

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-4
May 26, 2009
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II
Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Commissioner Maria Anderson
Commissioner Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Commissioner Wayne "Chip" Withers

City Staff

City Manager, Patrick Salerno
City Attorney, Elizabeth Hernandez
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Public Works Director, Alberto Delgado

Public Speaker(s)

H-4 [Start: 10:22:26 a.m.]

Resolution authorizing the execution of the Joint Participation Agreement between Miami-Dade County and the City of Coral Gables for disbursement of Road Impact Fee funds to the City, for the construction of the Segovia Street Median Project along Segovia Street from Bird Road (S.W. 40th Street) to Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida.

Mayor Slesnick: H-4.

City Manager Salerno: H-4 is a Resolution authorizing the execution of the Joint Participation Agreement between Miami-Dade County and the City of Coral Gables for disbursement of Road Impact Fee funds to the City, for the construction of the Segovia Street Median Project along Segovia Street from Bird Road (S.W. 40th Street) to Biltmore Way.

Mr. Delgado: This is a necessary step in order to obtain from the County the monies from the impact fees for this project. The Segovia Median, in addition to the beautification project, it's also a project that will enhance the traffic and the pedestrian safety in the area, and we provide a very convenient connection to the bicycle facility of Alhambra Circle. This is the beginning of a process, this requires after this JPA is approved by this Commission to go to the County Commission for approval, and then after that we'll authorize to proceed with the bidding process. So I will say that the schedule for this project will most likely take three to four months for the County to approve the JPA, and

then about three to four months for the bidding process. So our anticipation is it would be ready for construction by the end of this year or the beginning of 2010.

Commissioner Withers: Move it.

Commissioner Cabrera: Second.

Mayor Slesnick: Moved by Mr. Withers, seconded by Mr. Cabrera, Mr. Cabrera.

Commissioner Cabrera: So I understand this correctly; if we approve this today it now moves to the County for County Commission approval of the use of road impact fees for this project.

Mr. Delgado: Of the JPA...

Commissioner Cabrera: Mr. Delgado, does City staff typically attend these meetings?

Mr. Delgado: Yes, we always are present when they discuss the JPA, which is an extra step.

Commissioner Cabrera: Why don't you tell the audience what the acronym stands for?

Mr. Delgado: The Joint Participation Agreement.

Commissioner Cabrera: OK. Thank you. But that's done before the County Commission?

Mr. Delgado: That's correct.

Commissioner Cabrera: Is it typically a consent item?

Mr. Delgado: Yes, it's usually a consent item.

Commissioner Cabrera: Would you alert me as to when this would be on their agenda so I can contact two of our Commissioners to seek their support to ensure that it doesn't get pulled, and it doesn't get....what's that?

Mayor Slesnick: Way-laid.

Commissioner Cabrera: Yeah, either delayed or deferred.

Mayor Slesnick: Way-laid.

Commissioner Cabrera: Way-laid.

Mr. Delgado: Absolutely, I will.

Mayor Slesnick: Old western term.

Commissioner Cabrera: I didn't know that – way-laid. Yes, so we can make some certain calls to the appropriate personnel to County, and even if we, if you'd like us to be there, I would certainly welcome the opportunity to attend, so I think this is an important...from a construction standpoint does the project have gutters?

Mr. Delgado: No, this project will only include elimination of the central section of paved area, we are putting the median with no curve; it will look similar to the Alhambra Circle.

Commissioner Cabrera: No curve and no gutter.

Mr. Delgado: And no gutter.

Commissioner Cabrera: Will this have landscaping?

Mr. Delgado: Absolutely, it will have landscaping along the median, and we are looking at addressing also landscaping the swales as well.

Commissioner Cabrera: Will the landscaping be part of the cost associated with the construction or is that an additional cost?

Mr. Delgado: No, it is part of this cost.

Commissioner Cabrera: It is; and last question. When do you anticipate beginning the construction of the round-about at Segovia and Biltmore Way?

Mr. Delgado: The round-about is scheduled to begin in the fall, so prior to this project.

Commissioner Cabrera: This coming fall?

Mr. Delgado: This coming fall. We are right now in the...JPA was already approved by the County, the Joint Participation Agreement, we now in the bidding process.

Commissioner Cabrera: OK. Thank you sir.

Mayor Slesnick: I have a few questions while I've got you here Alberto. One is the circle at Coral Way and Segovia, round-about, where are we on the vegetation; I mean, we keep talking about it, but it looks about as dreary and plain as it has.

Mr. Delgado: We obtained already the approval of the Historic Preservation Board, it went to the Historic Board and we got the certificate of appropriateness; now we are moving along with the same contractor so that we don't have to bring another contractor as an extension of this contract, as an addendum, change to proceed with the landscape. The landscaping has already been approved as I told you, and will include installation of the plan materials and the truck and irrigation, so this is on the way right now.

Commissioner Cabrera: When do you anticipate that?

Mr. Delgado: Most likely next month, we are going to be...if the contractors submit the proposal by the end of this month; he was supposed to do it by the end of May, we can start construction.

