

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item I-2
August 25, 2015
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

**Mayor Jim Cason
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada
Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick**

City Staff

**City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Deputy City Attorney, Miriam Ramos**

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item I-2 [4:46:06 p.m.]

Update regarding compliance with City regulations on placement of mailboxes by the U.S. Postal Service.

Mayor Cason: I-2 – mailboxes.

City Attorney Leen: I-2: Update regarding compliance with City regulations on placement of mailboxes by the U.S. Postal Service. I'm going to turn it over to the Deputy City Attorney to talk about a little bit with this, but this is another instance where the City is raising its Zoning Code and making sure that as a matter of committee, as a matter of respect from different governments that our Zoning Code be respected. So with that I'll turn it over to Ms. Ramos.

Ms. Ramos: Hi again. So our office conducted some research on whether mailboxes in a townhouse complex can be placed in a self pre-standing structure with multiple mailboxes, rather than on each door. Our Code is silent, our Zoning Code, I should specify is silent as to mailboxes in particular. But what we did find was that the accessory use structure section of our Zoning Code would be applicable to mailboxes in the way that they are being contemplated here. So a freestanding structure with multiple mailboxes. 5-101(b) of our Zoning Code prohibits accessory buildings and structures between the street and the main building, and subsection (c) also prohibits accessory buildings from being located closer to the front or side of the lot or building site. Therefore, our conclusion is that to have a self-standing structure with multiple mailboxes in a townhouse complex would be in violation of our Zoning Code.

City Attorney Leen: And to provide some further context. The request came to us really from the U.S. Postal Service. What they are saying is that they want for townhomes, townhouses this centralized mailbox unit that's in between the townhouses and the street with a lot of different mailboxes. Instead of having a mailbox for each unit, which is what our practice is and what our Zoning Code requires, and we've responded that our Zoning Code doesn't allow that. They've asked for an opinion and I'll turn it back over to Ms. Ramos, but the one thing I would ask is, its one thing for the City Attorney to say that and under the Code I believe that we should follow that, but its another thing for the Commission to say. So I'd ask that you also, assuming you like the opinion, that you adopt it.

Ms. Ramos: And the opinion has been drafted and I believe circulated to all of you. It is our conclusion that the mailboxes need to be placed at each door to comply with our Zoning Code, and also you should know that there was a similar Code provision at Pompano Beach and it was upheld by...

Mayor Cason: They are not going to respond by saying, well we are not going to deliver the mail there, we don't think they are going to do that.

Ms. Ramos: I don't think that they can do that.

City Attorney Leen: I don't think they can do that, although obviously we'll have to look at that if that comes up, but right now we just want to show them – what they asked for was just a memo explaining why our law requires this, we think that they will respond positively. We are not positive, but it would be helpful that the Commission say that, that's the way that we view our law.

Mayor Cason: Do we have a motion to do that?

Commissioner Lago: I'll make the motion.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Lago.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Second.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Quesada. City Clerk.

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 4-0)

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Slesnick: Speaking of mailboxes there are a lot of really faded U.S. Postal mailboxes around town, especially by Alhambra and Granada, Granada and North Greenway. Can we get those painted or suggest to the Post Office that they paint their mailboxes.

Ms. Ramos: Might be a Code Enforcement violation, I'll check with Will....

Commissioner Slesnick: A very, very, light blue.

Mayor Cason: Not only that but the Post Office downtown as well. Sometimes you see grass, trees growing out of the sidewalk. They don't always keep it up, so we should take a look at that.

Ms. Ramos: I'm sorry Commissioner, are you referring to the actual mailbox.

Commissioner Slesnick: I'm talking the actual big blue mailboxes.

Ms. Ramos: OK. Then we'll contact the U.S. Postal Service.

Commissioner Slesnick: And they are all over town.

Ms. Ramos: Absolutely.

Commissioner Slesnick: But everyone's basically faded.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, as part of the, and Commission, as part of the resolution I'm not just going to put, this is our law, I'm also going to put in some "whereas" clauses just asking the U.S. Postal Service to please work with us and accept this because I think that they'll probably respond to that better, if that's OK with the Commission.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

[End: 4:50:20 p.m.]