

**City of Coral Gables Blue Ribbon Committee Meeting**  
**August 5, 2021**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**Blue Ribbon Committee Members**

**Chairperson Felix Pardo**

**Board Member Aramis "Mitch" Alvarez**

**Board Member Robert Behar**

**Board Member Willy Bermello**

**Board Member Glenn Pratt**

**Board Member Javier Salman**

**City Staff**

**Assistant City Attorney, Gustavo Ceballos**

**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

**City Architect, Juan Riesco**

**Assistant Development Services Director, Devin Cejas**

**Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias**

**Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director, Warren Adams**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Sue Kawalerski**

**Adan Quesada**

**Samuel Lawson**

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Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Clerk, could we start?

City Clerk Urquia: You have a quorum, Mr. Chair. You're welcome to start.

Chairperson Pardo: I'd like to call the Med Bonus Blue-Ribbon Committee to order. Mr. Clerk, can you call the roll, please?

City Clerk Urquia: Chairperson Pardo?

Chairperson Pardo: Here.

City Clerk Urquia: Board Member Alvarez?

Board Member Alvarez: Here.

City Clerk Urquia: Board Member Behar?

Board Member Behar: Present.

City Clerk Urquia: Board Member Bermello?

Board Member Bermello: Present.

City Clerk Urquia: Board Member Pratt?

Board Member Pratt: Present.

City Clerk Urquia: Board Member Salman?

Board Member Salman: Present.

City Clerk Urquia: Board Member Riesco?

City Architect Riesco: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you. Approval of the minutes. We received it recently. They are verbatim, correct, Mr. Clerk?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir, they are.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Behar: I'll make a motion to approve.

Board Member Salman: I'll second.

Chairperson Pardo: Made by Mr. Behar. Who seconded? Mr. Salman.

City Clerk Urquia: All in favor?

The Board Members (Collectively): Aye.

City Clerk Urquia: Opposed?

Chairperson Pardo: Okay. So, we have been reviewing, and we have been analyzing the issues before this committee. And as far as the order of things, this will be our third meeting, and today we're going to discuss specific changes to Section 5-201. I'd like to be able -- with the indulgence of the board -- what we have here is that since this meeting is open to the public, both here physically and also on Zoom and is being recorded, we thought that it would be a good idea to bring up the documents where everyone can see it and follow it. And then that way, it's easier, I think, for the board members to also discuss it, and then we'll start at the top of the section and then work our way through it. Everybody's okay with that? Okay.

Board Member Behar: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: Yes.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Mr. Chair, if I may. Assistant City Attorney Gus Ceballos. Just to provide some, I guess, general timeline, I believe we have one meeting subsequent to this.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: If we were to try to get this on the August 24th meeting, which is the desire of the Commission, we need to have something by next meeting to kind of -- to discuss and finalize and make our final recommendation. So, I would just keep that in mind that we are in a bit of a time crunch. And as we wrap up today, hopefully, we have some sense of where we want to go, so that we can make a motion next meeting and have this on the 24th. If not, we'd probably have to delay it to the September meeting.

Chairperson Pardo: The --

Board Member Bermello: Mr. Chair, could I make a comment or a suggestion? You -- three versions of redlines have been circulated to date. I circulated, I guess, the first; you circulated one a couple days ago, and we just got from Mr. Behar, one today. Obviously, you know, the one today and the others at some point should be discussed. I would suggest that -- we have a very talented staff with the City Attorney's Office -- we try to consolidate all the comments received to date, not eliminate anything, so that we have everything to review and discuss, but that we get it all in advance so that we have like four or five days, so that when we come at the next meeting, we -- I'd like to be able to go line item by line item, knowing that we've had an opportunity to review, consider, discuss, properly vet every comment from any of our board members, including those that may be made on the spot because those are as good as any that have been made with

prior time. So, I would just consider that because I'd like to read Mr. Behar's. We could do it today and go through it, but I think at some point I'd like to see it all combined so that we look at it in one place and there may be areas of commonality where we both agree with adding the same thing or striking the same language. I'm sure we do. I think there's a lot of commonality in what we all see, and there may be some areas that some of us see that others don't. And those are the ones that I think we then discuss whether they're included or excluded. But I would just recommend that at some point, and I think it should come from the City Attorney Office that we get a -- I don't know -- a combined that we can still see the comments in there and then make some discussion. Because if not, it's going to be still tough, I think, to try to go through everything in one sitting.

Board Member Behar: If I may, just to elaborate on that point a second. I agree that we should discuss this because there are some complete differences of opinion between some of us. And I think that in some cases, you know, the one that Felix circulated was taking out some of the items there that, in my opinion, should be kept. So, I think it would be most beneficial for all of us and for the public, if we went perhaps one by one, and then we could discuss which we agree, which we don't agree to take out or leave it in or add or clarify. So, I think that if we were going through -- before it went to the City Attorney's Office, so when we send it to the City Attorney with the minutes, it's clear for them what to follow.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. And that was exactly the purpose of trying to do it this way, so we could go line item by line item, discuss it, see where we have consensus, and we see where we have differences of opinion. And then we can consolidate it, you know, basically by this meeting and then be able to have a consolidated draft that reflects exactly what our opinions are. And hopefully, we can get consensus on most of them and see which ones we don't, and we go from there. So, I think that is what we're trying to do.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah, I think the only thing I want to make sure is we discuss everybody's comments, not just one set of comments.

Chairperson Pardo: No, no, no.

Board Member Bermello: That's my only point, you know.

Chairperson Pardo: Willy, I think the -- what we're trying to do is put something up there on the wall, and we got something to try -- a target to try to hit, and then we can go from there, and then we can express, you know, our -- either our agreement or disagreement and discuss that here. And then go -- you know, because now we're really getting into the technical end of it. We've already discussed the philosophical component. We've discussed the drawbacks, and we've discussed also other things that weren't reflected in the ordinance to -- in this section of the Code to begin with. So, that being said, okay, let me see if I don't knock out the power in the city here. Hold on. Alright. We're going to start. And so, the public understands what they're looking at, is this is a portion of the Zoning Code, which is what regulates the limitations of development and the performance standards for that. Everything that is in black on this particular document that everyone is looking at is specifically as it is written in the Code now. And this particular example that you have up here now, everything that is crossed out in red is taking out an existing word or group of words. And then everything that is underlined in red are new words that are being -- been inserted. So, you could see basically what the original sentence or paragraph said, and then you can then proceed and see what the proposed changes are. And these changes, of course, are going to be subject to the committee -- because this is a committee -- the committee's recommendations and consensus. So, starting off with Section 5-201, in Article 5, there are two sections. And this is for the Mediterranean standards, which is Section 5-200. Section 5-201 are the Coral Gables Mediterranean style design standards. So, under the purpose and applicability, you could see that originally -- sorry about that -- it said "bonuses." I am suggesting adding the word "development" because these are development bonuses. And it said before "incentives," and I am suggesting that we change the word from "incentives" to "special allowances." The special allowances are described specifically, and these special allowances are different than variances and other legal words. So, under the purpose, the other suggestion that I made on this document is to strike out

the words "the various architectural styles and association with." So, reading the entire paragraph, it's "provide development bonuses and special allowances to property owners to encourage and expand the creative use of promoting public realm improvements." Now, Mr. Bermello made the suggestion of changing the word "promoting." And I would suggest the word "encouraging," so it would be "to property owners encouraging public realm improvements."

Board Member Bermello: Yeah. But I think the word encourage is already there. To me, it was just grammar, not -- so it's more -- this is a stylistic change. This is not a substantive change. I think if it would read "the creative use of public realm improvements" -- you already discuss "encourage." You already say "expand," so I think that -- it's just a little cleaner, but that same. Not change of substance, it's just --

Board Member Salman: Just to remove the second "promoting."

Board Member Bermello: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Salman: Through the Chair, I think that the inclusion of an ambiguous term, such "special allowances" actually detracts from the goal of the whole section. If you were just to say, "provide development bonuses to property owners to encourage and expand the creative use of public realm improvements."

Chairperson Pardo: Well, the reason that there's a distinction between the two is the development bonus is normally referred to FAR and the special allowances would probably have more to do with height and other things. So, there's like a distinction between the two.

Board Member Salman: Well, height is defined later on in the Code under the different tables as to how much you can add.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct.

Board Member Salman: So, if that's what you mean, well, that's also part of a bonus. I'm just trying to remove weasel words out as much as we can.

Board Member Bermello: Is special allowance a defined term in the Code?

Board Member Salman: Special allowance is...

Board Member Bermello: Because that's one way to resolve it, that you recommend it in the glossary or the definition of terms that be added, but then we got to have a definition of what that means. Otherwise, you get the legal profession making a heyday out of...

Board Member Salman: And that's exactly what...

Board Member Bermello: What it is.

Board Member Salman: We're facing here today, okay, is people making hay out of what was the original intent of a code and transforming it from a bonus to an as of right development opportunity, and that was never the intent.

Board Member Bermello: Right.

Board Member Salman: And I have just a general objection to the disassembly of the general intent and the following, you know, A through I breakdown of that without some sort of a preamble that would begin with, you know, the Mediterranean bonuses are designed to protect, promote, and enhance the unique character of the City of Coral Gables as follows: By -- and then you could go providing dah, dah, dah, dah, dah.



Chairperson Pardo: I did not change the order of the letters that are there, but what you're discussing is C, provide development bonuses for Coral Gables Mediterranean architecture design to continue to support George Merrick's vision, consistent with the established historic building fabric of the city. Then D, enhance the image of the city by providing a visual linkage between the contemporary development and City's unique historic thematic appearance. And then you go to A -- I would think -- which would be C, and then B, provide for a two-level bonus program, architectural style, and public amenities that provides architectural features and amenities typically provided in Mediterranean style buildings. So, what this does is it's showing you that you have two different things going on for the development bonuses and the special allowances, and that would be architectural style, and then the other one would be public amenities.

Board Member Salman: Correct.

Chairperson Pardo: And what is awkward about this is I did not change the original order...

Board Member Salman: And what I'm suggesting -- through the Chair -- is that we put some of these sections -- and they would be specifically D, C, E, and H, as part of a preamble that sets out what the whole goal of the ordinance is, and then go into the specifics rather than -- it's...

Board Member Behar: But I think...

Board Member Salman: It just makes it more difficult.

Board Member Behar: Javier, the purpose -- (INAUDIBLE) intent to comply with the purpose. And I think those A, B, and C and D, okay. Then when you get into more detail is when you're going to start seeing more defined requirements, I think.

Board Member Salman: I understand, but I keep saying that we're burying the lead. What is the purpose of this? It is to enhance, promote and protect the unique character that is Coral Gables by incentivizing the creation of a higher standard of architecture beyond that which is allowed in the Code.

Chairperson Pardo: Well, it's two things. First of all, it's promoting a style and promoting public amenities, and that's a way...

Board Member Salman: Through the use of an architectural style and the enhancement of...

Board Member Behar: But let's not lose...

Board Member Salman: I'm not saying...

Board Member Behar: The fact that...

Board Member Salman: I'm not taking anything out.

Board Member Behar: The style...

Board Member Salman: I'm just saying this is the logic of it all.

Board Member Behar: The style is only one of various. You've got other public benefits that are just as important if you do a contemporary building, or you do a Coral Gables style building.

Board Member Salman: I agree. And I agree.

Board Member Behar: Because what I -- what you're going to see from my document, even though it's not reflected on B, I'm suggesting that -- I'm proposing that we go to a three-level bonus; that

you have in Table 1 what you get, Table 2, and then if you want to get your full 0.5, then you do the style. Because I think the way we're seeing the development throughout the city, you could get some very good projects that may not be the, you know, Mediterranean style building. So, you may not get the full benefit, but yet you could get to a level that are -- they incorporate and provide public benefits.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. And that's why I separated the public pedestrian amenities, purpose and applicability separate from -- if you look at the top again -- where its purpose and applicability, it's purpose and applicability of the Coral Gables Mediterranean style design standards. But when you go down to the next section, which would be B, which like I said before, I did not re-enumerate everything, public pedestrian amenities would be B, purpose and applicability. And then E would be A under that section. So, what you have there is: A, promote an assortment of street level public realm and pedestrian amenities in order to earn development bonuses and special allowances through a structured discretionary review process and subject to compatibility with the surrounding neighborhoods. Now, what is very important, I think, in this particular sentence, going back to what Robert said just now, is that it is saying that the public realm and pedestrian amenities are extremely important, and that through this review process, the development bonuses and special allowances would be granted and it's subject to all of these different things. But what you're saying is promoting an assortment of the street level (INAUDIBLE) is separate from the style. So, you have, as Robert said, the style with a certain thing. Now, you have the public realm things that we all talked about and are rewarding them. And that's why it is so important to understand that the word "earn" makes a difference and words mean things. You have to earn these bonuses. You have to earn these special allowances. It's not being diluted. And the key is that you earn them through great design. So, if you look at F, which would be B, provide the ability to provide special allowances by the Board of Architects to promote public open space improvements. G, which would be C, promote and require architectural design elements focused to a pedestrian scale. When you go to...

Board Member Bermello: Mr. Chair, do you see the use of the word "structured discretionary"...

Chairperson Pardo: Right. The reason...

Board Member Bermello: To create any kind of potential confusion in somebody's mind? If the Board of Architects is being given discretionary powers to provide those special allowances through the dialogue with the architect and the developer, which I think is something that -- I mean, I think the Board of Architects does a great job. And I think giving that authority, I have no problem. I just don't know what it means when you say structured.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. Well...

Board Member Bermello: Because I -- the last thing I want to do is kind of tie their hands, because the idea of having -- I don't know, it's a seven-member board -- is that you have a lot of talent and they can see something good, and they can see what we can't see because we're not seeing the specifics. They'll be seeing the specifics of a site, of the response of a neighborhood condition that we're not -- we're talking in theory. So, I like the idea of discretionary. I like the idea of putting that onus, that responsibility, which is a great responsibility, on the Board of Architects. But when I saw the word discretion -- "structured," which again, by itself, you know, I put a lot of structure in my life and my business. But I would ask myself, "Well, what does that really mean," if I'm telling here that my fellow colleagues on the Board of Architects will have discretion not to give these allowances.