Commissioner Cabrera: So potentially June, July, and/or August.

Mr. Delgado: The summer months.

Commissioner Cabrera: You know, in a way its good that we waited this long to do the landscape because there have been some accidents on the round-about, and I think the material would have really sustained some damage.

Mr. Delgado: Absolutely, and the cost of those accidents have already been taken care of, it was lack of some of these....those reflective pave markers that have been added. We have done some tweaking to the actual circle....

Commissioner Cabrera: Round-about.

Mr. Delgado:...round-about – have already been identified. So right now as we start....state today in the last two to three months, we haven't had any other accidents.

Mayor Slesnick: I think too the landscaping will help because the lights coming right at you sometimes confuse on the thing, look at each other, it's a very flat...you don't see what's there.

Commissioner Cabrera: That's a very interesting point; will the landscape have any up lighting?

Mr. Delgado: Yes, the landscaping will have landscaping lighting, which will also enhance or actually improve the visibility of the area.

Commissioner Cabrera: It will what?

Mr. Delgado: Improve the visibility.

Commissioner Cabrera: Oh, visibility; and since we are talking about roundabouts, what's happening with the fountain, the DeSoto Fountain? I think of all the areas in the City that probably needs a round-about, a true round-about its DeSoto Fountain, I drive through it every single day. If we want to improve revenue from a Police standpoint, traffic ticketing, just put motor men out there, put them all out there and they will just have a field day with the number of people that just completely ignore the stop signs entering the DeSoto Fountain and go right in front of the drivers in front on the boulevard, which we are the ones that have the right-of-way.

Mr. Delgado: For that project we have impact fees approved for year 2010-2011. So the first step would be the design phase, which there is a conceptual design already prepared and paid by the MPO, David Plummer and Associates, they already prepared a conceptual design, which is going to be one of the most beautiful roundabouts of the City.

Commissioner Cabrera: Lots of green space.

Mr. Delgado: And will also provide some buffer to the County because it's going to increase the center portion of that area with a green area. So design will go in the 2010-2011 component and then we will....about a JPA for construction.

Commissioner Cabrera: Were you able to go through the process of getting these approvals earlier so that you can actually fast-track some of these projects or it has to be sequentially done?

Mr. Delgado: It has to be sequentially because they OK the money as we collect the money, and then they don't want really to over do it as far as projects; they want to keep the projects as the money is being collected.

Commissioner Cabrera: It's amazing how much money there is, but we don't get it all, I don't know if the Commission knows that, but we always don't get it, and so its really critical now more than ever that we work toward getting that money. Thank you.

Mayor Slesnick: Speaking of that, where is the Ponce median?

Mr. Delgado: The Ponce median is the one that is being worked in the combination of the stimulus funding, the Federal money and also the impact fees. The deadline for the submittal of the plans is July 16th, that's when the Federal government is going to authorize the expenditure of that funding; until that day we won't be able to start the bidding process. So what we will do is once we obtain the Federal approval of the stimulus money, we will proceed with the bidding process, and most likely that project also will take place at the beginning of next year 2010.

Mayor Slesnick: Which is later than we had projected.

Mr. Delgado: Later than we projected, that's right, but they are taking some time in reviews of plans and everything, even though it was shovel-ready, they take some time in reviewing those plans.

Mayor Slesnick: But my main question is, its still on the drawing board, its still on our plans.

Mr. Delgado: Yes, it's a project that is going to go.

Mayor Slesnick: One thing Mr. Manager, that concerns me that does not bear directly on the discussion of medians and so forth, but it does have to do with landscaping downtown, since we are talking about landscaping; I was concerned the other day with a developer, that Mrs. Jimenez and I were meeting about our approach to approving or disapproving landscaping plans for buildings. You may or may not know, we have a Master Plan that was created at some time for landscaping the downtown area, and it was created by a person for the City; and I think in general we accepted the plan. I don't know that we approved it, I think we accepted it, I'm not sure, but it's become some kind of hierachal document that people will not vary from; and I really have to tell you that I think that's wrong, I think we have to look at some individual cases. In this particular case to highlight the entrance of this brand new building; they want to put majestic palms, I think they are called "spectaculars"; and they were rejected because they didn't have to do with the oak tree shade trees that we want in our downtown area. This is an ongoing debate. I particularly favor palm trees in some places, but it doesn't matter what I favor, but here was an entrance way to a new building that was going to be spectacular and really highlighted, and we forced them into oak trees, which do not highlight the building at all; I mean, there could be oak trees all the way up to the entrance, but this plan has become kind of like the "mind-com" of landscaping and it just shouldn't be. I think that we need to have someone just look at that and be more flexible and to review particular situations. So I just bring that to your attention, nothing to do about that today. We have Item H-4, did we have motion on that Mr. Clerk?

City Clerk Foeman: Yes we did.

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes, Mr. Withers and second by me.

Mayor Slesnick: Withers and Cabrera, OK; any other comments?

Mr. Clerk

Commissioner Withers: Yes

Commissioner Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes

Mayor Slesnick: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

[End: 10:33:52 a.m.]