

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item F-7**  
**March 27, 2018**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli**  
**Vice Mayor Pat Keon**  
**Commissioner Vince Lago**  
**Commissioner Frank Quesada**  
**Commissioner Michael Mena**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark**  
**Assistant City Manager, Peter Iglesias**  
**City Attorney, Miriam Ramos**  
**City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman**  
**Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia**  
**Assistant Development Services Director, Charles Wu**  
**Finance Director, Diana Gomez**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Henry Iler**  
**Craig Coller**  
**John Sumberg**  
**Anthony De Yurre**  
**Constance Ryan**  
**Austin Jones**  
**Duane Schultz**  
**William Jones**  
**Jo Sumberg**  
**Ray Burkemper**  
**Peggy Brodeur**  
**Daniel Sachar**  
**Bernadine McAulay**

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Agenda Item F-7 - Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables approving the submission of an application to Miami-Dade County for the annexation of the area known as High Pines/Ponce-Davis into the City of Coral Gables pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Miami-Dade County Code and requesting that Miami-Dade County approve the application.

**Lynn Wheeler**  
**Charles Munroe**  
**M. Victoria Cummock**  
**Gary Timin**  
**Jorge Diaz-Silveira**  
**Elise Brodeur Teague**  
**David Denham**  
**Catherine Koch Espinosa**  
**Larra Call Waldmann**  
**Ryce Stallings**  
**Patrick Burns**  
**Rafael Garcia**  
**Laura Bon Simon**

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Agenda Item F-7 [0:00:00 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables approving the submission of an application to Miami-Dade County for the annexation of the area known as High Pines/Ponce-Davis into the City of Coral Gables pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Miami-Dade County Code and requesting that Miami-Dade County approve the application.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Mr. Mayor, if I may, this is a tremendous turn out. We're very excited. We want to remind people that we use speaker cards in Coral Gables, so if you want to speak and you don't have a speaker card, we'd encourage you to fill it out. And then, from staff, if you don't have anything related to annexation, I'm going to ask you to remove yourself from the room so you can watch from the monitor so we open up additional seats so people don't have to stand.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright, the next item is time certain, 10 o'clock, F-1. And this is a -- agenda Item F-7.

City Attorney Ramos: F-7 is a resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables approving...

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Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Please. Go ahead.

City Attorney Ramos: Approving the submission of an application to Miami-Dade County for the annexation of the area known as High Pines/Ponce-Davis into the City of Coral Gables pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Miami-Dade County Code and requesting that Miami-Dade County approve the application. This is a public hearing item.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. Who makes the presentation?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I'm going to ask Charles Knight...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Charles Wu, who is helping us with the annexation while Naomi is on maternity leave, to open the item, and then we also have our consultants that have been assisting him.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Thank you, Mayor. For the record, Charles...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Wait a second. Remember, I want to reiterate what our City Manager just said. If you want to speak, fill out a speaker card and you will be recognized. Thank you. Sorry.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: And the speaker cards are outside on the table, so please fill that out before you approach.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. For the record, Charles Wu, Assistant Development Services Director for Code Enforcement Administration. I'm here standing in for Ms. Levi. Hopefully, she'll be back soon for this project. We have some minor updates for you. Since your last presentation on this item, we have since sent out the nonresponders, particularly...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you please be silent? I mean, we can't hear and everybody deserves an opportunity to be heard. Go ahead, I'm sorry.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Since you last spoke about this, you directed staff to go back into the neighborhood to see if we can garner more support from registered voters on this item. We have since done that.

Unidentified Speaker: Louder.

Unidentified Speaker: We can't hear you.

Unidentified Speaker: We can't hear.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Okay, thank you. I will.