Chairperson Pardo: They have the discretion because it's a discretionary review. But the reason that the word "structured" -- the reason I placed the word "structured" in was not to create confusion, but the reason that I provided structured is that when you read what the text said before, it just said a discretionary review process. The structured discretionary review includes the Board of Architects, includes the City Architect. It includes the Planning Department. So, that's all part of a structure.

Board Member Bermello: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: And if you keep reading down the...

Board Member Bermello: Okay, so by "structured," you mean that it's part of a structured...

Chairperson Pardo: That's correct.

Board Member Bermello: Review process...

Chairperson Pardo: That's correct.

Board Member Bermello: That is beyond the Board of Architects, but it maybe starts with the Board of Architects, but there are other -- there's other input that'll be...

Chairperson Pardo: Yes.

Board Member Bermello: Coming in too.

Chairperson Pardo: And the reason, Willy, that I did that specifically was because there was a loss of, you know -- as far as in the process of being inclusionary, as far as that is concerned. The word is not intended in any way, shape, or form to limit what the Board of Architects can review, can opine on, or the City Architect, or the Planning Department for that purpose. But the whole point is to understand that the review process is not up to one person. It's not up to one board, but it's up to several of these to keep everything compatible and in check in the city. So, therefore, once you keep reading and going down the sections, you'll see, I think you may agree, and if you all want to take the word "structured" out, that's...

Board Member Pratt: Well, yeah.

Board Member Bermello: Well, I wasn't...

Board Member Pratt: Willy, if I could just...

Board Member Bermello: Suggesting that. I just wanted to ask the...

Chairperson Pardo: The intent.

Board Member Bermello: Thinking behind the -- the intent...

Chairperson Pardo: The intent.

Board Member Bermello: Behind the word. It's not...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Pratt: Yeah. And Willy, to your -- I agree with you. When words start being interjected into the -- I mean, as you said, Felix, before, words have meaning. And I think that it's -- if we don't have to add unnecessary words in -- the process is already identified in the Zoning Code for the projects as they go through the development process. And so, -- and going back to another question that Willy had is that is that structured -- is that in the definition section? Or you know, we're adding words that are not defined.

Chairperson Pardo: Well...

Board Member Pratt: And I think, you know, we need to be careful in terms of...

Chairperson Pardo: Well, discretionary review is not in any of the -- in the glossary in the Zoning Code either. But when you say discretionary review, it can mean one thing one day and another thing another way. But when you explain that it's a structured discretionary review, it basically is telling you, well, for example, the Board of Architects, the City architect, the Planning Board, all these different entities are part of a, in my mind, structured review process. And it's discretionary in the sense of you're looking at something that is very difficult to put in words when you're reviewing a design, but it is structured in such a way that it's referred to in other parts of the section.

Board Member Behar: When you explain it that way, it makes sense, but it's when you read it, you don't get that same definition.

Board Member Pratt: Right.

Board Member Bermello: That's why I asked the question.

Board Member Behar: You know, I don't know...

Board Member Bermello: As the Chair explains it, I'm good with the explanation, which basically says that discretion is within the structure of a methodology or a process or a sequencing that involve departments and other things. I get it. I think that's...

Board Member Salman: I think if you just change structure to define multi-leveled review, you're fine because that's what the Code is.

Chairperson Pardo: Very good. Alright, so noted. The next one is providing for the ability to provide special allowances by the Board of Architects to promote public open space improvements. Because, you know, up to now, Mr. City Architect, you usually don't do that -- right? -- as far as the Board of Architects and yourself? In other words, as far as you providing the recommendations for public open space improvements in your review process, is that correct?

City Architect Riesco: Yes, based on the Planning and Zoning report and things of that nature.

Chairperson Pardo: Right, so in other words, what I'm trying to do is see, you know, the Board of Architects and the City architect being able to provide input on the these very important public open space improvements. So, I thought that that (INAUDIBLE) because...

Board Member Pratt: No. And generally, the Board of Architects does opine on, you know, projects and for the public realm finishes, you know, pavement treatments...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Pratt: The street furniture...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Pratt: You know, all of those things, lighting. Those are all things that the BOA does review and...

Chairperson Pardo: Right. And you're talking, Glenn, specifically, I think, about the finished materials and maybe the lighting and the -- but normally, you don't get into actually providing comment on the design as far as why don't you open this up to, you know, create a space here or there because...

Board Member Pratt: No, I think that...

City Architect Riesco: That happens...

Board Member Pratt: Yeah.



City Architect Riesco: At the Board of Architects all the time.

Board Member Pratt: Yeah.

City Architect Riesco: We do make recommendations...

Board Member Pratt: Yes.

City Architect Riesco: Based on that.

Board Member Pratt: Yes, the board does.

Chairperson Pardo: The only thing that has been added here is to add specifically that the Board of Architect has the ability to provide those special allowances, so I think it reinforces...

Board Member Salman: May I -- through the Chair -- just make a scrivener's suggestion so it would help clarify a whole lot. Change it to read "provide for the ability by the Board of Architects to promote public open space improvements," and then strike the rest.

Board Member Bermello: So, Mr. Chair, I had recommended adding some language to that only because I've been in situations where there is a definition of open space and you're going to have a lousy open space and you can have a great open space. And so -- and I think it goes beyond the space, so I think some wording with respect to the amenities and the features that go into making a great space, without defining them. I think the Board of Architects would, but I think it's more than just open space. And because I can see someone getting cute and just defining open space as a footprint, and say, that's open space. And then you get into arguments. I think the intent here is that we're trying to make sure that there's consistency of greatness and the quality of our built

environment in the public realm particularly. I thought a little bit of additional wards because the word open space is throughout our Code.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. But you don't disagree as far as inserting the Board of Architects?

Board Member Bermello: Oh, no, no.

Board Member Behar: No, no, I agree.

Board Member Bermello: No, totally.

Board Member Behar: Not at all.

Board Member Bermello: I'm in agreement totally.

Board Member Behar: And Willy, I saw your comment. And in my draft, I did include design amenities and features that benefit the public realm.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah.

Board Member Behar: Because I think that makes a lot of sense.

Board Member Bermello: We're saying the same thing.

Board Member Behar: The same thing.

Board Member Bermello: So...

Board Member Behar: It makes it a little bit more detailed of what is expected.

Board Member Bermello: I think it describes the intent with a little more detail than just providing footprint area to meet a code requirement.

Chairperson Pardo: No, no. And the only thing I changed on your comment, which I didn't have time to put it in here, was that I changed the word embellish to enhance.

Board Member Bermello: That's fine.

Board Member Behar: I did benefit or something, but yes.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah, they're all...

Board Member Behar: They're all the same thing.

Chairperson Pardo: We're all on the same page.

Board Member Bermello: They're first cousins.

Board Member Salman: So, are we in agreement that we're going to add design amenities and features as part of the description of public open spaces?

Board Member Behar: I think...

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah, amenities and features.

Board Member Behar: I agree with Willy.

Chairperson Pardo: Let me read it into the record. It would say design -- add at the end of improvements, add design amenities and features that enhance the public realm.

Board Member Salman: Are we in agreement?

Board Member Behar: Yes.

Board Member Pratt: Yes.

Board Member Salman: Sorry. That's the Chair's job.

Chairperson Pardo: Then the next one is promote required -- that did not change. The next one I grappled with because it says encourage landmark opportunities, including physically designed -- defined squares, plazas, urban passages, parks. And then I added pedestrian compatible driveway, public open spaces, and space.

Board Member Bermello: I think that's a great one.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah, because...

Board Member Bermello: If anything, it helps you or helps all the architects with their clients as to why they should be spending something other than asphalt in a driveway. And to realize that even your entry driveway -- and I know that the code -- and I think rightfully so -- tries to limit the number of driveways onto any property from multiple entries to, you know, limiting the curb cuts where you do have that curb cut, I think the underlying theme is a return and a recapture of that public realm to the pedestrian, even in areas where cars go through, to treat them with a sense of elegance and pedestrian quality. And so, I think having it there -- Mr. Chair, you have it. I had it in my comments. If anything, it underlines kind of the intent of where we're heading here.

Board Member Behar: I think it's good.

Board Member Bermello: And it's good.

Board Member Behar: I'm in agreement. And I think...

Board Member Bermello: I think it completes your first page.

Board Member Alvarez: I think you guys are doing fantastic. But when you look at it, all of a sudden, you're sitting presenting a case and there's a board interpreting your case, and they all agree with it, and okay, how much square footage do I get for this? Or is there a measurable guide in determining what do you get tit for tat in terms of area or, you know, any measurable manner? And I don't know how to deal with that.

Chairperson Pardo: Mitch, this -- up to now, this is all part of the...

Board Member Pratt: Introduction.

Chairperson Pardo: The intent of the design, not part of the table for where you get square footage.

Board Member Alvarez: So, you get to that in the tables?

Chairperson Pardo: Later, correct. And then the problem that has occurred is that, in the last few years, we've seen more and more buildings where the pedestrian versus driveway vehicular portion is almost as nice as picking someone up at Miami International Airport, you know, where you have the overpass above it, and you have the cars zooming by and you have the side -- that's not what we're looking for. We're looking for a better experience for the pedestrian and the driveway. And it's not, you know, necessarily just separation, but how you design it and how you open up the spaces, instead of just squeezing something in.

Board Member Bermello: Mr. Chair, can I make a comment that has nothing to do with this, but it's something that the attorney -- the City Attorney mentioned at the beginning? And it has to do with time and date of competition. I submit to my fellow board members that what we're doing right now is the correct thing. We're taking the time to look at every word, every comma, every sentence, because what we do here will transcend all of us for years and years to come. I think -- even though I live in a world of deadlines, I really do, but in this world, where we're trying to properly vet and give the public also a chance to give opinions, I think that the schedule of trying to get this in time for the August Commission is unrealistic. And I don't want this to be something that happens later personally from my side. I would rather tell the City Attorney, "Listen, we're going to take as long as it takes, and it may take six sittings, if we take two or three pages a day, every time we meet." Because this is -- you know, we got like 10 pages to go. This could be three meetings just to go through the whole thing, so it won't be in August before we get back to the Commission. And I hope that's not a problem, but to work it backwards, I don't think -- I mean, I don't know. I think it'll be unrealistic.

Board Member Behar: Unfortunately, I will agree with you. As much as we want to -- we've been going at it for like 40 minutes and we only covered seven, eight-line items.

Board Member Bermello: And we haven't covered any of the difficult stuff.

Board Member Behar: Yeah, so we should try to do it as soon as possible, but it may not be doable.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah. I just wanted the City Attorney to hear that because I'm sure you report back and...

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I was just trying to provide some guidance. At the end of the day, the City Attorney's Office will be here however many meetings you deem it inappropriate. It's just that the Commission did want to have an item in August, but I can report to them that the

committee just could not turn around a completed product, and that you requested more time. That's basically it.

Board Member Bermello: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: Alright. We'll continue then. Provide a strong emphasis on the aesthetics and architectural design in these regulations to plan the mixing of uses to establish identity, diversity, and focus to promote a pedestrian friendly environment subject to compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods. So, the compatibility issue is one of the reasons that we're here. And one of the things that we have to make sure is that on the compatibility and surrounding neighborhoods, that we have to be aware of not just the height, but the uses. And for example, if you have a building that is near a residential area, you have a commercial side, maybe the commercial side should be flipped to the other side of the building for more compatibility with that particular project in that particular neighborhood. So, what has happened is that it's not just strict zoning. It's more of understanding the compatibility with the surrounding neighborhoods that that is part of what we should all be striving for. Let's continue.

Board Member Salman: Through the Chair. Whenever we read something that we come to more or less consensus, do you want to just say, hey, this is it, and that way we can log it and move on? I think it would help the City Attorney quite a bit. For example, your last one, I don't think there was an objection to it. Just call the question and see if we have a consensus to move forward.

Chairperson Pardo: Well, you've been making notes. We're taping this. There's going to be a verbatim record of it.

Board Member Salman: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: And then hopefully, Mr. Clerk, as soon as we can on this, I think it would be very helpful that we get that as soon as we can to be able to then incorporate any additional comments.

Board Member Bermello: I think Mr. Salman makes a good point though. And just for the record, for example, when we finished that first page, like, I don't have any other comments personally, and I will be ready to say we move first page with all the comments that we have agreed upon. I don't know if the City Attorney is like keeping tabs, or is he going to have to go back to the meeting minutes at the end and reconcile the two? I mean, if we were negotiating a contract, you'd have the attorneys with the documents live and they'd be clicking and saying accept, and we go to the next page. I realized this is not that kind of setting...

Board Member Behar: But I don't think the first page...

Board Member Bermello: How is it going to be?

Board Member Behar: I think you got to go by items.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah, well, I think we've gotten all the items on the first page, on page 51.

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Bermello: And I think Mr. Salman's point was, are we officially, I guess, adopting for page one with the modifications discussed, and then now we move to page...

Chairperson Pardo: That's the way I'm...

Board Member Bermello: I mean, that's...



Chairperson Pardo: (INAUDIBLE).

Board Member Bermello: That'd be the best thing, so we know when we come next time, we're not going to be addressing page 51.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct.

Board Member Bermello: That's already done, right?

Chairperson Pardo: Correct. Alright.

Board Member Bermello: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: So, going to the next page, the site-specific zoning.

Board Member Behar: On the -- under 4 on there, after site specific Coral Gables Mediterranean architectural style, I think that we should include new construction because I think that something was taken out under four, right? Do I have the same document that you do? Because under where it says Coral Gables Mediterranean architectural style...

Chairperson Pardo: That should have stayed in, and then conversions would have been added.

Board Member Behar: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: Applications for new and additions, restorations and/or renovations of existing buildings as...

Board Member Behar: But you had taken out applications for new construction, right?

Chairperson Pardo: No, it is. We should leave it in there.

Board Member Behar: We should leave it in there.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct, right.

Board Member Bermello: So, you're agreeing with my comment?

Chairperson Pardo: Right. And Willy made that comment also.

