

1 CITY OF CORAL GABLES
2 QUASI-JUDICIAL BOARD OF ARCHITECTS
3 MEETING: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2015, 3:50 P.M.
4 FIRST FLOOR, CORAL GABLES MUSEUM
5 285 ARAGON AVEUNE, CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

6 MEMBERS PRESENT:

7 GLENN PRATT, CHAIRMAN
8 CALLUM GIBB
9 PETER KILIDDJIAN
10 LUIS JAUREGUI
11 JUDY CARTY
12 NELSON DE LEON

13 CITY STAFF PRESENT:

14 CRAIG E. LEEN, ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY
15 YANENS FIGUEROA, ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY
16 CARLOS A. MINDREAU, CITY ARCHITECT
17 JANE TOMPKINS, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

18 ALSO PARTICIPATING:

19 PETER GONZALEZ, ESQ.
20 LAURA RUSSO, ESQ.
21 ALBERTO PEREZ, APPLICANT
22 RONEY MATEU, ARCHITECT
23 CARLOS GOBEL, APPRAISER
24 RICHARD HEISENBOTTLE, ARCHTECT
25 RAFAEL PORTUONDO, ARCHITECT
26 JIM DOCKERTY
27 EDUARDO CALI, JR.
28 UMBERTO PEREZ
29 JAIME SALDARRIAGA
30 MARIA CRISTINA LONGO
31 ERNESTO FABRE
32 ALVARO FABRE
33 DOLLY MAC INTYRE
34 WILLIAM DONELAN
35 ARVA PARKS

36 NOTE: APPLICANT'S EXHIBIT NUMBERS 1-17 WERE MARKED AND
37 ARE ATTACHED TO THE TRANSCRIPTS

1 THEREUPON:

2 (The following proceedings were had:)

3 MR. PRATT: If you could please keep your voice
4 down. The acoustics is not very good in this room
5 and in addition, we have a court reporter that is
6 trying to keep a record on this.

7 Okay. And also if you could please at this point
8 silence your cell phone; and as I said please keep
9 the talking amongst yourselves down.

10 MR. LEEN: I just want to say a few words. This
11 is the first, as far as I know - and I just talked
12 with the city architect - this is the first
13 Quasi-Judicial Board of Architects hearing that we
14 have held. What the code lays out is a Professional
15 Board of Architects that reviews applications on
16 architectural principles and for aesthetics; and it
17 is not quasi-judicial, generally, and that it is done
18 in panels. And there is a back and forth that
19 occurs, which I have had the pleasure of seeing now
20 for my four and a half years as City Attorney.

21 I feel it is one of the best boards that exists.
22 And it really is part of the character of the city of
23 Coral Gables. And it has existed - I have a 90-year
24 pen - literally for 90 years. So a very important
25 board.

1 Now, the code says that in circumstances where
2 there is a resident - or it could be the applicant -
3 is aggrieved by a decision of the board acting as a
4 panel, that a quasi-judicial hearing can be requested
5 before the Board. And that is what has occurred
6 here.

7 So today the Board is acting in a quasi-judicial
8 capacity, where they will hear evidence, they will
9 hear arguments of counsel, and then they will make a
10 decision. Now, one issue I want to put on the record
11 is that at one point, one of the members of the
12 board, I had said, had to recuse because they had
13 taken a position on the matter outside of the Board
14 of Architects panel hearing. And at that point, all
15 the other members of the Board of Architects had not
16 taken a position on the matter.

17 Now that we're having this quasi-judicial
18 hearing and there is a period for disclosure and the
19 potential for objections, I wanted to state on the
20 record that I have given the opinion that all of the
21 board members can participate, because all of them
22 now have taken a position on the matter, actually in
23 the prior board hearing, at least the ones that were
24 on the panel; all the members of the panel have.

25 And so at this point, the code contemplates the

1 idea that they would still be on the quasi-judicial
2 board. So I see no reason why one board member would
3 have to recuse. So I have given that opinion, and
4 there will be an appointed time where an objection
5 can be taken, if desired.

6 The other point I want to raise is that because
7 it is quasi-judicial, the board members are acting as
8 judges, so they have to put aside their prior
9 decision in the panel and they have to look at this
10 completely anew, based on the evidence that is
11 presented today. And that is what they will do.

12 And with that I will turn it back to the chair
13 to begin the hearing.

14 MR. PRATT: First of all, can I see a show of
15 hands for the number of the people or other parties
16 - not the applicant, but outside the applicant - that
17 are going to be speaking, and we're trying to
18 determine how much time we need to allocate.

19 So we have two, four, six, eight ... roughly 12
20 people. If we allocate, say, five minutes, that's
21 about 60 minutes that we could go, for 12 people.

22 MR. LEEN: Well, generally the code calls for
23 three minutes per person.

24 MR. PRATT: Okay.

25 MR. LEEN: You can increase it if for some

1 reason someone has something particularly different
2 to say than what everyone is saying so that
3 everything gets voiced.

4 MR. PRATT: Okay.

5 MR. LEEN: Usually we also look at, if someone
6 is like a neighbor, like an adjacent neighbor, and
7 they may be affected more, we would tend to give them
8 a little more time. I also know there's the party
9 that requested the quasi-judicial hearing; you would
10 allow that person to present their case, within
11 reason. But generally it should be three minutes or
12 less per person.

13 MR. PRATT: Okay. And I think that the
14 procedure was that the applicant or the ...

15 MR. LEEN: It is not an appeal, so generally we
16 would allow the applicant to go first.

17 MR. PRATT: Right.

18 MR. LEEN: And then the aggrieved party, and
19 then it would be opened up to a public hearing.

20 Everyone needs to be sworn in, though, who is
21 going to testify who is not a lawyer - because
22 lawyers make arguments - but everyone who is here to
23 speak, to testify, needs to be sworn in.

24 MR. PRATT: All right. Seeing as this is kind
25 of a first, who would do the swearing in at this

1 point?

2 MR. LEEN: Do you do oaths?

3 THE COURT REPORTER: I can. I'm a notary --

4 MR. LEEN: Yes.

5 THE COURT REPORTER: I can administer the oath.

6 MR. LEEN: Everyone please stand who plans to
7 speak; and understand what you are saying today will
8 be under oath.

9 THE COURT REPORTER: Would you raise your right
10 hands, please, to be sworn; to be administered the
11 oath.

12 (Thereupon, prospective individuals to give
13 testimony were collectively administered the oath.)

14 MR. PRATT: So if everything is in order, we
15 will go ahead and begin with the applicant to do his
16 presentation.

17 MR. GONZALEZ: Good afternoon.

18 I don't have a podium, so it is kind of
19 difficult to get all my documents in order. With
20 your permission, I will use this little corner of
21 this table for my materials.

22 MR. PRATT: Okay.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: My name is Peter Gonzalez; I'm an
24 attorney here in Coral Gables for 21 years. I'm with
25 the law firm of Sanchez Medina Gonzalez Quesada. And

1 I'm here on behalf of the applicant, the owner, the
2 developer of the project.

3 I just want to go through a few housekeeping
4 matters, based on what the city attorney said with
5 respect to quasi-judicial procedures, which is
6 governed under Statute 3-304.

7 I believe, Mr. City Attorney, unless I'm
8 mistaken, the applicant goes and then any public
9 individuals that are speaking in favor of the
10 applicant has an opportunity to speak for no longer
11 than three minutes; and then the public comments in
12 opposition of the applicant. I just want to figure
13 out if we're going to change those procedures --

14 MR. LEEN: My recommendation to the chair is
15 because there's an actual aggrieved party who has
16 brought the matter, that it go the applicant, the
17 aggrieved party, and then the public. Now, as part
18 of your presentation if you have people who are
19 speaking as part of your presentation, you can have
20 them speak.

21 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. What we're going to do is,
22 I just have a few opening remarks, and then I will
23 introduce Mr. Roney Mateu, who is the architect on
24 the project. And we also have Carlos Gobel, who is a
25 certified appraiser, who is actually going to submit

1 an appraisal report for the Board's consideration.

2 I just want to touch upon what the city attorney
3 said, which is the mission or the purpose of the
4 Board, which is for architectural principles and
5 aesthetics, is what we are here for.

6 The Board from its inception back in the Merrick
7 days is designed to improve upon the architectural
8 design that is selected by the private property
9 owner. The purpose of the Board is not to object and
10 completely redesign any different architectural
11 style; that is not the purpose of the Board.

12 The Board is also supposed to be a peer review,
13 and there are certain requisites that you need to be
14 part of the Board of Architects. And that is set
15 forth in the Board of Architects Rules and
16 Procedures. Each member of the Board is a registered
17 architect landscape architect with at least ten years
18 experience and numerous design construction projects
19 within the city.

20 And the reason that is important is because even
21 though we're having a hearing where it is out in the
22 public, it is not supposed to be a public hearing.
23 That is expressly set forth in the code, and I quote:
24 Although the Board of Architects meeting convened for
25 panel members is opened to the public, it is not a

1 public hearing; however, the member serving as the
2 chair of the panel has the discretion whether or not
3 to allow public comments. If public comments are
4 made, they should be limited to three minutes.

5 And the reason I say that is because if we are
6 going to turn what has traditionally been the peer
7 review system of professionals into a political
8 popularity contest, then we're turning upside-down
9 what the purpose of the Board is.

10 And since we're on the record, I just want to
11 state an objection. I know the city attorney has
12 determined that Mr. Callum Gibb can be part of
13 today's proceedings, but just for the record, we're
14 objecting to that for two reasons.

15 Mr. Callum Gibb at the early part of this
16 process had already sent a letter to all the members
17 of the Board objecting and prejudging this before we
18 had a full process to be heard. And I have a copy of
19 the letter that Mr. Callum Gibb submitted to all the
20 members of the board which I would like to mark as
21 Exhibit 1 to the proceedings.

22 And number two, one of the principals of my
23 client, Mr. Alberto Perez, received an email from I
24 think the person who is the aggrieved party, which is
25 Maricris Longo, recommending that my client hire Mr.

1 Callum Gibb, to give him the business for the
2 architectural work. And I am going to submit that
3 email as well.

4 Based on that alone, we are objecting to Mr.
5 Callum Gibb being part of the process. He has
6 recused himself in the past; we think he should
7 recuse himself again. And here is a copy of the
8 letter.

9 I will hand it to the court reporter as Exhibit
10 Number 1. And I have a copy for all of you.

11 (The previously referred to document was
12 subsequently marked as an exhibit and attached to the
13 transcripts.)

14 MR. LEEN: Thank you.

15 I will wait until you are done before I put in
16 the record the City's view.

17 MR. GONZALEZ: And here is a copy of the emails.
18 It's from Maricris Longo and also a gentleman named
19 Ernesto Fabre. And the emails were sent on June 4th,
20 2015 recommending Mr. Callum Gibb to replace the
21 architect of record, Mr. Roney Mateu. And I'm going
22 to mark this as Exhibit Number 2 in the proceedings.

23 (The previously referred to document was
24 subsequently marked as an exhibit and attached to the
25 transcripts.)

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Now, before I get into the meat
2 of the project and introduce Mr. Mateu, just a little
3 bit of background on the two principals of the
4 company that owns the project.

5 MR. LEEN: Excuse me, sir. Are you done with
6 the preliminary? Because I was just going to state
7 the city's position, just on that one --

8 MR. GONZALEZ: The floor is yours.

9 MR. LEEN: Okay. The City Attorney's office is
10 issuing an opinion on this matter, just so everyone
11 is aware. It was my office's view that there's two
12 basic grounds for a recusal, based on state law. The
13 first is a required recusal, which is where you have
14 a conflict of interest; and the second is a recusal
15 based on bias, or perceived bias.

16 And in this particular case Mr. Gibb recused the
17 first time; he wasn't required to recuse by the City,
18 but he chose to recuse because of the appearance that
19 he had already prejudged the matter. He wasn't
20 saying that he did prejudge the matter, but he had
21 submitted a document that showed his views on the
22 item, and in order to make sure that that didn't
23 become part of the proceeding, he recused.

24 It was my office's view, though, now that there
25 is a quasi-judicial proceeding with all the

1 protections that that sort of proceeding enforce and
2 because now at least, I believe it's three other
3 members of the Board have taken positions in their
4 vote on this matter, it was my view that there was no
5 material reason why he would have to recuse. He
6 could still choose to recuse, but in this particular
7 case, based on that opinion, it is my understanding
8 that he has chosen not to recuse.

9 But I would ask Mr. Gibb if he would like to say
10 anything; I would say please don't comment on the
11 merits right now, but just comment on whether you
12 believe you could be fair, and you have the
13 opportunity to respond to the motion.

14 MR. GIBB: Is there a motion?

15 MR. LEEN: Well, the request. There was a
16 request that you recuse; he is objecting to your
17 participation.

18 MR. GIBB: No, I agree with you. I don't see a
19 need to recuse at this time. I defer to your
20 judgment.

21 MR. LEEN: Well, Ultimately it is your decision.
22 I am telling you in my opinion you are not legally
23 required to recuse. I would ask you, though, do you
24 believe you can be fair?

25 MR. GIBB: Yes, I believe I will make a judgment

1 as I would do in every other ... well. I don't think
2 I'm being unfair in my appearance today, no.

3 MR. LEEN: Do you believe that you can put aside
4 that prior email - and in fact this is to the whole
5 Board - but do you believe you can put aside your
6 prior position and give what is called a de novo
7 hearing today, where you look at this again?

8 MR. GIBB: Yes, I will look at it again and make
9 my judgment based on the presentations.

10 MR. LEEN: The other three board members, I
11 would just ask for purpose of the record, can you do
12 the same? The three board members who voted on this,
13 can you be fair?

14 MR. PRATT: One of the members is no longer on
15 the Board.

16 MR. LEEN: Oh, forgive me. So the two.

17 MR. PRATT: Yes. So there's two. And actually,
18 one of them is absent also now.

19 MS. CARTY: I have never seen this letter
20 before.

21 MR. LEEN: This is not about the letter. What
22 I'm asking you is can you be fair, today, even though
23 you have already made a decision in a prior hearing
24 on this matter?

25 MS. CARTY: (Nods head in the affirmative.)

1 MR. LEEN: You can take a look at it anew - you
2 have to say it for the record - can you look at this
3 anew?

4 MS. CARTY: Yes.

5 MR. LEEN: You can be fair?

6 MS. CARTY: Yes, I can be fair and take a look
7 at it anew.

8 MR. LEEN: Okay. Just for purpose of the
9 record, please note it's one member that is present
10 here today that was on the prior panel that decided
11 this matter.

12 And your objection has been noted for the
13 record.

14 MR. GONZALEZ: Right. Just so we're clear. We
15 have no objection other than we will reassert the
16 objection to Mr. Callum Gibb. Not only because of
17 the appearance of bias, but because the objected
18 documents - they speak for themselves - show that
19 even before the prior hearing he had already
20 prejudged and objected to the project; but more
21 importantly, he had been an architect that was
22 recommended to replace the architect who is going to
23 be making the presentation, the architect of record.

24 But I just note the objection for the record in
25 the event that it becomes an issue down the road.

1 MR. LEEN: I understand. And I would also note
2 that there's an appeal to the city commission before
3 any petition for certiorari to the court. So there's
4 a lot of process here to protect the parties.

5 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you.

6 Just briefly, like I mentioned before, I have
7 been a lawyer here in the Gables for 21 years. My
8 wife and I and our two kids are also Coral Gables
9 residents.

10 I would like to talk very briefly about the
11 principals of the developer. Albert Perez has a
12 company, AJP Ventures Corporation; it's a developer
13 based in Coral Gables. AJP Ventures has acquired
14 and/or developed nearly one million square feet of
15 commercial and residential property, more than half
16 of which is exclusively here in the city of Coral
17 Gables. Among those projects is 2801 Ponce de Leon
18 Boulevard; 2901 Ponce de Leon Boulevard; 3001 Ponce
19 de Leon Boulevard; 2990 Ponce de Leon Boulevard and
20 2626 Ponce de Leon Boulevard. They have additional
21 current developments: The Setting, Cane House,
22 Calbira House, 100 Miracle Mile and 2700 Ponce. They
23 have been very active developers in the Coral Gables
24 community.

25 In 2007 Mr. Perez was inducted into the George

1 E. Merrick Society at the University of Miami; he's
2 also a co-founder and advisor of the University of
3 Miami ALS Research Foundation; is a member of Class
4 IV of the Miami Fellows Initiative, a leadership
5 development program of the Dade Community Foundation.
6 Mr. Perez is also a member of the Chamber of Commerce
7 in the city of Coral Gables and sits on the
8 President's Cabinet of Miami Children's Hospital
9 Foundation.

10 He has a Master in Business Administration in
11 Finance and Management from the Crummer Graduate
12 School of Business at Rollins College. Incidentally,
13 Rollins College is the same college and institution
14 of higher learning where Mr. George Merrick received
15 his training as a real estate developer.

16 Mr. Perez and his wife Kristi live in Coral
17 Gables with their children, Lucas, Noah and Nina.

18 Juan Mas, or Carlos Mas, who I believe may join
19 us in a little bit, is also the other principal. He
20 is currently the Chairman of the Mas Group; he is
21 also involved with this project. He has been
22 involved in infrastructure development, real estate
23 construction, equipment construction and healthcare
24 for various decades.

25 Mr. Mas is president of R.E. Holdings, which is

1 an active participant in the Florida real estate
2 market. Mr. Mas, through his various business
3 entities has entitled, owned and developed millions
4 of square feet of residential and commercial
5 properties here in Florida, also in Arizona and
6 Nevada.

7 Mr. Mas is the chairman of the Board of
8 Directors of the Miami Children's Hospital System,
9 and as chairman Mr. Mas helped define the strategic
10 vision of this this globally recognized leader in
11 pediatric care.

12 His resume is too extensive to list here but I
13 just want to touch upon a couple of things.

14 In addition to his seventeen years of service on
15 the Board of Miami Children's Hospital, he also
16 serves as a director of the Mas Family Foundation,
17 which provides scholarships to disadvantaged young
18 students who demonstrate leadership skills and
19 embrace the ideals of a free society.

20 I'm going to include as part of the record the
21 bios for both Mr. Mas and Mr. Perez. And I have an
22 extra copy for all the members of the Board.

23 (The previously referred to documents were
24 subsequently marked as an exhibit and attached to the
25 transcripts.)

1 MR. LEEN: Mr. Chair, traditionally the Chair
2 gets to decide if you admit it.

3 MR. PRATT: Yes. I was going to say, generally
4 as an aesthetics board we really don't look into the
5 past experience they have as developers that are very
6 extraordinary citizens in Coral Gables. Again, I
7 don't know that that really has any relevance in
8 terms of, you know, our views on how a project is
9 presented.

10 MR. LEEN: Mr. Chair, I would recommend if he
11 presents it, to accept it, for the record; and then,
12 you know, your comments would go more as to weight
13 and whether they would really be considered.

14 MR. PRATT: Okay.

15 MR. LEEN: Just so keep a full record. I would
16 recommend generally allowing anyone to present.

17 MR. PRATT: All right.

18 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you. I'm just doing it for
19 the record and I understand some of this may not be
20 relevant to the Board's decision, but given - and I
21 will show some of the documentation that's been
22 circulated in the city, in the neighborhood - with
23 regard to the opposition, I think it's relevant with
24 respect to what statements that were made by the
25 opposition against the developers.

1 MR. PRATT: Okay. No, we will accept them.
2 It's just generally we look at the project as the
3 project itself, and we really don't question the
4 owners or, you know, whoever the property owners and
5 developers are.

6 MR. GONZALEZ: In the interest of time, instead
7 of handing you bit by bit, I will just put it all for
8 the record and I will give you a packet at the end of
9 the presentation.

10 MR. PRATT: All right. Thank you.

11 MR. LEEN: Mr. Chair, is that okay?

12 MR. PRATT: Yes.

13 MR. LEEN: That's what we will do.

14 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you.

15 And then I want to briefly mention Roney Mateu,
16 who is going to be doing the meat of the matter; he
17 is going to be handling the presentation with respect
18 to the project, that has already been approved. Just
19 by way of history, I think this is the sixth time
20 that we have been up here. And the last that time we
21 were here was on August 6th; that was the fifth time
22 we were before the Board of Architects. We presented
23 the matter and it was approved by two to one.

24 But Mr. Mateu, who is sitting here to my right,
25 is the architect on the project. He is the president

1 and director of Design for Mateu Architecture. His
2 design work includes project experience in
3 residential, commercial, institutional, industrial
4 and educational projects throughout Florida and the
5 Caribbean.

6 His accomplishments have resulted in him being
7 the recipient of 67 awards for Excellence in Design
8 from the America Institute of Architects over the
9 last 35 years. He has been recognized as one of
10 Florida's leading design architects. Over the years,
11 his design works has been featured in numerous
12 television, print media, commercials.

13 Just a little bit about AIA Fellows. Nationally
14 there's about 86,000 members. Approximately 3100 are
15 Fellows. That's less than three percent.
16 Approximately 20 percent of the Fellows have been
17 recognized for design, urban design; promotional
18 design and urban design. In Florida there are
19 approximately 3500 AIA members and about another 4400
20 reciprocal registrations, which are basically
21 out-of-state architects that are allowed to practice
22 in Florida. There's only 115 Fellows in Florida -
23 that's less than two percent - that have been
24 elevated for design; and Mr. Mateu is one of those
25 individuals.

1 In 1995 Mr. Mateu was selected to receive the
2 Silver Medal for Design from the Miami Chapter of the
3 American Institute of Architects. This is the
4 highest award given by the Chapter to an individual;
5 as a matter of fact, he was the first recipient of
6 that award in the Miami Chapter.

7 In 2001 Mr. Mateu was inducted into the AIA
8 Miami Chapter Hall of Fame for Design; in 2010 Mr.
9 Mateu was selected as Architect of the Year by the
10 Miami Chapter of the American Institute of Architects
11 for his special contributions to the profession
12 through excellence in design.

13 And I will submit his CV for the Board's
14 consideration, as well.

15 (The previously referred to document was
16 subsequently marked as an exhibit and attached to the
17 transcripts.)

18 MR. GONZALEZ: Now let me give you a brief
19 overview of what you are going to hear today. We're
20 not here to seek a variance; we're not here to seek a
21 change in density. We're not here to somehow modify
22 the land use. It has nothing to with that. We're
23 not in a historic district. We're here to do what is
24 allowed pursuant to the code as a right. As a matter
25 of fact, we're building less than we are entitled to

1 do. I think we're entitled to build five units, and
2 we have designed this project in such a way we're
3 only building four units, as opposed to what is
4 allowed in the code.

5 There's been a lot of chatter about this area
6 being historically significant. And I have, for the
7 Board's consideration, a letter by Dona Spain dated
8 March 23, 2015 regarding the city's rejection of
9 multiple efforts to try to have Segovia designated as
10 a historically significant area.

11 And the reason this is important is ... I want
12 to mark this as Applicant's Exhibit Number 3; is it
13 3? Is that the next one?

14 THE COURT REPORTER: I'll keep them in order.

15 (The previously referred to document was
16 subsequently marked as an exhibit and attached to the
17 transcripts.)

18 MR. GONZALEZ: This is a letter from the
19 Historic Preservation Officer Dona Spain. It's
20 self-explanatory. But it is important to take this
21 into account only because the public notices of
22 incompatibility that have been provided to, I believe
23 members of the Board, counsel and neighbors and other
24 residents of Coral Gables, and implies that somehow
25 this project is in contravention and violation of the

1 code. As a matter of fact, some of the written
2 statements that have been circulated in the city
3 actually say that, which is completely untrue.