Unidentified Speaker: Move closer.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Since the last meeting the Commission heard this, we've done a couple things. One is we resent petition notices to registered voters in the area, and we've gotten increased petitions of yes votes, increasing to up to 60 percent from the last presentation of 50 percent. We have also start completing...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You have to get closer to the microphone, please.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: And we start initiating the annexation application should you approve the resolution today. And we also encouraged residents to show up to today's meeting for public comment. Two things of note. We sent out about 2,000 mailers to property owners for this meeting, as required by Code. However, the decision for the annexation rests on the registered voters of the area, so I just want to clarify that. Mr. Henry Iler is our consultant/planner on this item, and our consultant legal counsel is Craig Hollo, if you have any legal questions. And I want to recognize some of the residents who expressed interest in this. They are also here in the audience as well.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: We can pull up the presentation, the PowerPoint presentation for this item on annexation.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, while that's being pulled up, we just wanted to remind the Commission that the County, from time to time, has said that they do not want to crossover other governments in order to provide municipal services. So, the idea of what's called an enclave, where it is surrounded by other cities and the internal area is unincorporated Dade County, and so you'll know that we've had these discussions related to Little Gables to the north. We are in that process today, having formally applied. And this is the time that we're coming to you related to the High Pines/Ponce-Davis area to say, yes, this meets the definition of an enclave; yes, we have had some meetings with the residents, and yes, we would like to review with you an application to move forward requesting that the County Commission consider annexation for this area, and that a vote of the registered voters in the High Pines/Ponce-Davis area take place. And so, with that, we'll call on our consultant and then, Charles, if you can stand by in case there's other questions that your office can answer.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, sir. Go ahead. Good morning.

Henry Iler: Thank you. My name's Henry Iler. I'm president and principal of Iler Planning, joined today, of course, by Craig Collier, our legal advisor on these issues. And I have a short presentation. And also, I believe Ramon Trias will also be making a presentation right after me on land use and zoning items. We are here...

City Attorney Ramos: Henry, can you get closer?

Mr. Iler: Huh?

City Attorney Ramos: Thanks. Can you get closer?

Vice Mayor Keon: Speak into the mike.

Mr. Iler: Okay. I normally have not been anywhere accused of being soft, so hopefully, it'll carry. This is -- we're looking today at the High Pines/Ponce-Davis area. And the area is bounded by, of course, Sunset Drive on the north, approximately Irwin Road on the east -- a little bit different over there -- Red Road on the west, and Kendall Drive on the south. You've probably seen some of this before, but it's 675 acres in size, a little bit more than a section of land, about 3,000 population, and registered voters are 2,382. The homeowner occupied ratio is fairly high here, 78 percent. Household income is right around \$160,000. And 95 percent of the area are single-family homes. This is a little different than the Little Gables. We had a lot more multifamily, a lot more commercial. I think we had upwards of eight or ten county zoning districts in Little Gables. Here, I think we have a lot less.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And Mr. Mayor, for the public that is here, as well as those that may be watching, we have this loaded on our website on our agenda so they can follow this PowerPoint as well as Ramon Trias' PowerPoint at the -- after. So, if anybody wants to come back or wonder what exactly that PowerPoint said, they can go to our Coral Gables.com, look up

under Government, look up under Agendas & Minutes and pull this item and follow that PowerPoint.

Mr. Iler: The application to the County will have to include justification for the annexation, and the County Code's very specific on what you have to submit. One is a land use and zoning plan, and then a services -- what, again, will be provided by the City versus the County or other agencies, and then a timetable for those services to take place. The tax load on the area, what the tax load will be for area residents, and also, submit at least 20 percent plus one of the registered voters in support of the annexation. And to date, we have approximately about 27 percent of the registered voters with a positive response, so we're in very good shape in that particular area. And then, of course, a resolution that's approved by the City. It has to be transmitted with the application as well, which is on the agenda today. The County approval criteria, the area is -- does not create an enclave. And in fact, in this situation, much like Little Gables, we are actually eliminating an enclave, which should be very positive for the County. A number of other things. The impact on public safety response times. That's a big issue. Public transit connections. The impact on the County's ability to provide efficient services. And obviously, if we're able to eliminate an enclave where they have to travel over City jurisdictions to get to this area, that'll be taken away. That should save them money. The County approval process is somewhat involved. We have this flowchart. But it does involve submittal of the application. There's a meeting of the County Commission just to receive the application and to refer it to the Planning Advisory Board, the PAB. Then there's staff review, which the Little Gables application is going on right now for that. Then there's a PAB meeting, the Planning Advisory Board of the County, with their recommendation that goes to the County Commission. And then also a committee of the County Commission, and then it moves forward as an ordinance to the County Commission, with an interlocal agreement also. There's a second meeting of the County, and the County committee, and then it all goes forward to the second reading of the ordinance and the interlocal agreement resolution, and after that is the area referendum.