Board Member Behar: I'm okay with the language that was added on number 3.

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Behar: And taking out Tables 1, 2 and 3 on that, I think. But under the other one, yes, we should...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Behar: You took out number 4...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Behar: Which I was okay with that personally.

Chairperson Pardo: Right, and then just add the conversion.

Board Member Behar: If we -- if you go back to the number 4, the bonus height should not apply to MF -- I can't see that far. MF3? Is that what you have there?

Chairperson Pardo: That's a 4.

Board Member Behar: MF3. Why will it not apply to MF3?

Board Member Bermello: Well, it does apply. I think he's just taking that paragraph out.

Board Member Behar: Oh, but it was taken out. But I think it should not be taken out, right?

Board Member Bermello: I thought you took it out maybe because of redundancy because it's -- you're not talking about specific districts, and I thought you were taking it out there because you're not making reference to all the other districts where that would apply also. So, I thought you were just cleaning it up.

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Bermello: So, I wasn't seeing it as an exclusion. I was seeing it as a clean-up...

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Bermello: Where there's a comment about a couple of districts, but there are a bunch of others that it applies also that are not being mentioned, so let's not mention any of them.

Board Member Behar: So, it's clarification only.

Board Member Bermello: Because -- yeah, it's clarification because...

Chairperson Pardo: And on top of that, there's also a conflict on the amount of one and the other. When you go back to the tables, there's a conflict there also, so I just took it out completely because they shouldn't be there.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah. They're covered in the table, and you know...

Chairperson Pardo: They're covered in the table clearly.

Board Member Bermello: Right. So, we agree on this page that we're consistent with everything, except we're adding the word "new construction" back.

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Bermello: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: Leaving that (INAUDIBLE).

Board Member Bermello: Does that mean that 52 is approved also?

Chairperson Pardo: Yes.

Board Member Bermello: We're moving at a fast clip. We may have to...

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Pardon me. Where did you want to leave the word "construction"?

Board Member Bermello: It's new construction. It was deleted, and then we're putting it back in on what used to be...

Chairperson Pardo: Five, now four.

Board Member Behar: It's now four, right.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Chairperson Pardo: There will be, depending on how we do with time.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I'm sorry. If the Chair is going to allow public comment, I would ask that everyone come up to the mic.

Chairperson Pardo: No, we're going to hold off on that.

Board Member Bermello: At the end.

Chairperson Pardo: We're going to see how far we get on this comment.

Board Member Pratt: Felix, just a question. The MF3 and the MF4 were created from the old MFSA area, and the MFSA districts are in a much more established residential character neighborhoods. And I think that, you know, originally that those additional requirements were put into place, you know, because of the existing character and the fact that they were areas that were in very established neighborhoods.

Chairperson Pardo: You're talking about number 4, Glenn?

Board Member Pratt: Yeah, I'm going back to number 4.

Chairperson Pardo: What we're saying is that that's reflected already in the table. And as you see, it says...

Board Member Bermello: It's kind of redundant.

Chairperson Pardo: And it says, "and five of ten standards in Table 2," and when you look at that, there's a discrepancy in the table on the amount of items -- there are 12 items...

Board Member Pratt: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: And it says 10. So, nowhere else do you have any of these in this first section.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah, it's cleanup. It's not...

Chairperson Pardo: It's a cleanup (INAUDIBLE).

Board Member Bermello: It's not...

Chairperson Pardo: They're reflected. Nothing has been taken away.

Board Member Bermello: Nothing's been taken out.

Board Member Pratt: Okay.

Board Member Bermello: It's like repeating a sentence twice and you're just deleting it.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct.

Board Member Bermello: So, 52, are we good with the changes?

Chairperson Pardo: I think 2 is fine.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I'm just trying to make sure we follow along and that I can track it.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: So, 54 is the only part of the deleted language that's going to be included as construction or new construction?

Board Member Behar: New construction.

Chairperson Pardo: New construction.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I'm sorry?

Board Member Salman: Read the whole paragraph so that it makes sense.

Chairperson Pardo: Applications for new construction and conversions of existing non-Coral Gables Mediterranean style...

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Understood.

Board Member Bermello: Okay.

Unidentified Speaker: There you go.

Board Member Salman: Got it, Mr. Attorney?

Chairperson Pardo: Alright.

Board Member Behar: Okay, in the -- here, hold on second, Mr. Chairman. Number 7 or number 6, special location site plan review, where it says properties in the MF2, 3, 4, MX1, 2, 3 District, which are adjacent to or across public rights-of-way or waterfront from an SFR district. Should we do that instead of across -- adjacent, across -- should we say abut?

Board Member Bermello: Above?

Board Member Behar: Abut, abut it.

Unidentified Speaker: Abut.

Chairperson Pardo: Adjacent.

Board Member Behar: Take out are adjacent to or across public rights-of-way or waterway from and just simply say abut.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I will defer to the Planning and Zoning Directors that are both present in the room. But I believe abut is a defined term, so...

Board Member Bermello: So, let me just give you my feeling. And I used to live on (INAUDIBLE) on the water. And if someone was on the other side where they're not really abutting me, but they're definitely across from me and kind of imposing, I think I want to be able to, you know, receive some notification. So, I'm thinking about a single-family home, and if you're in a waterway or in a golf way, you spent a lot of money. And I think this kind of highlights the fact that those public rights-of-ways, whether it's a greenway or a waterway, they're important.



And the level of care should be, frankly, of a higher degree because those waterways and those open ways are really for everybody's enjoyment, you know.

Chairperson Pardo: And that's the specific intent of this paragraph. (INAUDIBLE) leave it in.

Board Member Bermello: That's what's -- I mean, if you live in North Greenway or South Greenway Drive and you jog there in that area, you know that's special. That's really special. So, that's the only thing. I think, legally, you're correct, it's about -- across. But I think leaving those there, I think just highlight a sense of maybe of care.

Board Member Behar: Okay, that's fine. I mean...

Board Member Bermello: I had more of a comment that I thought that Paragraph B was quite redundant. So, it's, again, not substance. I'm not looking at the substance, more of the style. It looks like we're saying the same thing like three times in the same paragraph.

Chairperson Pardo: No, the difference...

Board Member Bermello: But I'm -- listen, I'm fine with the wording. I just thought it was a little redundant.

Chairperson Pardo: Right. The -- one of the things that seems to be missing from the Board of Architects, in my opinion -- from the Board of Architects tools that -- for their review is the conceptual type -- in other words, when you're going through a review process or something that has to do with a special location site plan review, it's a different animal altogether. And it's very rare that the Board of Architects gets to opine on the site plan itself. In other words, it's left to Planning and only Planning. So, the difference is to obtain a conceptual site plan review approval from the Board of Architects, which the only reason that you would do this is because this section has to do with special location site plan review. So, therefore, the Board of Architects, by them

reviewing the conceptual site plan, has the ability then to see the big picture of the site plan because this is not a normal site plan. This is a special location site plan review.

Board Member Bermello: Are you suggesting that as a different step than their preliminary approval by the BOA?

Chairperson Pardo: Correct, yes. It would be almost like three steps, and that's why they obtain conceptual site plan review approval from the Board of Architects. Then you still obtain a preliminary review for the building -- the buildings on the site, and then you still obtain the final review for the...

Board Member Bermello: I mean, it would seem to me that it'd be more of a -- I mean, I would not add a layer of reviews and expense and time. What I would simply say -- I mean, again, I'm sure that everybody here -- I mean, when we are doing a project, we look at the overall context. We go well beyond our property boundaries to see how we relate to the surrounding area in scale, et cetera. I don't know if that is like one of the -- if you go online and you get the requirements for the BOA and you have to get the letter from the architect and a survey, if maybe this kind of recommendation is one that goes there that says, "Add a urban context analysis," for example, for lack of -- that then the architect knows, as part of the package, that's what you expect. I know in the City of Miami, the UDRB, we require that. And if they come in without it, you know, well, staff won't allow the application to be presented. Maybe that's where that happens, Mr. Chair, as opposed to here.

Chairperson Pardo: What makes this so different, in my opinion, is because it's a special location site plan review, normally what happens in these mixed family areas, 2 and 3, normally what happens is it's a special -- they're basically looking at multiple properties that have always been individual properties. Then they're being consolidated into a much larger project. If the Board of Architects is involved -- because not taking out the Planning Department. The Planning Department is involved, the Board of Architects is involved in the site plan review, but this is a

very special location site plan, and therefore, you're able to opine early on in what direction the design of that new space is. So, just imagine you've got a block, it's got 20 separate lots. It's been like that for ages. Now, it's all being consolidated. Now, it becomes one block. If the Board of Architects is involved at the beginning, you know, of the site plan review, it's, I think, a great tool that can be used by the city, you know, to be able to understand that instead of it simply going only to the Planning Department and then coming out already completely site-planned where there's very little discussion.

Board Member Behar: But Mr. Chair, currently, I think there's new requirements to go through a DRC approval, right?

Chairperson Pardo: The DRC...

Board Member Behar: And the DRC pretty much is -- I think does some of that work.

Chairperson Pardo: Well, let's ask the...

Board Member Behar: And maybe we could ask...

Chairperson Pardo: No, let's ask the City Architect. He's the one that represents the Board of Architects at the DRC.

City Architect Riesco: Okay. On the DRC reviews, we are looking at design issues, but we're looking a lot at the materiality, the mass, the compatibility. We look at the context. We look at those things in general, and we provide comments on the project regarding completeness, informational items that are missing. And so, we give the developer responses of things that may not be complete for proceeding with the project.

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

City Architect Riesco: But we do -- of course, we look at the project as an overall. Now, you don't have the full board...

Chairperson Pardo: Exactly.

City Architect Riesco: Responding to that. It's only myself. And so, that's the purpose of the City Architect's position on the DRC.

Chairperson Pardo: And the problem that I see with the DRC review, it's a general review to help expedite, you know, the overall look. It's a very quick review.

Board Member Behar: Not anymore, not anymore.

Board Member Pratt: Yeah. And I would -- Felix, you know, just speaking from the other side of the table as a practicing architect, not for the Board of Architects, when we -- in fact, we're doing a project right now that required conditional site plan approval using the RIR, the Residential Infill Regulations. And we started the process way before the DRC in meeting with Mr. Trias and trying to set up, you know, appropriate siting for the building and creating green zones, buffer areas that would enhance the overall urban character and context, as well as also for the possibility for, you know, future projects that could link up and create these green -- with additional green buffers that would be created. So, there's a lot of pre-planning that goes into that, as well as also the Board of Architects -- that's something that the Board of Architects does review in their preliminary review.

Chairperson Pardo: So, if you're working, for example, with the Planning Board, with Mr. Trias, and you're working for weeks or months on that, by the time you go to the Board of Architects, how much input can they have on the project in itself?

Assistant Development Services Director Cejas: If I may add something? Devin Cejas, Assistant Director...

Chairperson Pardo: The Chair recognizes...

Assistant Development Services Director Cejas: For Development Services.

Chairperson Pardo: Devin Cejas.

Assistant Development Services Director Cejas: Thank you, Chair. Hello, all. Just some brief clarification with regards to DRC. There are no approvals granted in DRC. DRC is solely technical and is there to provide guidance for large projects or any project that the Code deems necessary to go to DRC in preparation for the rest of the process, which may require Board of Architects, Planning and Zoning Board hearings, as well as City Commission. So, it's just a way of all departments to gather together to make certain once a project is deemed appropriate to go to DRC, to make certain that all disciplines get to chime in and prepare an applicant as they proceed further. I just want to be clear. No approvals are granted in DRC.

Board Member Pratt: Correct.

Chairperson Pardo: And Mr. Cejas, would you object for the Board of Architects to be involved in the conceptual site planning of the special location site plan review?

Assistant Development Services Director Cejas: My understanding is -- again, chiming in -- the Board of Architects already has certain purview over the massing and the overall project. Site plan reviews are a conditional use, and that is also a part of a process. And the BOA has every right to chime in on that as well, so -- as well as anything under that purview. And again, for further clarity, that's all on -- that's up to this board, and we're here to answer any questions you may have.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, thank you, sir. Alright, so...

Board Member Bermello: I have a question for Mr. Cejas because there were comments, Devin, I think at the last meeting, or maybe the first meeting, which -- I mean, I didn't comment on because I believe that it's not the case. But the comment was that there was a feeling that when projects go before the DRC and then they land at the Board of Architects, that at that point, the project is kind of like straitjacketed. Could you elaborate a little bit on the process when an applicant comes before you and the different departments gather and that coordinating committee and review and provide guidance? Are you a gatekeeper, or are you --? Do you funnel the project in a different direction than maybe what the Board of Architects would opine? I think that was kind of maybe the concern.

Assistant Development Services Director Cejas: Well, nothing -- yeah, I'll try to answer it the best I can, just applying what the Code dictates. At that level, there's nothing finalized. Obviously, the way the Code is designed is to continue to receive input until its final destination to make certain that we get the best possible product, best possible projects possible. When projects are deemed ready to proceed to DRC, what is generally done on that end is pre-application meetings with applicants to see where they're at with the project, and at the very least, go over the zoning technical issues that the project may have. Right, so if the building is being built outside of a setback, well, that's going to be an issue. The project may not be ready to proceed to DRC. Let's make certain to get that building within the envelope -- right? -- technical issues.

Board Member Bermello: Right.

Assistant Development Services Director Cejas: Sometimes there's things that they might not exactly fit yet. If we see them as ready -- if we feel that it's really to go to the DRC, it's a comment on that report, and they're going to be identified and made aware of that concern to correct it as they proceed to the Board of Architects. Once it leaves DRC, then it goes to the Board of Architects, and then we could start having the discussion of how do you refine the aesthetics, how

do you refine the application. Is the project compatible with the tables if a Med bonus is being requested, so on and so forth? If no Med bonuses are being requested, at that level, the Board of Architects is recommending the project on its aesthetic to Planning and Zoning. If there is Med bonuses, they have to do a vote on that.

