

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items F-2, F-6, F-9 are related
March 23, 2021
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena
Commissioner Jorge Fors

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Zoning Director, Ramon Trias

Public Speaker(s)

Jackson Rip Holmes
Mark Trowbridge
Mayra Joli

Agenda Items F-2, F-6, F-9 are related [Start: 11:12 a.m.]

F-2: An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-212, "Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments," by amending the following provisions relating to "Miracle Mile" (1) Article 2 "Zoning Districts," reducing the maximum height and modifying and conforming associated provisions including, ground floor design, setbacks, vehicle access, and site plan review in the Zain/Friedman Miracle Mile Downtown District Overlay (DO) and the Mixed-Use 2 (MX2) District facing Miracle Mile: (2) Article 4, "Urban Design and Public Improvement Standards," clarifying a build-to-line: (3) Article 10 "Parking," Section 10-109, requiring remote off-street

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parking; and (4) Article 14 “Process,” Section 14-204.5, prohibiting use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) as receiver sites; providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification and providing for an effective date.

F-6: An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables providing for text amendments to the Code of the City of Coral Gables, Chapter 74, Article III, Division 5 entitled “Parking Replacement Assessment,” providing for updates to the assessment provisions and procedures and providing for severability, repealer, codification and an effective date. This is a public hearing item.

F-9: A Resolution of the City Commission amending Resolution No. 2013-256 to add a Parking in Lieu fee in accordance with City Code, Chapter 74 – Traffic and Vehicles, Article III – Stopping, Standing and Parking, Division 5, Parking Replacement Assessment, providing for severability and an effective date

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We will now take the zoning changes F-2, F-6 and F-9, please, these are related, F-2, F-6 and F-9.

City Attorney Ramos: Yes Mayor. F-2 is an Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-212, “Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments,” by amending the following provisions relating to “Miracle Mile” (1) Article 2 “Zoning Districts,” reducing the maximum height and modifying and conforming associated provisions including, ground floor design, stepbacks, vehicle access, and site plan review in the Zain/Friedman Miracle Mile Downtown District Overlay (DO) and the Mixed-Use 2 (MX2) District facing Miracle Mile: (2) Article 4, “Urban Design and Public Improvement Standards,” clarifying a build-to-line: (3) Article 10 “Parking,” Section 10-109, requiring remote off-street parking; and (4) Article 14 “Process,” Section 14-204.5, prohibiting use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) as receiver sites; providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification and providing for an effective date. This is a public hearing item, Mr. Trias.

Zoning Director Trias: Mayor, no changes have been made since first reading.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Do I hear a motion?

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, we do have members of the public who wish to speak on this item.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: The first one is Jackson Rip Holmes.

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Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, two minutes, alright.

Mr. Holmes: Forgive me Mayor, but I want to praise you for bring Hispanic pride into City Hall that is an accomplishment, I salute you. However, get ready please, because I think that your greatest legacy, unfortunately is going to be the end, along with Citizens United, they may deserve more blame than you, bringing about the end of Coral Gables as a suburb. The proposed changes to Miracle Mile is going to make Miracle Mile South Beach. If you think how hard it is to park on South Beach, that's what I predict and that's what I know is going to happen. This proposal is a disaster, because its basically, if you think it through, four-story buildings with no parking is going to actually cannibalize the existing parking. The streetscape took away one-third, more than one-third of the on-street parking, we are already stressed, and there is not really enough parking depending on where you are on Miracle Mile. When these four-story buildings come on with no parking, guess what people are going to do? – they are going to cannibalize the parking that exist. So, for instance, my tenant Massage Envy, people won't have places to park, they'll end up going elsewhere. This will happen throughout Miracle Mile. The lunch hour for Miracle Mile is dead. Nobody is going to be able to get back to work in time for eating lunch on Miracle Mile by remote parking. Lunch hour is gone. I predict that the Publix Market parking lot will start getting cannibalized, they'll start having to tow there, just like you do on South Beach, even city parking right in front of City Hall is going to start getting cannibalized with these four-story buildings that have no parking. This is a disaster. Its not going to work and its going to diminish the income of Miracle Mile and diminish the city's tax base. I remind people that Mayor Valdes-Fauli said many, many times, you can look it up in the city archives, in City Commission meetings back in, let's say 1999, he said, if the City of New York, if the City of London, if Paris, France can do without parking so can Coral Gables. The difference there is that those cities have a subway system, a metro system that works. We do not. We cannot...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you Mr. Holmes. Thank you, sir. Thank you for your participation. Next.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker is Mr. Mark Trowbridge.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Trowbridge.