Unidentified Speaker: The chart's out of focus.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah. You can't read it.

Craig Coller: I don't know how to -- this is Craig Coller, counsel for -- outside counsel for the City, just a comment on this process. There are three -- actually three more public hearings that are going to take place at the County that I want you all to be aware of and the folks that are here today to be aware of. There is a public hearing before the Planning Advisory Board. If it's submitted to the County, the County transmits it to the Planning Advisory Board, and there is a public hearing before the Planning Advisory Board.

Vice Mayor Keon: How is it noticed?

Mr. Coller: It is noticed similar to what we noticed here. Within the area and 600 feet outside the area.

Vice Mayor Keon: Everyone -- every registered voter will receive a notice by mail?

Mr. Coller: Well, it's done by property owner.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay, so every property owner will receive a notice by mail from Miami-Dade County...

Mr. Coller: Correct.

Vice Mayor Keon: With the dates and the times and the location of any public meeting.

Mr. Coller: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: How long will...



Vice Mayor Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: If I may...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And Vice Mayor, we have to follow the County's annexation process.

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And so, that's why, in some instances, it is property owner...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Notification and other instances it is registered voter.

Mr. Coller: If this goes to a vote, then it will be the qualified electors, which are those people that are electors that reside in the area to be annexed. But the notice -- curiously, this is how the County Code has set it up -- goes to the property owners.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright, go ahead.

Vice Mayor Keon: It's just important to communicate to the public that this is not the only public meeting, that, as you go through the process, there are numerous public meetings in which everyone will have an opportunity to speak to the different bodies that will make decisions with regard to this process.

Mr. Coller: That's exactly correct.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay, thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, we're making 50 copies, and we'll make more copies for those that wish that they had been able to follow it more regularly, but it is on the website and we're going to get some additional copies. And if we need to make more than 50, we'll make more than 50.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Mr. Coller: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Mr. Iler: I'll just...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Mr. Iler: Go on to the next slide. The financial impact on the City is very positive. The -- we have estimated the revenues at about \$66 million over an eight-year period. This is not just one year. And cost to be around \$25 million over that same eight-year period. And so, the net revenue is around \$40 million to the City over eight years, so it works out to around \$5 million each year. Now, the cost for the annexation, as far as City staff and services, Public Works would -- is estimating they would need to hire six new sanitation workers. Police force is estimating three new sworn officers and one additional neighborhood service aide. Fire and

EMS showing no initial need, but over time, over this eight-year period, they will probably add in the area of about six firefighters to the force in this area. Development Services would need one new code enforcement officer and a half of a position of a code enforcement assistant. Parks not looking for any additional personnel, but they are planning about \$6 million in new park and open spaces in the area over six years.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Now, in...

Commissioner Lago: Madam City Manager, can you do me a favor...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Just for clarity, since we have so many people here in the room. Can you explain what an NSA is and the value in the NSA and where would be the jurisdiction of that NSA?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Of course. And so, the neighborhood safety aide is a person that is in a golf cart, electric golf cart that is going around, eyes and ears, helping as a conduit to the Police Department. They know the neighborhood. They are assigned to that neighborhood. If that package from UPS is left out, they'll come and they'll tuck it into the hedge so that it is protected. But they have really become a vital part of the community to make sure that they're eyes and ears, all the time, working with the zone officer -- because we have a zone officer also assigned -- working with the neighborhood team leader. But that is one of the reasons why our crime is down 15 percent, that it's the lowest it's been in many years. And so, it is that neighborhood safety aide assigned that is partnering in the community that we think is a vital part.

Commissioner Lago: So, this is -- the reason why I asked this -- and I want people to be aware of what are the dividends and what are the benefits of the program that we're putting before you

right now. The NSAs are being used in North Gables, and the residents have loved the NSAs so much that we've had to expand that in this year's budget -- and correct me, if I'm wrong -- from six to ten.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Six.