Board Member Bermello: I think maybe some of the comments had to do a lot with massing, and that maybe some applicants, after they go through the DRC, they may go to the Board of Architects already maybe with the feeling that, you know, they passed go, they've cleared it, and the project is approved. And you're clarifying that you kind of just look at kind of the fatal flaw analysis of things that you must comply with and that you're not an approval process. You're just a technical support process.

Assistant Development Services Director Cejas: In the last two years that I've been here, I know we've been really working hard to make certain when the project's go to the BOA, that there's a clear understanding on what the request is for, so the Board of Architects is best equipped to make the best possible decision when that project gets to them.

Chairperson Pardo: Devin, my concern, you know, again, goes to the hypothetical example of you have basically a city block in a residential area that's got multiple little two-story apartments there forever. Go from one side to the other, it's lots. Now, it's not 20 lots anymore. It's one lot. Then what I'm hoping to do is see that the Board of Architects, who are very qualified, are able to opine on it at the Board of Architects level, not at the DRC level. Because as you explained clearly, it's more of a technical, you know, component. And the thing is to be able to express at that conceptual level whether, like Glenn said, he's meeting with Mr. Trias, and then, you know, they're going back and forth on all these different things. But the Board of Architects, I think, would be helpful in expressing, you know, at a very early stage, while the project is still very plastic, their concerns to be able to make sure that the compatibility issue is there, from a site planning standpoint, not from a -- not even from a use standpoint. Because most of these things that I see going up are a compatibility issue. And again, one of the reasons that we're here is because some of these projects

just haven't been very compatible. So, I'm just trying to -- I've recommended to the board members inserting just a conceptual -- it's called a conceptual site plan review on the Board of Architects just to say, you know, we're good with the site plan, with the concept of the project. And that's before the preliminary of the architecture of the -- even the detailed massing, et cetera. It's more of a conceptual where you're looking at, you know, the whole thing. And like Willy said, City of Miami has something similar with massing studies, et cetera.

Board Member Behar: No, Willy -- but we both sit on that UDRB. We don't have that requirement. The applicant has to comply with certain requirements, but I think that what Felix is saying here is different from what the City of Miami requires.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah. What I meant by the City of Miami is that we have a requirement where the urban context has to be explained...

Board Member Behar: Correct.

Board Member Bermello: In a great sense of detail as part of the submission, but there isn't a second layer. You know, as a matter fact, there's just one. They don't go through a preliminary and a final. They just go through us one time.

Board Member Behar: Once.

Board Member Bermello: But a lot of detail is provided by the architects on an explanation of the urban fabric and the context in which the project sits, which I thought is what you're trying to get at where you're seeing or referring to a project -- I don't know which one it is. But it seems that it's a project that is changing the fabric of the area. And I think to me, that's, you know, something that needs special attention. But I think if that becomes -- it may not apply to a single-family home in a single-family district, but it may apply to other projects that the context analysis maybe is part



of the submission. In some cities, you have to submit sun studies to see how your project could cast shadows on your neighbors, and they make it as one of the submission requirements.

Chairperson Pardo: And the point that I was trying to -- that I am making is specifically with a special location site plan. It is a special location site plan. So, therefore, it's one of the rare opportunities that you have for the BOA to come in and express, you know, early on, are you doing this or that because there is no procedure like that for the massing, like they have at the city. That's why I thought that by adding that, it's not taking away from the normal Board of Architects approval, you know, and...

Board Member Behar: What I see here, as a practicing architect, right, what I see here is a contradiction because if we're going to request or require that the applicants submit for a conceptual site plan, the board is going to have -- is going to need -- the Board of Architects is going to need a massing study and more elaborate submission to be able to really compare, not as a -- just a site plan. And you know, if I want to compare the surrounding neighborhood, I need a little bit more in order to do that. And that is already a requirement that you need to submit to the Board of Architects.

Board Member Bermello: Not only that, but to make a comment on the site plan, you're going to need to understand the program that the architect is working with and what were the relationships that he was -- or she was trying to manipulate in terms of access, program requirements, parking, setbacks, et cetera. I mean, you're not just going to look at a...

Board Member Behar: A site plan.

Board Member Bermello: A roof plan and say...

Board Member Behar: Just one layer.

Board Member Bermello: Yes, it's good; no, it's not.

Board Member Behar: One dimensional plan, yeah.

Board Member Bermello: So, it's -- I really think, again, Mr. Chair, I think that's part of the overall process. And I think maybe it's more of an item that you deal with in that form that any resident can go online and pick that says, "These are the requirements for preliminary review and approval by the Board of Architects," and tells you how much you got to pay and the plans you got to submit and how many -- all of that, that that is included. It may not be included there today. I think that's where I would do it. I would not...

Chairperson Pardo: The reason that the word "site plan" is there -- and it could be stricken -- is because the line above it says, "Submit an application with the Planning and Zoning for special location site plan review," so you could delete the word "site plan" and say, "Obtain conceptual review approval from the Board of Architects." You could then add massing, shadows.

Board Member Behar: So, if you -- what you're saying is you're going to get -- before you go to DRC, you're going to get a conceptual approval from the Board of Architects. From there, you're going to submit to the DRC, and then you're going to come back for a preliminary approval of the Board of Architects.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct. And the only reason you would do that, Robert, is -- and you know, my estimation is these are not small projects. If you take up a city block in an existing neighborhood, that's not a small project. It may not be vertical, but it sure as hell would change the fabric of that entire neighborhood. That's why I think -- I just want the Board of Architects to look at it to protect the neighborhood.

Board Member Bermello: Again, I don't sit on the board. Maybe this is more for Glenn. Don't you do that now?

Board Member Pratt: Well, we do. And you know, I certainly wouldn't be opposed, or I don't know, you know, from the Administration what their feelings are. But I think speaking as a board member, you know, we would be happy to see something at an early stage and make recommendations. My only -- I guess what I would take out is the approval, the word "approval." I think that to have a conceptual site plan review by the Board of Architects and let the Board of Architects give their comments and directives, and...

Chairperson Pardo: That's fine.

Board Member Pratt: You know, that would be something -- because the DRC meets once a month. I think that, you know, the number of applicants that are applying to the DRC could be something that the Board of Architects could review. The Board of Architects meets weekly. And let that be something that they review.

Chairperson Pardo: Glenn, I think that's a great idea. I don't have a problem omitting the word "approval." I just want the eyes on it.

Board Member Pratt: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: I want the eyes on it.

Unidentified Speaker: But it would be beyond the site plan, correct? It wouldn't just be a site plan. I think...

(MULTIPLE PARTIES SPEAKING IN UNISON)

Unidentified Speaker: Massing study.

Board Member Pratt: To Willy's point, it would be massing studies.

Chairperson Pardo: It's a (INAUDIBLE).

Board Member Behar: You have to do a massing study.

Board Member Pratt: Yeah, you kind of have some...

Chairperson Pardo: The only thing -- the point I'm trying to make is these projects affect a lot of people.

Board Member Pratt: Right.

Chairperson Pardo: And it affects the compatibility a lot of times. And the point is that the more eyes -- that's trained eyes that see it. I believe a lot in the Board of Architects. I've chaired the Board of Architects. I believe a lot in the Board of Architects. And the ability for the architects to say, you know, there's something wrong with this, that it's not compatible with the neighborhood, I think it's extremely important. So, if you want to remove the word "approval," I have no objection with that.

Board Member Pratt: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: And if you want to just leave...

Board Member Pratt: And I believe -- no, I believe getting a conceptual site plan review would be very helpful both to the Board of Architects and the City and the applicant to get...

Board Member Bermello: Just how is that different from the preliminary approval?

Chairperson Pardo: Because the preliminary...

Board Member Bermello: Isn't that conceptual also? I mean, that's...

Chairperson Pardo: Normally, the building is already...

Unidentified Speaker: Designed.

Chairperson Pardo: Completely designed by the time they see the preliminary.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah, but you know, if I want to get a conceptual site plan approval...

Unidentified Speaker: That's the risk the developer takes.

Board Member Bermello: I'm going to...

Unidentified Speaker: And it's a schematic level design, with elevations, mass, roof, floor plans. And if the board deems it inappropriate, the board states it.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah.

Unidentified Speaker: If the board is in agreement with the design and the concept, it continues. But it is reviewed, it is scrutinized. It is assessed. We -- the board typically requires massing studies. They typically require renderings, so we don't -- we're not just looking at two-dimensional drawings. We're looking at three-dimensional drawings that give us that overall concept. So, that does happen at the Board of Architects. Now, can it happen earlier? Sure.

Chairperson Pardo: And again...

Unidentified Speaker: Would that be something that we would entertain? I, you know...

Chairperson Pardo: And again, this has to do with special location site plans only.

Board Member Behar: But what is the difference between special location and every project of any significant size? They're all special location.

Chairperson Pardo: No, the...

Board Member Behar: They all have to go through the process.

Chairperson Pardo: No, these are...

Board Member Behar: Unless you say, you know, a PAD or something that, you know -- but any project that goes through the process has to go through the site plan approval.

Board Member Bermello: Or a project in a very landmarked location or adjacent to a historic property or the size...

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Trias, can you come up here, please?

Board Member Bermello: Or the size of the property. You know, a lot of the projects that we have reacted, and people have reacted negatively to are in kind of inhospitable places on US 1, you know. I mean, really, are you kidding me, US 1? I mean, remember what those living conditions were before some of these projects, and you have automobile dealerships, you know. So, those are not landmark, I think, locations, but they're just huge projects. So, I wouldn't say those are special locations. They're just big projects, big parcels of land. And when you have a big parcel of land, you're going to have a big project. When you have a big project, there should be special attention, I think, very different than doing a single-family home on a 50 by 100-foot

lot. And you know -- I know that there's other conversations here regarding historic preservation, but this is not Boston. And the number of historically designated -- and we did the Merrick house back in the 1980s. So, this is something dear to me. But the number of historically designated properties in the Gables, you know, it's not like something's going to come up at every meeting. What I agree with Mr. Behar, I think the concept of urban compatibility is important on every project. And if the City Architect is saying, you know, this is the appropriate place to have it, I mean, I'd tell you, as a businessperson, as an architect, I would tell you that I would love to have a quick look at some point when we're developing a sketch, and maybe not all the ideas are just solid. I just don't know how you do that with a board that this is going to have a series of requirements. You know, I know how you do it collegially. Or you know, I could call Ramon Trias and say, "Ramon, what do you think of this idea?" You know, and he'll give me his unofficial opinion, and you could do that. But once you get it into a process, I can tell you, when I sit in the UDRB -- and Robert knows this -- and an architect comes and they come ill-prepared, we let them have it. We, you know, cut them up in little pieces. And somebody comes up with just a little four lines and saying, "This is my site plan." I'm going to send them back. I want more information. I want to see how they got there, why they got there, you know, and where they're going. And so, when you do the preliminary approval or submission package, I think at that time you have all those -- or should have all of those issues answered. I think that's the right time. So, I mean, I agree totally with the focus on the public realm, compatibility with the neighborhood, the studies on height, on shade, traffic, all of that. But I think I would work through the current process that we have and just -- if we got to...

Chairperson Pardo: Well, the problem is...

Board Member Bermello: You know, take some screws, and put them a little tighter, and add a couple of items that this board should have for projects, say a project over a hundred thousand square feet or over \$10 million...

Board Member Behar: Or a PAD.

Board Member Bermello: Or a PAD.

Board Member Behar: A PAD, which is any site over 43 -- you know, an acre. Well, those are the projects that do need that special...

Board Member Bermello: Sure, absolutely.

Chairperson Pardo: Why don't we hear from Mr. Trias about what the special location site plan is? Mr. Ramon Trias from Planning.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you know, I am an architect registered in Florida. I'm also an (INAUDIBLE) certificate, and I'm a member of the American Institute of Architects, like many of you, so I take this very seriously. And I think that the comment from Mr. Behar actually was right on the point. I think that you're thinking of the PADs more than the special location site plan. Special location site plan -- if you look at the definition, I think it was in that page -- deals with projects that have single family next to them, not necessarily the very large projects that are one acre or so, which have been the ones that Mr. Bermello was mentioning. I think that you're probably think in terms of the PAD, and I agree with Mr. Behar. I think that the idea of having a conceptual discussion is very good. And I think it takes place right now, and if you want to formalize it, I think that's a very good idea.

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Trias, what do you think as far as the special location site plan, if it's one square foot under what qualifies for a PAD would be? What would be the difference between the two?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The size, just the area.

Chairperson Pardo: So, can you tell us what the minimum size for a PAD is?



Planning and Zoning Director Trias: One acre.

Chairperson Pardo: One acre.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: 43,560 square feet. So, if it's got 43,559 square feet, it would simply be a special location site plan?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: If it is next to single-family, very important point.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, so the special location site plan is next to a single family?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I think if you look -- you might want to read the Code exactly what it says because it may include duplex. I don't remember exactly.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, so -- but you don't have any objection for having a conceptual meeting, review meeting for the Board of Architects?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No. No, actually, it's a very good idea.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, thank you, Mr. Trias. Does anybody have any questions?

Board Member Bermello: Will that be as part of the application same cost, or are we going to add the application cost to go through the city with that? Because we're certainly going to add a timeline.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Well, we'd have to come up with a process, obviously, yeah.

Board Member Behar: And that's the other concern, the time. Because you submit today to go to -- after you go to the DRC, to the Board of Architects, Planning has to review it. And that process is -- unfortunately because they're very busy, it's not a quick process. So, if you have another...

Chairperson Pardo: Well, what if -- Mr. Trias, an idea based on what Mr. Behar was saying, why can't -- because it says, "Submit an application with the Planning and Zoning divisions for special locational site plan review," why couldn't that be part of including the Board of Architects for this conceptual review? In other words, you're looking at it with the applicant, and then you bring it to the -- with the applicant to the Board of Architects. What would be wrong with that?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It could be done like that, sure.

Chairperson Pardo: And it shouldn't add time or money.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The concern that I hear from you is that projects are fully designed when they're submitted, and that is true, but that is the choice of the architect. That is not the opinion of staff. I mean, staff is in agreement with what you're saying.