4 So I'm trying to provide you with objective
5 factual evidence instead of the fiction and the
6 misinformation that's been spread through the
7 community in opposition to this particular project.
8 And I think this letter speaks to that.

9 Ms. Spain provided this letter on March 23 to
10 Mr. Ernesto Fabre, who is the same individual who
11 recommended Callum Gibb to be the architect on this
12 project in emails I have provided of record.

13 And the letter says that Article 3, Section
14 3-1103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code states that,
15 and I quote: In order to qualify for designation as
16 a local historic landmark or a local historic
17 landmark district, individual properties must have
18 significant character, interest, or value as part of
19 the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic,
20 or architectural heritage of the city, state or
21 nation. Upon receipt of the application, staff
22 conducted multiple site visits to evaluate the
23 current appearance of the resources along Segovia
24 Street, and compiled historical research to determine
25 the dates of construction, architects and the level

1 of historic integrity of the buildings.

2 They went through this painstaking process, and
3 in their estimation - I'm reading from page 2 - it is
4 the evaluation of the Historical Resources Department
5 that what gives the area its unique character is not
6 the historical, cultural or architectural
7 significance of the properties. Rather, it is the
8 siting of the buildings and the manner in which
9 duplexes and multifamily residences are given their
10 appearance of large, single-family residences which
11 is required by the Coral Gables Zoning Code. If the
12 preservation of this character is desired, it can be
13 better regulated by zoning regulations rather than
14 historic district designation.

15 The bottom line is, they rejected the historical
16 designation; and our contention is that what is
17 happening here is, given that they have been rejected
18 again by the city formally, they are trying to
19 back-door this rejection and they are trying to
20 nibble around the edges by pretending that this is a
21 historically significant street.

22 Now, Mr. Mateu will get into how even if it was
23 designated historically significant, this project is
24 in fact compatible and it is allowed pursuant to the
25 code.

1 By way of background I'm sure I'm not telling
2 you something that you don't already know, as you all
3 know that the plan for the original city called for
4 14 different villages; I think ultimately seven or
5 eight were actually part of the City of Coral Gables:
6 The French Village, the Chinese Village and numerous
7 other villages that all of you are aware of.

8 Some of the opposition talks about this being a
9 global city, almost pretending as if we are part of
10 the World Heritage sites; which of course Coral
11 Gables is not a World Heritage site. In fact, some of
12 the most significant global cities that are World
13 Heritage sites are cities that have old, ancient
14 architecture with a new view behind the scene in the
15 middle.

16 The most ultramodern, most Contemporary
17 buildings in the world are in World Heritage cities
18 and sites. And that is important, again, because the
19 opposition wants you to pretend that somehow if you
20 allowed contemporary architecture - which by the way
21 is, we're selling the highest per square foot in the
22 city of Coral Gables for the last two years, and
23 we'll get into that during the later part of the
24 presentation - that somehow the city is being
25 damaged, that somehow we're losing value.

1 There is no substantial competent evidence that
2 anyone will be able present to you today that can
3 back up that statement. As a matter of fact, the
4 evidence you are going to hear today is how the
5 properties are selling and that maximized values are
6 determined.

7 My client has invested over \$1.5 million into
8 this project. The idea that my client would invest
9 money to reduce the value of the very property he's
10 trying to develop is just silly. And that's why a
11 lot of the opposition papers you are getting is about
12 opinion rather than fact-based evidence; it is about
13 style opinion as opposed to quality and architectural
14 principle, which is what this Board is supposed to be
15 focusing on.

16 I have two more items. We have over 190 signed
17 petitions from members of the community that live
18 near the Segovia project, or that are Coral Gables
19 residents, that I brought with me for the Board's
20 consideration. And I will be submitting this also as
21 part of the record.

22 (The previously referred to document was
23 subsequently marked as an exhibit and attached to the
24 transcripts.)

25 MR. GONZALEZ: And Jorge Hernandez, the

1 architect, had actually sent me a text, and with
2 counsel's permission, Mr. Leen, I would like to read
3 that text into the record.

4 MR. LEEN: That will be fine.

5 Is that okay, Mr. chair?

6 MR. PRATT: Yes. That's fine.

7 MR. GONZALEZ: He was unable to be here today
8 because he has a schedule conflict.

9 Mr. Jorge Hernandez spoke to Mr. Mateu regarding
10 the project and he sent me the text that says: I
11 have an out-of-office meeting, and did not receive
12 the information on time. While I can't speak to the
13 specifics of this project, I know Mr. Mateu's work
14 and can state that there should be no prejudice
15 against well-designed, Modern architecture. Our
16 zoning code promotes diversity in styles and we have
17 an incentive in the system of bonuses for
18 Mediterranean architecture for commercial and
19 multifamily projects. That legislation is ripe and
20 appropriate. It was well crafted and has generally
21 been well administered. The Mediterranean Bonus
22 Legislation should not be interpreted as a mandate
23 against diversity or the official disenfranchisement
24 of any well executed form of architectural
25 expression. I wish I could participate in person.

1 Respectfully, Jorge Hernandez.

2 Now, with respect to the opposition, two quick
3 points I would like to make. The opposition has
4 circulated an online petition, that I presume all of
5 you have seen. And the reason I want to bring this
6 to the Board's attention is because every single one
7 of the pictures that is depicted in what I will refer
8 to as the opposition, the aggrieved party, is wrong.

9 None of those photographs were the final
10 photographs and designs that were approved. None of
11 them. And I think it's either incompetence or it is
12 deliberately misleading to include photographs that
13 are not the actual photographs or renderings of what
14 was approved.

15 Now this online petition states, and I quote:
16 The project is an urban project because it is made up
17 of three buildings, not one, in one block; therefore,
18 its impact is great.

19 The suggestion being that somehow an urban
20 project shouldn't be approved by the Board.

21 It goes on to say - which I think is interesting
22 - and I quote: Segovia Street's urban character
23 contributes to its own charm and identity and it also
24 contributes to the charm and the identity of the
25 neighborhood in general.

1 So two lines above it they are objecting because
2 it's an urban project and two lines below it they are
3 saying that Segovia Street has an urban character.

4 This petition, like other opposition papers,
5 makes a blanket statement that says: Consequently, it
6 will reduce property values. Well, that's
7 interesting because you are going to hear from a
8 certified appraiser that states exactly the opposite;
9 not based on opinions, but based on actual sales of
10 properties over the last 24 months.

11 The opposition online petition also says that
12 somehow this project will undermine people's sense of
13 security. We are not sure what that means. "If the
14 project passes, it will create citizen's distrust in
15 the system." It also says that this will facilitate
16 other ultramodern designs to be proposed alongside a
17 beautiful coral rock and Mediterranean treasures
18 throughout the City.

19 Now, I live in the Gables - I have been here for
20 years - I drove down Segovia to look at these
21 Mediterranean and coral rock treasures. I didn't see
22 any, any Mediterranean or coral rock treasures. I
23 think there's 87 different properties on Segovia.
24 One of them has been designated historically
25 significant. And it's an art deco design. It is not

1 a Mediterranean or a coral rock treasure.

2 So, again, the reason I bring this up is because
3 this opposition is based on opinion, not based on
4 fact; and it is definitely not based on what the code
5 allows.

6 There's another opposition paper that has been
7 circulating that is entitled Notice of Highly
8 Incompatible Project on Segovia Street. You know, I
9 went ahead and looked in the English Dictionary as to
10 what is incompatible. And it means that this cannot
11 coexist in any way with any other property that is
12 different, has a different design architecturally.
13 Well, that is not the case; otherwise the code would
14 expressly prohibit Modern architecture. And the code
15 actually promotes diversity in architecture; it
16 doesn't limit diversity in architecture.

17 What is troubling about this notice of Highly
18 Incompatible Project on Segovia Street is the whole
19 premise of this objection - and I quote, and this
20 will be part of the record - it says: These three
21 projects appear to not conform to the zoning code in
22 various sections of the code.

23 Well, I ask the Board to ask whoever is speaking
24 today against this project, to ask them to please
25 point out to the Board of Architects what various

1 sections of the code this project violates. I would
2 like to know that. Because I haven't heard of any
3 competent architect, tell me - and you can address
4 this with Mr. Mateu - which part of the code this
5 project violates. But that is what this objection is
6 based upon.

7 And then it goes on for pages and pages quoting
8 from the code as if somehow there's a mandate to
9 limit architectural design to Old Spanish and
10 Mediterranean, which of course is more fiction.

11 So that's the reason I bring this up, is because
12 it's not factually accurate; otherwise, I wouldn't
13 have a bone of contention with it. Reasonable minds
14 can disagree.

15 What I do have a problem with is with deliberate
16 misrepresentation of what the code says and
17 deliberate misrepresentation of what this project is
18 all about. And that is what these objections are all
19 about.

20 And I would like to reserve some time toward the
21 end to just put all this into the record --

22 MR. LEEN: To the Chair, how much time do you
23 have?

24 MR. PRATT: Well, I'm thinking that some other
25 members have ... we've allocated enough time for

1 everyone to be heard. I think that's ...

2 MR. LEEN: Well, I would ask counsel, on behalf
3 of the Chair, how much time do you need? How much
4 more time do you need?

5 MR. GONZALEZ: Oh. At the end?

6 MR. PRATT: I thought you were going to get to
7 Mr. Mateu.

8 MR. GONZALEZ: At the end? I'd like no more
9 than five minutes I think should be sufficient.
10 However, I note the procedure, in a quasi-judicial
11 proceeding, would allow me to cross-examine anybody
12 who is opposing the project.

13 MR. LEEN: You can cross-examine but ... anyone
14 who testifies; not the lawyer. Anyone who testifies.

15 MR. GONZALEZ: Right, right. Anyone who
16 testifies.

17 MR. LEEN: You have five minutes at the end,
18 though, after everyone has spoken to rebut, if that
19 is okay with you, Mr. Chair?

20 MR. PRATT: Yes.

21 MR. LEEN: Are you okay with that?

22 So you have five minutes at the end.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you very much. And with
24 that, I would like to introduce Mr. Roney Mateu.

25 MR. LEEN: I just want to say for the record

1 that the law is very clear. It is not that we're
2 encouraging cross-examine or discouraging it. It may
3 not be something you're used to, but the law is very
4 clear in these quasi-judicial proceedings we must
5 allow cross-examination or else it could defeat the
6 entire proceedings. So we have to allow it.

7 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you.

8 MR. MATEU: Thank you.

9 My name is Roney Mateu. I am the architect for
10 the projects that are being considered here. Before
11 I present -- and I will present, trust me, the
12 project as I would have otherwise done if it was a
13 normal board. Of course this is not a normal setting
14 and I am, I'm pained to be here in this setting
15 because all of you, whether we agree aesthetically or
16 not, this is something that is an affront to all of
17 us as professional architects, what has happened
18 here, where the normal process of the presentations
19 of the projects are between professionals has
20 basically been subverted.

21 We are the ones that are charged to design, to
22 create, buildings. We all do what we do in whatever
23 vocabulary we choose to do it. But as has been
24 evidenced here, which this is my sixth time here,
25 this has been an attack on all of us as architects,

1 which is also not at all what George Merrick
2 intended. And George Merrick had an advantage when
3 he created the city of Coral Gables. He had his own
4 projects, and nobody out there in the public got to
5 say whatever they heck they wanted to. And he did
6 what he did and what he wanted to do. But he also
7 saw the value of architecture and architects, where
8 he himself - he could do whatever he wanted - he
9 chose to get a panel of experts in design and
10 architecture to review projects, without public
11 input.

12 And I'm not going compare ourselves with doctors
13 or lawyers or any of that stuff; we are the
14 professionals that are charged and that we are
15 trained to build and to design in the environment.

16 And what has been happening here and the
17 commentaries that have been put out there in today's
18 world with the ability to say anything and do
19 anything and hide behind the media, and Facebook and
20 all of the stuff online, it is a sad, a travesty,
21 really, of an abused process.

22 I don't have a problem with people not liking
23 our project. I would love for everyone to like what
24 we do, but it is not for everyone. That's fine. But
25 the difference between taste - which is a subjective

1 matter - and quality is where we come in. And the
2 code, the zoning codes, particularly here in Coral
3 Gables - and throughout cities around the world - are
4 designed to differentiate and separate taste from
5 being subjective to objective. And codes are
6 designed to put in place, in situations like this,
7 rules and regulations that would dictate edges and
8 limits for designs, and control height, scale,
9 proportions, volumes, et cetera, that allow a
10 diversity of designs to take place in cities.

11 So before I present, I would like to make a
12 quick statement, because I really feel that this is
13 an important - and as the city attorney has
14 mentioned, it has been the first time this has
15 happened, and I for one am quite bothered by what has
16 been happening.

17 Today we often are asked to believe that Modern
18 architecture is not a living, ever-transforming
19 tradition, but merely another style for selection
20 from the styles menu available to the eclectic
21 designers and architects of today.

22 Over the last 35 years of practicing
23 architecture in Miami, I have designed and built
24 Modern architecture for modern clients in, whether
25 you like it or not, a modern place - Miami. And

1 Coral Gables.

2 Economical and yet expressive, functional and
3 yet experimentally rich, constructed of modest
4 materials and of realistic available methods, yet
5 full of generous light, our buildings are examples of
6 vibrant, humane, and uncompromised Modern
7 architecture.

8 While Florida is often represented as a land of
9 make-believe where both past and future are built
10 with false fronts and fake materials, our Florida is
11 a different place; one where Modern architecture
12 fulfills in our time its initial promise: more light,
13 functional spaces, and subtly articulated experiences
14 of living with our unique nature.

15 Over the past 35 years many architects have
16 succumbed to the temptations of fashion and stylistic
17 influences in their work, reducing built work to the
18 levels of clothing, with its contemporary flash and
19 impact. Yet we - I - have never given a second
20 thought to the question: in what style should I
21 design and build?

22 I submit to you that we are the exact opposite
23 of the eclectic designers, with their malleable
24 ethics, for we have always been Modern architects;
25 and therefore, we have the confidence of those whose

1 ethics will not change with the latest fashion.

2 I am a Modern architect without question,
3 whether in or out of favor, even at the risk of
4 foregoing lucrative commissions. From the outset, we
5 have concentrated our energies on becoming good,
6 becoming better architects, a part of our ethical
7 commitment to what I have chosen to be my discipline
8 and I feel entirely natural, even as it becomes
9 increasingly rare and difficult to practice
10 architecture today.

11 In South Florida - and in Coral Gables - even
12 Mies Van Der Rohe's "almost nothing" and "less is
13 more" becomes more than enough when flat walls are
14 bathed in tropical sunshine. Even white cannot be a
15 cold color here, framed against the blue sky and
16 receiving the shadows of the palm trees swaying in
17 the warm humid breezes.

18 The so-called Moderne of Deco Modern forms were
19 never so much at home as in South Florida. And the
20 Mediterranean climatic - not stylistic - origins of
21 modernism could again be recognized in the way Modern
22 architecture in Florida engaged the cooling breezes,
23 strong sunlight and primary colors.

24 Now there are those that have become obsessed
25 with a new international style, uniformly imposing

1 so-called Neo-traditional or Classical forms, most
2 often with a Spanish, Colonial or Mediterranean
3 flavoring superimposed on Modern buildings. Whether
4 it is used to dress up the suburban housing developer
5 neighborhoods of the new urbanism or the massively
6 over-scaled high-rise towers in Coral Gables which
7 are the result of rewarding height and bulk, a gift
8 from city officials, interested only in the visuality
9 of the Mediterranean style, a look that is with
10 complete disregard for scale, character, quality and
11 timelessness of the design in the urban context.

12 These universally applicable styles result in
13 evermore efficient eradication of all traces of local
14 climate, economy, land form, native vegetation,
15 building materials and construction traditions.

16 The triumph of universal air-conditioning - not
17 around in the days of Merrick - plastic foam stucco,
18 and nursery-catalog landscaping speaks volumes about
19 the very real loss of the ability to experience
20 "place" that has accompanied this adoption of a
21 superficial and fake classical covering for a
22 perceived optimum real estate development.

23 For us, to build Modern architecture has never
24 been a matter of choice, has never been a selection
25 of styles; it is an ethical matter, a matter of right

1 or wrong.

2 Our work is simple and direct; we believe that
3 good design comes from focusing on very few
4 fundamental things in order to make a building that
5 is refined, simple and complete as experienced.

6 By employing a minimalist vocabulary of Modern
7 forms, we let the tropical climate and the landscape
8 - and the lifestyle that has engendered - be
9 fore-grounded with our buildings as background or
10 framework for the rituals of daily life, as Frank
11 Lloyd Wright defined architecture.

12 The strength of our work comes from being a part
13 of a true tradition, the tradition of building that
14 has nothing to do with the style in which one builds.

15 Our architecture reconnects to the older
16 building cultures which originally gave rise to
17 modernism - a Modern tradition where what it does and
18 how it is experienced are more important than what it
19 looks like; where architecture is designed for a way
20 of life, not for an image; where architecture is
21 designed to house the life within, not create curb
22 appeal.

23 Where the new urbanists and the historical
24 stylists endeavor to mandate a universal formula
25 applicable to all situations, we seek unique

1 opportunities in each project offered by the site,
2 its orientation, its program, its occupants, its
3 context, its budget, its construction materials.

4 We do this in order to be able to design, the
5 exact opposite of applying a formula.

6 In our work, we do not need to be original,
7 rather, we need to be good; we do not need to be in
8 the majority, rather, we need to be right, with the
9 result being a tradition of designing architecture
10 with integrity, true to the fundamental precepts of
11 what we do in Modern architecture, yet tempered by
12 the experience of building and living in the tropics.

13 We do architecture of its time. We do
14 architecture of its place.

15 Thank you for letting me say that.

16 With that I would like to present the three
17 projects.

18 (NOTE: Presentation includes the use of visual
19 aids.)

20 The way we have been doing them in the past, for
21 those of you who were not here before, there are
22 three separate buildings. I will present one at a
23 time. But the reason we submitted all three as one
24 project is because it was our design solution that
25 since we had two projects on ... since we had ... for

1 those of you, to orient you to the site, north is up
2 on this board --

3 MR. LEEN: Just for the purposes of the record,
4 anyone who needs to see can walk around to look.

5 MR. MATEU: Yes.

6 MR. LEEN: Just so everyone can see; it is
7 important everyone be able to see.

8 MR. MATEU: There are three sites, three
9 separate sites: one, two and three. This is Segovia
10 Street. This is Catalonia Street. This is the
11 corner, the northeast corner of the intersection of
12 Segovia and Catalonia.

13 MR. LEEN: I didn't realize that so many people
14 would come - but that's great - but if you can leave
15 a little space; please don't interrupt at all during
16 this time. Thank you.

17 MR. PRATT: Exactly. No comments from the
18 public at this point.

19 MR. MATEU: The property currently has a duplex
20 building on this site; a duplex building on this site
21 and a garage building on this site. The zoning is
22 duplex zoning on this lot, duplex zoning on this lot
23 and single-family zoning on this lot.

24 We are intending to demolish the two duplex lots
25 and the garage, and we are going to rebuild a duplex

1 on the northernmost piece of the property, and we are
2 going to build --

3 MR. PRATT: We have stands, you can use them, to
4 make it easier.

5 MR. MATEU: Okay.

6 MR. PRATT: We have a second one here.

7 (Discussion off the record.)

8 MR. MATEU: So as I was mentioning, we are
9 demolishing the duplex here and the duplex here; we
10 are going to build back (inaudible) --

11 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, sir. Now your
12 back is to me and I can't hear you.

13 MR. MATEU: Oh. I will move this way.

14 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

15 MR. MATEU: We are going to build a duplex here
16 on the corner; and we have decided to not build a
17 duplex, to build a single family home, and build a
18 single-family home here, which it is zoned for.

19 As was mentioned earlier, we are allowed to
20 build a duplex here and a duplex here. So we are, in
21 effect, contrary to some of the things that have been
22 said out in the public, actually down building from
23 what we are allowed to do.

24 The other thing that is not being said out in
25 public, and another reason we are proposing all three

1 projects at the same time, is that in order to make
2 what we consider to be a much better urban design
3 solution, we have decided to incorporate all of the
4 vehicular traffic that would normally be allowed, if
5 you will, for example on this duplex, we will be
6 allowed to have one or two driveways for access to
7 garages from Segovia. And either one or two, or one
8 here and one here. So we would be allowed to have
9 potentially four- and five-vehicular driveways that
10 would break up the sidewalk and rhythm of the whole
11 development.

12 We believe that our solution makes a superior
13 urban solution by combining all of the driveways of
14 all of the buildings into one driveway off of
15 Catalonia, by the developer having to then go through
16 more legal matters, et cetera, to create a private
17 easement, including one for the single-family house.
18 So that all access for vehicular access of all three
19 projects comes in from one driveway. This way we
20 have eliminated all vehicular conflicts with the
21 pedestrian sidewalks along Segovia and not allowing
22 what typically happens up and down Segovia, which is
23 visually seen here and in other places, where cars
24 are parked up and down the swales and the
25 right-of-ways, et cetera.

1 So as we have moved forward, we have used that
2 strategy to make what we believe is a much better
3 urban decision in terms of design.

4 As was mentioned earlier, our design is not
5 asking for any variances; we have designed all
6 buildings within all of the requirements and the
7 prescriptive limits that differentiate taste from
8 objective, and separates objective from objective
9 design (sic). So within all of the requirements of
10 the code, we meet - and are below - and there is
11 nothing that we are asking for in terms of
12 exceptions, height, setbacks, lot coverage; nothing.

13 The rules of zoning are made in cities like
14 Coral Gables - and other places - to give order and
15 rhythm to sites along any street and create some sort
16 of limits where architects then have the right and
17 the ability to use their creative talents and design
18 buildings inside those limits.

19 In the City of Coral Gables, we are allowed to
20 design a number of styles, including Modern. There
21 are statements that have been floated around that
22 Modern is an illegal style in Coral Gables. That is
23 a false statement. Mr. Merrick, after visiting
24 Europe and deciding that his major theme of his
25 development was going to be Mediterranean villas

1 style, and set out to build a city based on that
2 theme for the reasons that he did at that time, soon
3 found that many of his homes - by the way, Mr.
4 Merrick was a developer, a developer that came here
5 to make money. Let's just not forget about that.
6 People want to avoid the idea, or suggest that
7 developers are bad, a bad name and a bad profession.
8 But let's be clear that Mr. Merrick was here, intent
9 to make money.

10 Now, I think architects, we all want to make
11 money too, now. We are not very good at it, okay.
12 So maybe Mr. Merrick wasn't very good at that either.
13 But I believe that he did do well; and he went
14 through cycles as the economies changed, et cetera,
15 and we are not necessarily in control of those kinds
16 of things. He was here to make money.

17 (Thereupon, Yanens Figueroa, Esq., Assistant
18 City Attorney, entered the hearing room, and the
19 proceedings continued.)

20 MR. MATEU: And when it was clear that, his
21 potential customers were saying, hey, listen, we're
22 not interested in all this sameness, it was clear
23 that he then became interested in coming up with
24 another idea of developing a variety of villages, as
25 he decided, and chose to come up with the idea of

1 different, up to 14 different stylistic villages
2 around the city. Unfortunately for him, and for the
3 city and for all kinds of other things, the hurricane
4 of '26 sort of destroyed that idea. And it became a
5 difficult time after that; and the city took some
6 time to recover from that, and personally, he
7 himself.

8 The style and the designs that we are proposing
9 here fit very well in the master plan and the ideal
10 that he developed, and copied from the City Beautiful
11 Movement, and influenced back from the homestead
12 designs in New York, and the ideal of the plazas and
13 the great boulevards and all that stuff; there is
14 also I think an attempt to suggest that Modern
15 architecture cannot fit in such a climate.