Commissioner Lago: And everywhere I go in North Gables, everybody tells me, listen, again, the police are doing an exceptional job, but this is just another set of eyes and ears that are really giving us another opportunity, along with our CCTV initiatives and other initiatives that the City of Coral Gables is doing to really make sure that public safety is our number-one priority, so...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And the other thing, sir, is it has been very important to the Commission that -- and if annexation is going to occur, that it will not harm the current level of service that our residents -- our Coral Gables residents experience. We are a CALEA gold standard police department. There are measures and accreditations that earn us that. That's important that that continue. We are a Class I fully accredited fire department, only 40 in the entire country. You have said that response time, that service that for our Coral Gables residents cannot be compromised as we expand additional residents, which is why you're seeing some additional staff added to the equation because you all wanted to make sure that none of the accreditations that the City has is compromised as a part of any expansion.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Unidentified Speaker: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Mr. Iler: Now, very -- a very important part of this process is, of course, the net cost to the residents. What is this going to cost? And all of these costs are given to you on the assumption that the County's fire district will not be serving the area and that the City's fire department will serve the area. The taxable values that you see there of, say, a home of \$2 million, we're looking at about 22 -- \$2,860 per year in additional cost. That's property tax, fire fee and waste fee. And then for a \$500,000 home, we're looking at the lower end, \$1,042 per year. Now, I will note there is a security district in the southeast corridor of this section, in the Ponce-Davis -- what is normally called the Ponce-Davis area. And that security district costs each resident about \$1,700, roughly, each year. If the annexation does happen and the residents feel like the security is going to be highly upgraded with the City forces, then they might choose to do away with that district, and that would save that particular group of residents \$1,700 a year. So, that's one caveat to the cost. The benefits of being in Coral Gables -- it was hard to reduce them to one slide, but I just tried to be very, very short. Faster police, fire and medical response. More frequent and convenient waste service. Upgraded parks and access to a city recreational venue, of course, at reduced cost. Improved roads, drainage and landscape in the area, and closer to municipal services and the City's ombudsman and all their other staff that are very helpful on a day-to-day basis. Charles had mentioned our notices we had sent out for community support, the petitions. We've done two different mailings to the 2,300 voters -- plus voters. Right now, our totals are for the entire area, 60 percent yes and 40 percent no. And in the chart that follows this, the map shows you kind of the breakdown by area of the various support in these subareas for the application to the County.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And these are qualified, so we went through the signature process to make sure that they're validated.

Unidentified Speaker: We cannot read it. This is very blurry.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: No. I understand, so we're making copies. We're going to make...

Unidentified Speaker: Thank you.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We're going to, obviously, increase the number of 50 copies to 100 copies so that everyone can have it. It is also on our website, if anybody is following it by television and they want to -- I'm looking at it here and it's clear. I'm not sure why it's not clear on the television monitor itself.

Mr. Iler: Yes. So, this slide shows the breakdown of the voting for each area. Feasibility, of course, this was very feasible from a financial point of view, but it's more than dollars and cents in the long-term for any city. This is an enclave area surrounded by cities on four sides; Coral Gables on three, City of South Miami on the west side. Physically, this area -- geographically, this area belongs in Coral Gables. It really fits best with the Gables being on three sides of it. The annexation would fill a large gap in the City's western boundary. It would be more efficient for the City to serve the area over the long-term, obviously, and of course, the key here is strong community support. That really is the bottom line in all of this. So, with that, that's the end of my presentation, but I know that Ramon also has some information.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: If I could pull up the land use and zoning component PowerPoint.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You have to get closer to...

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We can't hear.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Thank you. While you're putting up the PowerPoint for land use and zoning -- that is a separate process after annexation has occurred.

Once the referendum is approved, it officially becomes part of the City of Coral Gables. We will have a separate process, a, for the land uses; b, for the zoning restrictions, and there's a separate public hearing process that goes before the Planning and Zoning Board and City Commission for two hearings. Even though this is a cursory introduction, by Mr. Trias, we thought it would be helpful to let you know we've done some analysis and we have a cursory report for you with respect the land use and zoning aspects of the annexed area. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And...

