just going to park somewhere else.

Mr. Peraza: Well, listen, Baptist is a big organization.

Mayor Lago: Sir, but that -- let's just stop for one second. I told you the same thing the Vice Mayor just told you. So, let's just say we got rid of that parking -- which by the way, we can't. There's a 30-year lease on it that was signed before any of us in the room were here, okay. That lease is -- it's allowed. You know, it's recorded, and moving forward, it's not going anywhere. But let's say we did get rid of the lease, and we sold as a City that property to a developer and they put 15 townhomes there.

Mr. Peraza: They're not going to put 15 condos in there; they can't.

Mayor Lago: Okay, what would you like for them to put?

Mr. Peraza: There could be -- I think you can get two lots and four other units there. I'm just saying. Look, I'm not saying...

Mayor Lago: So, you feel good with four.

Mr. Peraza: I'm not saying that's the solution.

Mayor Lago: But let me -- let's just be...

Mr. Peraza: I'm not saying that's the solution.

Mayor Lago: Pick what you want. What do you want? You want four townhomes? Is that what you would like?

Mr. Peraza: No, I'm being a realist. I'm going to tell you -- we're dealing in hypotheticals.

Mayor Lago: But I'm asking you just pick what number amount of units you would like to see built there.

Mr. Peraza: I think given the amount of the land...

Mayor Lago: How about we just build one? How about we build a nice house there, right?

Mr. Peraza: Sure. Put a nice house.

Mayor Lago: Okay, let's just do that. Let's just -- the house gets built. The parking lot is gone.

Mr. Peraza: Right.

Mayor Lago: A beautiful house gets built. There's a beautiful family, two adults, two children, with two dogs...

Mr. Peraza: Right.

Mayor Lago: And a hamster.

Mr. Peraza: Okay.

Mayor Lago: Right? What do you do with the hundreds of people that are parking that are coming to the hospital every day? My father, like I told you, is a physician in that hospital. When I've had to go to that hospital to visit someone and I try to park in the parking garage, there's no parking in the parking garage, and there's no parking on the surface parking lot around the facility. So, people are forced basically to park valet. That's why you go from 94 parking spaces to 120, 130 because

they're jamming all the cars in there, and then they have to go and start pulling the cars out and moving cars around. So, what I'm telling you is, if you get rid of that lot -- let's say we get rid of it.

Mr. Peraza: I didn't say to get rid of the lot. I never said that. You're putting words in my mouth. We're talking -- we just talked about a hypothetical between eight units and -- I didn't say that in the context of let's get rid of the lot.

Mayor Lago: You did say maybe we should make it -- that you would prefer to see it build -- be residential.

Mr. Peraza: My preference would be that, but I'm a realist and I know it's not going to happen.

Mayor Lago: So, if you...

Mr. Peraza: So, what I'm saying to you is -- and I said yesterday -- in the course of this discussion that we're having with Baptist right now, that there be some teeth put into that, so they don't have the congestion issues. I know you mentioned that earlier. So, let's go in that direction.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mayor Lago: And I even mentioned the fact that I brought up the fact of the reverter clause, and the City Attorney's going to look into the reverter clause.

Mr. Peraza: Yes.

Mayor Lago: But the idea -- but I want to put this on the record. The idea...

Mr. Peraza: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: Of selling that a lot and allowing it to stay residential so a developer can build a house or four townhomes or two townhomes, the concept of where you're going to put those hundreds of cars of the people who come to visit their loved ones in the hospital or to come to have ancillary or procedures in the hospital, we would have a major problem on our hands...

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Mayor Lago: Because we wouldn't be able to park anybody.

Mr. Peraza: They have a multilevel garage, right? I assume that they have...

Mayor Lago: Where would they build it?

Mr. Peraza: What's that?

Mayor Lago: Where would they build a multilevel parking garage?

Mr. Peraza: It's there.

Mayor Lago: I know, but it's packed.

Commissioner Anderson: It's packed.

Mr. Peraza: Listen, Baptist is a big organization, okay? They're all over South Florida. And if they wanted to shift some of their services to other facilities in order to alleviate traffic there, they could do it.

Vice Mayor Mena: They're not going to.

Mr. Peraza: Of course, they could.

Mayor Lago: But I think we're dealing in...

Mr. Peraza: Why not?

Mayor Lago: Hypotheticals right now.

Vice Mayor Mena: They're not going to.

Mr. Peraza: But they could.

Mayor Lago: Think about...

Vice Mayor Mena: Well, sure, I mean, yes.

Mr. Peraza: Okay, they could.