Chairperson Pardo: You know, I just think -- and maybe I'm wrong, but I just think that, you know, when you have almost an acre, it can change the fabric of that neighborhood forever, and that's the concern. You know, it's all about the compatibility. And some architects do a great job, and some don't. And unfortunately, it would be great to be able to have the Board of Architects early on, with the Planning Department, to do that. So, in the proposal was to include the Board of Architects in this conceptual site planning, the same as applicants when they come see you. And that way it's just not only you, but it's also the Board of Architects, and I don't think that you would have much of an issue because you rely on their opinion.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, and the idea that, somehow, we have a broken process, I don't think we do. And in fact, we can enhance it by doing the things that we do well. I mean, I want to thank all of you for donating your time right now. The same idea goes for the members of the Board of Architects. Every other week, they spend hours trying to help the community be a more beautiful city. So, I think whatever we can do is fine. The one thing I would warn you is that it's better to do it in a more informal way, like Mr. Bermello was saying than trying to come up with the perfect zoning language. I think you're doing a great job coming up with the different strike-through and underline. However, you're coming up with some words and some terms that do not exist in the Code right now. That may be a problem, so I would not encourage you to do that. I would encourage you to think more in terms of a more collegial, like you were saying, approach to the process.

Chairperson Pardo: So, obtain conceptual review from the Board of Architects would be better than...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That would be fine.

Chairperson Pardo: Conceptual site plan review approval from the Board of Architects.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah. And that is something that I've tried to do in the past, because a project was not ready to be approved, but it was ready to be reviewed by the Board of Architects. I think it's a good idea. I don't think it should be only for this type of special site plan. I think it should be a general option, and it probably should be an option. If an architect wants to do it, they should be able to do it.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, so we'll strike out "site plan approval" from that, and it would say "obtain conceptual review from the Board of Architects."

Board Member Pratt: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: I mean, that's a good compromise.

Chairperson Pardo: That's all we're looking.

Board Member Bermello: That's a good compromise.

Board Member Behar: Now, we need to find a mechanism to expedite the process to get there, because the fact that when you submit a project to the Planning Department first, and we know, Glenn, that you're -- it takes a little bit of time for them to just -- before it goes to the Board of Architects. So, that to me, that adds a little bit more of...

Board Member Pratt: Yeah. The other thing too, Robert, is that -- I know most things have to be really figured out in order to get to the DRC level with services and parking and -- where all of the access is going to be. And so that -- you know, that has a lot of development and information that needs to be processed in order just to get to that DRC level. It may be helpful that even before it goes to the DRC, that maybe there could be some...

Board Member Behar: That's exactly...

Chairperson Pardo: That was always my intent.

Board Member Bermello: That's a conceptual review.

Board Member Behar: That would be the way.

Board Member Pratt: That's very conceptual.

Board Member Bermello: Very conceptual review.

Board Member Pratt: That's the point where you've identified...

Chairperson Pardo: Glenn, that was always my intent.

Board Member Pratt: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: In other words, the whole point is that this thing is -- by the time it goes to the DRC, Planning and the BOA have conceptually looked at this thing.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The only thing I would say is that DRC is the time when staff can tell you, "Oh, you need to do a re-plat, you forgot that" or "Oh, wait a second, you have to do certain things."

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: DRC is really very preliminary, and it doesn't approve or deny, like Mr. Cejas explained. But it does give you the opportunity to make corrections in the process or give you some better ways or better tools to do the project. I think DRC is always at the beginning. I think to think that you can go to Board of Architects prior to DRC may lead to some assumptions that are incorrect by the part of the applicant.

Board Member Bermello: I think, for example, when you go to the DRC -- Glenn is correct. You want to go with all your parking laid, your mechanical spaces on the ground level worked out, everything tied down. But I think what the Chair may be talking about is well before then, where you haven't gotten your mechanical engineers giving you the final sizes of your vault or any of your spaces. But you have a parti. You have an initial design idea. And before you spend a lot of money, I think on renderings, on a lot of drawings that you've spent -- that you come with a very series of generalized drawings. I would not even specify how many or what kind. I would

leave it up to the architect to determine what he or she may think. And I think it's great actually that there will be some face time. There will be a discussion. You take those comments, you finalize your work, and then you go to the DRC. And you can talk about, well, the massing was reviewed conceptually, and no one seemed to object. As a matter of fact, people liked -- so, I think it'd be good as long as it's kept flexible, not rigid. And it may not apply in certain cases, but in others, it's a -- I would say...

Unidentified Speaker: I would use it.

Board Member Bermello: I would definitely use it.

Chairperson Pardo: So, we're all in agreement, we're going to leave obtain conceptual...

Board Member Pratt: Review.

Chairperson Pardo: Review of the Board of Architects. And the reason conceptual is that's before preliminary review, which is the normal...

Board Member Pratt: Right.

Unidentified Speaker: I think that'll be good because it gives everybody a heads up on the board of what's coming, and gives them the chance to opine prior to coming in with a preliminary...

Chairperson Pardo: And I think also...

Unidentified Speaker: And I think it's part of the normal conversations we as architects tend to have with staff prior to actually submittal of the preliminary. So, this just allows the board to act as part of that preliminary preparation in the conceptual stage to then opine on it. I think that's

perfectly fine, and I'm very good with the language to just say "obtain conceptual review from the Board of Architects."

Chairperson Pardo: Very good. Alright, so we'll move on. So, thank you very much for indulging me on that special location site plan. And you could see that item 4, underneath it says, "preliminary approval" -- you know, "secure Board of Architects preliminary approval," and then obtain final approval, which is the normal process. In the review criterion, applications considered pursuant to the regulations must demonstrate that they have satisfied all the below-listed criterion. The Planning and Zoning Division shall evaluate the application and reference to each of the following criteria and provide a recommendation to the Board of Architects. So, the only words that were added there was Board of Architects. And the reason is because this -- at this time, we're talking about a special location site plan, which is very sensitive to the residential areas around it. If you go to I below there, where it says, "To the extent which the proposed plan complies with," right now, I found it curious that the words that are there is "departs from the Zoning Code." And if you read this carefully, the extent to which the proposed plan complies with the Zoning Code and subdivision regulations otherwise applicable to the subject property, including but not limited to density, size, area, bulk, and use, and added the words "compatibility with the zoning regulations, which will be deemed to be in the public interest." And in the review criterion, by doing that, I think it gives you the ability to understand that the compatibility with the zoning regulations is extremely important. When you go down to three, added the -- and adjacent properties and neighborhoods -- "contiguous and adjacent properties and neighborhoods," which goes back to what Willy mentioned before on the waterways. And then Article 6 below it, those actions, designs, construction, or other solutions of the site plan, if not literally in accord with these special regulations, satisfy public purposes and provide -- that, to at least an equivalent degree, I thought it was redundant, so I requested that we strike that out.

Board Member Behar: Which one? Where are you at now? I'm sorry.

Chairperson Pardo: Right at D.

Board Member Behar: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Salman: And your purpose for striking that last section?

Chairperson Pardo: Let me get this up on the screen. Actions, designs, construction, or other solutions of the site plan, if not literally in accord with these special regulations, satisfy public purposes, provide -- I think that it's -- if you look up above compatibility with the zoning regulations, you know, it's almost redundant. I thought striking it out would just keep it a little clearer.

Unidentified Speaker: I'm not in agreement.

Board Member Salman: I think it's there for the purpose of granting a certain amount of flexibility to allow for especially odd and special conditions where you're required to do something and you can't quite get it to work within the specific guidelines, but you still want to have it included. It's one of those -- a little bit of wiggle room you want to leave to allow for the imperfection of reality.

Chairperson Pardo: I think it's leading a person to basically say, "We don't have to comply with the Code." That's -- there's a process...

Board Member Salman: No, it's saying that it has to meet the -- at least to an equivalent degree.

Board Member Pratt: Who would be the deciding factor of the -- or who would be the -- or what would be the entity to decide if it's an equivalent degree?



Board Member Salman: I think it'd have to be in compliance with all the review people involved, Planning, Zoning, and the Board of Architects.

Board Member Bermello: I don't know. I got a really bad feeling when I read this paragraph. I'll be very honest with you. I've never seen in a code something like this, where it opens the door -- it says, "If you don't fully comply." I mean, are you kidding me?

Chairperson Pardo: But you can provide some...

Board Member Bermello: I mean, can you imagine that?

Chairperson Pardo: (INAUDIBLE) degree.

Board Member Bermello: You know...

Chairperson Pardo: That's where I got the heebie-jeebies.

Board Member Bermello: So, I think it's -- again, I don't know who wrote this, where they were going with it. I didn't -- no disrespect intended, but I think it just opens up a can of worms. It gives you the feeling that you don't have to be compliant, and when you're not, let us show you some of the things that you can do. And I think where you have discretionary -- where you use the word discretionary without spelling it out, that's where you're giving the Board of Architects a lot of power where they're looking at specific things, and they're seeing how you're reacting and you're offering something that's special. And then there's some areas where you're probably a little bit short, but the special part really over -- more than justifies where you're short, but you're not short intentionally. This is almost like saying, you know, you don't have to comply with everything here.

Chairperson Pardo: We'll give you a mulligan.

Board Member Bermello: And so, I -- when you struck it out, I was good with that.

Board Member Behar: I was okay with that too.

Board Member Bermello: You know because I can't...

Board Member Behar: Personally, I was okay with it.

Chairperson Pardo: Yeah. That's where you go back to that structured discretionary, which is the Board of Architects and everyone else. And you know, this just kind of opens the back door there. And you know, the...

Board Member Salman: Well, we opened the front door when we said special allowances.

Chairperson Pardo: Again, the...

Board Member Salman: Sorry. We either take one and not the other -- we either take one and the other or get rid of both.

Chairperson Pardo: No, the -- well, we'll get to that.

Board Member Salman: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: So, is everyone in agreement with that?

Board Member Pratt: Yeah. No, I'm okay with eliminating that.

Chairperson Pardo: Glenn, you're good.

Board Member Salman: (INAUDIBLE) with the majority.

Board Member Behar: I'm good with that.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Behar: The next one is the one I have a little bit of hiccups here.

Chairperson Pardo: Compatibility of designated historic landmarks. The historic city plan adopted by Coral Gables Commission and building assessment.

Unidentified Speaker: Before you get into it, give me an opportunity.

Unidentified Speaker: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Warren Adams is here, who is the department head for Historical Resources. Mr. Adams, can you approach for a minute?

Board Member Bermello: I just have one question for him. One after you finish, though.

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Adams, you know, since some of us have got a little bit of a -- I want to make sure, clearly, clearly, both Mr. Behar and Mr. Bermello both have expressed their concerns with the phrase "assessed to be of historic value and not designated." Do me a favor and explain to us when you have a designated historical building in Coral Gables, what do you show to say that's a historically designated building? You obtain a certificate through what process?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Warren: And there are two ways something could be classed as historic, either individually designated as an individual site or as part of a historic

district, so there are really two ways we can do it. All of the historic properties, either individual or the districts are shown on a map on the City website. Any alterations to any of these properties either require staff review or the board review, so that's for our designated properties. For buildings that are assessed to be of historic value but not yet designated, that's a tricky one. Ideally, the way that everyone should do a historic inventory is actually do a survey of all the different sections of the city that potentially contain historic buildings. However, that's a big job, especially when you consider anything over 50 years old really potentially is eligible to be designated as historic as a starting point. So, the only way we really at the moment identify or designate buildings that are not designated would either be if the owner approaches us or if someone was either wanting to demolish a building or do substantial alterations to it. We would then request -- or the Board of Architects could request that they actually apply for a determination of historic significance, where we would review it. But the issue at the moment is we really don't have the staffing to survey every single eligible building in the City. So, buildings assessed to be a historic value but designated is a difficult thing to gauge.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, let me ask you...

Board Member Bermello: So, what...

Chairperson Pardo: Let me ask you one question before I turn it over to my colleagues. The San Sebastian Apartments...

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: Is it designated?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Not yet.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, but -- it's not?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: No.

Chairperson Pardo: Would you conclude, in your professional opinion, that the San Sebastian Apartments are -- have historical value?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: There are three things we really look at when assessing historic significance: One is over 50 years of age. Two, does it have architectural or historic significance. And three, does that building retain its integrity, integrity of setting, location, design, workmanship. So, obviously, if you have a building built in the 1920s, and the 1970s, someone put an addition on the front of it, it's lost its historic integrity. Generally, you can get a reasonable impression if something is eligible and likely to be eligible to be designated, but until you've done the research, you can't really be definite. But certainly, in my opinion, they certainly appear on the face of it to be potentially eligible.

Chairperson Pardo: So, I...

Board Member Bermello: (INAUDIBLE) questions. You're the Historic Preservation Officer of the City?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Yes.

Board Member Bermello: What staff do you have?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: What staff? I have two other people who generally focus on historic preservation. I have one person who is more of cultural arts and public arts, that is an archivist, an administrative assistant, and is a part-time (INAUDIBLE) for the Merrick house. So, there are really three of us that focus on historic preservation.

Board Member Bermello: So, again, I'm not sure about their mission and how well staffed you are or are not, but it seems to me that if we're really serious about historic preservation, that really, every property that should be designated is. And we should not even be talking about properties that are not. I mean, I think any community that is worth its salt, like we are, whether you're Santa Barbara, California, or you know, outside of Boston, you know, where you have numerous historic properties, I think those that are worthy of designation should be. I think it's a bad statement to say that we're...

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: And there is the...

Board Member Bermello: Swamped. We don't have enough time, and it's up to somebody coming up, you know -- because the comment here, which I reacted to, which obviously was when -- the redline was building assessed to be of historic value but not designated. So, assessed by whom? A I -- you know, not, again, to be disrespectful to anyone, but I don't want anybody just to wake up and say, "I think that building is of historic value," and it hasn't gone through the litmus test. I also personally believe, as an architect, that it's not of architectural or historical value. I think there has to be both.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: That's not the way the Code reads so...

Board Member Bermello: I realize that. But if you have a building that is only of historical value -- there's no architectural value at all, it has no significance to the period, as far as architecturally, to the vernacular that it represents. People sometimes also wonder, "What is this? And this is really of historical significance?" So -- but that's a different discussion. But my point is, if it's not designated, we should not open the can. Now, if it's designated, absolutely. But if it's not designated, I don't know, because then it's like, you know...