16 And that is another one of the
17 farther-from-the-truth statements. Because
18 architecture in any number of styles can very well
19 fit in the City Beautiful plan. In fact, the City
20 Beautiful plan envisioned not buildings necessarily
21 of Mediterranean Revival architecture but more
22 moderne and boulevards architecture.

23 So the idea that somehow the building of
24 Modern-style buildings on Segovia Street is such a
25 terrible decision is absolutely a false statement.

1 What Segovia has, and I have said this in the past,
2 is that it has a fabric of landscaping treatment -
3 which, by the way, wasn't there all the time, some of
4 the landscaping medians, et cetera, that can be
5 primitive, and some of the opposition that
6 participated in its doing, was not there all along -
7 and the scale of the street and the landscaping, I
8 have stated before, is the one thing that creates a
9 fabric of continuity from Alhambra all the way to
10 Bird. But the architecture and the attempts to make
11 it sound that there is this rich historic collection
12 of things up and down is just not there.

13 There is a collection of buildings; the oldest
14 one is the Art Deco building, but the others are the
15 thirties, the forties and fifties buildings that were
16 at the time considered Modern buildings. In fact,
17 the codes, the zoning codes, at the time in the 1950s
18 refer to this Biltmore subdivision area, allowing
19 modernistic architecture - and Modern architecture
20 were the actual words that were being used in
21 describing the Biltmore Section - in the Biltmore
22 Section, the Biltmore vision, where modernistic type
23 houses are also permitted, along with Spanish,
24 Venetian, Italian and other Mediterranean or similar
25 of this type architecture.

1 So I say all of that to justify the fact that
2 any statement to the contrary about Modern
3 architecture not being allowed is just without
4 opinion by people that prefer other architectural
5 styles.

6 To discuss the design of the duplexes I blew up
7 the renderings.

8 MR. PRATT: Excuse me one second.

9 (Discussion off the record.)

10 MR. MATEU: I didn't make a blowup of all the...
11 I brought the plans that were approved the last time.
12 But basically, and again, I don't know how much
13 detail you want me to go into, but some of the folks
14 that were not here the last time may want to look at
15 these.

16 But the plans for the duplex have a different
17 entrance from Segovia. The front yard is open to
18 maintain the rhythm of the other duplexes that are in
19 the northern end of Segovia. There is a rendering --

20 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, sir. I can't
21 hear you, again.

22 MR. MATEU: I'm sorry. This rendering is a
23 little misleading because it does not show the
24 building next to it; but I have an elevation,
25 respective, that shows how can these buildings, the

1 two buildings that face Segovia and the existing one
2 that will remain, and their relationships to each
3 other along Segovia. I have taken out, obviously to
4 show the buildings, the trees that are in the median,
5 et cetera, and those, the trees that are in front, so
6 that you can see the architectural compositions
7 behind it.

8 There have been in the past discussions about
9 the duplex and its height; there was commentary by
10 the aggrieved party that this was too tall, that it
11 didn't belong, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. And
12 I made comment of the fact that the aggrieved party
13 was part of the writing of the code that suggested
14 that duplex buildings along major roads get extra
15 height, because they needed to have a bigger and
16 better presence, especially on streets that had great
17 widths. However, the hypocrisy of that statement is
18 that that is okay for a different style but not okay
19 for this style.

20 The commentary that was made by the attorney
21 regarding the flyers that were out online was that
22 this building, as we've responded over the several
23 meetings that we've had with this Board and responded
24 to comments about making changes and making
25 improvements on the design and the composition, this

1 area here behind this tree has a sloping roof, that
2 otherwise the drawings that were submitted out into
3 the general public did not show that. And it did not
4 show the lowered height, et cetera, of these things,
5 that while we objected to them, we did it, because we
6 wanted to show that we are not sitting here not
7 listening. But we are listening and we are, as part
8 of the dialogue of the professionals, we are
9 listening and incorporating the, you know, the
10 suggestions of the Board.

11 And as we worked on this project and removed,
12 originally we had a wall, a property line wall, which
13 was a very objectionable issue because it appeared to
14 wall in all three projects from the neighborhood; a
15 wall that was, within the code, allowed; and there
16 are other numerous examples of a now Segovia that had
17 thick walls, et cetera, but somehow our wall was
18 unacceptable because it was walling in a Modern
19 building.

20 So the consistencies of all those kinds of
21 commentaries, I think I continue to point out,
22 because they have nothing to do with factual
23 statements and had nothing to do with, except
24 opinions from non professionals, which is what this
25 discussion is about.

1 So this response (indicating) was through a
2 number of commentaries about how we could change the
3 scale and the slope and proportions and break up the
4 elevations and have insides and outsides, in and
5 outs, et cetera, and we believe we did that
6 successfully for the last meeting that we responded
7 to the comments.

8 And these (indicating) are the elevations with
9 dimensions so that everyone can see how ... this is
10 the back of the building from the common driveway, an
11 alley for the duplex and the garage entrances in the
12 back, and the sides elevations. (Indicating.)

13 (Thereupon Mr. Leen departed the hearing
14 room, and the proceedings continued as follows:)

15 MR. MATEU: Our buildings, our designs, our
16 floor plans, are organized in a very clear ... the
17 plans are very clear in organization where the public
18 spaces and the private spaces are very obvious.
19 There's no debate architecturally and
20 organizationally. The head or the main spaces
21 upstairs, for example, the master bedrooms, are in
22 the important locations of the site, towards the
23 front; and the secondary bedrooms are organized in
24 the back.

25 We take advantage of this unit, for example,

1 takes advantage of the design site by allowing the
2 side and front yards to be able to use as an outdoor
3 space; and since the front of this duplex is facing
4 west, we articulate, create a series of shading
5 devices that respond to that fact.

6 And depending on orientation of these elevations
7 of the building, the glass components of our
8 compositions either have shading devices or they
9 don't. If they are facing north, there is very few
10 places where there are shading devices. If they are
11 south, west or east, there are eyebrows, overhangs or
12 balconies that shade the glass pieces.

13 MR. PRATT: Can you kind of tell us what some of
14 those materials are.

15 MR. MATEU: Yes.

16 MR. PRATT: What the material of the shading
17 devise is and what the majority of the material --

18 MR. MATEU: Yes. The majority of the design -
19 and this is another thing that is a consistent answer
20 for all three - we have decided that we like, and
21 used, only a handful of materials in general. The
22 building, the areas that you see in white is
23 basically a stucco finish. The areas that you see in
24 the brown are also a stucco finish, but the color is
25 used to separate the materials -- to separate the

1 functions that are either structured columns or
2 balconies or shading devices. And then the louvers
3 are, and I say this ambiguously, because my first
4 choice is for them to be wood, but depending on the
5 structure of, you know, the structural capacity and
6 spans, they may be metal that is painted a wood
7 color.

8 Because all of these things will have to be
9 inordinate numbers, which is, for the people that do
10 not know, are required numbers for hurricane
11 protection requirements in the county.

12 And then the doors; the garage doors, the front
13 doors, et cetera, are made of solid wood finish. And
14 then the railings are made up of aluminum finish.

15 So in composition, there's basically like three
16 hues of colors; there's sort of like taupe brown - a
17 wood color brown - an off white and then a natural
18 aluminum.

19 MR. PRATT: But is this the beige material --

20 MR. MATEU: I'm sorry. I forgot this one.

21 Along the edges of the building, particularly where
22 there are either up on the sidewalk or in places
23 where the general public will see, we have clad the
24 walls in sort of a keystone tile material. So that
25 that gives that texture.

1 MR. PRATT: Is that natural stone --

2 MR. MATEU: Natural stone.

3 MR. PRATT: -- or cast stone?

4 MR. MATEU: Natural stone. No, natural stone.

5 And these combinations of materials are used
6 throughout, differently, but they are used throughout
7 all of the projects.

8 MR. PRATT: And (inaudible).

9 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, sir. I can't
10 hear you.

11 MR. PRATT: And what roof material are you
12 proposing?

13 MR. MATEU: We would use a flat cement tile.
14 Originally we had proposed a white flat cement tile
15 but we are since proposing a taupe color glassimine
16 tile.

17 MR. PRATT: Taupe or gray?

18 MR. MATEU: The rendering is ... but it will be,
19 you know, we would submit the actual colors with our
20 plans.

21 Unless you have any other questions, I will --

22 MR. PRATT: I just want to ask you, were there
23 any comments that were from the previous ... were
24 there any previous comments? Sometimes I see a sign
25 on the back of the preliminary, but ...

1 MR. MATEU: The comments that led to this?

2 MR. PRATT: Yes. From the previous board.

3 MR. DE LEON: No. The comments ... all three
4 were approved.

5 MR. PRATT: Sometimes there are comments ...

6 MR. DE LEON: All three were approved as
7 submitted.

8 MR. PRATT: All right. So you're moving all
9 three.

10 MR. MATEU: Yes. This is the duplex.

11 MR. JAUREGUI: Are we supposed to ask questions
12 any time?

13 MR. PRATT: I think just out of courtesy for the
14 presenter here, why don't you go ahead and make your
15 presentation. Go ahead and let's take --

16 MR. MATEU: I mean, I will do it either way.

17 MR. PRATT: The general ... I'd like to follow
18 more of our general procedure where we have the full
19 presentation and then each board member has a chance
20 to talk and discuss or ask any questions that they
21 may have; I think rather than all the interruptions.

22 MR. MATEU: I will leave this up here anyway.

23 MR. LEEN: One other thing. Because it's
24 quasi-judicial, at some point after you've asked your
25 questions, members of the public have to be given a

1 chance to cross-examine him.

2 MR. PRATT: Okay.

3 MR. LEEN: Now that should be within reason.

4 MR. PRATT: All right.

5 MR. GONZALEZ: Maybe I'm mistaken; I thought
6 quasi-judicial allows me to --

7 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, sir. I cannot
8 hear you; and I'm hearing talking over here by me;
9 it's very difficult.

10 MR. GONZALEZ: My only comment to Mr. Leen's
11 comment was that my understanding of the process
12 pursuant to what is required of the code is that the,
13 quote, aggrieved party has an opportunity to
14 cross-examine; not just anyone from the public.

15 MR. LEEN: Yes. Except that the aggrieved party
16 here is anyone within a thousand feet who indicates
17 they're an aggrieved party would be an aggrieved
18 party.

19 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. If they qualify as an
20 aggrieved party, then that's fine.

21 MR. LEEN: So it would be anyone who is an
22 aggrieved party.

23 So if you are just here, but not within a
24 thousand feet, you wouldn't be able to cross-examine.
25 You're absolutely right. But it's any aggrieved

1 party. We have an actual aggrieved party who asked
2 for this matter and if we have any other residents
3 within a thousand feet who would like to be
4 designated as an aggrieved party, you could also ask
5 questions. Again, it needs to be within reason, both
6 sides, because we don't want cross-examination to be
7 a speech, but you can ask questions for few minutes.

8 MR. JAUREGUI: I have a real quick question,
9 though. So we're looking at this as individual
10 folios or is this all one folio?

11 MR. MATEU: They are individual folios. But as
12 I stated earlier, we've designed them and we are
13 proposing to build them all together, because of the
14 driveway situation that makes it that ...that this
15 unit, for example, will be using the same driveway as
16 this unit, as this unit. The garage for this house,
17 when we get to it, you realize is back here. So if
18 we built this, for example, first, we'd have to have
19 a driveway built for access to this house. If we
20 didn't build this or build this, we would have to
21 build the driveway, and vice-versa.

22 MR. PRATT: Well, I think Luis' main question
23 is, are they being done as --

24 MR. JAUREGUI: Yes.

25 MR. PRATT: I mean because of the cross

1 traffic --

2 MR. MATEU: I think it is being done by a deed
3 or by agreements.

4 MR. JAUREGUI: But we're being asked to look at
5 the entire project and approve the entire project, or
6 to approve individually one house, one house, one
7 duplex?

8 MR. DE LEON: Each building will be per lot.
9 There will be three different motions, one for each
10 site.

11 MR. PRATT: But going back to the original
12 beginning, I think that the Board originally asked
13 the applicant to present as a whole.

14 MR. DE LEON: Right. To see it in its entirety.

15 MR. PRATT: To see it all in its entirety.

16 MR. DE LEON: But it's three individual lots.
17 Whether or not they have to work together for any
18 special requirements from the city. Each of our
19 votes has been per lot.

20 MR. KILIDDJIAN: And that's the way we're
21 viewing it.

22 MR. MATEU: Yes. It's being done
23 individually --

24 MR. PRATT: Each one individually, yes.

25 All right.

1 MR. JAUREGUI: Has this been reviewed by zoning?

2 MR. MATEU: It hasn't.

3 (Multiple individuals speaking simultaneously.)

4 MR. KILIDDJIAN: It hasn't gone through --

5 MR. ALBERTO PEREZ: Yes. Yes.

6 MR. PRATT: Well, no.

7 MR. ALBERTO PEREZ: The DRC responded the last
8 time --

9 MR. PRATT: Well, The DRC will give cursory
10 zoning reviews; it is not a full zoning review.

11 MR. ALBERTO PEREZ: But it did go before the
12 DRC. And to answer your question, I mean, obviously
13 our condo association and HOA attorney is not here --

14 THE COURT REPORTER: I can't hear you.

15 MR. ALBERTO PEREZ: Our condo and HOA attorney
16 is not here, but there will be, obviously, units for
17 the share drive, but the two single-family homes fall
18 within the individual lot, which in essence will
19 probably be a unit, and then the duplexes falls
20 within the duplex lot. So.

21 MR. PRATT: Well, it is the thought that this
22 would all be handled under a single HOA? I, mean,
23 who's going to control the --

24 MR. ALBERTO PEREZ: There is going to a shared
25 agreement for the drive, that all four homes share.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Ms. Court Reporter, just for the
2 record, that is Albert Perez.

3 MR. ALBERTO PEREZ: Alberto Perez, principal of
4 AJP Ventures. So there will be a shared agreement
5 for the driveway.

6 MR. PRATT: All right.

7 MR. JAUREGUI: So, in general, do you feel that
8 everything you are presenting is up to the zoning
9 codes: the heights, the setbacks, the swimming
10 pools --

11 MR. MONTEU: Yes.

12 MR. JAUREGUI: The swimming pools?

13 MR. MONTEU: The swimming pool's inside the
14 setback line.

15 MR. GIBB: I just have a question. When you do
16 the agreement, do you have the driveway go through
17 the single family residence lot?

18 MR. MATEU: No. The driveway is not on the --
19 the single family lot is not ... the driveway is not
20 on the single family lot. It is on the back of the
21 duplexes.

22 MR. PRATT: Just out the curiosity, what is the
23 gap that is between the single family lot and the
24 back of the --

25 MR. GIBB: Sorry. But the single family, the

1 building single-family house is on the duplex lot.

2 MR. MATEU: On this one (indicating).

3 MR. GIBB: Right?

4 MR. MATEU: On this corner.

5 MR. GIBB: Right. I know it is a duplex
6 zoning --

7 MR. MATEU: Yes.

8 MR. GIBB: -- but you are building a single
9 family house.

10 MR. MATEU: Yes.

11 MR. GIBB: So I guess my question is if you
12 build a single-family house on a duplex lot, under
13 which zoning requirements do you have to follow? It
14 is not a one duplex. The yard, set-backs, all those
15 things, you have to take on the single family
16 requirements.

17 MR. MATEU: Correct.

18 MR. GIBB: Right?

19 MR. MATEU: Correct.

20 MR. GIBB: So my question is then once you put a
21 driveway across the back of that, even though it is a
22 duplex lot, it is now being built as a single family.
23 You've got a through driveway. Because it wouldn't
24 be allowed -- when it's a family, or when you get
25 your, when you go to the city, do you request the

1 alley -- basically, well, you've designed a private
2 alley to the duplex; right?

3 MR. MATEU: Well, the underlining duplex zoning
4 has not changed.

5 MR. GIBB: No, I'm not saying that. My question
6 is, does that affect ... because you're going to have
7 to shorten the single family lot in some way?

8 MR. MATEU: No, no, no. This will be -- and I'm
9 not an attorney; nor do I want to be one. Sorry.

10 MR. GONZALEZ: No offense.

11 MR. MATEU: This would be treated as an
12 easement. So it is a document that gets written that
13 basically permits these folks and this individual to
14 use this. In other words, this individual that will
15 be living here cannot put a gate here out of his own
16 doing.

17 MR. GIBB: No, I understand how it would work.
18 Believe me. It's just that if it is a single family
19 and you are providing access through the lot, at some
20 point, it will act like an easement, or whatever, but
21 you've basically got a lot of driveway in the rear
22 yard of the house.

23 MR. MATEU: But this is why this corner lot, the
24 design is such that it makes the rear yard of the
25 outside of the drive, the use of it is on the side.

1 MR. GIBB: Correct. No, I understand.

2 MR. MATEU: It's no different than when you have
3 like, in a residential zoning, where you have a flag
4 lot, they call it, you know, a lot here and a land
5 lot behind it; the access to it is somewhat similar.

6 MR. GIBB: Right, right.

7 MR. MATEU: So think of this as a flag lot.
8 This house ends up having the yard is this
9 (indicating); which is why it was designed with the
10 pool where it is and the side yard. You know, the
11 setbacks on a corner lot like this are, you know,
12 make the property difficult.

13 MR. GIBB: I don't know if it is done here,
14 maybe I'm wrong, but you have a 15-foot setback to
15 the side street. Right?

16 MR. MATEU: Yes.

17 MR. GIBB: Even though all the other houses that
18 go down that street face that street with a 25-foot
19 setback; right?

20 MR. MATEU: This was already determined by the
21 zoning director.

22 MR. GIBB: Okay. So that exception has been
23 granted?

24 MR. GONZALEZ: The good news is that particular
25 issue is not even an issue for the Board of

1 Architects is supposed to consider, but that issue
2 has already been considered and determined favorably;
3 even though that is not an issue that is supposed to
4 be, I guess for lack of a better term, a dispute.

5 MR. GIBB: You got 25, 25, 25, and you got 15.
6 So in a way it does affect it.

7 MS. RUSSO: If I may respond. Laura Russo,
8 co-counsel.

9 That was a determination in a question that came
10 up I think in the first panel, at the first board
11 meeting or the second board meeting.

12 MR. GIBB: Okay.

13 MS. RUSSO: And Ramon Trias responded in the
14 affirmative that he had made the determination of the
15 15-foot setback. So that is in a transcript that is
16 part of the record.

17 MR. GONZALEZ: Which I will be submitting at the
18 end of the presentation.

19 MR. MATEU: And I think the existing building
20 that is there now, has, I believe it has ...

21 MR. PRATT: I thought you were going to hold off
22 on questions, at least until the presentations for
23 all three and we can have all of our questions and
24 entertain public's presentation.

25 MR. MATEU: Okay. So, as I mentioned, on this

1 corner property we are, in spite of the fact that we
2 can a do a duplex, the developers ... for a
3 single-family house, not unlike ... not probably for
4 similar reasons that the setbacks, you know, limit --

5 MR. PRATT: Do you want to use the podium while
6 you are presenting (indicating)?

7 MR. MATEU: No. I have the ...

8 MR. GIBB: The podium will make it easy for the
9 others.

10 MR. MATEU: So what we did here from a planning
11 perspective, as I mentioned earlier, the duplex has a
12 larger front yard with no walls, et cetera, that sort
13 of more responds to the existing duplexes. There's
14 only one more building on this lot -- on this block;
15 as you saw on this elevation. It's a two-story
16 building. So it is consistent. All the buildings
17 that we are taking down are two-story buildings.

18 So what we're doing here is the front yard is,
19 being to the left of this duplex, responsive to the
20 rhythm of the block that is existing with the
21 building that is here on the corner. The wall, we
22 create a front wall that is halfway, smaller yard in
23 the front, and then it sets back towards the corner
24 piece; and then the wall that creates the patio,
25 interior patio of the corner house.

1 MR. PRATT: Excuse me.

2 Do you want to move to get a better view? Can
3 you see from there?

4 MR. DE LEON: No, I'm fine.

5 MR. MATEU: The curve portion of the property,
6 we decided to treat at the edge of the property wall
7 as a curved part, for a number of reasons. One of
8 them might ... could be safety. But treat the
9 quarter round with the stone veneer that we talked
10 about on the other project. And it would have
11 landscaping behind it. But it's a curved corner.

12 And the building, as such, addresses the corner
13 with the element that turns the corner as opposed to
14 just being a flat piece, so that it has more of a
15 substantial element on the corner. And it goes and
16 turns on the south side and on the west side with a
17 similar treatment of the louvered shading devices
18 that were presented on the duplex project, except the
19 pattern and the rhythm is slightly different with
20 glass that is behind the western wall facing Segovia
21 farther back. Therefore, the spacing vertically and
22 the spacing of the glass back are different.

23 So, that while the materials that we are using
24 are similar, the way they are being used is not. So
25 it isn't a repetitive, as has been said before,

1 cookie-cutter design. It is using similar elements,
2 similar materials in different ways.

3 But the same idea of creating a front that is
4 entered from Segovia, and then creating public space
5 that the plan shows; the front door and the public
6 space on the ground.

7 Then once you enter this space, the visual
8 effect of using this ground floor with the great room
9 concept, visually a small space made large by an
10 optimum glass and treatment to occupy; and that way
11 the idea of using the indoor and the outdoor spaces
12 is reinforced, which is part of complying with where
13 we live here in South Florida. And this idea of
14 glass and reinforcing this transparency is what we
15 had tried to do here.

16 On the south side, these dotted lines here show
17 that the pool, which is inside the setback line, is
18 covered by the building above, and it is inside the
19 setback line in the front and on the side property.

20 We are proposing a water feature that extends
21 out. Water features are allowed.

22 This will be an element that is maybe four
23 inches of water. But the effect would be visually
24 from here to here (indicating); the pool is larger
25 than this.

1 This is fixed glass; and a couple of doors out
2 here and out here (indicating). So it allows this
3 site to be used effectively on the corner ground.
4 Then as you turn the corner and come down Catalonia,
5 the wall stops and it breaks and it creates a rhythm
6 so that the wall will not happen along the sidewalk
7 continuously but it breaks, and landscaping gives a
8 real colonial look along Catalonia.

9 And the second floor is, again, a simple
10 arrangement where the master bedroom, as in the
11 duplexes, is in the front of the house and the
12 secondary bedrooms are in the back.

13 There are a couple of the elevations on the
14 south side, again responding to comments that had
15 taken place with the Board during the presentation
16 process, the elevation on the south is broken up by
17 the corner treatment and by indentations for an
18 outdoor shower. So that there's not a long facade
19 that is continuous, but it is actually broken up into
20 a series of elements along the side.

21 And here are the elevations. This is the
22 Segovia elevation without the wall - these elevations
23 are all without any of the perimeter walls so that
24 you can see the articulation and the breaking up and
25 the massing of the composition of the house.

1 And then the north elevation with another roof
2 that gives you privacy on the second floor, but light
3 from the north is treated in this fashion, and along
4 the east side the two bedrooms that are on the back
5 have covered balconies, and the garage on the bottom.

6 So there is a variety of shapes and
7 articulations; not all flat roofs, but a number of
8 elements that are part of the composition of the
9 corner piece.

10 And here you see how the relationship of the
11 duplex and the corner piece relate as the privacy
12 walls come out. And again the same idea of the
13 eyebrows, the shading devices are used similar in the
14 front. Okay?

15 The last project is the single family home on
16 Catalonia. This house faces south on the north side
17 of Catalonia; the other projects, again, the other
18 two projects face Segovia; this one faces Catalonia.