Vice Mayor Mena: They could.

Mr. Peraza: They could.

Vice Mayor Mena: They could.

Mr. Peraza: So, but let's just say that...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mr. Peraza: There could be ways that they can do it.

Vice Mayor Mena: But more than likely, they're not going to.

Mr. Peraza: I understand, but I think there's...

Vice Mayor Mena: And all those people are going to come and park on your swale...

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: And...

Mr. Peraza: They do that already.

Mayor Lago: Get ready.

Vice Mayor Mena: But a hundred more.

Mr. Peraza: They do that already.

Vice Mayor Mena: A hundred more at a time.

Mr. Peraza: Look, I'm not...

Vice Mayor Mena: That's the reality.

Mr. Peraza: Yeah, I know.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

City Commission Meeting

September 28, 2021

Agenda Items F-3 and F-10 are related - Ordinance amending the City of Coral Gables Code by amending Chapter 2 Article IZ "Sponsorship Program," and resolution of the City Commission directing the City Manager and City Staff to establish sponsorship packages for certain City events and further directing staff to secure sponsorship for those events.

Mr. Peraza: But look, for simplicity reasons with this argument, I'm going to say I am not against the parking lot being there, okay?

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mr. Peraza: You asked me the question would I rather have a residence, or would I rather have a parking lot? I think if any of you lived there...

Mayor Lago: How long have you lived in...?

Mr. Peraza: 25 years.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think you're going to end up with a better -- honestly, with a better...

Mr. Peraza: And I would prefer...

Vice Mayor Mena: Situation.

Mayor Lago: Have you owned that --? Just a quick -- just for my own...

Mr. Peraza: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: Reason. I'm not -- I hope you don't take this as disrespect. Do you own the property and live there, or do you rent the property?

Mr. Peraza: No, I own and live there.

Mayor Lago: Okay, because I know that multiple properties down that street, they rent...

Mr. Peraza: No, I live there.

Mayor Lago: To UM students.

Mr. Peraza: I live there and -- I live in the upstairs, just to be -- and my mother, who's 94 years old, lives downstairs with her sister, who's 95 years old. We woken (sic) up every day by the car alarms going off.

Mayor Lago: We've got to fix that. So, why don't we start off...

Mr. Peraza: It's a bad thing.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Manager, with sending a nice letter from our City Attorney stating that if you can't find your cars, valet drivers, please do not use the horns as -- I would like for you to send that letter to the attorney from Baptist and put it on the record so that this gentleman could have a little bit of peace of mind and quality of life.

Commissioner Anderson: Alright.

Vice Mayor Mena: Again, that -- even that situation, again, I really do believe you're going to end up with a better version of what there is now. You're going to have a wall, which is going to help with that noise.

Mr. Peraza: I think that's wonderful. I think that's great.

Vice Mayor Mena: You're going to have better landscaping.

Mr. Peraza: I...

Mayor Lago: You're going to have designated parking spaces, not a free-for-all.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, you know, so...

City Manager Iglesias: And which is much easier to find as far as the valet is concerned because you -- the parking right now...

Vice Mayor Mena: They're going to be numbered.

City Manager Iglesias: Is very chaotic. It's very (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Mena: So, at that point, I think the broader concern which has been expressed here is just having the peace of mind that in the long term, those conditions will stay that way, and we're going to do everything we can...

Mr. Peraza: I certainly hope so. I mean, you know, they -- and during Hurricane Wilma, one of their trees fell and took out a roof that I had just put in two months before. After I had written numbers of letters to the City Manager about, you know, these trees need to be trimmed, and guess what? The hospital said, "It's the City's responsibility." City said, "No, it's the hospital's problem." And boom, the tree fell down, took out my roof. Two roofs in one year. So, I hope this improves things. And I mean, it's full of invasive species in there. I don't know how it got to the point it got to it's in. It has been very improperly managed. I don't know if that's...

Mayor Lago: Well, that's our fault then.

Mr. Peraza: It's at the City's fault then...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, we have to maintain that.

Mr. Peraza: Two-thirds of the canal...

Mayor Lago: I mean, we own the property.

Mr. Peraza: Half of the canal today, by the way, is blocked by trees that have -- from Wilma that have grown into the canal.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Mr. Peraza: Half of the canal is blocked.

City Manager Iglesias: We've had issues removing invasive species because it would clear the area. So, if you clear the area, then you'd have a problem. So, the only invasive species that we're planning on leaving is the pines so we can go in and do it properly, Mayor.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, I mean, we can control the height a little bit so that they don't fall onto a roof, and you can slowly but surely plant something else underneath that would be appropriate because Australian pines do have that tendency to fall over.