Board Member Behar: Who makes that determination.

Board Member Bermello: Who makes that decision? I wake up one morning...

Board Member Behar: And I agree with you.

Board Member Bermello: And I think that I, you know -- and you know, so I think that that becomes -- that was my problem here. Now, if every property that has been designated or is in the Department of Interior Designation, even more important. I mean, to me, that's a higher level, then yes, absolutely. But if not, this opens up the Pandora's box for any neighbor that doesn't like what his other neighbor's doing and to say this property is of historical significance.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: I think the other issue is that if we do assess something to be of historic value, we would then move ahead with the designation. So, if an application comes in for a building which is near a number of 1920s buildings, and we had to determine if they were of historic value, we would be obliged to then move ahead and do the designation. As I said, the correct way to do it is actually do surveys of various parts of the city, not necessarily just react to...

Board Member Bermello: Right.

Chairperson Pardo: So, if someone came in tomorrow and said, "We want to knock down the San Sebastian Apartments," what would the city...

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: They would have to apply for a letter of historic significance from this department. We would then do the initial research...

Chairperson Pardo: The City would be the applicant.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: And if we determined the appeal to be eligible, we would move ahead with the designation.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Behar: I think that example is not a good example. That building, even though it's not designated historical, has a lot of the contribution, the time it was done, some of the architectural significance that it has. Even though stuff was done, you know, over the years, but it's not -- but personally, I think it still maintains that attribute for designation. But I'm going to use the example -- a couple years ago, there was a house -- I remember, you know, going through the process -- that it was built in the '50s, but it was not a lot of significance to that. And there was a battle, and then that property owner was going to lose his rights for something that, in many opinions, did not historic designated for no reason. So, I think that the project -- the example you're giving us, yes, I believe that project should be designated -- personally -- designated historical. But my concern is just like, you know, Willy -- Mr. Bermello said -- opens a box -- a Pandora's box because who is going to make that determination? That's my problem. Properties that are worth of getting designated should go through the process. And maybe you could identify and go through something that has value, but it has to be done in a manner that is done that really analyzes correctly. That's my opinion. That's why I don't feel comfortable with that language.

Board Member Bermello: And by the way, I think...

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: There is a process for that. And you know, you may have believed that the building that wasn't ultimately designated, the post-war building, didn't have any value, but there was a substantial report prepared that actually split the Preservation Board in two. So, there obviously were people with the opinion that that building had value. And so, these sort of designations, especially for the post-war properties, they are the tricky ones because there are so many of them, and a lot of them maybe do not have a lot of significant architectural features. So, we're not going to designate...



Board Member Behar: But with all due respect, that's very subjective. And in some cases, you may say that that has the value, but you know, when you look at -- at least when I -- as an architect, as a registered architect, I looked at it and says, "Okay, I believe" -- if I recall correctly, it was designed by Alfred Browning Parker, if I remember.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: If it's the Asturia one, it was Pancoast.

Board Member Bermello: Russell Pancoast, Russell Pancoast.

Board Member Behar: Russell Pancoast, I'm sorry. You know, that was it. That was -- I mean, you look at the house, it could be any -- you know. So, to me, that's what is concerning to impose something like this. That's my opinion.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: But to other architects, it had value, and that's why the board was split. There are architects on the board. So, these sort of things, there is always a level of opinion. But I think if you have a 20-page report, it's more than just subjective. It comes to a point where, yes, it's an opinion, but I don't think if you have a thorough report, then it's a subjective -- it's opinion, yes, but it's not subjective. And there is a process in place to do this, which has been established not only in this City, but throughout the country. So, I agree that there is a process in place, and I do think, you know, this particular one thing could have its difficulties. So, yes, that is maybe not the best way to do this.

Chairperson Pardo: Some places -- if I recall, some places have like a radius around a certain project where they say, you know, 200 feet or 300 feet, and then they basically do an evaluation to see if there's any potential...

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: Projects there. And for example, like this one, like the San Sebastian would be, you know, one of them. So, if it's like within a 300-foot radius -- a project is within 300 foot, then at least it would be, you know, pinged where people would know that although this is not designated, it may have historic value, not to the point that it's, you know, designed by...

Board Member Behar: But Felix...

Chairperson Pardo: A certain architect or someone...

Board Member Behar: You're talking about a specific project that I think we all could attest that has significant value.

Chairperson Pardo: Correct.

Board Member Behar: Ten years ago, I think that -- I live off of Pinta Court, which is off of -- I live on Pinta Court, off of Santamaria. Santamaria was designated as a historical block...

Chairperson Pardo: District.

Board Member Behar: Okay, they wanted to tie Pinta Court, which the houses were built late '50s, early '60s, of little significance, but tie it to have -- to, you know, those guidelines. I personally opposed it because, you know, that will restrict me doing just about anything to my house, so it's a time and place for everything.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: And again, a buffer zone around any properties would require a change to the Code. And you know, it's a rare thing. I don't know of many places that do it, because as you said, I really don't know how much support putting buffer zones around historic properties would actually get.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you. Don't go anywhere yet. Alright, so...

Board Member Behar: But we're going to...

Chairperson Pardo: The historic value not designated will be stricken.

Board Member Behar: Building accessed to be historic value not designated will be stricken.

Chairperson Pardo: Right.

Board Member Bermello: Agreed.

Chairperson Pardo: But it says the historic City plan adopted by the Coral Gables -- that's part of the ordinance. There's an ordinance in place.

Board Member Behar: That stays.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah, that stays.

Board Member Behar: (INAUDIBLE) up to Gables Commission.

Chairperson Pardo: Is everybody good with that?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: And can I point out the historic City plan is the designation of the street plan and changes to the street plan only. That does not reflect any of the buildings effectively, so I just want to make that clear. The historic street plan is for the historic street layout of the city. It doesn't include the buildings. So, the historic street plan is for the street layout only.

Chairperson Pardo: Oh, no. I know exactly what it is, and that was the intention. I'll give you an example now. So, when you go to the next page, and you look at C, which was added, compatibility with the viewshed of historically significant buildings shall be considered in the site planning, massing, and step-backs of the Board of Architects. These are now officially approved buildings. These are not historic -- you know, these are with the certificate and the whole thing. The second one is compatibility with the historic City plan shall be reviewed by the Planning Department in consultation with the Historic Resources Department and the Board of Architects. Now, the plan was approved. Mr. Adams, can you give me an example, for example, of the street plan on how it can affect a historical building?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: With actual changes to the actual layout of the street pattern?

Chairperson Pardo: How it would affect a historically designated building.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: This is what I was saying. The historic street plan is for the street layout only. Widening of streets, changing of plazas, you know, actual alterations to the layout of the street. It doesn't include the buildings actually on the street. So, if there was substantial alteration to the street plan...

Chairperson Pardo: I'm referring to the viewshed.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Well, the viewshed is a different thing. The viewshed is how either a view from a historic building...

Chairperson Pardo: Correct.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: So, for instance, if then -- there was a case with the Bonnet House in Fort Lauderdale many years ago, where there was a proposal to build a

hotel. And there was a case raised from the Bonnet House because the hotel would be visible from the gardens. And the argument was that that was destroying the viewshed from the property. The other thing is, if you are viewing a historic property and a new development is proposed around it, then potentially you're destroying the setting of that property, especially if you've got a two-story historic building and someone wants to put 14 stories on the lot next to it. So, you're negatively impacting the setting. A good example is the Dade Heritage Trust office in Miami, where you have their historic...

Board Member Bermello: Which office?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Dade Heritage Trust is just one example.

Board Member Bermello: Heritage.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Downtown Miami, where you have a small one-story historic building, and it is now surrounded on all sides by, you know, 40, 50, 60 foot buildings.

Chairperson Pardo: In the Plaza project, you have 2901 Ponce de Leon. It is a small three-story historic building. And when you look at that, the viewshed isn't necessarily -- because there's no verbiage yet in here where it discusses the viewshed and how it affects the height and/or massing when you're looking at that, how it affects that historic building. And I guess another example would be when you look down Miracle Mile from Douglas towards City Hall, which is also a designated building. If you would eventually canonize Miracle Mile by having height on there, it would affect the viewshed of the historic significance of the City Hall building.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: It would change -- certainly change it, yes. You know, a good example would be if someone built a 15-story building in the parking lot right next to City Hall. Obviously, if you look at City Hall now, you see the building in its, you know,

setting, but all of a sudden, if a 15-story building built right next to it, and you look at City Hall in completion of that, then obviously, there's a negative impact to the setting of the historic building.

Board Member Bermello: You know, it may, and it may not. It all depends on how it's done.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Exactly, yeah.

Board Member Bermello: I mean, I've seen it done, you know, very elegantly, with a lot of respect.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: And then I've seen projects done not correctly.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: It can be done.

Board Member Bermello: You know, the two examples that you've used -- or that you've used, and the Chair has used -- are buildings that are almost like a little island, so that you're actually -- the viewshed is important because you can see them from four directions, or from three directions. There may be other buildings...

Board Member Salman: And not only that...

Board Member Bermello: That are historic.

Board Member Salman: But just beyond them, like this building.

Board Member Bermello: And there may be a building that has a historic front, but its sides are blank, or of no significance, where then a viewshed has to be looked at very differently than this building or the building on Ponce that I know it's the genesis of a lot of these comments in terms

of that project there on Ponce Circle. So, I think, even though I totally agree, I think it needs to be always calibrated...

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: By the setting and the conditions of that building because...

Chairperson Pardo: Correct.

Board Member Bermello: I'll tell you a funny story. I used to live on 2601 Granada. My house - side of the house was Valencia. And across the way -- and I think Glenn might have been involved maybe in the design of this single-family home, where there was a lot splitting. And during the construction, the old house, they kept the front of -- front façade. Was that your project? And I recall a hurricane was coming, and they had -- and I got concerned. I called the Mayor at that time, and I said, "Mayor, this thing is going to blow off. Why is it being done?" He says, "No. Because it had to be done because of the Historic Preservation Board." And I said, "Really?" And you know, I don't know who lived there or, you know -- I lived there for 28 years across from it, and it looked...

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: But I think...

Board Member Bermello: It looked like, frankly, a dump, but I'm sure that the developer who bought it -- and they didn't want any problems -- had to keep the façade, which is, you know...

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: But I think you're right in what you say. It's a matter of just taking it into consideration.

Board Member Bermello: It's just consideration.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Exactly.

Board Member Bermello: As opposed to prescribing it, because once you prescribe things...

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: I tell you; bad things happen. I'd rather leave it in the hands of the very capable Board of Architects or the Historic Preservation Board and give them the flexibility as it comes up. So, you know, like in this comment from the Chair, I -- again, I think it should be designated properties only because...

Board Member Salman: I agree.

Board Member Bermello: As I look at the property that I just made the comment that was my...

Board Member Salman: Designated only.

Board Member Bermello: Neighbor for 29 years, and I looked at it, somebody here must have thought it was significant. But I got to tell you, living there...

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: And again, the...

Board Member Bermello: And seeing it every day -- and Glenn, I hope I'm not offending you...

Board Member Pratt: No, no, no. I...

Board Member Bermello: Because I'm sure you had to do what you had to do, right? I mean, like we always do. But I wonder, you know, how can that be historic, you know? I mean, I wonder



other things, like how can some artwork be called artwork, but that's a different discussion. But you know, so I would say, if it's designated, it means it's gone through your process.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Yeah, exactly.

Board Member Bermello: It means that you've done your studies. It means that it went through proper vetting, and it wasn't just someone waking up one day saying, "Oh, I think that it's significant."

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Again, because when you look at viewsheds as well, what happens when you have four blocks of single-story homes that are potentially historic and someone builds something at the end of the street, which is higher. That obviously affects the viewshed, but should we then be designating every single home in that block simply because there's a new building that interferes with the viewshed? And I think all you can really do is consider it.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: You consider the setting of the historic building.

Board Member Bermello: You know, and I'll tell you, I know a lot of what we're talking about is compatibility, and I can point to some examples -- I'm sure all of us can -- of projects that I would say are not necessarily compatible with the neighborhood but are still good additions to our community. For example, the Luminaire project by (INAUDIBLE) Matteo. That could not check the box of compatibility anywhere. But I would tell you it's a beautiful design and I think it's a great addition.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Pardon my interruption. We need to make sure that all conversations being had are being had on the microphone, and that there's no conversations falling outside of that because of the Sunshine. Thank you.

Board Member Bermello: You know, Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum, the same way. If you look at the neighborhood, is it compatible? Absolutely not. Is it a good addition? Absolutely, yes. So, even the issue of compatibility, which you know, there have to be certain circumstances where, you know, you have to weigh it.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Absolutely, yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: The only thing -- just for the record, under C, compatibility with the viewshed of historically significant buildings shall be considered in the site planning, massing, and step-backs by the Board of Architects. In other words, it only says, it should be considered, not that it is...

Unidentified Speaker: No, it says it shall be.

Chairperson Pardo: Done in a certain way. That is C, page 54, top of the page, where it says, "compatibility with viewshed of historically buildings shall be considered in the site planning, massing, and step backs of the Board of Architects."

Board Member Pratt: Again, who's establishing the viewshed? Is -- I just did a quick Google search on viewshed, and there's multiple ways it's calculated. Is there -- how is that established?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: How about compatibility with the setting of historically significant buildings?

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Director, I have a quick question.

Board Member Pratt: I mean, that's -- the Board of Architects generally, when we review projects, we review the compatibility, and especially if there is a historic structure that's a part of what's being proposed. But I have some trouble with a kind of a nebulous term, viewshed, that -- what is it really? You know, how do you calculate it? What is -- how does it, you know...

Chairperson Pardo: For example, if you had Mount Vernon and you put a building in front of it that blocked the view to and from the...

Board Member Pratt: Actually, that was on Google. That...

Chairperson Pardo: Is it?

Board Member Pratt: You must have Googled. Yes.

Chairperson Pardo: Is it? That's pretty funny.

Board Member Pratt: But...