19 Again, the typical 50-foot lot would otherwise
20 have required a driveway in front, and either a
21 two-car garage facade or a huge use of a driveway
22 where the front of the house basically is occupied if
23 you turn sideways to enter a garage in front. If we
24 were not doing this gesture of tying all the
25 driveways together, then a typical house with a

1 two-car garage would occupy the whole front of the
2 yard, and with the garage and driveway if we were
3 doing a two-car garage sideways.

4 So we have taken the opportunity that we believe
5 it's a better urban gesture and a design where this
6 house actually has a front yard free of garage doors
7 and driveways, and created a space where the drive
8 and garage is in the back, and allows the design to
9 address the street as a full-front house. And
10 occupy -- I'm sorry. This is the wrong one.

11 And again (indicating), the breaking down of the
12 facades of front property where a piece of the yard
13 in the front of the living space down on the ground
14 floor is step back. And then the rhythm of the walls
15 that are along Catalonia are broken up, and they are
16 also broken up by the driveway itself and the
17 landscaping around it.

18 These houses have walkways for pedestrian. And
19 the front doors are off to the side in this case. So
20 when you enter the house, you enter into what is
21 basically an L-shape for the public spaces on the
22 ground, where the living room is to the right as you
23 enter and the dining/kitchen area are to the left, on
24 the ground floor. And then the bedrooms are all on
25 the second floor.

1 This is a design that allows for courtyard
2 living, allowing single wide rooms that allow for
3 ventilation, which is what South Florida real
4 tropical architecture should be allowed.

5 So these spaces are designed so that they can
6 ventilate. And the idea that we created the L-shape
7 and the two-story portion of it, where the two-story
8 portion of our house, the majority of it, is done so
9 it is on the other side of the property as opposed to
10 on the east side where it would hug the neighbor.

11 The two-story long version of the house
12 (indicating), hugs the driveway, allowing the space
13 up against our one-story-house neighbor to become the
14 courtyard and the outdoor space in framing this area.
15 So that only this portion of our structure is facing
16 the side of one neighbor.

17 And we have a setback that is bigger than we
18 need to be. We are required to have five feet; and
19 we are about seven and a half feet away in this
20 space.

21 A very simple plan.

22 The second floor has - again, concentrically how
23 we have arranged the house - the master bedroom is at
24 the head, and then the other bedrooms are behind.
25 All of these rooms have outdoor balconies. In this

1 case, the master bedroom has a gable shape to it, as
2 a gesture, if you will, I guess, to the residential
3 single-family scale of art.

4 Here, the elevations. And then we have this
5 street elevation that shows the rhythm and the
6 relationship of our project through the scale of the
7 neighbor on this edge of Catalonia. As you continue
8 down the streets, I think the next structure is
9 another two-story structure. So you can see how the
10 context of the scale and the proportion of our design
11 relate to the existing houses that are there.

12 And I would like to --

13 MR. PRATT: Are you done with your presentation?

14 MR. MATEU: I'm done with my presentation, but I
15 would like to reserve, if I can, to say something at
16 the end.

17 MR. PRATT: Oh, you would be able to address any
18 questions that the Board may have, you can have time
19 to respond if you like. But if that is the
20 conclusion of the formal presentation --

21 MR. MATEU: Yes.

22 MR. PRATT: -- we will start with comments or
23 questions from the Board.

24 MR. DE LEON: Let me say with regard to
25 comments, and questions. Say we have dialogue with

1 the architect, the comments and discuss feedback, and
2 at the end of that we would make a motion to proceed
3 and approve, whatever. If we do this step now, then
4 we freeze, and then have to wait an hour to actually
5 get all the comments, I think we're going to break
6 the thread of our motion being made having to put
7 that on hold for an hour. So in my view, I think
8 it's better to just let everybody whose going to talk
9 talk --

10 MR. PRATT: Well, to avoid --

11 MR. DE LEON: -- and then interface with the
12 architect and hear our motion.

13 MR. PRATT: Where did the city attorney go?

14 MS. RUSSO: She's here.

15 MR. PRATT: Oh.

16 MS. RUSSO: Ms. Yanens Figueroa is sitting in.

17 MS. FIGUEROA: I'm here for the city attorney.
18 There's nothing preventing you from doing it that
19 way.

20 MR. PRATT: Okay. No, I think that's a very
21 valid point. And I think that actually what I would
22 prefer to do is go ahead and take comments from the
23 public.

24 MR. DE LEON: I think we should be the last one
25 to speak so we end on our motion.

1 MR. PRATT: I agree.

2 MR. GONZALEZ: Once they do the public comments
3 after we're done with the presentations, we have one
4 or two additional speakers, and then we are done with
5 our presentation. I know 3-304 allows comments in
6 favor first and then comments against secondly,
7 before there is ...

8 MR. PRATT: Let's finish with - if you have
9 additional comments, then let's go ahead and finish
10 out that. And then we will take public. And then
11 the Board will have the final say.

12 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay.

13 I would like to call Carlos Gobel, who is a
14 certified Florida appraiser who prepared, on behalf
15 of GRE Group a market analysis for 2909 Segovia
16 Street, 2915 Segovia Street and 555 Catalonia Avenue.
17 Here is a copy of the report, which I will submit as
18 also part of the record.

19 (Addressing the court reporter) This is also
20 going to be an exhibit to the record; we will go
21 through the exhibits at the end and we will number
22 each one of them.

23 (The previously referred to document was
24 subsequently marked as an exhibit and attached to the
25 transcripts.)

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Part of the reason than Mr. Gobel
2 is here is, again, the two documents that I made
3 reference to early on in my introduction with respect
4 to the opposition to the project, one of the opinions
5 that have been leveled is that somehow this project
6 is going to hurt the property values on Segovia, and
7 Mr. Gobel can speak to that issue.

8 Again, not that that necessarily is a factor
9 that is determinative of whether or not the project
10 is approved, but since it's been raised, we went
11 ahead and addressed that. And I think that Mr. Gobel
12 can speak to that and then answer any questions you
13 may have regarding his analysis and the written
14 report that has been submitted as part of the record.

15 MR. GOBEL: Good afternoon. As Mr. Gonzalez
16 states, my name is Carlos Gobel, the executive
17 director for GRE Group. We're an appraisal firm
18 based out of South Miami; we appraise in the Coral
19 Gables market very often; I would say several times a
20 month.

21 My office used to be located in Coral Gables. I
22 am not only a state certified appraiser but I am also
23 a designated member of the Appraisal Institute and
24 also a member of the American Society of Appraisers;
25 I sit on the board the directors for the local

1 chapter of the Appraisal Institute and I have served
2 as appointed special magistrate on the Value
3 Adjustment Board in Broward County.

4 Mr. Perez hired me with the intent ... he had
5 certain questions he wanted to address. And his
6 concerns were whether or not this type of
7 architecture, Modern/Contemporary, may have an effect
8 on the property values, particularly a detrimental
9 effect. He wanted to know how other architectural
10 styles stood out in the neighborhood and he had some
11 concerns regarding compatibility.

12 I think probably the best way to go about this
13 is to read our findings, essentially the summary or
14 the letter that was hand-delivered to Mr. Perez. And
15 we can go from there.

16 The letter states, Mr. Perez: In accordance
17 with our engagement, please allow this correspondence
18 to provide a summary of our findings based on the
19 scope of work agreed upon and the subsequent research
20 and analysis conducted. Our research and analysis
21 were specific to the Coral Gables market and its
22 reaction to newly constructed residences,
23 particularly homes with a Modern and/or Contemporary
24 flair.

25 The following are the most distinctive

1 conclusions drawn from the analysis completed and the
2 market reactions observed:

3 Modern/Contemporary architecture styles appear
4 to be the favored designs for newly constructed
5 residences currently being marketed for sale within
6 Coral Gables. Of the seventeen current listings for
7 homes built between 2014 and 2015 six are Modern or
8 Contemporary flair.

9 Similarly, of the seven closed sales in the past
10 twelve months that were built between 2014 and 2015,
11 four were of a Contemporary design.

12 Non-waterfront homes built between 2000 and 2015
13 command a significantly higher price per square foot
14 sale amount than other notable construction
15 timeframes - such as the Mediterranean Revival era,
16 which is approximately 1920 to 1940, and the
17 Mid-century or post World War II era, approximately
18 1945 to 1965; a 31 percent premium over Old Spanish
19 style homes and a 24.7 percent premium over Ranch
20 style residences was observed.

21 Amongst the eleven non-waterfront closed sales
22 in the past 12 months of homes built in the past five
23 years, the four Contemporary residences commanded the
24 highest price per square foot on average, at \$511 per
25 square foot.

1 Additionally, and in direct response to your
2 questions and concerns regarding the effect on value
3 for neighboring properties, a general neighborhood
4 architectural description, and overall compatibility,
5 please note the following:

6 There was no data found or believed available
7 that would indicate that the presence or construction
8 of a Modern and/or Contemporary residence within
9 Coral Gables would have a detrimental effect on
10 neighboring property values.

11 The Segovia Street Corridor, from Coral Way to
12 Bird Road, was found to have no distinct uniform
13 architectural style amongst the properties located on
14 either side of the road. Several architectural
15 styles were noted - including Mediterranean,
16 Colonial, and Ranch designs - with the majority of
17 the residences build in the post World War II era,
18 between the late 1940s and the 1950s.

19 The proposed residences are compatible with the
20 overlying nature of the neighborhood as they are
21 single family homes and town homes, consistent with
22 current land uses. Compatibility, and its resulting
23 effect on neighboring values, would only be of
24 concern if land use were to change from its current
25 and proposed use - i.e. from residential to

1 commercial or affordable housing - or if the proposed
2 construction would be of inferior quality and
3 finishes than what the market expects, neither of
4 which is the case here.

5 Our hope is that the conclusions drawn and the
6 statements made help in answering and addressing your
7 questions and concerns regarding the proposed
8 development along Segovia Street and Catalonia
9 Avenue. Attached, please find supporting tables,
10 photographs, and printouts.

11 Should you have any further questions, please
12 feel free to give us a call.

13 So in essence, our research and our analysis
14 could not conclude that there was any detrimental
15 effect on Modern houses. Really because there just
16 isn't sufficient evidence with regard to specific
17 Modern houses. We note that new construction,
18 regardless of architecture type, has a positive
19 effect on market values. This analysis was conducted
20 solely on dry parcels or non-waterfront residences;
21 as with waterfront residences you have to take much
22 more into consideration, including how many mixed
23 bridges, the distance in bays, et cetera, et cetera.

24 Aside from that, I don't know if there are any
25 questions? I know you had said questions may be at

1 the end of the presentation but --

2 MR. PRATT: No. Actually I think, I mean, I
3 think we recognize that the (inaudible) --

4 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, sir. I can't
5 hear you.

6 MR. PRATT: I said I think it is the Board of
7 Architects' venue to try and define and recognize
8 good architecture, and that good architecture, you
9 know, generally increases value, property value. And
10 so, again, I think we all recognize that.

11 I don't know that there's -- I mean, if you
12 would like to stay, and if there's any - I don't know
13 if that is going to be a topical discussion that each
14 party is just going to raise - and if you would like
15 to stay and respond to anything that they may raise,
16 or if any other member has a question with respect to
17 the report that's been presented, you can ask the
18 question now or wait until later; either way that is
19 fine.

20 MR. GIBB: All right, sir.

21 MR. PRATT: The next presenter or the next
22 person in your party.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Yes. I believe Richard
24 Heisenbottle is here. Oh. He just stepped out?

25 (Discussion off the record.)

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Mr. Heisenbottle is an AIA Fellow
2 as well. And he is also the recipient of the Miami
3 Chapter of the AIA Silver Medal for Design. He is a
4 recognized expert in Historic Preservation; and he is
5 here to opine on this particular project.

6 MR. PRATT: He has not been sworn in.

7 MR. GONZALEZ: And the Court Reporter, would you
8 please swear in Mr. Heisenbottle.

9 THE COURT REPORTER: Spell your name for me,
10 please, sir.

11 MR. HEISENBOTTLE: H-e-i-s-e-n-b-o-t-t-l-e.

12 THE COURT REPORTER: Would you raise your right
13 hand.

14 (Thereupon, RICHARD HEISENBOTTLE was duly
15 sworn.)

16 MR. HEISENBOTTLE: Ladies and gentlemen, for the
17 record, my name is Richard Heisenbottle. And as
18 counsel said, I am a resident of Coral Gables, I'm a
19 business owner; I'm a Fellow of the American
20 Institute of Architects, and I hold the Miami
21 Chapter's Silver Medal for Design. And I am a
22 recognized expert in Historic Preservation matters;
23 although I'm not being paid for my testimony today, I
24 might add.

25 For as long as I can remember, the Board of

1 Architects has conducted itself in a very exemplary
2 and highly professional manner. It is a tough thing
3 to do to sit in a peer review of a panel consisting
4 of your fellow architects in approving their designs
5 for the city of Coral Gables.

6 (Thereupon Mr. Leen returned to the hearing
7 room; Ms. Figueroa departed the hearing room, and the
8 proceedings continued as follows:)

9 MR. HEISENBOTTLE: It is a charge that should be
10 done without the stylistic preference, because in the
11 end, it's not about architectural style, it's about
12 good design.

13 By all measures, the Board has been highly
14 successful in maintaining quality in the building
15 environment of Coral Gables. And the project in
16 front you today is certainly a good design. The area
17 surrounding both Segovia and Catalonia development
18 lacks adhesive architectural style; is not the French
19 Country Village, the French City Village, the Chinese
20 Village or any of the other groupings of stylized
21 villages created by Merrick and his wonderful
22 architects when they planned this city over 90 years
23 ago.

24 It is certainly not an area dominated by the
25 Mediterranean-style buildings either. To be sure,

1 there are very few Mediterranean-style buildings in
2 this neighborhood. Rather, it is a neighborhood made
3 up of an overwhelming majority of post World War II
4 structures; some nice, some not so nice, most of an
5 unidentifiable architectural style.

6 It is by no means an area that should never be
7 considered for historic designation as a district.
8 In fact, there are only three buildings that I know
9 of in the area with entitlement to it, that are more
10 given historical status to it, the more ready
11 capital; the library, of course on the east side of
12 Segovia and the Art Deco townhouses on the west side
13 of Segovia.

14 So what is all the fuss today? Why are we here
15 discussing a small townhouse development in a Modern
16 style? Well, some will tell you that, today that
17 modernism is out of style. But you know better, my
18 friends, because you are architects; because as you
19 remember the names of all the famous architects
20 during the past that your history of architecture
21 professor taught you in school: Le Corbusier, Mies,
22 Mier, Neutra - I can keep going - thank you, Jan
23 Hochstim for broadening our horizons. Modernism,
24 Modern, Miami Modern, mid-century Modern, post
25 Modern; all legitimate architectural styles. And so

1 is this project.

2 For all of my work in historic structures, you
3 may find it strange that I have worked with the likes
4 of my infamed partners Gwathmey Siegel and Richard
5 Meier. One of the things I originally told Richard
6 Meier, watch out, your buildings are going to be
7 historically designated very, very soon. Some day
8 they all will be.

9 Diversity a good thing in our community, ladies
10 and gentlemen; it is a good thing in our
11 architecture. These are, to be sure, well-designed
12 town homes and meet all the provisions of the city
13 code and they were designed by a highly recognized
14 architect working in a Modern style.

15 I would caution you that it is a very slippery
16 slope when a public entity tries to dictate or
17 mandate architectural style.

18 This project will fit in nicely - it is well
19 scaled - it will fit in nicely within the
20 neighborhood that contains this amalgamation of
21 architectural styles; and I urge you to support it
22 today.

23 Thank you all very much.

24 MR. PRATT: Thank you.

25 MR. GONZALEZ: I believe there's only one or two

1 additional speakers; one is Ralph Portuondo, who I
2 believe is here. And I believe he is going to be
3 speaking also in favor of the project.

4 MR. PORTUONDO: My name is Rafael Portuondo.
5 I'm a principal --

6 THE COURT REPORTER: I am so sorry, but I can't
7 hear you at all.

8 MR. PORTUONDO: My name is Rafael Portuondo; I'm
9 the design principal at Portuondo Perotti Architects.
10 And I have been practicing for thirty years; and I
11 have known Roney for 35 years. And one of the things
12 that I think is critical about today's
13 presentation -- and I heard Heisenbottle; in fact, I
14 heard Roney talk, and they all said a lot of the
15 things I was going to say. So I come in with that.
16 So I will take a little bit of a change in direction
17 and talk a little bit about myself.

18 I went to Columbia University; I studied with
19 Stephen Hall, Robert Stern, Leon Krier, Bill
20 Peterson, which are to me fabulous professors. And
21 one of the things that I tried to do while I was in
22 school was to listen and learn. And one of the
23 things that I am honored to say today, looking at
24 Roney's presentation as a scholastic presentation -
25 which is also a very professional presentation and it

1 is a very beautiful project - is how beautiful it is.
2 And there is a book called the Mathematics of the
3 Ideal Villa, which actually compares Palladio to Le
4 Corbusier. Right?

5 So in there I think is a sort of mesh between
6 classical architecture, and Modernism kind of grew
7 out the classical.

8 THE COURT REPORTER: I can barely hear him.

9 MS. RUSSO: Don't worry.

10 MR. PORTUONDO: And I think that even though
11 that Roney and I have different styles, we have a lot
12 of things in common. And one of the things that I
13 would say about Roney's project is how incredibly
14 picturesque it is.

15 And what is my definition of picturesque?
16 Picturesque is a series of local symmetries that
17 together makes something that is not a villa, meaning
18 it's of a a synetical piece. So when I see the
19 tower, and I see the original windows, it is very
20 reminiscent of the houses we see in Coral Gables,
21 except in Modern language.

22 When you see the loggias, which is in the plan,
23 what makes the Classical plan, the Modern plan, is
24 declarative diagram, declarative rhythm. So I see
25 the rhythm of windows as the same rhythm that you

1 would see in the houses in Coral Gables, like you
2 would see in the Biltmore, like you would see in a
3 villa, an old Mediterranean villa, that you would see
4 the rhythm of the villages.

5 The other thing that I think is quite beautiful
6 is the sculpture of the house. So I think it is
7 actually masterly done in this, in the way that this
8 element actually ties all these elements.

9

10 THE COURT REPORTER: He needs to speak up.

11 MR. PORTUONDO: So one of the things that
12 Heisenbottle said earlier is that there are people
13 that we know, architects that we know: Luis Parragan,
14 Le Corbusier, and a lot of architects that we're
15 saying today couldn't build in the city of Coral
16 Gables. One of the things, coming from Cuba, one of
17 the things that is actually quite revealing is Cuba
18 is a historically Colonial town. It is one of the
19 most beautiful cities in the world. And it has one
20 of the most biggest foundations in modern
21 architecture. Because during the fifties there was a
22 lot of Modern architecture built in Cuba. It is very
23 representative to the city of Coral Gables, that one
24 of the themes, developments of the city, is that it
25 can actually evolve into and keep up with the times.

1 And I think that Roney's project is incredibly
2 skillfully done. I think his courtyards are
3 reminiscent of the da Cortona's courtyards and the
4 Phineas Paist courtyards; the use of water is
5 incredibly beautiful.

6 So I think that when you compare this to this
7 and this to this (indicating), things that Roney is
8 seeing, one of the things that you realize is how bad
9 the architecture on Segovia really is.

10 So I think that we are blessed to have someone
11 as talented as Roney come in front of us, probably
12 many more times that he would actually have wanted,
13 and present to you, the city, a beautiful project.

14 And one of the things that I have always done as
15 a student is sit there, but when I was in college, I
16 would do my project and I would note everyone else's
17 project. And today, after looking at it in a more
18 academic way, I've actually looked at Roney's project
19 and actually learned a great deal from Roney.

20 So I am endorsing Roney Mateu's project - and I
21 understand it - and I hope that the Board approves
22 the same.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. PRATT: Any other presenters?

25 MR. GONZALEZ: I believe - as a footnote to this

1 commentary regarding the (indiscernible), they are
2 very well respected with its mix of old Spanish and
3 modern architecture - I believe there are some
4 neighbors that are here that also want to speak in
5 favor of the project.

6 If you are one of the neighbors, you can come
7 up. We'll start with the gentleman in the back and
8 then we'll go this gentleman here and this gentleman
9 here.

10 MR. DOCKERTY: Hi. My name is Jim Dockerty. I
11 live at 1230 Catalonia, just down the block, a few
12 blocks down. I'm here primarily as a citizen but as
13 a passionate lover of great architecture. And I know
14 sometimes change is hard for people in Coral Gables.
15 My first house in the Gables in 1990 was in the
16 Italian Village. My current home is a 1934 home
17 designed by Russell Pancoast, an architectural
18 masterpiece, I believe. So I'm a lover of
19 architecture.

20 This is great architecture. I'm not an
21 architect, but I have been financing
22 residential/commercial properties since 1981. And I
23 am very proud to say that I have a good eye for great
24 architecture, being a layman.

25 I am very, very excited that Roney and Albert

1 can bring this into the city of Coral Gables. We
2 need to stand up for diversity of architecture in
3 Coral Gables. It is very important for the growth
4 and the continued value gradation of residential and
5 commercial properties that we have diversity in
6 architecture in Coral Gables.

7 MR. PRATT: Thank you.

8 MR. LEEN: You weren't sworn in already?

9 MR. CALIL: No.

10 MR. LEEN: Ms. Court Reporter, could you please
11 swear him in.

12 THE COURT REPORTER: Would you please raise your
13 right hand to be sworn.

14 (Thereupon, EDUARDO CALIL, JR. was duly sworn.)

15 MR. LEEN: May I before we continue, is this
16 part of your presentation still?

17 MR. GONZALEZ: Yes. We just have I believe two
18 more.

19 MR. PRATT: I think you were out of the room.

20 MR. LEEN: Sorry.

21 MR. PRATT: But what we had decided, at the
22 suggestion of one of the members, was before the
23 Board starts doing all their questioning, to go ahead
24 and let the full presentation from the presenter; and
25 then we were going to entertain then the public

1 and --

2 MR. LEEN: But then the aggrieved party and then
3 the public.

4 MR. PRATT: Well, however. Yes.

5 MR. LEEN: And I'm sorry about having to step
6 out; I have two meetings going on at the same time
7 and now a third one is about to start; it's been a
8 busy day.

9 MR. PRATT: Then the Board would then wrap up
10 with their comments and questions.

11 All right. You may proceed.

12 MR. CALIL: My name is Eduardo Calil, Junior. I
13 am an architect here in Miami. My father is also an
14 architect; he has been an architect for the past 35
15 years in Coral Gables, city of Miami, basically all
16 of South Florida.

17 I won't speak so much for Mr. Mateu's
18 architecture - he is a wonderful architect - but I'm
19 going to speak more for Coral Gables and it's Board
20 of Architects. The fact that they even have a Board
21 of Architects is magnificent. I have presented them
22 multiple times; I may not always agree with them, we
23 have our little bouts and we have points of
24 conversation.

25 But the point is that because of this Board of

1 Architects, the architecture often becomes better.
2 Sometimes my architecture is not completely finished
3 as I believe it to be, and they actually help them
4 improve upon this project.

5 With regard to the city of Coral Gables having a
6 specific style of architecture, this is simply
7 untrue. There's a variety of styles of architecture.
8 As a matter of fact, in most historic cities around
9 the world, you will see this: Amsterdam, Barcelona,
10 Paris; you will see a variety of styles of
11 architecture. You will see avenues with a specific
12 style that may have certain Contemporary or Modern
13 incorporations within that fabric that basically
14 works within the same, the same guidelines that the
15 Coral Gables Board of Architects deals with, which is
16 similar massing, scales, bulks. If there's a
17 difference, they question why. They will question
18 why. This is what they do. They make sure that
19 there's a certain pleasant aesthetic that continues
20 within the City Beautiful that is Coral Gables.