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, Charles.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, it's important for us to present what it means from a planning and zoning standpoint because some of the residents we heard back worried that they wouldn't be allowed to have the same color paint that they have on their house today. But we follow a like to like, so that if their house is painted this color today and they come and they join Coral Gables, we will allow them -- they will be allowed to have that same color. They'll also go through -- if they're wanting to paint a very different color, there's a Board of Architects process before that. We've heard from our resident -- from the residents in High Pines that that was an issue. We want to use this time with Ramon to explain what that process will be. We've heard a couple of other issues or concerns that they have. We're using this PowerPoint to help our neighbors nearby to understand this is how we believe that it will be approached. But because we've had experience with Snapper Creek, Pine Bay Estates, Deering Bay and other areas that have annexed over the years and we developed site specific or neighborhood specific zoning that applies to the uniqueness of those areas, we know that with good community meetings and input, we'll be able to develop a specific code for the neighborhood that works for the neighborhood.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Thank you, Mayor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, Ramon.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah. The area that we're looking at is a wonderful neighborhood, very beautiful, with a very clear identity. And Mr. Iler has explained the boundaries. I think they're very clear. I wanted to show it in the context of a 1913 map that was before any kind of development. But as you can see, it's in an area that doesn't have any of the early environmental systems, so it's actually very, very nice, from a point of view of early development in South Florida. If you look at the way the City of Coral Gables wrapped around it, I think it's clear that it does make some sense from a geography point of view as part of the city.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, Ramon, one second. We're going to share, and then we're going to have 50 more brought in. So, we've just made 50 copies of the first presentation so that if you can share, we'll have plenty of more copies brought in. And then, they're making copies of this presentation as well, first 50, and then another 50. So, this is the first 50 of the previous presentation. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And some more details you can see, it says right there with the historic geography of South Florida and the 1920s layout of the City of Coral Gables. Now, one look at the zoning in the County -- and there are ten different designations. But in reality, it's a little bit more simple, if one looks at it in a simplified fashion. There's multi -- single-family. There's some multi-family. There's some commercial -- that's Sunset and Red Road. And there's a school and a church, as different uses. Now, the important thing is that there's different regulations that apply to a single-family. If you're able to look at the details here in this



chart, these are all the different single-family categories that the County has, and then the one that the City...

Commissioner Quesada: Just to interrupt you for a second. We've got to figure out the haziness because this happens all the time. It's not just...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I...

Commissioner Quesada: It's not just today.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I've been advised that -- well, actually the television people have a very good technical explanation that they can give you. I've asked them the same, Commissioner.

Commissioner Quesada: I mean, just -- if we can just get it fixed in the future because this happens every time we put something out. That's why I always have my computer open. Sorry to interrupt your flow...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Commissioner Quesada: I just -- I thought it was important to bring it up because this is -- this always happens.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It is. It has to do with the digital quality. It's...

Commissioner Quesada: Yeah.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Believe me, they know exactly what the issue is. To make it simpler, I'll talk about it, and then, of course, as the City Manager has explained, it is in the

website and I think it is being passed on. The City of Coral Gables has one designation for single-family. However, it also has site specifics that are very detailed in certain areas. So, the way that the City of Coral Gables handles the nuance and the differences between different neighborhoods is with site specifics. That's the way it's done today. That's the way it was done historically, ever since the early days with Merrick. So, what happens is that the main distinction, I think, if one looks at the County designations is that there are some different setbacks and different front setbacks and different requirements for width of the lot and so on. All of those issues, all of those issues would be typically addressed in the City of Coral Gables through site specifics. And you, as a Commission, have that ability. Now, in terms of the quality of the neighborhood, I just said, it's wonderful. And there's some general issues that were asked in terms of paint colors, as the City Manager said, or the storage of boats and so on. All of those, again, can be addressed through site specifics. Now, in terms of the multifamily, there's also multiple designations. I believe that they can be addressed with MFSA. MFSA is a very effective zoning designation in the City that allows attached units, townhomes, but also, small apartment buildings, which is...

Vice Mayor Keon: What is MFSA mean? Can you tell the people?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Multifamily -- I forget exactly what it means, but what it means...