Chairperson Pardo: So, the point is, on the viewshed, for example, if you think about this -- the -- as Willy came up with an example, it could be a historic building that's got only one façade and the rest are blanks.

Board Member Bermello: Right.

Chairperson Pardo: But the viewshed could be the front. So, now all of a sudden, if you slam a building or you block it in such a way, you don't consider it, and if you have enough step back to do it in such a way where it doesn't hurt it -- for example, Mitch Alvarez, when he did the Douglas

Center, he was very careful with the new buildings that were there to make sure that it did not alter that existing Douglas Entrance building.

Board Member Pratt: But how is that different from viewing...

Chairperson Pardo: And it's preserved by the way he pushed back the volumes of the new buildings. He did a masterful job doing that. So, that's part of the viewshed. The only thing is that there's no verbiage whatsoever in the Code from one end to the other that discusses viewshed of historic buildings anywhere, and it doesn't necessarily have to be on three sides, like the 2901 building, but there are buildings that have a specific viewshed that is necessary to be considered. Not says approved. It just says that the (INAUDIBLE).

Board Member Salman: I think what Glenn is talking about and my particular heartburn, and I think what Willy's talking about is all the same things.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Salman: I think we just need to define viewshed somewhere if we're going to include it in as part of this Code. Okay, that's it.

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Adams, can you get us a definition on viewshed please?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Yes. Legally, how do we agree on a definition? And just bear in mind, I mean, it may be that setting is actually the preferable option because setting is one of the criteria of integrity that we look at with historic buildings. And everything that you're describing is actually setting. How does new development affect the setting of historic buildings, so...

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: If I may. I think Director Warren could address one question I think that kind of speaks to what we're discussing here.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Does the current code require properties within a certain range or buffer around historic properties get some sort of historical approval?

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: No.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: None.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: I believe there maybe was something like that in the Code several years ago, and I believe it was removed, but I would need to look into that.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Okay, but specifically, also in regard to the City plan, because there's discussion about adding that language, right now any modifications to the City plan would have to go through Historic Preservation and go through the entire approval process.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: Any alteration to the historic street layout and (INAUDIBLE), yes.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I only say it because I think it may be redundant because it's already in the Historic Preservation Department section.

Board Member Behar: Good point.

Chairperson Pardo: Well, it's funny that you say that because some people don't even know that the historic plan is there, and we're talking about a section specifically that has bonuses where people are going...

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Well, we're referring to the street. I just want to make sure that the record is clear. We're referring to the street. So, an actual physical property wouldn't affect the City plan.

Chairperson Pardo: Well, it depends, I guess. You go into public rights-of-way and things like that, you know.

Historical Resources & Cultural Arts Director Adams: If they did that then...

Chairperson Pardo: If you get a loggia that goes into a public right-of-way, that becomes an issue. It does affect the city plan, and there could be other examples also. But I would ask for a specific definition, if you could, Mr. Adams, if you don't mind sharing that with...

Board Member Behar: And let's leave this item for next time.

Board Member Pratt: Yeah.

Board Member Salman: Okay, let's move on.

Board Member Behar: Let's table this one for now.

Board Member Salman: Let's table this one.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay.

Board Member Bermello: But could we agree at least on the issue that we're dealing with designated properties?

Board Member Behar: Yes.

Board Member Salman: Yeah. We -- I thought we had.

Board Member Behar: In my opinion, yes.

Board Member Salman: I thought we had.

Chairperson Pardo: That's been stricken.

Board Member Bermello: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Bermello, that has been stricken. The words "historic value not designated" has been stricken. Alright. So, just want to leave -- because obviously, we're not going to have enough time to complete this today. But I wanted to just add one thing and make sure that everyone here is in agreement. I inserted under B(1)...

Board Member Behar: Mr. Chair, I think that that whole table...

Chairperson Pardo: No, no, no. I'm not going to get to the table. I'm going to get to above the table.

Board Member Behar: Okay.

Chairperson Pardo: I'm only above the table. I just wanted to, under number one, required standards. Applications shall be required to satisfy all the requirements of Articles 2 and 3, which

is Zoning and Uses, and Section 102, Design Review Standards, A and B, which we've discussed before, which are for all projects that are reviewed by the Board of Architects, and in Table 1. The reason that I wanted to insert Section 5-102 Design Review Standards, A and B in is because massing and 19 other items are included in all designs in the City of Coral Gables. And it should -- in my opinion, it should be highlighted the same as Articles 2 and 3 were added there, which is Zoning and Uses. So, the reason that I would really like to have Section 5-102 Design Review Standards A and B is because those are the tools that we all need to be able to have the proper step-backs, proper massing, and proper compatibility, which are already written in that section. Just highlighting it there to make sure that everyone that reads this Code and uses this Code knows they have to comply with that section. Does anyone have any disagreement?

Board Member Bermello: They were fine. Are you suggesting we stop here today and continue on?

Board Member Behar: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: I agree.

Chairperson Pardo: That's what I am suggesting.

Board Member Behar: Yeah, the table, I think, is going to take a lot more time.

Board Member Bermello: We'll start with the table in the next meeting.

Chairperson Pardo: I just want to ask -- there have been -- there are several people here. Mr. Clerk, do we have anyone on Zoom that has requested to say anything at all? Any emails?

City Clerk Urquia: No, sir.



Chairperson Pardo: And I just brought up...

Board Member Bermello: How about persons from the public?

Chairperson Pardo: Section B(1), where we added Section 5-102 Design Review Standards A and B and the word (INAUDIBLE). It's underscored in red. Nobody -- and anyone requesting to speak?

City Clerk Urquia: No, sir. And the gentleman that was here that wanted to speak also left.

Chairperson Pardo: I know the doctor left. He left earlier and I owe him that later. Is there anyone here that would like to say anything from the public?

City Clerk Urquia: There is. Absolutely, Ms. Kawalerski. And Mr. Chair, right after, there is someone on Zoom requesting to speak at this time.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, thank you.

Sue Kawalerski: My name is Sue Kawalerski. I reside at 6830 Gratian Street. Thank you again for your service. When you were talking about the review, that would certainly be nice if the public -- some part of the public was also part of that pre-review review, and this is the reason why. You know, we want transparency, and it's always the public that seems to find out last what's going up. It would be nice to include possibly in this amendment that the public also be in on that review, and that's all I ask. So, thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you so much for your comments. Appreciate it. Is there anyone else?

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Chair, on Zoom, we do have one person. It's Adan Quesada.

Chairperson Pardo: Yes.

Adan Quesada: Good afternoon. Good evening. My name is Adan Quesada. I reside at 718 Valencia. And I just wanted to make a comment. I've been following the blue-ribbon committee, and I just want to say, there's a lot of wonderful ideas coming out of it, and I'm just glad to be able to be -- see history being made. As a young architect in the city, I just want to commend everyone in the board on a spectacular job. And that's what I wanted to say. Thank you.

Unidentified Speaker: Thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you, Mr. Quesada.

City Clerk Urquia: That's it, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, thank you very much. Is there a motion to adjourn?

Board Member Behar: I make a motion to adjourn.

Board Member Pratt: I'll second.

Board Member Bermello: Just a quick comment on the comment made by Ms...

Chairperson Pardo: Sue.

Board Member Behar: How would that happen? I mean, it sounded good, but how would it actually happen? Because it seems that when the City sends out notices to say, residents within 500 feet, there's already like a very formal process. You're kind of ready to go. And this conceptual seem to me to be more of an informal showing up very early. You don't have all your ideas yet. You're kind of testing them. And so, you know, if a client of mine asked me, "Would you want to

spend that kind of money yet," when they're not even yet set, they're just trying to get some feedback -- and I realize what she said, that people don't want to come in -- they want to come in early. But I'm just wondering how that would work.

Board Member Behar: Because you would have to send notices to, I guess, a radius of that property, and there is a process like you would normally do when you're going to go to the Planning and Zoning.

Board Member Bermello: Yeah.

Board Member Behar: So, in order to do that and get the public involved from the beginning, I think it's going to be a little bit difficult, because at that point, like Mr. Bermello said, the project is not really defined or it's just in the conceptual stages.

Board Member Pratt: Or you know, typically, the property is just posted. You know, there's a notice.

Board Member Behar: But this will be before it goes to the Board of Architects.

Board Member Bermello: I even have -- with some of my clients, I'm always very hesitant at what time, at what point I'm ready to show them something, because -- I'm not saying that the lady that made the comment or the citizens that would show up are -- don't know our can't read plans or can't understand. But even a client -- if an idea is not totally well presented, it can go in the wrong direction for all the wrong reasons, even though it may be a great idea, just wasn't well worked out, wasn't well thought out. And when you're discussing it with a colleague, it's kind of okay. It's kind of like, you know -- because we all have gone through the early phase of developing an idea. And it may not be perfect, it may not be right, but when you put it in the public purview per se, and you're saying invite -- coming in -- you know, it's not what I personally -- when we voted for it, it's not really what I had in mind. I had in mind something definitely more collegial, more

intimate, maybe more at a professional level, where you're kind of bouncing off an idea of a group of very well-informed professionals, and before you go to the DRC, just to get their feedback. Am I -- is this -- what did you think? And so that's -- I guess it's like maybe a couple of doctors talking to each other about a procedure before they go ahead and do it. You're kind of at a professional level getting a very early reading, a very -- which I think is what -- it's almost like doing a fatal flaw analysis with your colleagues at a very high level looking at something very early, where things are not yet defined, and you know, I can see it going in the wrong direction, sending wrong messages, people getting riled up because things weren't properly presented. So, I want to be clear because I'm very transparent. I want to tell you things, you know, the way I see them. When I voted for this, it wasn't in mind that at that conceptual level, I'm doing like a public hearing. I see myself being here with maybe -- it tells you how old I am -- with yellow trash, but it's that kind of thing with showing it to the board, going through it and getting some comments on massing, on setbacks, and maybe heights, on the parti, maybe some of the visioning, that sort of thing. And taking that and then preparing for the DRC, and then coming back formally. When we come back formally at that preliminary, that's where I would see all the residents, because at that point, I can get up on that podium and answer any question that anybody would have with definition, with clarity, and not having to later somebody say, "Oh, you did a bait and switch on us. You presented this and then you went back and did something else." Of course, if I'm doing something very early, for sure, it's going to change it, right? So, I hate to take -- because I know I'm taking too much time. But the comment was made, and I know I voted fully in support for the conceptual, but it wasn't based -- and not that I'm against public inclusion. That is not -- the wrong message to take from this. It's where it happens and at what point is the public involved.

Ms. Kawalerski: And if I can just say this. This does not have to be formal, where you have to send out notices. I mean, for the DRC, plans are presented. You don't send out notices to the thousand foot -- you know, people within a thousand feet for a DRC meeting, but the public's invited to the DRC meeting. I've spoken there at DRC meetings. So, the idea is -- and what you just said. So, you talk about -- you throw good ideas around, you add better ideas. The public also might be adding better ideas to the concept. And at that point, before anything is actually done on

paper and the developer has spent a half a million dollars, you know, at that point, you already know where the public sentiment is, and you're including them. And some of their ideas may be ideas never thought of. You can include them, and that would be a welcoming, you know, differentiation between what's happening now and what could be. And I'm not saying that this would be a belabored point where we would spend till midnight talking about this, but you would collegially...

Board Member Bermello: Okay.

Ms. Kawalerski: And collegially meaning not just with, you know, the professionals, but with the affected community and saying, "Look, here's what we're thinking. What do you think?" It doesn't mean we're going to do everything you say, but we're going to take your opinions into consideration. And again, nothing formal with notices or certified mail or anything like that, just like the DRC process.

Board Member Bermello: So, what you said, it sounds good, just how you said it.

Chairperson Pardo: Mitch has had his hand up for a while.

Board Member Alvarez: I just want to share with you a thought. This conceptual situation can be very delicate. What are the expectations of the clients that Mr. Bermello is representing? And what do they expect to hear, what level of commitment and they come out of that meeting with from the city to continue? What level of direction can he give his staff to proceed in a certain manner? I mean, what are the expectations as a result of that conceptual? Every project I have done have had a conceptual process, but there's never been a project conceptual presentation with any attachment or consequences. The consequences come when you come in and present your preliminaries and you start working. So, I don't dislike the idea, it's beautiful. But let's read into what are the results and the consequences and the level of commitment that both the architect, his client, and the city are willing to put on the table. I hate to have somebody on my staff with 500

hours work developing a concept -- and this is not a little house that we're talking about -- and all of a sudden somebody thinks this is not enough information to make a call or a judgment or doesn't feel secure enough to make a statement and you're out in the boondocks. And you know, beware of what you wish for.

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Trias.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Mr. Chairman, if I could just add. The notice that we have right now is posting on the property, like Mr. Behar said. There's a little sign that says, "Oh, there's a hearing before the Board of Architects." That's probably not enough, I think. But what I would ask you to think about is the most important decision is when a project becomes public, meaning everybody gets a chance to discuss it, and it has to be at a level that people can give input. You don't want to do it too early. You certainly don't want to do it too late either. So, I would ask you to think about it for the next meeting. And what I will tell you is that when I was in private practice, what I used to do is what I hear people want, which is the charrettes that I used to do. That was what I used to do. I used to do conceptual design with a little public participation. A lot of cities, clients, throughout America and so on. This is done all the time. We haven't done it often enough, I think, in Coral Gables. However, having said that, it was done professionally, and it was done in a way that was -- the expectations were very clear. So, I would encourage you to think about that because when a project becomes public, then is when we have to have a serious discussion with the community and so on. Very important point. Right now, that point is DRC. It's in the map and the website. People can contribute through Zoom or in person. That is the point we have now. If we're going to change that, let's think about it carefully and see how we can do it. That would be my recommendation. Thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: It could be also based on the size of the project.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Could be.

Chairperson Pardo: It could be based on the...

Board Member Pratt: I agree with Willy, though. I think it should be something very informal and kept on a very, you know, collegial basis. And it's really more about getting feedback for the applicant from the BOA and for direction, and you know, I think it's something that would be very, very beneficial.

Board Member Bermello: I think so too.

Board Member Pratt: But I think -- I understand your concerns too. I have the same.