21 So if, let's say a case in point is that if this
22 were happening in the City of Miami, you don't have
23 such a board to deal with, this would never be in
24 question, the project would be allowed within the
25 constraints of the code, which is what I believe this

1 project to be.

2 Again, this hasn't gone to Zoning, this hasn't
3 gone to Building; they haven't had a chance to review
4 it yet, because it is currently stuck within the
5 Board of Architects and this presentation. Once it
6 progresses, it will continue within that process.

7 However, from what I have heard and what I've
8 seen and what I've personally experienced, this is
9 what I believe, this is within the constraints of the
10 code and it is within the approval of the Board or
11 Architects, whose restrictions and comments are very
12 strict and very well stated.

13 I have seen them, myself personally with other
14 architects, critic; regardless of the name,
15 regardless of the name of the architect, whether it
16 be myself or whether it be Ralph Choeff, or whether
17 it be Roney Mateu, or some other architect, that is
18 not taken into regard. What is taken into regard is
19 the architecture presented to them. They attack it
20 critically and they give comments that help it become
21 a better architecture. And for that I respect the
22 Board of Architects and their opinion and their final
23 view on the project.

24 And that's all I would like to say. Thank you.

25 MR. PRATT: Thank you very much.

1 MR. UMBERTO PEREZ: My name is Umberto Perez. I
2 have been a resident of the Gables for about 15
3 years. I work, play and eat in the Gables. I live
4 at 740 Aledo Avenue. My kids go to Sommerset; I work
5 on Alhambra; I'm up and down Segovia about ten times
6 a day.

7 I'm not an architect. I see things pretty
8 simple. For me, it's, we're taking away something
9 old and ragged and has no historical value and
10 putting something that is really cool and modern and
11 beautiful.

12 I would love to be riding bikes with my kids and
13 see these properties up; I would like to see more
14 properties like this up. I think it's a slam dunk;
15 no-brainer. And ... that's all I've got to say.

16 MR. PRATT: All right. Thank you very much.

17 MR. SALDARRIAGA: You have to excuse me because
18 I have a little bit of Parkinson, but I still can
19 speak.

20 The first thing I have to say is that
21 communication has been very poor.

22 MR. GONZALEZ: Can we get your name, please.

23 MR. SALDARRIAGA: My name is Jaime Saldarriaga.

24 I have been a resident of Coral Gables for more
25 than thirty years. I own six properties on Segovia,

1 and I did not get any communication. The first time
2 I heard of this meeting was when Maria ... Maria ...
3 Maricis came on Monday and told me that, to sign this
4 paper, that she recommended that I sign this paper
5 against the construction of that project. And she
6 gave me a few things in the back.

7 Which I -- I'm an electrical engineer; I have a
8 master's degree from Wisconsin, University of
9 Wisconsin. And it caught my eye, because the reason
10 is that we need to be precise; words like highly and
11 compatible with the character of Segovia Street has
12 no meaning to me, unless you explain exactly what is
13 compatible.

14 When it says historically-minded sense of place,
15 what is the meaning of that? It has no meaning.

16 Segovia Street, and it has been said many times
17 here, is a collection of old buildings. The six that
18 I own -- we used to own more, on Valencia and
19 (indiscernible); we have sold them, now I own six; I
20 think Maria only owns one; I own six. And they are
21 all rental buildings whose time has expired; these
22 are old buildings that lack facilities for tenants.
23 To me a project like that is refreshing. We are
24 going to see a lot different things. Modernity is
25 not bad if the architecture is good; I mean the

1 architecture that are modern that are badly designed,
2 they are bad. Even if they are Mediterranean. I've
3 seen Mediterranean things that are very bad.

4 Coral Gables has no -- Segovia has no
5 Mediterranean. I'd like anyone to show me which
6 building in Segovia is Mediterranean.

7 I approve of the project. It is very valuable
8 to see something new in our neighborhood, even though
9 I'm old.

10 MR. LEEN: Sir. Sir. Can I ask you, what is
11 your residence address?

12 MR. SALDARRIAGA: 2711 Segovia.

13 MR. LEEN: Thank you.

14 MR. SALDARRIAGA: We also own 2615, 2617, 2701,
15 2717 and 3404 Segovia.

16 MR. LEEN: Thank you. And then just in answer
17 for the Board --

18 THE WITNESS: No, very poor communication, this
19 is the first time --

20 MR. LEEN: I understand.

21 MR. SALDARRIAGA: I have never seen any
22 rendering or any communication, but I do get
23 communication about other projects way out in Ponce
24 de Leon.

25 MR. LEEN: I understand that.

1 I would just like to say for the record and -
2 Jane Thompkins is here, and Jane, I will ask you a
3 question - under the code, the Board of Architects
4 matters are posted. The code doesn't require them to
5 be sent out. Now I'm curious, for this particular
6 quasi-judicial procedure was there any additional
7 notice provided?

8 MS. THOMPKINS: I did not hear you.

9 MR. LEEN: For this proceeding today what was
10 the notice?

11 MS. THOMPKINS: I don't know. I don't think
12 there's any additional notice.

13 MR. LEEN: I don't think there was additional
14 notice. Because the way that it worked was, the code
15 for some things requires a thousand feet. The code
16 here does not require a thousand feet; it just
17 requires posting.

18 I have given an opinion that anyone within a
19 thousand feet, in my view, would be an aggrieved
20 party, as well as anyone that has been harmed and
21 could show a special interest, which is the legal
22 requirement.

23 MR. SALDARRIAGA: But I have six properties.

24 MR. LEEN: No, I know. You definitely have six.
25 I heard that; I heard it on the record.

1 But what I'm trying to say is the code only says
2 it's posted. Now maybe that issue should be raised
3 for these in the future. But there's nothing legally
4 deficient about the notice under the code.

5 MR. SALDARRIAGA: It is funny that the person
6 that gave me this is the opposition, and then I'm
7 here to support it.

8 MR. LEEN: I understand.

9 MR. PRATT: No, but I would like to thank you
10 for your views and your presentation. And it is very
11 nice for the citizens to come out, and it is all of
12 the citizens. It was very well said.

13 MR. GIBB: I would like to say that I've known
14 Jaime for thirty years --

15 MR. SALDARRIAGA: You remembered me.

16 MR. GIBB: -- from my first address in Coral
17 Gables, 2711.

18 MR. SALDARRIAGA: (Indiscernible.)

19 MR. PRATT: Sir --

20 MR. LEEN: Can I raise one other point.

21 MR. PRATT: Sure.

22 MR. LEEN: Just for the audience. Because I
23 don't want you to think that Coral Gables doesn't
24 want people to come. This is a very unique
25 proceeding today. Normally, the way the Coral Gables

1 code is set up almost everything comes through the
2 Board of Architects. So it would be prohibitive for
3 us to send a thousand-foot notice on every issue that
4 could come up, and would frankly probably slow down
5 the Board of Architects. Which is not the goal;
6 because it's a professional board. It is just that
7 this particular hearing, there's been more
8 controversy, so it is unique.

9 But I hear what you've said, and I will raise it
10 with the appropriate authority.

11 MS. THOMPkins: This is not usually public
12 anyway.

13 MR. LEEN: It is not; usually it's in a --

14 MR. PRATT: No, but the properties are posted
15 with the signs, you know. So that there is
16 notification for the public to be aware of.

17 MR. SALDARRIAGA: We used to have a Coral Gables
18 newspaper, but that went out sometime ago.

19 MR. PRATT: Yes. But the properties are
20 noticed; and you will see the little green card or
21 blue card or whatever color it is with the drawings
22 of the property.

23 All right. Is there any other ...

24 MR. GONZALEZ: I don't believe so.

25 I think - we're going to submit for the record

1 the 190 plus signatures - I think the last signature
2 we got today was from Jorge Hernandez who sent a text
3 message. Would you like me to wrap up the
4 presentation now or should I wait until the end of
5 the hearing?

6 MR. LEEN: I think you should wait until the
7 end.

8 MR. PRATT: Yes. I was going to say. If we
9 could hear the aggrieved party next.

10 (The following exhibits were subsequently
11 articulated by Mr. Gonzalez to the court reporter,
12 per agreement of Mr. Leen, and marked as follows:)

13 MR. GONZALEZ: Applicant's Exhibit Number 1 is
14 Callum Gibb's letter regarding the Segovia Project.

15 Applicant's Exhibit Number 2 is emails sent by
16 Maricris Longo and Ernesto Fabre on June 4, 2015.

17 Applicant's Exhibit Number 3 is the biography of
18 Alberto Jose Perez, who is one of the two principals
19 of the property owner/developer.

20 Applicant's Exhibit Number 4 are the petitions
21 in support of the Segovia project signed by over 190
22 Coral Gables residents.

23 Applicant's Exhibit Number 5 is the biographical
24 profile of Juan Carlos Mas.

25 Applicant's Exhibit Number 6 is a three-page

1 exhibit regarding Roney Mateu, the architect, and
2 Mateu Architectural Incorporated, his architectural
3 firm and Mr. Mateu's honors and recognitions and
4 biography.

5 Applicant's Exhibit Number 7 is the March 23,
6 2015 letter from Dona Spain, the Historic
7 Preservation Officer for the City of Coral Gables to
8 Ernesto Fabre, regarding the rejection of a request
9 to have a historic district designation of Segovia
10 Street between Alhambra Circle and Bird Road.

11 Applicant's Exhibit Number 8 is is the Market
12 Analysis on 2909 Segovia Street, 2915 Segovia Street
13 and 55 Catalonia Avenue, dated September 9, 2015.

14 Applicant's Exhibit Number 9 is a two-page
15 document, 9-A and 9-B, which is the Plat 6 for the
16 Biltmore Section and includes Section 12 regarding
17 General Regulations where the Biltmore Section and
18 Biltmore Addition allow for modernism type houses
19 which are permitted in this section.

20 Applicant's Exhibit Number 10 is the Notice, or
21 document entitled Notice of Highly Incompatible
22 Project on Segovia Street, which is the document that
23 was prepared by Mr. Ernesto Fabre in opposition to
24 the project which contains demonstrably inaccurate or
25 false statements.

1 Applicant's Exhibit Number 11 is an online
2 petition that was also created by Mr. Ernesto Fabre,
3 which serves at the basis for the petition signatures
4 that the folks who appeared in opposition of the
5 project signed and delivered to the Board.

6 Applicant's Exhibit Number 12 is an article that
7 came out in the New York Times where Mr. George E.
8 Merrick was interviewed back during the days when Mr.
9 Merrick was privately developing the City of Coral
10 Gables.

11 Applicant's Exhibit Number 13 is the Board of
12 Architects Staff Report dated September 4, 2015.

13 Applicant's Exhibit Number 14 is the transcript
14 of the hearing before the Board of Architects that
15 took place on Thursday, July 23, 2015.

16 Applicant's Exhibit Number 15 is the transcript
17 of the hearing of the Board of Architects that took
18 place on Thursday, June 25, 2015.

19 Applicant's Exhibit Number 16 is the transcript
20 of the hearing before the board of Architects that
21 took place on July 30, 2015.

22 Applicant's Exhibit Number 17 is the transcript
23 of the hearing of the Board of Architects that took
24 place on Thursday, August 6, 2015.

25 And we move all these exhibits into evidence and

1 as part of the record for today's hearing. And
2 without objection as confirmed by the city attorney.

3 (The proceedings continued - no hiatus - as
4 follows:)

5 MR. LEEN: Mr. Chair, at this point I would
6 recommend that you hear from the aggrieved party and
7 let her make her presentation.

8 MR. PRATT: Okay. Aggrieved party.

9 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Thank you for your
10 contribution to the City, and for your commitment.

11 I just want to introduce myself. My name is
12 Ernesto Fabre. I studied architecture in
13 (inaudible)--

14 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, sir. I can't
15 hear you.

16 MR. PRATT: Would it be better if you move
17 closer to the middle; maybe it will be better for you
18 to hear.

19 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes.

20 My name is Ernesto Fabre, and I studied
21 architecture in Colombia and I have a license in
22 Colombia. I also have a Master of Science in
23 Historic Preservation from Columbia University.

24 I own eleven buildings a block away from the
25 property and with a total of 44 units. The

1 properties are very near and I have a serious, let's
2 say, stake in the neighborhood.

3 I want to do a Power Point but what I wanted to
4 show you with the handout is what the city code has
5 to say about role of a Board of Architects.

6 It was created to ensure the City's architecture
7 is consistent with the City's regulations and to
8 preserve the traditional aesthetic character of the
9 community. It is responsible for determining whether
10 development applications satisfy the Design Review
11 Standards set out in Article 5, Division 6.

12 So the next page is Article 5, Division 6. It
13 talks about the architectural style for a given
14 location, unless specified to the contrary, shall be
15 in harmony with the architecture of the particular
16 neighborhood. The Board of Architects shall review a
17 new building or structure or a substantial addition
18 to an existing building or structure to be
19 constructed in context within an area that includes
20 both sides of the street.

21 The architectural context of an area includes
22 the height, scale, massing, separation between
23 buildings, and style, in regard to how buildings and
24 structures relate to each other in their specified
25 area.

1 It goes on to discuss the purpose of the zoning
2 code: To protect the distinctive historic and
3 architectural character of the City which is unique
4 throughout South Florida and the world.

5 To preserve residential properties to ensure
6 their future development will be in conformity with
7 the foregoing distinctive character.

8 Establish zoning districts as a means of
9 achieving unified civic design and proper
10 relationship.

11 More general provisions: Reasonable
12 consideration, among other things, to maintain the
13 character of the districts, and their peculiar
14 suitability for particular uses.

15 I also bring in a definition from the code of
16 what compatibility means. It's the characteristics
17 of different uses or activities or design which allow
18 them to be located near or adjacent to each other in
19 harmony. Some elements affecting compatibility
20 include height, scale, mass and bulk of structures,
21 pedestrian or vehicular traffic, and architecture.
22 Compatibility does not "mean the same as." Rather,
23 compatibility refers to the sensitivity of
24 development proposals in maintaining the character of
25 existing development.

1 So that being said, I just wanted to share with
2 you the fact that, yes, I was involved in a campaign,
3 let's say, on change.org. It was news to me; I did
4 not know how effective it was; we ended up gathering
5 probably 235, 240 signatures, about 80 or 90
6 comments; Maricris is going to hand them out.

7 But what I did do is I went ahead and created a
8 board just to do the same thing that Roney did, which
9 I commend him for his architecture, absolutely; but I
10 just think it's out of place.

11 And I don't want to downplay his incredible
12 design; I just want to show that we're looking for
13 possibly a chance to avoid a dramatic change in the
14 neighborhood by getting this project approved. So
15 we're opposing it because of how strong a statement
16 it's making in the architectural landscape, the urban
17 landscape.

18 So it's important to look at it in context; not
19 only the building next door or, you know, the other
20 side, maybe across the street, but the whole, let's
21 say, experience that you see when you go down the
22 street.

23 So - and I apologize, Roney, that some of these
24 are not exactly the right scale - but I just wanted
25 to show all the renderings that he brought with the

1 elevations and abatement to the buildings.

2 And you guys, you know, are the architects; you
3 are sort of like just use this as a tool, if you care
4 to, to make your determination.

5 I really don't have that much to say except that
6 we just feel that 200 and something signatures attest
7 that we just don't feel it's appropriate for the
8 neighborhood.

9 So in conclusion, I wanted to say that ... get
10 my thoughts here ... a picture is a worth a thousand
11 words. So it is everything that, from the photos,
12 that the design is incompatible, in my opinion, and
13 in many people's opinions; and it this this creates a
14 disharmony on Segovia. And we hope that you will
15 consider rejecting it.

16 One more thing I wanted to say. A great book
17 that I've referred to in the past: Kevin Lynch's The
18 Image of the City; the key is the dialogue with the
19 citizens, with the users of the city; not necessarily
20 just the developers trying to bring in a project.

21 I think it's important that this exercise that
22 we have embarked on here will provide a fruitful
23 outcome.

24 And thank you very much.

25 MR. GONZALEZ: I have a few questions.

1 MR. LEEN: Sure.

2 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Sure.

3 MR. GONZALEZ: The majority of the petitioners
4 that signed the petition, are they Coral Gables
5 residents?

6 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes. The majority are in
7 the 33134, which is defined from Douglas Road to 57th
8 Avenue; Flagler to I guess it's Bird. But basically,
9 we, the group of people that we approached were
10 directly in the immediate neighborhood.

11 MR. GONZALEZ: Are there any folks who signed
12 the petition that are not Coral Gables residents?

13 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes. I will say somebody
14 from Colombia, a friend of mine, happened to sign it.
15 Yes.

16 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Just for the record, all
17 the petitioners that signed our petition are Coral
18 Gables residents.

19 Do you reside within a thousand feet of this
20 project?

21 MR. FABRE: I don't know if I'm a thousand; I'm
22 three or four blocks away in the corner of Biltmore
23 and Segovia. I live on Segovia in a high-rise but I
24 own a lot of residential rentals a block away from
25 this project.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: And to the extent that he does
2 not reside within a thousand feet of the subject
3 property, just for the record, I'm asserting my
4 objection of his testimony, for it to be stricken if
5 he doesn't qualify as an aggrieved party.

6 MR. LEEN: Well, this is my opinion, is that he
7 has a special interest.

8 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay.

9 MR. LEEN: Because remember, what I had said was
10 if it's within a thousand feet or a special interest.
11 The owner of a property, if it is close - this could
12 be conceivably; I'm not saying it does - affect the
13 property value, I would view him as a
14 special-interest party.

15 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay.

16 MR. PRATT: I have a question. Of the
17 signatures that you have, you said that there's
18 rental properties, is there a break-out on actual
19 property owners and renters who have signed your
20 petition?

21 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No. It is a broad-base
22 petition.

23 MR. PRATT: No renter or somebody without any
24 kind of --

25 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes, a renter can be a

1 voter, so I suspect that they are entitled to have an
2 opinion on where they live; right. I guess a renter
3 can be a voter. So you know, I --

4 MR. PRATT: I think it's more transient.

5 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I asked that question
6 myself, would it be appropriate to get a signature
7 from a renter. And I felt that if they are allowed
8 to vote, I guess then --

9 MR. LEEN: In my view, we treat renters the same
10 as owners.

11 MR. PRATT: Okay.

12 MR. GONZALEZ: Now, Mr. Fabre, do you have any
13 professional disagreement with any of the testimony
14 offered by Richard Heisenbottle?

15 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Well, I would have to say
16 that one of the outcomes of getting a project like
17 this built is that it will set a precedent, and even
18 though, yes, the building's (indiscernible) is
19 fabulous, but there is a cohesion.

20 So my rebuttal would be basically that the way
21 that I see the neighborhood developing is such that
22 all the projects that have come through the Board
23 that have been approved without much issue have been
24 in a traditional vein; and it is beginning to provide
25 a confirmation of what the urban landscape is going

1 to be. This has had a lot of challenges because it
2 is just popping out.

3 MR. GONZALEZ: But my specific question is do
4 you have any professional disagreement with the
5 testimony of Richard Heisenbottle?

6 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I don't even recall his
7 testimony, I'm sorry. But in general, I respect him
8 very highly and I don't have any professional
9 grievances or disapproving of anything that he is
10 about, let's say.

11 MR. GONZALEZ: With respect to his testimony, do
12 you have any disagreement with anything that he said?

13 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I don't recall his testimony
14 very clear.

15 MR. GONZALEZ: But you were present during his
16 testimony?

17 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I was here, yes.

18 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay.

19 How about with respect to Ralph Portuondo? Do
20 you have any disagreement with his testimony?

21 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No. I tend to agree with
22 him that the architectural is a good proposal. But I
23 just feel that for the neighborhood it is not
24 appropriate.

25 MR. GONZALEZ: Now are you an architect, sir?

1 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Not in the US; yes in
2 Colombia, South America.

3 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Do you have a business
4 that provides architectural services in Miami-Dade
5 County?

6 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No.

7 MR. GONZALEZ: What is your line of business?

8 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I'm a property owner and I
9 do some research and preservation consulting.

10 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Do you do any historical
11 preservation consulting with the aggrieved party,
12 Maricris Longo?

13 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No.

14 MR. GONZALEZ: Do you do any business with her
15 whatsoever?

16 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No.

17 MR. GONZALEZ: Are you aware of the Modern and
18 Contemporary project just east of Almeria Road, are
19 you aware of that design by Reinaldo Borges?

20 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: 625 Almeria?

21 MR. GONZALEZ: Correct.

22 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes. I saw that.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Do you know that on
24 September 3rd, just recently, there was a vote six to
25 one in favor and deferred by the Board of Architects?

1 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No, I did not.

2 MR. GONZALEZ: Did you attend that hearing to
3 object because of its Modern/Contemporary
4 architecture?

5 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I missed it.

6 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Are you aware that no one
7 showed up to object to that particular
8 Modern/Contemporary project?

9 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No. I wasn't aware of it.

10 MR. GONZALEZ: (No verbal response.)

11 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Can I ask you a question?

12 MR. GONZALEZ: Actually, that's not the way it
13 works.

14 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Okay.

15 MR. GONZALEZ: I'm just a lawyer.

16 I will ask you to identify what's already been
17 marked as Exhibit 2 to these proceedings; just to
18 confirm that this is the email that you sent Mr.
19 Perez, just so you can authenticate the document.

20 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Okay.

21 MR. GONZALEZ: So that is the email you sent?

22 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes. I had a meeting with
23 Albert and we were trying to make a suggestion; I
24 will never do that again I guess, because now it's
25 coming back to bite me. Is that what is happening

1 here?

2 MR. GONZALEZ: No. I'm just asking about the
3 document so we can confirm that you were the one that
4 prepared and sent the email recommending Mr. Callum
5 Gibb. Correct?

6 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I wasn't recommending,
7 though. I was just saying that if he cared to
8 inquire of traditional architects, that was one of
9 the people that I had met and known, if he so
10 desired.

11 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. But you are the one who
12 sent an email with Mr. Callum Gibb's Website and
13 email address; correct?

14 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes.

15 MR. GONZALEZ: Do you know if the code, anywhere
16 in the code, does it say that Contemporary or Modern
17 architecture is disallowed?

18 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Not that I'm aware of.

19 MR. GONZALEZ: And then, are you aware of this
20 notice of Highly Incompatibility Project on Segovia
21 Street?

22 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Do you know who prepared that?

24 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I think I did.

25 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Now if I can hand you a

1 copy of the document that you prepared. The second
2 paragraph there says: These three projects appear to
3 not conform to the zoning code in various sections of
4 the code.

5 Do you see that?

6 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes. But this is a very
7 old... just as this process is a de novo process, why
8 are we bringing this up?

9 MR. GONZALEZ: Sir, with all due respect, I wish
10 I could answer all your questions, but I can't. I'm
11 just asking if you prepared the document?

12 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes, I prepared the
13 document.

14 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Can you tell me where the
15 code --

16 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: But the thing is that when I
17 first learned about these documents --

18 MR. LEEN: No argument --

19 MR. GONZALEZ: Can I finish my question;
20 otherwise, the court reporter, if we interrupt each
21 other, she won't be able to get --

22 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Ask the question.

23 MR. LEEN: Keep it calm.

24 MR. GONZALEZ: My question is you prepared a
25 document that was submitted to the public, and I

1 believe to the Board of Architects, that says these
2 three projects appear to not conform to the zoning
3 code in various sections of the code. My question is
4 simple: Which various sections of the code does this
5 project violate?