City Manager Iglesias: But that's not the only invasive species that we have there.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

City Manager Iglesias: So, we haven't cleared it because it would create more visibility.

Commissioner Anderson: The holly -- yeah, the holly's in there and...

City Manager Iglesias: Hollies and all that.

Commissioner Anderson: All that kind of stuff.

City Manager Iglesias: Once we clear that, then you expose the parking lot. So, what we're trying to do is do it as part of this. Do the wall and put a six-foot hedge in front of the wall, and then landscaping it so that you wouldn't even see the wall initially.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Mayor Lago: So, moving forward.

Mr. Peraza: So, just one last question. That you're going to put the covenant in place.

Mayor Lago: Yes, sir.

Mr. Peraza: And that you will fight for it. But what if the hospital says, "No way."

Mayor Lago: Then I won't sell it to them.

Vice Mayor Mena: Then we don't have to sell it.

Mr. Peraza: You won't sell?

Mayor Lago: We say no.

Commissioner Anderson: No.

Mr. Peraza: Great. So, you're -- that's the commitment you're making?

Mayor Lago: I've said it ten times on the record.

Mr. Peraza: Oh, okay. Well, that's great.

Commissioner Anderson: You have -- and now you have commitment of more of us, sir.

Mr. Peraza: What's that?

Commissioner Anderson: Now you have the commitment of more of us.

Mr. Peraza: Wonderful, wonderful. Listen, I really appreciate the time, Mr. Mayor, I mean, and the hard work you guys all do, Mr. Iglesias, in keeping us informed. This whole process first started back in December. I met with Mr. Trias, and it was a lot of...

Mayor Lago: When did you reach out to me?

Mr. Peraza: I never reached out to you.

Mayor Lago: When did the two ladies reach out to me?

Mr. Peraza: When I first heard about this thing back in December...

Mayor Lago: It was on Friday at 3 o'clock at office hours. We had a meeting on Monday morning with all the entire staff that was over...

Mr. Peraza: Yes.

Mayor Lago: An hour and change, and we're on the Commission today.

Mr. Peraza: And the wonderful thing about that, Mr. Mayor, is that I know a lot of these facts are facts and they're coming out, so we're not having to -- like you're having the situation with the Coral Gables Country Club. It's the information that we have. It's based on factual information. But you know, I hope you can appreciate the fact that, you know, we were concerned about, you know, a multistory garage going in there. I went in this thing this December not knowing what was going on, and frankly, not getting a lot of straight answers about what was going on. One meeting was cancelled. But frankly, in June, Mr. Iglesias -- back in June...

City Manager Iglesias: Let me just say that I had a special meeting with all of you, and then...

Mr. Peraza: Yes, you did, and that was in June. But I'm talking in December. I went from December to June. And that clarified a lot of things for me in June, which was very helpful.

City Manager Iglesias: We did not want to have a meeting without showing you the final plan, and there was a number of iterations that we did not like, so we wanted to make sure that it was something -- I didn't want to show you something that could not happen and did not occur.

Mr. Peraza: Right. Yeah, so the plan as it stands from the landscaping, I reached out to Solange, and I'm going -- Dina's going to come out and we're going to meet because I don't want to be looking at cars next to my deck.

City Manager Iglesias: She's our landscape architect. She's happy to meet with all of you, and she's met with you before.

Mr. Peraza: Yes, and she's going to come out. We're going to talk about some of the tree trimming and issues that are there. So, I am completely satisfied with that. I think that's great, and I have no issues with that whatsoever.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.

Mr. Peraza: Okay and thank you.

Mayor Lago: So, moving on, Mr. Clerk, we have to take a motion on F-5?

City Clerk Urquia: And -- F-5 and F-6.

Mayor Lago: We have handle these individually, correct?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir. And we need a motion on F-5 and F-6.

Vice Mayor Mena: Move it.

Commissioner Anderson: Second.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Lago: F-6.

Commissioner Anderson: Move it.

Commissioner Fors: Second.

City Commission Meeting

September 28, 2021

Agenda Items F-3 and F-10 are related - Ordinance amending the City of Coral Gables Code by amending Chapter 2 Article IZ "Sponsorship Program," and resolution of the City Commission directing the City Manager and City Staff to establish sponsorship packages for certain City events and further directing staff to secure sponsorship for those events.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Lago: F--7.

City Attorney Ramos: F-7 and F-8 will be on next time for consideration.

Commissioner Anderson: Next time.

Mayor Lago: Okay.