Board Member Bermello: Well, on the public level, I mean, it's like -- you know, we -- before we put our name on something and it goes out to the public, it goes through a whole level of scrutiny and review that would not be present, you know, in a conceptual plan that you would do informally. Hey, let me take -- let me show you what we have in mind, what we're thinking about. It's that kind of thing.

Board Member Pratt: Yeah.

Board Member Bermello: And you bring, you know, I don't know, the site plan and...

Board Member Pratt: But that's where the most help could occur, and that's where the most direction and input...

Board Member Behar: It's really -- that becomes almost a charrette.

Board Member Pratt: Yeah, exactly.

Board Member Behar: And that's very good. Because before you go in developing that further, you have a basis. But I agree with Mitch. You got to be careful up to, you know...

Chairperson Pardo: What you wish for.

Board Member Behar: Yes.

Unidentified Speaker: Be careful what you wish for.

Chairperson Pardo: Mr. Trias.

Board Member Alvarez: Be careful what you wish for.

Chairperson Pardo: There's one more thing. I think that maybe if you don't mind, if you could give us a breakdown of the size of the projects -- for example, we were discussing the difference between a PAD and just a special site plan. You said, "Well, it's an acre and it's less than an acre." Can you break down, especially, you know, most of these projects, you know, the types of projects and the quantity of the projects and the size of the projects.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, I could...

Chairperson Pardo: You go all the way up to the gigantic project. And I can't stress enough, the reason we're here is because something just hasn't worked quite right. You know, we're not trying to reinvent the wheel, but we're trying to fix the wheel.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Of course.

Chairperson Pardo: So, what I'm trying to do is, if you could break it down in such a way where it becomes logical that there's neighborhood participation -- when I say participation, not the



neighbors marking up the plans, but the neighbors being aware because, you know, someone saying, you know, your loading zone is like right across from my house, or that traffic is going to come right through my residential street, and you could put it somewhere else, you know, at the end of the day, what you want to do is have people that are genuinely happy with those projects. And the problem is that the reason that we're here today is because there are a lot of people that are unhappy with some -- not the majority -- with some projects, and those are the ones that we want to correct.

Board Member Behar: But Felix, you're right to a certain extent. But if you look at the projects that have been the most controversial, okay...

Chairperson Pardo: Vilified.

Board Member Behar: Are the projects that go over and beyond, you know. Look at the two examples that we have used in the last couple meetings, Plaza -- but that's even, you know, over and beyond. And the other one that I heard also is Gables Station. Those are not the typical project that we go through. Those are except -- you know, special projects that go over and beyond. Unless -- because I -- you know, as a member of the Planning and Zoning Board, I see the projects that come through. For the most part, they're not the problem projects. These are the ones that, you know, the one -- for example, the Plaza. But those are over and beyond, and those are the one that, yes, those projects may go one step further and you start doing the charrettes specifically for those projects, you know.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah. What I would say is that there are three categories in the updated Zoning Code that we finished very recently. Ten thousand square feet -- I'm talking about the site area -- 10,000 square feet, 20,000 square feet and the one acre for the PAD. Those are the magic numbers that I think set the difference in terms of height, in terms of the applicability of the Med Bonus Level 2, Level 1, et cetera. We -- in the perfect world, maybe if you have a PAD, you have a requirement to have special public participation early on. If you have 20,000

square feet, you know it's going to Planning and Zoning, and then Commission. Maybe there's some preliminary review by Board of Architects in those projects. If you have 10,000 square feet, you don't do it, for example, because those are not as significant. Some thinking along those lines, I think, would be very helpful in terms of enhancing the Code.

Chairperson Pardo: I would like to see from your department basically a short paper on being able to bring in that neighborhood participation based on size, intensity, type of project, so people are aware...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Chairperson Pardo: Much more than just posting.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And right now, the neighborhood meeting is a requirement, except that it's not explained very well, and the expectations are not very clear. So, yeah, people do that. The developer does those meetings. But when are they more or less productive; that's really an issue.

Board Member Behar: And that may be where you do it early on, not after...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It could be.

Board Member Behar: The project is ready to go to Planning and Zoning. And then you bring the neighborhood in to get their feedback. Listen, I am 100 percent in favor of getting the neighborhood feedback, you know, because at that time, yes, there's an opportunity, not all the way at the end before the Planning and Zoning meeting.

Chairperson Pardo: Exactly.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And my goal here is just to listen to your ideas and the ideas of the public and see if we can...

Chairperson Pardo: I'll tell you; you may want to look at what Collier County does. We did a project there recently, and we had neighborhood participation early on, very early on, and a bunch of people came out, over 100 people came out. And staff was pretty nervous, and there was a -- it was a bad situation because the original developer had made them promises 15 years before. It was a terrible, terrible relationship they had. So, the fact that when we were making our presentation, every time we mentioned the original developer, it looked like you were in right field in Yankee Stadium. The boos were just absolutely incredible. It got to the point where we finally allowed them to just boo all they wanted to get it out of their system. Once we made our presentation, they understood. Once they understood, then we left on -- in pretty good shape. In fact, they gave us a standing ovation. Once we left and we went through the process, as Robert said, the more formalized process, the Zoning Board, the Commission, et cetera, it was a cakewalk. The thing was that the difference of the neighbors knowing exactly what we were doing became a benefit instead of a liability. And therefore, depending on the size of the project, depending on these things, they -- in fact, those neighborhood meetings had to be recorded and transcribed because what happens now is that you can meet with the developer and they could tell you anything they want, and they'll tell you that we met with the neighbors, and that's the end of that. In Collier County, you have to record it physically on video and also transcribe the meeting and what the comments were. And then that way, there's no mistakes. So, I'm not suggesting that you have to copy it. I'm just suggesting that you look into their requirements there for certain projects, including changes of zoning and things of certain impact, and that's just a suggestion of what another municipality, or in this case, a county, does.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That could also be a trigger. The change of land use, for example, change of zoning, in the projects that require that, you could have special requirements for public meetings. What I would encourage you is I'll think about it, and if you please think about it also, I think we can come up with some solutions at the end. My frustration with a lot of

the projects that have been criticized in the past is that having been through the process, the process was very lengthy, and it did not focus on solutions. It focused on frustration, on complaints. We need to focus on solutions. And I think if we all do that, if the public is a partner in that effort, I think we can come up with a much better project.

Board Member Behar: I think that's a good way to come in and to finish.

Board Member Bermello: Make a motion to adjourn.

Chairperson Pardo: (INAUDIBLE), you raised your hand? Yes.

Samuel Lawson: I've been to -- as all of you. This has been a very technical meeting, very, very technical.

City Clerk Urquia: Sir, if you don't mind, can you state your name and address for the record?

Mr. Lawson: Sure. I'm Samuel Lawson and I spoke two meetings ago. I wasn't here last week. Represent the Youth Center community. I know you, Felix, and have met some of you after the meeting last week, and it was very useful. If you recall, the last time I was here, I brought up that question about process, and it was directed at -- is there a breakdown somewhere that at the end doesn't yield what was the original intent and what was originally agreed upon. So, I'd like to be a little bit -- since that time, I think after talking to a few people after the meeting, I realize there's a lot more for myself personally to dive into, and I would love to have a very -- you know, continue to learn, Felix, and maybe have a good understanding of what are all the elements that impact that. So, I don't think that right now I can talk more about that. And thank you for some of you who, after the meeting last -- two weeks ago, talked to me a bit about that. But what I -- on a larger level -- because this is very technical, and I'm a technical person. I've been in a ton of technical meetings as all of you have, but sometimes you sit back and you say, "What's the really big picture? What's really happening here?" And at least me as a citizen -- and I'm not an architect and I'm not

educated in these areas, and I'm fascinated listening to all of you. It's really fascinating the level of detail you go into, and I'm sure this is only the tip of the iceberg. And I also appreciate like a lot of the big picture thought that's happening. But one thing that I do know, and I have heard and from my group is that at least in terms of the most recent election, there were people that were angry, and this was one of the points that was the number one point that they focused on was development. And now, I didn't talk to all those people. Is it anecdotal? Is it not? I have it from one person that I trust completely gave me very good information that it's not anecdotal. There were a lot of people that complained. By the way, I do believe very much in what you said, a lot of times it's just bringing the public up in terms of education and getting them on board and making them feel they have buy-in, I think, is big because there's a lot going on there. But -- so people -- if people were angry, my question is why? Like why would that -- why were they angry? And I have neighbors that I've spoken to. I've listened quite a bit to other people here. Is it the Mediterranean design? Is that really what's got people upset, if they are upset, which I believe? Is that it? I want to say something. I've been around -- I went down US 1 the other day with my wife. I've seen -- I was at Whole Foods the other day looking at some new projects going up. I've seen a lot of projects go up. They look really beautiful to me. I don't -- they don't look -- you know, they look, from a design standpoint, they look beautiful. I'm not an architect. I don't know if there's good construction. I don't know what's going on behind the scenes, but the projects themselves look nice. But is it a Mediterranean thing? And I brought something up to a couple of architects after the meeting last time, and I'd like to bring it up here on the mic instead of just behind the scenes. There was a gentleman at the last meeting -- and by the way, I love what you said about 50 years. Will you look back in 50 years and appreciate it? But there was a gentleman at the last meeting, and he came up and said he was a very big advocate of Mediterranean architecture, very big advocate of that. And I know it's the history of Coral Gables, and I personally think it's beautiful, there's no doubt about it. But you know, if you think about like iconic buildings and iconic structures and what makes a place beautiful, as time goes on, cities evolve, and they change the architectural styles of it. And I'm not here to talk about architectural styles. I just want to bring it up as a side point because it's something that I've seen happen on South Beach and on Brickell and I want to bring it up here. I hope it's a good forum to bring it up. Maybe it's not, I

hope it is. I'm thinking how they built an Eiffel Tower in Paris, completely doesn't fit the architecture, right? I mean, it doesn't look like anything that was a part of the Parisian architecture. People like Frank Gehry built bizarre looking buildings that everybody cherishes to have in their city. Zaha Hadid, she built a building there on Brickell -- right? -- and you've seen her body of work, and these are buildings that are not Mediterranean style. Again, the 50-year test, I think is phenomenal. But here's something as a Miami citizen that I noticed and I brought it up, and I think you guys will really appreciate it, is years ago, South Beach -- well, you know, South Beach in Miami Beach has gone through its ups and downs, but maybe in the '90s, it was quite -- you know, it was booming, right? There was a lot of things going on there. There was a lot of draw there. You know, this was before Wynwood. All the young people were going there. It was a big thing. But there was a lot of architectural, let's say -- I don't know personally, but it seems like from everything you hear living there, a lot of architectural control around the building -- anything built on South Beach needs to be Art Deco in style. The building heights could only be, you know, three or four stories or whatever it was, six stories, I don't know what it was. And if you look at what happened...

Board Member Bermello: If I may make a comment only because I have to take a Zoom call at 7, and I don't mean to interrupt you. But at five minutes to 7, I wanted to walk out, so I don't want to sound like if it was disrespectful. I just...

Mr. Lawson: Thanks for saying that. And I don't take it like that.

Board Member Bermello: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Lawson: So -- but these -- you know, but then what did everybody do? All the developers moved across the water to Brickell, and they developed the hell out of Brickell. And guess where everybody that comes down to Miami wants to go? They want to go to Brickell. They don't want to go to South Beach. South Beach is a mess. And Brickell, by the way, has a Zaha Hadid building there, right? But Brickell is a big problem if you've lived there. I lived on Brickell. It's a big

problem. The congestion is crazy. So, when I think about what's the possibility of -- what people are angry about, you know, I think about what is it that people when they come from New York down to Miami, what do they always tell you why they love coming down here? They love the trees, right. They're always like, "We can't believe all the trees," you know. People love the trees. They love the space. What do they complain about? They complain about how overcrowded it is to try to get around. And you know, at least before the pandemic, what it was like to drive around New York City or try to get around New York City. So, I said before, there are some other issues that seem to be going on. I don't know exactly, and I want to get behind the scenes. I've heard different things about why certain projects come to fruition that maybe were not intend -- is it in the process? Is it -- what party's impacted? But I would say that what I think that is probably big in people's minds is developers coming in and taking, but not giving, not giving back. And I think you can definitely mitigate things by, you know, including the public, you know, making them feel involved. But really, at the end of the day, you know, this is your town too. I mean, you guys are pouring all this effort into this piece of it. Something's happening behind the scenes. And it seems to me, it's the things that relate to, you know, the future growth. I mean, the world is growing, Florida is growing. Coral Gables is growing, right? So, what's the infrastructure going to look like around Coral Gables. You know, you built Merrick Park or designed Merrick Park, and you know, there's no traffic issues around Merrick Park. It's nice, but Coral Gables is going to grow, and it's going to continue to grow. Developers are going to pour in, and I don't know that it's the Mediterranean thing that's the big issue. I know it's beautiful. I love it personally. I think it's great. But I think what -- at the end is what happens -- like I think what you guys were talking about, public amenities, green space, traffic, congestion, traffic, so the density issue. But is it really in the height of the building? Is it really in those things? Are there other things to manage around? And again, I know I've listened to the technical conversation that you guys have had today. I just wanted to go on record to say a few things. I appreciate the technical piece. I appreciate all of your, you know, genius behind it. And what you're doing in this piece is indispensable. But big picture, you know, as just a normal, everyday person, that's the stuff that I'm thinking about. Is it Mediterranean or not? Is it beautiful? Does it fit? Is there space around it? Is it green? Has somebody thought about infrastructure? I mean, isn't that what always plagues

New York City? Infrastructure, infrastructure, right? So, we're going to grow. The City's going to grow. So, I think those are some things that I'd just like to talk about. I thank you for this technical piece of the discussion, and I continue to follow you and we'll see how it goes. So, keep up the good work.

Chairperson Pardo: Thank you very much.

Unidentified Speaker: You did good. Great, thank you.

Chairperson Pardo: Okay, we're adjourned.

Unidentified Speaker: Thank you very much.

Board Member Behar: There's a motion and a second.

Chairperson Pardo: Adjourned.

Board Member Behar: Thank you.