6 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: At the time I wasn't totally
7 familiar with the project, because it had just been
8 brought to my attention. But now that I'm familiar
9 with the project, it appears that it is compliant
10 with the code with certain setbacks and what not.

11 One of the things that I found very curious was
12 the use of a communal driveway; and I thought that
13 that was in violation of the codes. It affected two
14 zoning districts; the single family residence and
15 duplex. But it appears that it wasn't an issue with
16 Planning, because I've inquired.

17 So that being said, I never issued that kind of
18 statement again after I realized that it was a
19 mistake.

20 MR. GONZALEZ: So you do admit that that
21 statement is factually incorrect; correct?

22 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Well, it appears, was the
23 word I used.

24 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Let's be certain. You
25 just said that you weren't familiar with the project,

1 but you put together a seven-page document in
2 opposition to these three projects; correct? You
3 weren't familiar with the project?

4 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Well, I was familiar with
5 project; I was just interested in understanding the
6 code myself, and then sharing it with the people
7 before it got approved.

8 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Now in this document that
9 you prepared, it makes reference to Section 5-604.
10 Coral Gables Mediterranean Styled Design Standards.
11 That's the last page of this document.

12 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I prepared it, yes.

13 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. What does that have to do
14 with this project?

15 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Which one?

16 MR. GONZALEZ: Section 5-604. The last page of
17 this document that you prepared in opposition.

18 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Well, Item D basically just
19 states that: Enhance the image of the City by
20 providing a visual linkage --

21 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. I'm sorry, sir.

22 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Item D in 5-604 says that,
23 enhance the image of the city by providing a visual
24 image between contemporary development and the City's
25 unique historic thematic appearance.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Sir, isn't it true that Section
2 5-604 doesn't apply to MF1 duplex zoning?

3 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I don't know. I'm not sure.

4 MR. GONZALEZ: The reason I'm asking is if you
5 don't know, why would you put something in the
6 document for public consumption opposing three
7 different projects when you don't even know that
8 5-604 doesn't even apply to MF1 duplex zoning?

9 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Okay. So what do you want
10 me to say?

11 MR. GONZALEZ: Why would you do that? Why would
12 you put something in there that has nothing to do
13 with this project, this zoning where this particular
14 project is located?

15 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I haven't the foggiest idea.

16 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Well, I don't either.
17 That's why I'm asking, because you're the one who put
18 it in there.

19 MR. LEEN: This is getting to be argumentative.

20 MS. LONGO: Yes.

21 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay.

22 My other question is: Did you have anything to
23 do with this online petition? I will give you a
24 courtesy copy of it.

25 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. And did you prepare this
2 on your own or did you have assistance?

3 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No, other people got
4 involved.

5 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Now let me ask you. In
6 this online petition that you prepared, it says
7 property value will be reduced. Do you see that?

8 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes.

9 MR. GONZALEZ: What do you base that on?

10 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I based it on the fact
11 that -- well, one neighbor is talking about the fact
12 that they live in Coral Gables because it's unique,
13 because it's special, because it's different from the
14 rest of Miami, and that they were basically hoping
15 that this type of architectural would not happen in
16 the neighborhood because it would begin to look like
17 other parts of Miami, and they felt they would
18 possibly end up with a neighborhood that wasn't as
19 appealing, as unique, as it is today.

20 And that would probably create a possible
21 diminishing of value because -- well, one of the
22 reasons that I feel that the diminishing of value
23 could occur over time would be the fact that Coral
24 Gables loses its uniqueness.

25 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. So it's based on the

1 opinion of the neighbors as opposed to you going out
2 and actually doing an object--

3 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Yes.

4 MR. GONZALEZ: Let me finish the question.

5 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I never did an appraisal.

6 MR. GONZALEZ: -- an objective market analysis?

7 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No objective market
8 analysis.

9 MR. GONZALEZ: So you have no reports, no
10 objective evidence --

11 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No.

12 MR. GONZALEZ: -- from any appraiser confirming
13 your opinion on this opposition paper --

14 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Right.

15 MR. GONZALEZ: -- that the market value would be
16 reduced --

17 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: That's correct.

18 MR. GONZALEZ: -- of all the properties on
19 Segovia?

20 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Right.

21 MR. LEEN: Remember we have to get it down. So
22 ask the question and answer it.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Your online petition also says
24 that, and I quote: It will facilitate other
25 ultramodern designs to be proposed alongside of

1 beautiful coral rock and Mediterranean treasures.

2 How many coral rock or Mediterranean treasures
3 do you know of are on Segovia?

4 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No. I think it was a
5 general statement talking about how in the
6 residential areas you will get a few instances where
7 Modern design will get passed in the city, and it
8 could be anywhere; it could be, you know, on a
9 single-family zoned area, or it could be in an area
10 that is zoned duplex. It doesn't matter where it is.
11 It is just a general statement concerning Modern
12 architecture up against Traditional architecture.

13 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Would you agree with me
14 that the zoning is not a popularity contest?

15 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Say that again. That
16 zoning --

17 MR. GONZALEZ: Should not be a popularity
18 contest?

19 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: What do you mean by that?

20 MR. GONZALEZ: Well, I asked you; would you
21 agree that it is not whether you got 200 petitions,
22 including folks that don't live in Coral Gables --

23 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: Oh, no. This isn't about
24 that.

25 MR. GONZALEZ: Would you agree that zoning is

1 actually a navigation of the private property rights,
2 so it should be looked at very carefully before
3 projects are denied?

4 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: I agree. This is a
5 contextual issue and it's just a definition, an
6 academic one, and we'll leaving it to the Board to
7 make a decision.

8 MR. GONZALEZ: Other than your opinions put
9 forth in writing in your documents opposing the
10 project, did you bring with you today any substantial
11 competent evidence whatsoever regarding value or
12 regarding this project being in violation of any part
13 of the code?

14 MR. ERNESTO FABRE: No. I don't feel that it is
15 in violation of the code; I just feel that the
16 challenge is a, possibly a subjective one, where the
17 Board has to make their judgment concerning its
18 compatibility in a neighborhood.

19 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you. I have no further
20 questions.

21 MR. PRATT: All right. Are you finished
22 with your testimony?

23 MR. FABRE: Yes.

24 MS. LONGO: My name is Maria Cristina Longo.
25 And I live in 2712 Segovia; my family owns 11

1 properties with about forty-five units in the
2 Biltmore Historical subdivision.

3 Before I just tell you my thoughts about this -
4 and we want to stress that this is a compatibility
5 issue, and that is what we gave to the definition,
6 that is actually in the documents that the city
7 provides, in the Zoning documents, the definition,
8 plus the reason why your board was formed.

9 You have been here for a long time; I'm very
10 appreciative of your time time and your patience. I
11 will be very brief. But I want to tell you that
12 there is proof and evidence, and these comments -
13 that we are going to be reading some of it, because
14 we know it is late - that 99 percent of the people
15 who signed it, petitioners - since July - is about
16 230, right now, live in the neighbor, live within a
17 thousand feet; I live within a thousand feet. And
18 these comments show, because they say "my street, my
19 neighborhood." The zip code 33134 is Coral Gables,
20 that's how the post office classifies it.

21 And here they are (passes document); you can
22 pass it.

23 And then we have here the petition which was
24 this morning 220, there's 230. And this is not a
25 taste contest; this is an issue of context. And this

1 not an issue about a building being Modern or not
2 being Modern. It is an issue of whether it is
3 appropriate in this context; whether it is
4 compatible.

5 And you are going to see in those comments that
6 - there's almost a hundred comments - that 80 percent
7 of those people who live in this neighborhood don't
8 think it's compatible. And like Ernesto said, a
9 picture is worth more than a thousand words.

10 Lawyers, evidence, questions, this ...
11 architecture is an art. Architecture is an art and
12 it cannot be put back into a question about what was
13 written in that flyer; architecture is what you are
14 seeing in front of you, whether it's public comment
15 or not.

16 I'm not against progress for Modern
17 architecture. What I'm for is thoughtful development
18 that considers the context of the street and the
19 neighborhood.

20 In this neighborhood, this block, is three
21 buildings. So that's what I meant by urban. Because
22 it's not one single family home in a residential
23 neighborhood, maybe in a corner. This is an
24 important boulevard. It has a median - and by the
25 way, I want to tell you that I was part of the team

1 who developed, help develop the median. I'm also a
2 realtor. And I also helped, I was part of the
3 creative team that developed the award-winning
4 project on Almeria Road. I have some experience as a
5 realtor, and I'm not against development at all.
6 This has never been personal; this is not personal at
7 all.

8 Being a realtor, I know that when the
9 development does not consider context, it lowers
10 property value on the long term. The lawyer's asking
11 all kinds of questions: how do you know, how do you
12 know? The best example that we have is what happened
13 in Coconut Grove. Right? Next to us. Where
14 properties used to be higher. And that was more than
15 forty-five years ago. But because of (indiscernible)
16 development, aesthetics and property values went
17 down. That's a fact. That's a fact.

18 The developer and the architect in the petition
19 said that their project is unique and innovative; and
20 that we're narrow-minded. That's what the petition
21 says. What they're presenting so unique and
22 different from the rest of the street that is clashes
23 significantly.

24 We are not narrow-minded. On the contrary, we
25 want a project that looks beyond itself and considers

1 the whole picture or context. That's the issue here.
2 Which is in all of these articles in the Zoning code.
3 By the way, the first thing that was done in the
4 first presentation, because I have been here for six
5 presentations; they didn't do it today, because it's
6 not to their benefit - is that they pulled all the
7 homes on both sides of the street so that you could
8 see the context.

9 That's the first thing, the principal thing that
10 is part of the standards. There's some standards.
11 Again, a beautiful design is not the same as what
12 does it look like in context.

13 Article 5 of the zoning code, which is what
14 Ernesto presented, says that the architectural style
15 for a given location shall be in harmony with the
16 architecture of its particular neighborhood.

17 Although the properties on Segovia Street are
18 not all from one distinct era, or period, they work
19 well synergistically and there is harmony in the
20 street. And that cannot be denied.

21 They can point to one property; they can point
22 to all them individually, but guess what? The whole
23 picture is nice. Because people say Segovia Street
24 is a beautiful avenue. Why? It's the total cohesion
25 that you find on Segovia. So don't look at each

1 piece individually; look at it in context, please.

2 The proposed project is highly incompatible.
3 Once this project is built, we won't be able to be
4 erase it; and if you approve it, this development
5 will establish a precedent. Please reject this
6 project so that we can give space to a better project
7 for this site.

8 Now we have a couple of people who want to speak
9 against the project.

10 Would you like to come first or would you like
11 to come first?

12 MR. GONZALEZ: Do I get to cross-examine now or
13 do you want to save that for later? It is supposed
14 to right after she is --

15 MR. PRATT: Go ahead.

16 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay.

17 MR. PRATT: If we could keep it brief. We are
18 starting to run ...

19 MR. DE LEON: Mr. Chairman, I would say from my
20 point of view, I mean this is great, all this
21 testimony, it doesn't have much influence. I'm going
22 to look at this as an architectural project
23 aesthetically only.

24 I understand the citizens have concerns for and
25 against, but ultimately I'm going to look at this as

1 an architect, based on my professional history, my
2 schooling, my life, what I learned as an architect
3 both through studying and traveling. So I appreciate
4 it, obviously it is a hot issue; there's a lot of
5 neighbors for and against this, it's very ... it is
6 getting a little too contentious for my liking. I
7 would like to move this along so we can get to the
8 heart of the --

9 MR. PRATT: Yes, I agree. But I think we're
10 obligated, though, to hear the ...

11 MS. LONGO: Can I say one more thing, please.
12 Is that, I agree, I agree with you, that the experts
13 - the experts - you are the experts, and the
14 evidence is the project and what you know you have to
15 do. I agree.

16 MR. PRATT: All right. Let's go ahead and --

17 MR. GONZALEZ: By the way, I agree that it's too
18 bad that a private property owner has to hire two
19 lawyers and go through six hearings, to then go to
20 Zoning to do what he has to do to get his property
21 developed the way he wants to develop it. It's
22 ridiculous that he had to retain me a couple of weeks
23 and incur additional cost just because we have two
24 notices floating around in the neighborhood that are
25 not even factually based; and, as you saw today, he's

1 taken advantage of those statements that were made
2 that were completely inaccurate.

3 So it is absurd that he has to incur additional
4 expenses to hire me to be his mouthpiece at a Board
5 of Architects hearing. It is ridiculous.

6 Ms. Longo, I just have a couple of quick
7 questions.

8 Do you have any disagreement with what Mr.
9 Richard Heisenbottle discussed when he talked about
10 the 87 structures that are on Segovia?

11 MS. LONGO: Sorry, but I have been so nervous, I
12 haven't heard a thing.

13 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Well, you just told this
14 Board about the cohesion of all the houses on
15 Segovia. Would you agree that most of those
16 structures are post World War II and that they are
17 unidentifiable from the the architectural stylist
18 standpoint?

19 MS. LONGO: I agree that as a whole there is
20 harmony.

21 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Did you have anything to
22 do with the Modern/Contemporary project that is being
23 developed east of Almeria Road?

24 MS. LONGO: No, sir.

25 MR. GONZALEZ: Did you have anything to do with

1 the real estate transactions that gave rise to that
2 project?

3 MS. LONGO: No, sir.

4 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Did you know that that
5 Contemporary/Modern project was being discussed on
6 September 3rd, 20--

7 MS. LONGO: No idea.

8 MR. GONZALEZ: All right. So you didn't show up
9 to that hearing; correct?

10 MS. LONGO: I have been very busy between my job
11 and everything else that I have been doing --

12 MR. GONZALEZ: Have you provided the Board of
13 Architects with any objections to that particular
14 project?

15 MS. LONGO: I have a, you know, I'm aware of the
16 project and I know that some neighbors have told me
17 about the project and I don't think that project is
18 next to the row houses but I haven't done anything
19 yet with it.

20 MR. GONZALEZ: So is it a yes or no, did you do
21 any objections to that particular project that was
22 before the Board on September 3, 20--

23 MS. LONGO: No. I haven't been in that --

24 MR. GONZALEZ: Hold on. On September 3, 20--

25 MS. LONGO: I haven't been in that board.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Do you know anyone else
2 who worked with you in opposition to this project
3 that have asserted an objection to that
4 Modern/Contemporary project?

5 MS. LONGO: No.

6 MR. GONZALEZ: No other questions.

7 MR. PRATT: All right. Whoever is next.

8 MR. ALVARO FABRE: My name is Alvaro Fabre.

9 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, sir. Spell your
10 name for me.

11 MR. ALVARO FABRE: (No verbal response.)

12 MR. LEEN: Sir, repeat your name.

13 MR. ALVARO FABRE: Alvaro Fabre. I live at 535
14 Santander.

15 MR. LEEN: She just needs you to spell it for
16 the record; the last name.

17 MR. ALVARO FABRE: F like in Frank a-b-r-e.

18 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

19 MR. ALVARO FABRE: I would just like to say to
20 the Board that I think it is important that you
21 consider not only the code issue and all the
22 specifics that I've been hearing in the last almost
23 three hours. But it is just the design, the design.
24 I love architecture in general also; I think Modern
25 architecture is fantastic. Not in the city of Coral

1 Gables. I mean, just look at, look at the design
2 compared to this. I mean, it just doesn't fit in.

3 So that's all I'm saying, you know, as a
4 resident of the area, that it's just too modern for
5 the area. That's all I'm saying.

6 MR. PRATT: All right. Any other comments?

7 MS. MAC INTYRE: My name is Dolly MacIntyre and
8 I live at 409 Viscaya, in the French Normady Village.

9 I have just completed an eight-year term on the
10 Historic Preservation Board, and although we're not
11 dealing with historic properties in this case, we are
12 dealing with a historical community.

13 Most of our identity is based on our history,
14 and it is an evolving history; we are not frozen in
15 time. But it evolves gently. This is a case of
16 starkness. This could be ... Aventura ... Phoenix.
17 Anywhere. Not Coral Gables.

18 You know, the minute you cross the city line you
19 know you're in Coral Gables. There is a particular
20 quality to the community, there's tree canopy, with
21 regard to the environment.

22 This doesn't fit. This should go to Phoenix.
23 Please send it on its way.

24 MR. PRATT: Have you been sworn in?

25 MR. DONELAN: Yes.

1 My name is William Donelan. I live at 645
2 Almeria Road; Almeria Avenue; the Almeria Road
3 development, the property owner mentioned.

4 The point that you made just a moment ago, about
5 the role of the architecture; as a citizen/taxpayer,
6 resident of Coral Gables, I would assume that this
7 group didn't just evaluate the quality of the
8 architecture of a particular building, but also paid
9 some attention to the context in which that building
10 might be set, particularly in residential. Okay.

11 We've got a Mediterranean handbook, a Bonus
12 Program, commercial buildings downtown. So obviously
13 Coral Gables is trying to maintain a certain kind of
14 development over time. And I have been glad to see
15 development in this district that I live in.

16 There are projects; there is the extension of
17 the Almeria Road project, there's projects on
18 Anastasia, on Santander, on Valencia; a couple of
19 them that I assume have come up in front of this
20 board. That's the kind of development that will
21 transform in a manner consistent with the context of
22 the Biltmore District and maintain a Coral Gables
23 kind of feel.

24 That, as the lady said, could be in Aventura,
25 Miami Beach. I don't dislike Contemporary

1 architecture; and I could probably, with a little
2 more attention to it, learn to like that a lot; I
3 just don't think it is going to look like we would
4 like to see Coral Gables look, stuck on the corner of
5 Santander and the cross street -- I mean Segovia and
6 the cross street.

7 Everybody's been giving their architecture
8 credits; I'm not an architect, but I was a senior
9 leader at Duke University for decades. I hired Alex
10 Cooper from Cooper Robinson, who is probably a name
11 you know, as my sort of consciousness as we developed
12 that Duke University campus over time.

13 I know what, you know, the sort of consistently
14 looks like. And I know what the constraints are.
15 And as to the appraiser that the lawyer has
16 mentioned, I can just give you anecdote evidence of
17 these consistent projects with the Biltmore Section
18 are doing very well.

19 I bought my house for a million three in 2012, I
20 think. The five new townhouses have now sold between
21 a million seven-fifty and the last one at just under
22 two million dollars. Okay. So design and
23 development consistent with Coral Gables can be
24 economically successful and can avoid having oddities
25 stand out in the streets there.

1 Thanks.

2 MS. PARKS: My name is Arva Parks. I live at
3 1601 South Miami Avenue, and although I don't live in
4 Coral Gables now, I've been intimately involved with
5 Coral Gables for more than 50 years.

6 MR. GONZALEZ: Ms. Parks. I apologize because I
7 know Ms. Parks and I have high respect for her, but
8 just for the record, I would just like to object to
9 her opining on it because she's not a Coral Gables
10 resident; she's not an aggrieved party; and this is
11 supposed to be limited to either Coral Gables
12 residents or aggrieved parties.

13 MR. LEEN: I understand the objection.

14 Mr. Chair, I think you should hear from her;
15 she's a recognized expert in the field.

16 MR. PRATT: And I think you have done multiple
17 resources for Coral Gables.

18 MR. GONZALEZ: I'm just doing it for the record.
19 Since she's not an aggrieved party and she's a non
20 resident; I'm just objecting to the testimony.

21 MR. LEEN: Mr. Chair, I would ask that she may
22 be asked to talk a little about her experience.

23 MS. PARKS: Yes, I would like to speak about
24 that.

25 I trained the first preservation board of Coral

1 Gables and we were instrumental in --

2 THE COURT REPORTER: I can't hear her.

3 MR. LEEN: Excuse me. Ms. Parks. Ms. Parks?

4 She is not able to hear. We need to get your

5 testimony on the record.

6 MS. PARKS: (Inaudible.)

7 MR. LEEN: She's not hearing you. Could you

8 come over here? Could you stand next to her.

9 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

10 MS. PARKS: I have a squeaky voice. Maybe this

11 will be better.

12 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

13 MS. PARKS: One thing that I ... I just can't

14 help but be a historian. But right at moment, I have

15 just completed a 400 page biography of George

16 Merrick, which will be released in this institution

17 in one month. So I have been living intimately with

18 George Merrick for more than ten years.

19 I have traveled all over the United States,

20 checking out planning history, architectural history;

21 I love architecture, and I love Coral Gables.

22 I recently completed a year as interim director

23 of this institution and also served as chairman of

24 the board. So I am kind of up to here with George

25 Merrick and all the good things in Coral Gables.

1 I can't help - because I know the big picture -
2 of seeing this as a defining moment in Coral Gables.
3 And that's why I'm here. And that is why you are so
4 important.

5 When George Merrick started the first
6 architectural board, the first architectural group,
7 had to approve everything. There were people that
8 said that he would never be able to develop anything
9 if they had strict controls. The strict controls
10 have worked. And why do we have Coral Gables today?
11 Because of zoning and because of you, and because of
12 the sense of place that it has.

13 Many of you may not know - I know Dolly was
14 involved in this - there was a plan to tear down the
15 Douglas entrance in 1963, to put a Modern building on
16 the site. A group of architects got together, many
17 of which did not live in Coral Gables, and stopped
18 Food Fair from building a grocery store on the side
19 of the Douglas entrance. That kind of sparked the
20 beginning of an era in Coral Gables.

21 Another contemporary - at the time - building,
22 the Antilla Hotel, which was a beautiful
23 George-Merrick era hotel was torn down and we got the
24 ultramodern Chateau Bleu, which is still up there,
25 not everybody's favorite building, today.

1 I love good architecture. I think Mr. Mateu is
2 one of our better architects in Miami; I love many of
3 his buildings. But I am here today, and this is the
4 wrong building in the wrong place.

5 George Merrick spoke out about harmony; he spoke
6 out about scale; he would get ... he'd look at whole
7 blocks, and he would look for the openings, and the
8 set-- you know, we have very strict setbacks in Coral
9 Gables, and the garages used to be in the back.
10 There were a lot of very thoughtful rooms that
11 were...

12 Segovia was to be a transition between the
13 buildings of the commercial area and the single
14 family homes. Believe it or not, in the 1930s, there
15 was a big effort led by Denman Fink - George Merrick
16 was still alive - to get the City, who was getting
17 away from the Mediterranean style, to do what they
18 called Traditional style. Segovia is ... many of the
19 buildings followed the, quote, Traditional style of
20 that era.

21 I think what speaks best for my point of view
22 and I think the point of view of many people here
23 today, is this (indicating).

24 I've been driving up and down Segovia for 50
25 years. And it is still there: There is a definite

1 sense of place on Segovia. And we're looking at it.
2 Perhaps we should investigate a Modern architectural
3 district, maybe south of Dixie Highway, when there's
4 not this creation. Many of these buildings are built
5 by architects like Robert Lauweig and Robert Fitz
6 Smith who were well known architects of the 30s and
7 40s, Skinners. But the scale is there; the yards are
8 there. And if you're coming from out of town, I
9 don't think you would even know they were duplexes.

10 The efforts that took place, the two large
11 groups -- first of all, we did save the kind of art
12 Deco-ish thing and they added on to it; that was a
13 preservation thing when I was still involved on the
14 Board. But the other two other larger projects
15 worked with the neighborhood, and even though they
16 are bigger, they fit in. And the new townhouses.
17 They fit in. Nothing has changed.

18 So all I think is necessary here is to take this
19 really good piece of architecture, but don't put it
20 in this place. Look at this (indicating); think
21 about what the role of harmony, scale, keeping the
22 feeling that is in the zoning code, the feeling, the
23 neighborhood feeling.