Mr. Trowbridge. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, good morning members of the Commission, Mark Trowbridge with our Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce, located at 201 Alhambra Circle. Honored to be with you all again today. We spoke with you during the first reading two weeks ago and shared our enthusiasm that we have found a path forward, in terms of addressing some of

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the challenges that have continued to take place on Miracle Mile. I know that there has been a tremendous amount of input, especially over the last two to three months, and we applaud that. We applaud that folks have shared their thoughts, not only related to this zoning update, but in terms of zoning changes around the community. We are very pleased that we were able to host with the Business Improvement District, a Town Hall, where a number of folks spoke very passionately about the future of Miracle Mile, but I think that we can all agree that we need to do something that will encourage businesses to locate, thrive and prosper on our main street. More than five years ago, we along with the B.I.D. and the city put together a study around the issue of the future of the Mile and businesses, and in May we will be having those consultants come back and take a look five years later, and I think this will be one of the anchors of the discussion going forward. So, I appreciate the collaboration, the compromise, the working together as you would expect city leaders to do, and we'll look forward to reporting back to all of our elected officials on the thoughts of our consultants, in terms of the future of Miracle Mile now that we have some of these opportunities ahead of us. Thank you again, to the Commission for your good work, to the staff, to our consultants and of course our partners. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Trowbridge. Next.

City Clerk Urquia: And the last speaker, Mr. Mayor, is Mayra Joli.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mayra Joli. Go ahead Miss.

Ms. Joli: Mayra Joli, 700 Jeronimo Drive, Coral Gables, Florida 33146. Here we are again, fighting the impossible, the residents have no input, when it comes to the Mayor that is leaving and the people that are still there. This debacle with the zoning started while the residents were sleeping. If anybody remembers the resolution 2004-246, that's when, I think, everything started to try to push for the changes. It wasn't with this Mayor; it was with other Mayors who kicked the can all the way up to here. So, anybody from 2004 to now is part of this debacle. The residents have spoken and what I see is that you put it away to see if we forget about it and then bring it back again. The Commissioners, the Vice Mayor, and Mayor, the election coming up already on the way, coming up on April 13th, and you keep insisting and insisting, we the residents will be better served if we know which one of you is talking to the developers. Which one of you have this under your first priority agenda, so we, you know, everybody is speaking transparency, but nobody is telling us who the developers know in this forum that they have the power to send Mr. Trias talking to us all the time, because the only contact is Mr. Trias speaking on how he want to push somebody's pet project. Its not the residents and you keep insisting and insisting, so I think we are going to have to bring the hammer down and get the court to make you, all of you understand, we are the bosses. The residents have spoken. They do not want more construction. I think you are

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happy with the \$600 million dollar that was expanded when the Ponce Plaza and then you have the people in Agave and Ponce Plaza is saying that Iglesias is the one who have the say-so of the last word of what to take to or not to, or what concessions, what waivers does Ponce Plaza going to have. When are you going to stop selling Coral Gables, even on the last day of the Mayor, we continue to sell Coral Gables....

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you Ms. Joli. Thank you for the accusations, they are inaccurate. Thank you.

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

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's it. Okay. Are there any comments by staff?

Zoning Director Trias: No comments.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner there has not been any changes from the first reading. Do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Keon: I have a couple questions.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, please. There have been no changes.

Commissioner Keon: For Ramon and Miriam. Ramon, do any of these changes or any of the amendments regarding Miracle Mile. Do they increase the height along Miracle Mile?

Zoning Director Trias: No.

Commissioner Keon: Do they really increase the density of Miracle Mile?

Zoning Director Trias: No.

Commissioner Keon: Miriam, is this considered an upzoning, these amendments? No?

City Attorney Ramos: No, it does not.

Commissioner Keon: That this is not an upzoning, doesn't increase the density, and it doesn't increase the height on Miracle Mile, is that correct?

Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Lago: Can I ask a question, please. Ramon let's use an example. If you have an existing building that is only allowed to build two-stories at 1.45 FAR, and you vote in favor of this today, what will that project be allowed to build as of today?

Zoning Director Trias: If it passes four stories.

Vice Mayor Lago: And how much FAR?

Zoning Director Trias: Same FAR, which is 3 or 3.5 with Med bonus.

Vice Mayor Lago: But before the building can only build two stories and 1.45 FAR, correct?

Zoning Director Trias: If it did not provide parking, yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: So by approving this today, you are allowing a building, a piece of property that without parking can only go to two stories, can only go to 1.45 FAR, and can now go to four stories and a 3.5 FAR, correct?