Vice Mayor Keon: Oh.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Is that it goes from the townhome to small apartments. So, it's a small range, very similar to the existing conditions right now, if you see the area around Red Road that has some attached units. But that is very consistent with what the City designation has. So, the City has that tool. Now, in addition -- which is similar to this image right here. We also have commercial uses. In the area, there are multiple commercial designations. I think that they can be addressed with the one commercial designation that the

City has. And I -- it's a small area. It's a small area, and the main potential for improvement, I think, is with some pedestrian-oriented guidelines, if the Commission were to choose to go through an overlay. And basically, right now, it's development along an arterial. Some of it is more pedestrian than others, but it certainly could have some improvements. Now, in addition, there's some significant historic resources and beautiful, beautiful landscape, which are very similar to the City of Coral Gables, certainly consistent with what the City has. So, in a nutshell, what I think is in terms of a summary, the tools that we have -- or tools that the Commission would have will be the Single Family, MFSA, Commercial, Special Use for the church, school and the historic property, and then site specifics for areas within single-family. I did a little diagram that shows that the site specifics can be very specialized, very targeted to the different areas. For example, the -- in the black area, the site specifics will typically deal with the size and the dimensions of lots, which is the existing conditions in the overall area, perhaps, that could be addressed in issues of maintenance, issues of the operations of facilities. So, in addition, perhaps, there will be some chance to do an overlay for the -- for more pedestrian design in the commercial area. So, that is my simple presentation. I think that it's just conceptual, and it's up to you and you have all the proof that you need to address the issues.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much. Thank you. Any other presentation, Madam City Manager?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Anything else that the consultants or Mr. Wu would like to add?

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: That's it.

Vice Mayor Keon: Could I...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's it?

Vice Mayor Keon: Could I ask one question of the consultant? If -- yeah, there is a small commercial in -- along Red Road that would become part of the City of Coral Gables. If there are plans or applications for development or redevelopment that are -- have been filed with the County at the time of annexation, does that process play out throughout the County or does it -- at some point, it shifts to the City?

Mr. Coller: It would shift to the City. There is an opportunity for the City and the County, through an interlocal agreement, to transition services. But as far as acting on zoning hearings, ordinarily, it would be transferred to the City upon the vote of the electorate.

Vice Mayor Keon: Oh, okay. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, thank you. I would like -- I have over 20 cards here, and I'm going to set a time limit for people to speak. I know it's a very important issue, but I'm going to set a time limit of three minutes. Mr. City Clerk, three minutes.

Unidentified Speaker: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I would like to -- I'm going to call them in the order that I received them, which I don't know if it's the order that you presented them, but that's what was given to me. The first is John Sumberg. John Sumberg. Good morning, sir.

John Sumberg: Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Mayor and Commissioners.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Three minutes.

Vice Mayor Keon: Good morning.

Mr. Sumberg: No problem.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You're very articulate, so...

Mr. Sumberg: I'll be brief. I've been a resident of High Pines in the same house for 40 years. And during that time, our interest in becoming part of Coral Gables has grown for a lot of reasons. One of them is, as is obvious, we are completely isolated area. And the services from Miami-Dade County are not good, and it creates a barrier for you because we're surrounded, as you know, on three sides by Coral Gables. In the limited instances where we have called for police help, they have responded saying you're calling the wrong place. You should be calling Coral Gables. Miami-Dade County doesn't even realize that we're to be served by them. It's not a good situation. So, I want to thank all of you for allowing this to get to this stage and move forward. The residents are very strongly in favor. I know there's always some division, but we've got over 60 percent in support. I think it will make a huge difference to our area in terms of primarily police service, as well as some of the other things, in terms of parks. But also, one of the things that's very important to me is that we would actually have access to our representatives, which, in Miami-Dade County, we really don't have. And we would be able to talk to you and talk through together solutions for our area. So, I'm very much in support of this and wanted to thank you all for listening to us.

City Attorney Ramos: Sir, could you please state your address on the record?

Mr. Sumberg: Of course.

City Attorney Ramos: And I'll ask everyone else when you come up, please state...

Mr. Sumberg: Of course.

City Attorney Ramos: Your name and then your address.

Mr. Sumberg: Sure. It's John Sumberg, 7407 Southwest 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir. And a very distinguished attorney, too. Anthony De Yurre.

Anthony De Yurre: Good morning, Mr. Mayor and City Commissioners. Thank you just for working with us and the community to move this forward. I think it is a testament that you have 60 percent support in the community is because the City of Coral Gables has been engaged in the process, because the City of Coral Gables has listened to the people in the community and they have been responsive. I will tell you a small vignette, my personal experience in dealing with this area. When I needed something done, I had to go out to Coral Way, and I believe it's 137<sup>th</sup> Avenue, to a very large shopping center to be -- in what seemed like a building of thousands of employees in order to get my issue addressed. If I needed -- when I was living in the City of Coral Gables, by contrast, I would come here to City Hall. There is an ombudsman here that would -- everything I needed -- I almost call him a concierge. And I do know that if you need service at your home and you cannot make it to City Hall...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I call him my hero because...