24 This neighborhood has a feeling, right now.
25 Whether you live there or not, when you drive down

1 it, it has a feeling.

2 So thank you very much for your consideration.
3 I'm glad we still have a Board of Architects in Coral
4 Gables, and I'm counting on you to making the right
5 decision. Thank you.

6 MR. PRATT: Thank you.

7 Any other people speaking?

8 MR. GONZALEZ: I would just wrap up the
9 presentation.

10 MR. PRATT: All right.

11 MR. GONZALEZ: I will just touch upon a little
12 bit of what Ms. Parks talked about, which is Mr.
13 George Merrick. I don't know if you are familiar
14 with the interview that Mr. Merrick had with the New
15 York Times back in the heyday --

16 MS. PARKS: Absolutely.

17 MR. GONZALEZ: -- of American development.
18 Well, he wanted to develop the Everglades; he wanted
19 to do Modern concrete structures in the Everglades;
20 he wanted to do Modern architecture of the times here
21 in Coral Gables. But my specific point is that we
22 have a street that is not historically designated.

23 I'm not sure what "feeling" we're discussing
24 when we talk about not interrupting the feeling of
25 Segovia. There's 87 structures there, most of which

1 are unidentifiable. Post World War II structures. A
2 lot of them are duplexes; a lot of them are rentals.

3 No one has said anything that disputes the
4 opinions and the contentions of the professionals,
5 your peers. This is supposed to be a peer review
6 process of the architects that spoke in favor of the
7 project.

8 So when we're talking about not disrupting the
9 feeling of the community, what feeling are we talking
10 about? Rentals? This is going to hurt the property
11 value of rentals? In terms of people who have
12 standing, who have a stake, who have skin in the
13 game, you have heard from property owners who were
14 actually approached to object to the proposal and
15 when they finally took a look at the drawings and
16 learned more and became more educated on the actual
17 facts, as opposed to the misinformation or the work
18 of fiction that was put forth in the public to try to
19 create a little bit of hysteria and make this a
20 popularity contest, when he was actually informed and
21 got educated on the facts, the guy who owns six units
22 is in favor of the project.

23 And again, this isn't a popularity contest but
24 at the end of the day there's going to be opinions.
25 And like Ms. Longo said, it's not personal. So since

1 it's not personal, what I would like for you all to
2 focus on is on the substantive, competent evidence,
3 which is what you are supposed to look at when you
4 have a quasi-judicial process. And there hasn't been
5 one stick of evidence offered that it's inconsistent
6 with the code - which is what was put forth in those
7 written objections, which is fiction - that it's in
8 violation of the code, that it's somehow
9 impermissible.

10 It doesn't say anything like that in the codes.
11 As a matter of fact, the 1951 code - and I quote -
12 Section 12 General Regulations, specifically says in
13 section (a) (2): In the Biltmore Section and the
14 Biltmore Addition, where modernistic type houses are
15 also permitted; and it goes on to discuss further ...
16 that's expressly provided for in the 1951 code. This
17 isn't a 2014 or 2015 amendment to the code.

18 Now, I haven't heard anything about an objection
19 to the Board of Architects Staff Report. There was a
20 staff report that has no objections, that's favorable
21 to the project. No one has set forth any objections
22 to the staff report. No one has said that the
23 Historic Preservation determinations and the letters
24 that were put forth, rejecting Mr. Fabre's proposal
25 to make this corridor a historically significant

1 section of Coral Gables, no one has said the Historic
2 Preservation made the wrong choice. No one has
3 provided appraisals. One of the big arguments in the
4 opposition is, it's going to have an adverse affect
5 on property value.

6 Again, Mr. Mateu talked about opinion versus
7 quality, style versus quality. You know, everybody
8 has an opinion. But the opinions that you are
9 supposed to give greater weight to are the opinions
10 of your peers, of the professionals that spoke today.
11 The only architects that spoke today spoke in favor
12 of the project.

13 Mr. Fabre, I understand he's got an
14 architectural degree in Colombia and he doesn't have
15 an architectural business here, although he has so
16 much as said he provides architectural services. But
17 he's not a professional, a licensed architect to be
18 able to give a professional opinion. But what he did
19 say is that what is contained in his report is wrong.
20 But he made those wrong factual assertions without
21 even being informed. He just wanted to make sure
22 that he issued some report to make sure that people
23 gathered up and showed up today to object to the
24 project.

25 It's too bad that we've been here now six times

1 and it's too bad that my client has not been able to
2 knock down a roof tile, to be able to develop his
3 private property. And he's already into over \$1.5
4 million; hundreds of thousands of that are
5 professional fees, in order to finally get the
6 blessing of the Board to be able to move forward on a
7 project that he is doing as a matter of right.

8 There's no change in density; there's no
9 variance; there's no change in setbacks. He's doing
10 it as a matter of right. And we're down to - he
11 could have five units - he's doing four. And
12 somehow, even though there's been other Modern
13 projects - you can throw a stone and hit Almeria;
14 nobody bothered to show up. And the most vocal
15 opponents, which is a vocal minority opponents, are
16 people that have competing properties, that have
17 properties in the area. And no one has said, I'm a
18 competitor. But you can read between the lines as to
19 who are the most vocal opponents to this particular
20 project; are people that may in 18 months be in
21 competition to sell property that Mr. Perez and Mr.
22 Mas are trying to develop.

23 My clients have impeccable track records with
24 the City; they live in the City and they are looking
25 to invest money and develop properties in the City.

1 The precedent that is going to be set, if this
2 project is denied - even though we are here knowing
3 that the last time we were here it got approved - is
4 that you're going to force developers to go
5 elsewhere, to put their hard-earned dollars into
6 other projects. And they are going to go to
7 Pinecrest, and they are going to go to the Beach, and
8 they are going to go to Doral, and they are going to
9 go to Aventura. That is going to be the precedent
10 that you are going to set by not following mission of
11 the Board of Architects, which is not to redesign,
12 because you don't like the style; it is to improve
13 upon the permitted style.

14 And I think that the City Attorney said it best,
15 when he talked about that the Board's mission was to
16 improve upon, and with respect to aesthetics. The
17 Board's mission is not to pretend that they can sit
18 in the shoes of the architect and strip away his
19 architectural creative freedom and redesign the
20 entire project. We have made some substantive
21 changes to the project in response to - and because
22 we're receptive to - the comments that they received
23 at the five prior hearings.

24 So this isn't a situation where you have some
25 greedy developer - which is another term that has

1 been loosely thrown out there in some of the
2 opposition papers, as to somehow developers are
3 greedy and by definition, you have to reject it.
4 Well, guess what? George Merrick was a "greedy"
5 developer that wouldn't be able to get any of his
6 Modern buildings approved in front of the Board of
7 Architects, if you took the advice of folks who
8 showed up here without any evidence whatsoever.

9 And what the other opinion is, the evidence - if
10 can you call it evidence - that the documents that
11 went forth are full of factual inaccuracies and in
12 certain respects have completely false statements.

13 So what we're here to do is to ask you to let
14 this process continue. Obviously, if there is an
15 issue with Zoning, then the Zoning director is going
16 to deal with that. If there's an issue with a
17 driveway, that is not a question for this Board to
18 resolve; that's a question that comes later in time.

19 So we'd like the Board to do what has already
20 been done the last time we were here on August 6th, I
21 believe, is to go ahead and approve the project so my
22 client can actually exercise his private property
23 rights and build what I think most professionals
24 would agree is a beautiful project on a strip that is
25 full of duplexes and rentals, with the majority of

1 the properties being unidentifiable; they have no
2 architectural style whatsoever.

3 So we respectfully ask that the Board approve
4 the project and bless the prior decision that was
5 done by the prior panel.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. PARKS: While I'm up here, can I say
8 something?

9 MR. PRATT: Well ...

10 MR. LEEN: It is the Chair's discretion.
11 Although he has to be given a chance to rebut.

12 MS. PARKS: It's real quick.

13 MR. PRATT: Very briefly.

14 MS. PARKS: Okay. The difference between the
15 arguments you're making about zoning and property
16 price, the difference between Coral Gables and
17 everyone else, is you. This Board. You have the
18 right to reject. You have the right to accept. You
19 have the right to modify. And that is what has made
20 Coral Gables, in my opinion, from all the research I
21 have done, stay: the good planning, the good zoning;
22 but mostly the architectural board.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. PRATT: All right. Thank you.

25 If that is the conclusion of all the

1 presentations, if we can take just a quick
2 five-minute break.

3 MR. LEEN: Yes.

4 MR. PRATT: And we will resume with our --

5 MR. LEEN: Just so everyone knows, Mr. Chair, so
6 the public hearing is now closed. There will be no
7 more testimony. The Board is going to consider when
8 they come back from their break, and then they will
9 make a decision.

10 MR. PRATT: Okay. Thank you.

11 MR. LEEN: Oh, Yes. The Board should not be
12 discussing it during the break. But they know that.

13 (A brief recess was taken.)

14 MR. PRATT: All right. Ladies and gentlemen, if
15 I could have your attention, we're going to start
16 back up.

17 MR. LEEN: So in the discussion today we have
18 six board members. So because this is a
19 quasi-judicial proceeding, where they are acting as
20 judges, and they are making a decision based on the
21 evidence they heard today, the code indicates that
22 four of them are required to make any decision. And
23 they are going to do a discussion now to reach that
24 decision.

25 The standard that they are going to be applying

1 is they look at the evidence that's been presented to
2 them, and whatever decision they make has to be
3 supported by competent substantial evidence. Which
4 it can certainly be that evidence provided by an
5 expert - and you have heard some experts today - it
6 can also be evidence provided by an individual, a
7 resident, who speaks, but they have to show personal
8 knowledge and that they live nearby and they have to
9 explain how it affects them in a way that is more
10 than just general. But you can consider that as
11 well.

12 It is true, this is not a popularity contest in
13 the sense that there's 200 people who say this and
14 300 people who say this. But the Board is able to
15 consider the sentiment of the community as well,
16 because part of this is context. And that is the
17 purpose for public hearings; otherwise, there would
18 be no need for one: they are allowed to consider your
19 opinions. But ultimately the decision they make is
20 based on their architectural training, their
21 professional judgment and the ... they are allowed to
22 consider the context of the street, it's true, under
23 the zoning code, but it is also true under the zoning
24 code that there is no prohibition on any type of
25 architectural style in Coral Gables.

1 And with that, it's ultimately up to them. It
2 is not really a legal issue; it's a question of
3 judgment for the Board.

4 So I would turn it over to them for their
5 deliberation.

6 MR. PRATT: Thank you. And If I could ask just
7 one question. The fact that this project has had a
8 prior approval, how does that impact - so that the
9 testimony that we have heard would have to influence
10 us as a matter of going back and overturning that
11 acceptance?

12 MR. LEEN: No. Based on the way that the code
13 is structured, the prior decision of the Board has no
14 weight. There was a request for a quasi-judicial
15 hearing; it is a de novo hearing, it's based on the
16 evidence today. You should disregard your prior
17 opinions; you should not refer to the prior ... you
18 don't have to pretend it didn't happen, but you
19 should not be basing your decision on what happened
20 there; you should be basing it on what happens here.

21 MR. PRATT: Okay.

22 MR. LEEN: And you do not have to agree with
23 your prior vote. You can change your vote. That
24 vote should be based on what happens here, and if a
25 commission or a court ever were to look at this, what

1 they are going to determine is whatever decision you
2 make, is it based on evidence in the record today.

3 MR. PRATT: Okay. Thank you.

4 All right. So we'll start with questioning.

5 MR. DE LEON: My question is stated in the first
6 four, I think, of your presentations. I was absent
7 from the presentation in which the project was
8 approved, so this is the first time I get to see the
9 project in its present form.

10 At the previous board presentations I
11 think our conversations - or my conversations with
12 the architect, I had expressed issues with some of
13 the massings, with some of the open and solid void
14 relationships.

15 I did, though, never comment on the suitability
16 of Modern versus any other style architectural
17 relations whatsoever, whether it be Modern or
18 Contemporary as it relates to capitalist projects in
19 very historic areas, and to that end, I will point
20 out Palm Beach. Take two steps up from Worth Avenue;
21 I've walked down streets where you have a main
22 cottage home next to a Colonial home next to a 1950s
23 Modern type of home next to a Spanish Mediterranean
24 next to, you know, another southern style, you know,
25 low country home, for instance.

1 So there are ways to make doable neighborhoods
2 with contrasting styles - sometimes very contrasting
3 - as long as the sensibility is there in massing.

4 My issue with your project has always been not
5 the style but how you were handling some of your
6 massings. And to that I recall one of your versions
7 was a roof line that's contiguous across all your
8 projects. When I look at your project now, you've
9 addressed a lot of my concerns for creating, in
10 relation to skyline, creating something that has more
11 rhythm to it, and it wasn't aesthetic. You may or
12 may not agree with my earlier assessments of your
13 design but I think clearly your project now is a far
14 superior solution to where that first submittal was.

15 The only item that I would still ask you to look
16 at - and in no way would I motion to go against what
17 was approved that I not participated in - I still
18 think that when you look at these neighborhoods, the
19 rhythm of openness, particularly the amount of glass
20 facing the street and the amount of sidewalk -- the
21 amount of glass facing the street, and in this case
22 it would be the two units facing Segovia and the unit
23 facing Catalonia, while you create a very sculptural
24 facade, I think it still is overly weighted toward
25 mass and not void. But I think that's something that

1 you may or may not want to address as you finalize
2 your drawings.

3 But to me personally, I think that you have gone
4 to quite an extreme length to accommodate a lot of
5 the things that you heard from us, and I know it's
6 always hard as an architect to take critique. You
7 know, we always come to this point where we have a
8 project that we feel very confident about and
9 sometimes to hear your peers comment on things that
10 you thought you had totally worked out, you know, is
11 not a pleasant experience.

12 But I think you've listened to, now that we have
13 a new board, you have probably listened to comments
14 from ten different architects on the Board. And from
15 my point, I think I'm pretty content with where you
16 are. And the only comment that I would add would be
17 that solid versus void at the street in relation to
18 what the neighborhood has.

19 MR. PRATT: Any other comments or any questions?

20 MR. DE LEON: I do have one more comment.
21 Especially when I was looking through this Article 1
22 - General Provisions. And I know it pertains to the
23 zoning code, but it talks about the zoning code - I'm
24 just going to paraphrase - being established for
25 specific design, unity and character of the

1 districts, this and that. But the most interesting
2 thing about this is the last line, it talks about -
3 and this I will read, I would just start with the
4 sentence, it says: ... and they are to be regularly
5 reevaluated in order to best accomplish the above
6 objectives.

7 And I'm wondering whether or not this is one of
8 those periods where we have to re-evaluate how we
9 handled things in the past and how we looked at
10 projects in the past; and maybe we are at a time --
11 and it would certainly happen to the Board after
12 approving a lot of Modern/Contemporary projects, more
13 Modern projects, and certainly those are the demands
14 which are to a large extent sensitive, and I know
15 people would see this and they will say this does not
16 fit, but as an architect I think you've done a lot of
17 things to it to make the project fit.

18 And history will prove if we were right or not.
19 But I think the project will be a successful one.

20 MR. PRATT: All right.

21 Judy.

22 MS. CARTY: This is --

23 MR. DE LEON: I'm not an attorney, but at this
24 stage (indiscernible).

25 MS. CARTY: I've seen this now three times. I

1 was not there for the initial board rejection, I was
2 not there for the second one; but I have seen it now
3 three, or maybe this is my fourth. I've lost track.

4 I do think that there were changes that were
5 made, and I am trying to put away - since I rejected
6 it last time - and I am going to base my evaluation
7 this time on what has been presented here.

8 And just for the record, we had, we had none of,
9 any of that stuff have I seen; I haven't seen
10 anything that you put on the desk, I haven't seen
11 anything from anybody, at all. So there was nothing,
12 I mean in my opinion, it was not necessary to, you
13 know, plead against those arguments, because I hadn't
14 seen them. In fact, it is interesting now to see
15 some of this stuff.

16 And my evaluation is exactly what Dona put in
17 this letter - which I haven't seen before - and her
18 emphasis is that it's not the quality of the
19 buildings - and I agree with her, it is not that it
20 is a historic street, but it's the preservation of
21 the appearance of large single-family residences
22 along that street. And I have driven up it - I don't
23 usually take Segovia; I have specifically done it for
24 this project. And in good conscience, I do not think
25 that this project mimics that climate of duplexes as

1 single-family residences. And that is the essence of
2 my issue with it, really.

3 And mind you, I mean, I have enormous respect
4 for you. I didn't understand the qualifications and
5 background, either, of this developer and this
6 architect. I mean, they are exemplary. And that was
7 not necessary for me; those are absolute givens, and
8 I have huge respect for both of them.

9 And I actually, you know, I like this project; I
10 have no issue with Modern architecture. Even in
11 Coral Gables it has its place. And I think it's an
12 important place. And I think good architecture
13 always has an important place. And I'm yet to see
14 something that is not good architecture come out of
15 your office.

16 So ... but I still cannot in good conscience
17 vote for it on this street. I just ... it is not ...
18 and maybe it's because it's three and -- I mean, I am
19 new to this board. And I do have - I struggle with
20 the legislation of aesthetics, right. Which is
21 really what we are here to do. And so I'm not that
22 comfortable in it. And I just do not think this
23 project in this location is right. And ... I guess
24 that's what I have to say.

25 MR. PRATT: Well, would you - I guess just a

1 question - would you have comments or would there be
2 any suggestions that you could make that would make
3 some change or improvement or something that would
4 make ... you'd feel, you know, maybe make it more
5 compatible or ...

6 MS. CARTY: Well --

7 MR. PRATT: I mean, because you're new to the
8 Board, I was just making the suggestion that it's
9 also within our purview to make suggestions if there
10 are things that, you know, it's borderline or that is
11 something that you feel a suggestion could be an
12 improvement. You know, this is the time to voice
13 that suggestion or comment.

14 MS. CARTY: Well, I certainly have a hard time
15 with (inaudible) --

16 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. I can't hear
17 you.

18 MS. CARTY: I have a hard time with the
19 development of single family on Catalonia. And even
20 as the second single-family, the one on the corner
21 turns the corner.

22 And what I struggle with in those elevations is
23 that they do not seem residential to me in. And I
24 know, Nelson, your comment was the solid versus void.
25 To me on those, it was just too much solid. It

1 almost looks as though it's a different zoning. So.

2 MR. PRATT: Okay. What zoning is that?

3 MS. CARTY: It's not residential zoning, is
4 what --

5 MR. PRATT: Okay.

6 All right. Peter.

7 MR. KILIDDJIAN: I do think Segovia has the
8 width and scale to support this type of project. I
9 like what you've done with the alley in the back;
10 kind of tucking the cars away. The buildings are
11 articulated very nicely. This is the first time that
12 I see the project.

13 I do have some of the same comments with the
14 Catalonia house as far as the solid and void on the
15 front facade. I had seen the earlier version where
16 you had the flat roof; I don't know if the gables
17 came as a comment from the Board or not.

18 I generally don't have a problem with the
19 project. I think that street has enough presence to
20 hold the properties.

21 MR. PRATT: Are there any specifics or
22 suggestions that you would make?

23 MR. KILIDDJIAN: Well, on the duplex building, I
24 was wondering why there wasn't an attempt to make
25 it -- because you did it on the houses, where you put

1 a side entry on the houses; and you went to the
2 extent on the duplex building to be asymmetrical and
3 make it look like a large house, but then the entries
4 are next to each to other. So it's just a little
5 contrast. I don't know if you have maybe taken a
6 look at maybe coming in on the side on one of the
7 units so that --

8 MR. MATEU: Can I answer that.

9 MR. PRATT: Yes.

10 MR. MATEU: You bring up a good point. I'm
11 responding to the comments from the Board members in
12 the past where they did not like originally one of
13 the -- their opinion that the original, the duplex
14 you know, down the middle. The doors are on purpose
15 put next to each other to comply with the idea of a
16 single door requirement of the duplexes on Segovia.

17 At lot of the buildings up and down - not all of
18 them - but a lot of them have a front door. And then
19 you enter then through the lobby and then you enter
20 the duplex.

21 So instead of doing that, what we did is put the
22 two doors together so that it appeared to look like a
23 front door. So that's why we did not do them on the
24 edges. And then changed the roof line, and
25 changed -- in fact, by changing the roof line, we

1 also changed the floor plan so that they're not --

2 MR. KILIDDJIAN: But you did go to an extent to
3 make it an asymmetrical structure and then ... no
4 matter how close you put those two doors, it's going
5 to have a duplex feel.

6 MR. MATEU: True.

7 MR. KILIDDJIAN: But for me ... you have done
8 that on the houses, you have put the entries on the
9 sides. And I was wondering why maybe --

10 MR. MATEU: Because there's a requirement.

11 MR. KILIDDJIAN: Oh. Because there's a
12 requirement.

13 MR. MATEU: For the duplex. To look like a
14 single family.

15 MR. PRATT: Luis?

16 MR. JAUREGUI: I'm really excited about this
17 project. I like the idea of the project. I think
18 that the way that you put together the three
19 properties is a great idea. I think that both
20 Catalonia and Segovia can hold a project like this.

21 Looking at it in terms of the broader picture;
22 talking about the style of architecture first, I
23 think the style of architecture is appropriate. I'm
24 very fond of the duplex building, and I feel that the
25 Catalonia corner building, is it, and the one on

1 Segovia, that those need to have a little bit of
2 work; not in terms of bringing it into Traditional
3 architectural idea, but just make it feel more like
4 a, like for example, the side entry concept that he
5 likes (indicating), I don't like. I feel that this
6 one up here (indicating), that main volume with the
7 roof feels more like an entrance or has the memory of
8 once being an entrance, but I'm coming in on the side
9 instead.

10 So that's what bothered me. And I too, I'd like
11 to see something that highlights that entrance as
12 being a little bit more important. And the same deal
13 with the other one, the other one that is on the
14 corner there.

15 I think that you're correct in saying that what
16 ties the fabric of that neighborhood is the
17 landscaping, and the trees that are there and all of
18 that. That creates a rivet that allows us to be
19 expressive of individual architecture, of
20 architecture that is unique and different and that I
21 have a choice to live there or not live there.

22 I have touched on the type of little things that
23 I don't want to get into right now. I do have a
24 question, just for my mind, in terms of comprehensive
25 zoning map for that area. On Segovia, are those all

1 slated as duplex buildings?

2 MS. RUSSO: (Nods head in the affirmative.)

3 MR. JAUREGUI: The entire street; right?

4 MS. RUSSO: (Nods head in the affirmative.)

5 MR. JAUREGUI: Okay. On both sides?

6 MS. RUSSO: (Nods head in the affirmative.)

7 MR. PRATT: What did you say?

8 MR. JAUREGUI: On both sides.

9 So to me, the picture of the street is something
10 that is there, it feels a little bit old but is going
11 to basically change. And the way it is going to
12 change is to create a little bit of a more dense
13 environment, like what is being presented here, so
14 that we can get away from our cars and walk into
15 downtown. And I don't think that that's a bad thing.

16 So I see this as an evolving neighborhood. I
17 see this as a prime area to be able to develop this
18 type of architecture. Or somebody else's type of
19 architecture, whatever it would be.

20 And I think that the scale of the roof lines
21 work well with the two-story scale that we have going
22 on in that street. I think that what happens - and I
23 think it's a pleasant change - is that your
24 expression is vertical and all the other expressions
25 are horizontal. So I think that that idea is a good

1 idea and it's going to work.

