

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

5:00 PM

Parking Department Conference Room

Sustainability Advisory Board

Chairperson Teddy Lhoutellier
Vice Chairperson Martin Pinilla
Board Member James Brock
Board Member James Covey
Board Member Nicolas Eterovic
Board Member Joseph A. Fadel
Board Member Dipak Joshi
Board Member Dieter Manstein
Board Member Anabella Smith
Board Member Tiffany Troxler

1. Roll Call / Introductions

Present: 7 - Board Member Smith, Board Member Fadel, Chairperson Lhoutellier, Vice Chairperson Pinilla, Board Member Joshi, Board Member Brock and Board Member Manstein

Absent: 2 - Board Member Covey and Board Member Etercovic

Excused: 1 - Board Member Troxler

2. Approval of December SAB Meeting Minutes

Jasper motioned to approve the meeting minutes; Martin seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Public Comment

Rip Holmes, resident – presented his findings on free energy, claiming it could help mitigate sea level rise. He shared videos demonstrating the melting of iron at room temperature and the U.S. Department of Defense's acknowledgment of excess heat in experiments related to free energy.

4. Keep Coral Gables Beautiful Program Updates**i. Recent Events**

- 1. Holiday Cardboard Recycling – November 29 through January 10**
 - a. Collections for the Holiday Cardboard Recycling began the day after Thanksgiving and ran until Jan. 10. There was a recycling dumpster at the Coral Gables Youth Center for easy drop-offs. This was to offset the amount of cardboard that comes with the holiday season and provide an additional location for the community to recycle their cardboard.**
- 2. Christmas Tree Recycling – December 26 through January 10**
 - a. The annual Christmas Tree Recycling began on Dec. 26 and continued till Jan. 10. There was a drop-off point at the Coral Gables Youth Center for multi-family homes and curbside collections. As of now, approximately 400 pounds of Christmas trees were recycled and mulched.**

ii. Upcoming Events

- 1. Pinewood Invasive species removal – February / March**
 - a. An invasive plant species removal event at the historic Pinewood Cemetery is currently being planned for either February or March. This will be the fourth invasive removal event held at Pinewood Cemetery and will contribute to the restoration of this historic site.**

iii. Program Updates:

- 1. NextTrex Plastic Bag & Film Recycling**
 - a. 400 pounds of plastic bags and film have been collected and successfully recycled for the NextTrex Recycling Challenge. The bulk collections are dropped off at Sprouts who then send it to NextTrex to be properly recycled.**
- 2. Cigarette Litter Prevention Program (CLPP)**
 - a. Launched in November 2024, with 12 bins placed in strategic locations, collecting 8.7 pounds of cigarette butts. Recognition of Block by Block, a contractor responsible for maintaining cleanliness in the city, was discussed. Their efforts in collecting cigarette waste for the CLPP program and assisting the community were acknowledged.**
- 3. Battery Recycling**
 - a. As of now, 3,900 pounds of batteries have been collected and properly recycled. A discussion about potentially expanding the program was held, which brought up the need for more volunteers to assist with collection efforts. The conversation highlighted the importance of community involvement in sustainability initiatives.**

5. Sustainability Related City Commission Items**i. USDE Grant Acceptance**

- 1. The City was notified that the ECCGB and Villagers grants have been received. The Villagers grant is for \$20,000 and EECGB is for \$77,040 that will both go towards the Granada Diner Solar PV project. Sustainability will be working with Public Works on coordinating this project.**

6. Standing Agenda Items**i. Vulnerability Assessment Update**

- 1. For the Vulnerability Assessment, the October through December reports were submitted to FDEP. The timeline years had to be adjusted from the originally executed agreement based on sea level rise, the new timeline is 2050 to 2080.**

ii. Block by Block Monthly Report

- 1. In the month of December, the Block by Block team concentrated on all the extra Holiday events and displays that beautify the City of Coral Gables. Especially the gum and stain removal after such events. Their team of ambassadors takes great pride and ownership of their assigned areas. Through their proactive approach, they address most streetscape issues before they are reported.**

7. Member Comments**i. Deiter:**

1. Deiter would like to set aside some time with the team to discuss the different initiatives his high school's sustainability committee would like to establish at the school. He would like to partner on projects and events such as invasive plant removals, litter cleanups, and assisting in KCGB's collection programs.

ii. Jasper:

1. Only wanted to mention that it was his 81st birthday and he is very proud of this organization because it is just starting new programs such as the cigarette litter program.

iii. Dipak:

1. Discussed different ways to assist the Battery Recycling Program and encouraged reaching out for support from students at Deiter's high school to help with the different recycling program collections.

iv. Martin:

1. Martin shared the concept of Blue Zones, focusing on how cities can promote healthier lifestyles among residents and areas where people live longer. The board expressed interest in exploring this further and its potential application in the city.

v. Anabella:

1. Anabella discussed the ongoing Green Business Certification and the Earth Month Lunch and Learn in April. The Board discussed how to promote the certification application, and everyone will be sharing the program via City newsletters and social media.

vi. Joe:

1. Joe wanted to find out more about the demolition ordinances in the city as he was intrigued after reading about other cities who attempt to dissuade demolition to make it more sustainable. He would like to research this subject more before discussing it further.

8. ADJOURNED: 6:28 p.m.

Next Meeting – Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 5:00 P.M. at the Parking & Mobility Services Office

Additional Zoom Meeting Call-In Information Below

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82049614201>

Meeting ID: 820 4961 4201

Phone Number: 305-461-6769

For more information on the Sustainability Advisory Board please visit:

CoralGables.com/SAB

Email Sustainability@coralgables.com