Zoning Director Trias: No, because it has to provide parking, as a remote parking or parking...

Vice Mayor Lago: That's what I'm saying, but if you approve this today, you are allowing the building to go double in height, and you are allowing it to more than double the FAR, correct?

Commissioner Keon: No, it depends on the...

Zoning Director Trias: What I said was that right now, 1.45 FAR, no parking. If we pass, if you decide to pass this, you can do more than that. You can do four stories, but you'll have to provide parking, you have to provide parking, as remote parking or...

Vice Mayor Lago: But you can build, if you apply the remote parking portion to this, you can build four stories and 3.5 FAR, its simple, I don't want to confuse anybody.

Zoning Director Trias: Yes, that would be correct, with remote parking or some other parking.

Vice Mayor Lago: Let's vote on it. We debated this for three years, let's just vote on it. This is not a got you moment. Let's just vote on it and let's move forward. Everybody has made a decision, everybody is very clear, everybody knows where they stand. That's it. Let's vote on it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. Do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second?

Commissioner Mena: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll please.

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Lago: No

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 4-1)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. F-6.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you Ramon, I appreciate it.

City Attorney Ramos: F-6 is an Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables providing for text amendments to the Code of the City of Coral Gables, Chapter 74, Article III, Division 5 entitled "Parking Replacement Assessment," providing for updates to the assessment provisions and procedures and providing for severability, repealer, codification and an effective date. This is a public hearing item.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Any members of the public that wish to speak?

City Clerk Urquia: No one has requested to speak on this.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. Do I hear a motion?

City Clerk Urquia: I'm sorry, Mr. Mayor, we do have, okay, I'm sorry, I apologize, Ms. Mayra Joli would like to speak on this item.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. Ms. Joli, you have two minutes.

Ms. Joli: Oh, I have two minutes, thank you very much. So, its great. Mr. Trias, don't leave, Coral Gables is still up for sale, its all yours, all yours; and you also understand, Mr. Trias, whose the next one who is going to be on the Commission and the Mayor, because you need people continue representing you, developers, Mr. Trias, all of them. Thank you. You're great. You're a great representative of the developers. The developers should be the one conducting the elections on April 13th, because its being shown to everybody that no matter what the residents says, Coral Gables is up for sale. Thank you. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Ms. Joli, I wish to remind you that if you have any evidence of impropriety you should turn it into the authorities. Thank you very much ma'am. Anybody else?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes sir, Mr. Jackson Rip Holmes has requested to speak on this as well.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Holmes.

Mr. Holmes: Thank you for allowing me to speak. And first, I want to apologize up front if I'm speaking on the wrong item. Can someone possibly clarify what this item does? I have objections to the new plans for parking, anything relating to remote parking. Does this relate to remote parking?

Zoning Director Trias: The payment in lieu provision for the city code.

Commissioner Mena: The remote parking aspect of Miracle Mile was included in F-2, correct Ramon?

Zoning Director Trias: Yes sir.

Mr. Holmes: I guess that falls under replacement parking or something. Again, you know, I submit that the city really should have proven that its done government in secret. I've asked how many times for a public workshop and a full discussion of these matters and to this day, here I am having to ask questions, because you all have done government in secret. Me, who is a tiger on this, let alone the city's voters who have other desperate things going on in their lives, we don't even know, but what we do know is that you're planning to wipe out 25 percent of the parking requirement

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because you are allowing developers to buy their way out of it by paying only something like, 40 percent of the cost of the parking, so they can buy out 25 percent and never provide that parking. That's hardly comforting to people who need to park. Secondly, its going to be remote, we get different versions. I think the last one I heard was within 1,000 yards or 1,000 feet, but the problem again is, you don't want to remote park, and nobody else does, and so, people have choices. If they can go to a place where there is regular parking and avoid remote parking, that's what they are going to do. Its going to devastate our downtown. So, I can't even believe that you all are doing this.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you Mr. Holmes. Anybody else?

City Clerk Urquia: No sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. If there are no comments, do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second?

Commissioner Fors: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll please.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: F-9.

City Attorney Ramos: F-9 is a Resolution of the City Commission amending Resolution No. 2013-256 to add a Parking in Lieu fee in accordance with City Code, Chapter 74 – Traffic and Vehicles, Article III – Stopping, Standing and Parking, Division 5, Parking Replacement Assessment, providing for severability and an effective date.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Do we have comments?

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City Clerk Urquia: No sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No?

City Clerk Urquia: No, we do not.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Comments from the City Commission or do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second?

Commissioner Fors: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll please.

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)