2 So basically, the corner lot, the one facing the
3 street, I would work a little bit more on that
4 elevation to get rid some of the massing --

5 MR. DE LEON: Excuse me one second. This
6 (indicating) is Catalonia.

7 MR. MATEU: Let me get the right one.

8 MR. JAUREGUI: If you put up the, like the one
9 you have there (indicating).

10 MR. MATEU: (Complies.)

11 MR. JAUREGUI: So I feel that this facade here
12 (indicating), and this facade here (indicating).

13 MR. MATEU: That is this (indicating).

14 MR. JAUREGUI: This one here. Yeah. And this
15 facade here, that the massing there needs to be more
16 like, like a front. This is definitely a front for
17 me. This has more - from the side street, but
18 unfortunately that street has the side street feel.
19 So I'm thinking that you could elaborate that a
20 little bit more, maybe make more windows.

21 Now, this is the first time that I ever see this
22 project. Did you originally have pitched roofs in
23 that project?

24 MR. MATEU: No.

25 MR. JAUREGUI: I feel they're a little awkward.

1 I don't see them; I think it's an intention that
2 doesn't work.

3 MR. GONZALEZ: You should have been on the
4 earlier board.

5 MR. JAUREGUI: Huh?

6 MR. GONZALEZ: You should have been on the
7 earlier board.

8 (Multiple individuals speaking simultaneously.)

9 MS. RUSSO: Please speak one at a time because
10 we have a court reporter.

11 MR. LEEN: Yes, please. One at a time.

12 MR. DE LEON: I would like to say being on the
13 earlier boards, I don't think there was any directive
14 ever to pitch roofs --

15 MR. MATEU: No. Never.

16 MR. DE LEON: You could have gone all flat; it
17 was up to you to decide how to create the skyline.

18 And by the way, my first impression was, which
19 would probably have been better, flat, having seen
20 all the different elevations that you presented; I
21 actually think some of the model pictures you
22 produced are interesting and would work well in the
23 project.

24 MR. MATEU: Well. I thank you. And thanks for
25 your comments.

1 I think that - and we always think that the
2 first ideas are the best - but having been involved
3 in projects in Coral Gables for quite a long time,
4 and I would also add that I don't do a whole bunch of
5 them; and probably to the relief of many that are
6 here. I've been working in the Gables for a lot of
7 years.

8 But we listened, and we responded, and these
9 sloping roofs were responses to the commentaries and
10 suggestions of the Board. I sometimes don't agree
11 with comments, but we, as you know, in another
12 project earlier you asked me to look at another
13 solution a while back, and we ... I did that and I
14 showed you and I said, you see how ridiculous this
15 looks. And I think you agreed that it was stark.

16 But the sloping roof --

17 MR. DE LEON: We conceded that.

18 MR. MATEU: But the idea of the options are not
19 anything that we, you know, that we will be so set in
20 our ways. We understand and we can make a few
21 variety of things, within the context of how we
22 design and the vocabulary of what we are trying to
23 achieve.

24 I would not disagree with you that there are
25 some of the sloping roofs that look somewhat forced,

1 and in my view in particular, especially when they
2 are in the back of the house where they are in places
3 where they are not facing the street, et cetera, that
4 I, as suggested by the board, will look at them
5 again. But, you know, we have done them in the
6 response to the breaking up of the massing, et
7 cetera, as part of this.

8 MR. PRATT: No, I think it also is a -- oh.
9 Sorry.

10 MR. JAUREGUI: So, another thing that I'm
11 curious about is I've looked at the differentiation
12 of the ornamental elements of your design in terms of
13 change in color. You have white and you have a
14 taupey color and then you have some natural stone.
15 And I've been wondering for this type of development
16 and for the street and what these things are probably
17 going to sell for if you could possibly consider
18 using some other type of material to get that
19 differentiation that will make it less stucco, less
20 ... less harsh; bring in this piece here that's a
21 different color, let's say; it could be a stone, it
22 could be a treatment of some sort. I don't know if
23 you have that in your budget.

24 MR. MATEU: I'm always interesting in spending
25 my clients' money.

1 MR. JAUREGUI: We're all interested in doing
2 that; right.

3 MR. MATEU: No, we have not a problem with that.
4 Again, in the general vocabulary that I work in, my
5 architectural philosophy is about simplicity. Now
6 simplicity can be achieved in stucco, it can be
7 achieved with some other material, et cetera. My
8 design approach is explicitly in the imagery of it,
9 so whether it's stucco or some other materials. I
10 don't believe in over articulating things just for
11 the sake of it when we make a move like we have done
12 in these things; they have to be functional first, it
13 has to have reason, for one, not just --

14 MR. JAUREGUI: But you did that when you changed
15 the color.

16 MR. MATEU: Okay. The color is something that I
17 think is a movable thing. White is always, as I
18 mentioned in my first little speech, is reflective of
19 tropical bright color in South Florida, along with
20 all kinds of others that the early Merrick architects
21 used for their vocabulary of what they thought
22 tropical was. So I think all of that is a boarder
23 discussion and we can certainly look at other
24 options.

25 MR. JAUREGUI: I would take a look at that,

1 because I think that putting different materials upon
2 there would be a way of making those homes more
3 recognizable in terms of their residential character.
4 I have no objection to it being Modern, but the
5 memory you bring from typical residential to where
6 you're bringing residential, where there is a missing
7 link or there's something that needs to be put in
8 there. I'm not telling you how to do it or what to
9 do.

10 MR. MATEU: I understand.

11 MR. JAUREGUI: But something that would
12 recognize as part of the residential characteristics
13 of homes.

14 That's it for now.

15 MR. PRATT: All right. Callum, do you want
16 to...

17 MR. GIBB: Yes. I guess my view on the project
18 is probably most eloquently put by Arva. That's
19 where I am. I listened to the presentations from
20 Richard and Ralph, and George's text; and these guys,
21 I love their buildings; and I respectfully disagree
22 that this building fits on this street.

23 And, you know, I'm an architect who was educated
24 in a Modern architecture school, I don't know where
25 you guys went, but I went to FIU. I'm probably one

1 of the few people who went to FIU and became an
2 architect. And, my first job was at the same firm
3 that Roney used to work for.

4 So this is not something that I'm not
5 understanding of, or even appreciative of. But I
6 used to live on Segovia, I've lived around the
7 corner. And although I agree it's not something on
8 an old Mediterranean street, it's actually one of the
9 few streets that has classically-inspired buildings
10 on them.

11 There's a Greek Revival house, a great front
12 door; big fluted doric columns that, you know, I wish
13 there were more of, but there's one. So I like the
14 architecture of that street; I think the people who
15 live there probably really like their buildings, when
16 they've described them, so. And when Nelson made his
17 comment before about another project where, you
18 know... when you thumb down the neighborhood to make
19 yours fit, you know, I think that's not necessarily
20 what you want to do.

21 So to me, it's a street that has actually
22 buildings that I really like. This is not compatible
23 with those. I do feel that in your presentations,
24 you had mentioned new urbanism as being a derogative
25 thing, and how we like to draw these pretty little

1 buildings to make people like the projects. The
2 reality is people like those buildings, just as
3 people like this one. I don't think you have to be
4 insulting to one -- not insulting, I'm sorry, that's
5 too harsh -- but to separate yourself from those to
6 make a point.

7 You are a Modern architect. And you do Modern
8 buildings. And, you know, you make a proposal; your
9 client knew what you were when he hired you - and
10 good for you. I mean, who else is hiring - I mean, I
11 don't know what Roney thinks, but it's a step of
12 commitment to architecture, it's all architects love,
13 right.

14 But for me it's, that place holds, to me a lot
15 of, you know, particular knowledge, I guess would be
16 the word. And I joined this board to do the things
17 that are highlighted in the packet. I'm sorry. I'm
18 a classically professional architect, a classical
19 professional architect. I've worked in classical
20 offices. That's what I do.

21 So for me, yes, I want to agree with those -
22 which are part of the zoning code, Article 5 I think
23 is part of the zoning code.

24 MR. LEEN: Part of it is part of the zoning
25 code.

1 MR. GIBB: Right. So when people say it doesn't
2 comply, it doesn't mean that the setbacks are wrong
3 or the driveway is in the wrong place. You just ...
4 it's the same doctrine. And when the zoning code
5 actually says, this is what the Board of Architects
6 should consider when doing projects, that's part of
7 where you have to fall. You know, some fall on the
8 edge of what neighborhoods can or can't readily
9 accept Modern buildings, I think we generally apply
10 that to - or, certainly I do - to the more commercial
11 or the more exclusive; you know, places like Coco
12 Plum or Gables by the Sea I think where as a Board
13 we've probably approved more projects in those areas
14 because we feel that that's not in the center heart
15 of the working community, should we say.

16 So for me, I'm talking to the Board, not for
17 myself - that's my justification that I feel I have
18 to make because I was somehow, you know, vilified.
19 But my justification, my experience brings me to that
20 point, just as everyone else's individual experiences
21 brings them to theirs.

22 So as far as, Roney, I think Luis and Peter,
23 exactly right; but for me just as - you certainly
24 don't need my advice - the duplex building with the
25 slope portion on the side probably looks better with

1 a flat roof would be my ... I'm sure you feel that
2 too.

3 But as far as in general, the project, it's more
4 about the effect it has on the feeling of the street.
5 And that's why that's my position.

6 MR. PRATT: Is that it?

7 MR. GIBB: That's it.

8 MR. PRATT: Well, first of all, I would like to
9 say the diversity of the opinions expressed by each
10 of the members is I think what also makes the Board
11 really a strong ... or why the board is so
12 successful. I think it's the diversity of all those
13 opinions, is what really gives the most benefit to
14 any reviews that we do. I, you know, I think that's
15 where the strength in the Board lies. If we were all
16 the same, why have a board, you know, just go to one
17 person.

18 So I actually applaud the fact that there is,
19 you know, a challenge. And when you say that you
20 speak not only to the applicant but to the Board, I
21 appreciate that. Because I think it's difficult to,
22 oftentimes, to tell the truth or to be, you know,
23 honest. But I think that that's a very important
24 thing.

25 If you are finished, the only comments I had -

1 or I have several - you know, actually, this is the
2 first that I've seen the project. And I am actually
3 very positive on it. I like the fact that the scale
4 and the roof lines I think actually - because I drive
5 Segovia twice a day, actually; sometimes more, on my
6 way to the office from home. And so I think that --
7 I am very familiar with Segovia and, you know, the
8 sense of scale, and I think that the project really
9 fits well within the context of that broad Boulevard,
10 especially now it's been lined with trees and the
11 landscaping.

12 One of the things about the landscaping, I was
13 going to ask you, is that the landscaping that you
14 show as buffers between the single family home and
15 the ... or between ... on the east side of the drive,
16 is that just out of, I mean sometimes when I do
17 renderings, I pick palm trees or laurels just because
18 it allows you to see the building much easier and
19 still have a sense of landscaping. Is there actually
20 a landscaping plan that you have or does that
21 represent the true landscaping you've selected?

22 MR. MATEU: Well, only that we will have a
23 landscaping plan --

24 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, sir --

25 MR. MATEU: On the east side of Catalonia?

1 MR. PRATT: No. What I'm talking about is on
2 the east side of the drive, the drive that ... you
3 know.

4 MR. MATEU: That one.

5 MR. PRATT: Yes, this. I mean, you show it with
6 a line of palms. And I know that just when I render
7 buildings, you know, I oftentimes, like I said,
8 choose a landscaping material that allows the viewer
9 to see the building better rather than the actual
10 landscaping.

11 MR. MATEU: Well, in this case we intended the
12 landscaping to be this way, because the driveway is
13 more of a communal space for all of the houses, so
14 rather than maybe have a heavier buffer for the
15 house, let's say. And we could consider -

16 MR. PRATT: I guess just as a general comment.
17 You know, I see it as actually as an enhancement and
18 a continuation. I think that other members had
19 expressed it, that one of the really nice things
20 about the context of the neighborhood is the
21 established tree canopy and the green nature of the
22 streets, that you really have this, you know, really
23 nice tree cover and --

24 MR. MATEU: Right.

25 MR. PRATT: -- canopy going. So it might be

1 nice to actually pull that into the site than to have
2 something more substantial in terms of actually a
3 canopy tree rather than a palm tree, as a more
4 decorative thing.

5 MR. MATEU: We can certainly look at that.

6 MR. PRATT: I also agree with the other members
7 on I think the sense of the scales; I like the
8 breaking down, massing, and I appreciate, like Luis
9 ... I think the hip grooves that you, or the little
10 gables that you have and the amount of pitches I
11 think kind of speak to the neighbors, and have a
12 sense of, you know, they're establishing a dialogue
13 that you're not introducing a totally Modern building
14 with a flat roof. You know, you have these pitched
15 elements. And it is something that, you know, is
16 kind of a very neighborly gesture toward the same
17 type of context or the same type of, you know, of
18 roof nature, that there is something happening there.

19 And I think it's very successful, actually; I
20 think that ... I like the pitched roof.

21 I also agree with what Nelson was saying. I
22 think if you take and study some of the massing
23 effect, especially on the Catalonia side; I do think
24 that, you know, it is pretty heavy, the sculptural
25 element, that you could find some way of, either like

1 Luis is suggesting, maybe it's with materials, maybe
2 it's just with additional openings. But I think that
3 that could open up just a little bit more and could
4 be ... a little more coarse, it feels quite heavy
5 right now, at least to me it does.

6 The other thing that I was going to ask you is
7 that curved fence at the corner, I was going to
8 suggest that maybe you have some thought given to
9 that, at least with the materials that you're
10 proposing to use. You show the large pieces of
11 keystone or of, you know, of a stone material. And
12 especially on the pieces that you are talking about,
13 when you start trying to do a curve, it's going to be
14 more like a, you're going to wind up with all these
15 edges that are exposed. And so either, you know,
16 what would be really nice if you truly had curved
17 pieces of keystone - which is very expensive, but I
18 think ... you know, like the 550 Building, those are
19 actually true curved stone, solid stone pieces.

20 MR. KILIDDJIAN: Is that from maybe a more
21 Modern application? You have a Traditional
22 application of the --

23 MR. PRATT: Yes, or something. But my point is
24 that I'm a little worried about your choice of
25 materials in that, because the actual application

1 isn't going to come out as --

2 MR. MATEU: Right. The size of the pattern --

3 MR. PRATT: Maybe it becomes more like some type
4 of an accident or something. But you just have
5 stucco there, something. But I'm concerned about the
6 use of large pieces of stone and the facet nature of
7 making a curve.

8 MR. DE LEON: The softer solution would be just
9 to set that wall back further, put a little strip of
10 green in front of it to soften it.

11 MR. PRATT: Exactly.

12 MR. DE LEON: And then just do the wall stucco.

13 MR. PRATT: And so I think that actually in
14 terms of scale and massing, I think it fits well with
15 the backdrop or the background of the buildings -- or
16 of the street. And you know, there is, in Coral
17 Gables there is a lot of background buildings, you
18 know, and I think that for me with the majority of --
19 I mean, it's a nice street, it's a wonderful, you
20 know, green corridor of trees. But it's really
21 populated by a bunch of really very nondescript
22 boulders, background boulders. And they are not bad;
23 they make up, you know, a character of some ... but
24 it is not really something that ... you know, like
25 the pink building that is adjacent to it, it's not

1 something that I would ... I would prefer to see your
2 project coming in and more of that than more of that
3 pink building. It's not exactly anything that is ...
4 other than a background building.

5 And so I think that the one nice thing about
6 when you start getting into nice urban settings, that
7 there are buildings that catch your attention, there
8 are things that visually excite you and that, you can
9 go down the street and you may be going by a bunch of
10 stuff that doesn't do anything at all and suddenly
11 you see this, you know, really something nice. And I
12 think to that extent, you know, I'm happy that there
13 is something that will, you know, hopefully be an
14 exciting building on a street that is pretty
15 nondescript.

16 Which goes to the last point, that actually
17 Nelson brought up, and I want to, it is something
18 that ... I'm sorry?

19 MR. DE LEON: It's nothing. Somebody is talking
20 on a phone.

21 MR. PRATT: Oh. It's a more major point
22 actually that we as a board really need to be ... and
23 it goes to the workshop, actually, Carlos, that I've
24 asked you to maybe put together.

25 I think we are at a turning point, I think that

1 this is a pivotal point that other members or other,
2 you know, people from the public sector expressed. I
3 think that we ... it is a very difficult line that
4 the Board has to define between, you know, what's new
5 and acceptable and how that integrates and fits into
6 the neighborhoods and into the context and character
7 of the established Coral Gables.

8 It's easier for us, like the lady said, to
9 accept the newer buildings and modern buildings in
10 ... you know, Gables by the Sea and those areas. But
11 I think as older buildings begin to reach their life
12 expectancy and, you know, historic stuff definitely
13 should be preserved. Coral Gables has some historic
14 value either in design or in character or for
15 whatever reason it is designated as historic, that is
16 something that should be saved. But just because
17 something is old doesn't necessarily mean that the
18 rest of the neighborhood should continue in that kind
19 of a fashion.

20 MR. GIBB: But I don't think it is. We are not
21 arguing that the building there shouldn't be taken
22 down. Right?

23 MR. PRATT: No, no, I'm not saying that. I'm
24 just saying that --

25 MR. GIBB: You're right; it does talk to a

1 broader choice. And my --

2 MR. PRATT: What I'm saying is that there should
3 be a broader choice. Yes.

4 MR. GIBB: You're saying that if we are going
5 to, you know, 40 years or whatever the requirements
6 are for, even Jaime was saying, that these projects,
7 these buildings are sort of, they're coming to their
8 termination. The facilities they provide for, you
9 know, which they were built as rental properties in
10 every great sense of the word - and you want rental
11 properties too - but they do, they have small
12 kitchens, they don't work very well, all those are,
13 you know, our expectations, our lifestyle today, is
14 harder to do that in those existing buildings.

15 But then the question is well, what replaces
16 them? If you take, you know, sorry, if you take one
17 end of the island you've got ... well then you need
18 to replace it with ... you are going to demand of the
19 new building the same aesthetic what was done
20 originally; you know, that's one option. This is an
21 opportunity to broaden the aesthetics. Aesthetics is
22 not ... this is a stylistic discussion and that is
23 fine. But that, you know, I think your position is
24 that broadening the aesthetic is an opportunity to
25 take. You know, you could say --

1 MR. PRATT: I think that --

2 MR. GIBB: -- that opportunity that you take.
3 You know, we have an option here to approve a modern
4 building, and let's take that opportunity. You
5 know --

6 MR. PRATT: No, I think it's more of a, of an
7 acceptance of a broadening of style.

8 MR. GIBB: Exactly. When Merrick laid it out --

9 MS. CARTY: I think it has nothing to do with
10 the style; that's my whole thing. It has to do with
11 solid and void on a street that was intended to be
12 single ... duplexes designed as single-family
13 residences.

14 That is what that street is about. That's all
15 it's about. It has going to do with Modern or
16 historic or some, you know, I don't want to insult
17 anybody's building, but, you know. But you know what
18 I mean; it is not about the quality of the individual
19 element. It is just about what that street is about.

20 And this is not about that. And it could be
21 Modern; it could be Classical, it could be
22 Mediterranean; it is just about that scale on that
23 street, solid-void. That's it. In my opinion.

24 MR. PRATT: Well. No. And I respect that
25 opinion too.

1 MS. CARTY: And I'm a loyalist --

2 MR. PRATT: -- and I understand--

3 THE COURT REPORTER: Excuse me --

4 MR. PRATT: I think there's a certain falseness
5 to making duplexes feel like a big house.

6 MS. CARTY: Of course there's a falseness about
7 it. I mean there's a falseness about doing a
8 Mediterranean house today, right? I mean, there's a
9 falseness.

10 MR. PRATT: It depends on the style that you use
11 and how you want to do it.

12 (Multiple board members speaking
13 simultaneously.)

14 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. You're all
15 speaking at the same time, and I'm not writing.

16 MS. CARTY: Sorry. Okay. That's fine.

17 MR. PRATT: Anyway. Just to finalize it, I do
18 think that it is something that, along with the
19 diversity of the Board and the opinions --

20 MR. GIBB: Absolutely.

21 MR. PRATT: -- that I think it will be a good
22 discussion for --

23 MR. GIBB: Where the board would be --

24 THE COURT REPORTER: (Indicating.)

25 MR. LEEN: Guys. You can't talk at the same

1 time, respectfully.

2 MR. GIBB: I agree with that.

3 MR. PRATT: And so with that, I guess in
4 conclusion, it's a great project. I would ask I
5 guess at this point, are there any other comments or
6 any other board members that have any other
7 additional questions? Or if there's no additional
8 questions, is there a motion?

9 MR. DE LEON: Yes. I will make a motion to
10 approve, with at least one comment I think we heard
11 from maybe four or five of us, which has to do with
12 (indiscernible) --

13 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry. I'm straining
14 to hear you.

15 MR. LEEN: It is important that we get all this.
16 So can you say that again.

17 MR. DE LEON: You want me to start from the
18 beginning?

19 MR. LEEN: Yes.

20 MR. DE LEON: Read me where you were last at.
21 No, I'm sorry.

22 MR. LEEN: Just do it again.

23 MR. DE LEON: I motion to approve the project,
24 with the following comment, which is to study the
25 front facades of the three buildings, add either more

1 porosity to the windows or do something to those
2 three elevations.

3 I also think we should honor the previous
4 approval, which we historically have done as long as
5 the project has come back in the same form without
6 substantial changes. In the six years I've been
7 here, I have seen a number of projects that were
8 previously approved by other members; I may not have
9 agreed with everything they agreed but I honored
10 their approval, because we all have previously
11 honored each other's.

12 My motion is for approval.

13 MS. CARTY: But that's a dangerous precedent,
14 because it was rejected.

15 MR. DE LEON: Well, that is still --

16 MR. PRATT: But that's --

17 MR. LEEN: Mr. Chair --

18 MR. PRATT: We have a motion on the --

19 MR. LEEN: Mr. Chair?

20 MR. PRATT: Yes?

21 MR. LEEN: That is not a part of the motion,
22 though. Because remember, you are not supposed to
23 base your decision on the last hearing.

24 MR. LEEN: I understand what you are saying, but
25 this --

1 MR. PRATT: He was just expressing an opinion;
2 that was not part of the motion.

3 MR. DE LEON: That was a comment --

4 MR. LEEN: I understand.

5 MR. PRATT: All right. So your motion is to
6 approve this.

7 MR. DE LEON: Correct.

8 MR. LEEN: And who would have the authority to
9 look at those comments? Would it be the city
10 architect? Would it come back to you? Because I
11 really don't suggest that it come back to a
12 quasi-judicial hearing.

13 MR. PRATT: No, no. An approval with comments
14 is, it goes forward.

15 MR. LEEN: It goes forward. Okay.

16 MR. PRATT: Yes.

17 All right. We have a motion to approve with
18 comments. Do we have a second?

19 MR. KILIDDJIAN: Second.

20 MR. PRATT: All right. We have a second. So
21 Callum?

22 MR. GIBB: No.

23 MR. PRATT: Peter.

24 MR. KILIDDJIAN: Yes.

25 MR. PRATT: Luis.

1 MR. JAUREGUI: Yes.

2 MR. PRATT: Judy.

3 MS. CARTY: (Shakes head in the negative.)

4 MR. PRATT: Nelson.

5 MR. DE LEON: Yes.

6 MR. PRATT: Yes.

7 All right. So it's approved; it's four to two.

8 (Discussion off the record.)

9 (Thereupon, the proceedings were concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

STATE OF FLORIDA :

SS:

COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE :

I, JACKQULYN GIPSON HOLLAND, Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Florida at Large, do hereby certify that that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

DATED this 20th day of October 2015.

JACKQULYN G. HOLLAND
Registered Professional Reporter.