Mr. De Yurre: Your hero...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: He solves every problem here.

Mr. De Yurre: Your hero. I call him the whisperer, the City Hall whisperer. But he really is a person that you have as a go-to to solve problems for residents that don't have the working knowledge of how government works and the ins and outs. So, he's there to do a lot of handholding, which is in incredible contrast with what I dealt with on 130 something and Coral

Way. I do also know the City does go out to residents' homes if they can't make it to City Hall to help them. And then the last thing is I brought my daughter today, Valentina, because I've walked and I've canvassed the neighborhoods, and there are tons and tons of families in the area and their primary concern is their kids. All their kids go to Sunset. She starts Sunset next year. And so, for us, our primary concern is the kids and making sure that they're safe. And we feel that the City of Coral Gables is going to have the police presence to help us accomplish that. And also, to do some traffic calming. We've already had those discussions, especially during the rush hour times that have been very successful for the Gables in other pockets. And thank you very much for your time.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: Could you...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

Vice Mayor Keon: Give your address?

Mr. De Yurre: Sure.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

Mr. De Yurre: Sure, 7518 Southwest 55<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Next, Constance Ryan, 7630 Southwest 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue, right?

Constance Ryan: Correct. Do you want me to repeat it again?

City Attorney Ramos: You don't have to repeat it, no.

Ms. Ryan: Okay, thank you.

City Attorney Ramos: As long as it's on the record.

Ms. Ryan: Thank you. Good morning. And...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good morning.

Ms. Ryan: For allowing me to speak. I've lived in the Miami/Coral Gables area since 1981, and I've been fortunate enough to live in Coral Gables for most of that time. However, we did the proverbial downsize with our boys going off to school and we are now in a townhouse in the High Pines area. And I see the difference in how the area's maintained. Simple things like I've had them call and have the trashcans picked -- or replaced three times because they break them every time -- I was having a problem with them breaking them. I know the service that I received in the past from Coral Gables. Unfortunately, I have had to use the services of Coral Gables regarding police and fire-rescue because of health issues in my family, and I know the kind of response that we got and the care that we got. And it was a concern that response times are very poor. Neighbors have told me of issues of police simply not coming. I can't validate this, but I've been told that there have actually been instances where Coral Gables has been asked to do a -- like a mutual aid response to the area because officers were not in the area available. So, I strongly recommend and support -- and my husband does too. He can't be here - - but strongly support the annexation. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Commissioner Quesada: Let me ask you a question...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.



Commissioner Quesada: Because I just don't know the areas. You said the townhouse area?

Ms. Ryan: Yes.

Commissioner Quesada: Where is that exactly?

Ms. Ryan: On the -- Pine Manor is a series of townhouses that are on Southwest -- well, 7630 Southwest 54<sup>th</sup>...

Commissioner Quesada: So, they're...

Ms. Ryan: It's about four blocks...

Commissioner Quesada: Relatively new?

Ms. Ryan: It's about four blocks east of Red Road.

Commissioner Quesada: Got it. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Ms. Ryan: And it's in between 80<sup>th</sup>...

Commissioner Quesada: Yeah. I think I know which ones they are.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Commissioner Quesada: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And Mr. Mayor, if I can, I just want to remind the audience -- this is a great turnout. There will be multiple different opinions, and it's just really important that everybody respect the input...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And the voice of their fellow neighbors because, at the end of the day, this is your neighborhood. So, just if people can refrain from commenting on what people say. This is a City Hall that is built on civility and respect.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. I have one here from Austin James (sic), who does not wish to speak, but he doesn't say whether he's for or against.

Austin Jones: I'm for it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, you're for.

Commissioner Quesada: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I see that from your -- thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: He's got his pin on.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Next is...

City Attorney Ramos: Mr. Mayor, could you read his...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Doctor...

City Attorney Ramos: Address into the record?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What?

Commissioner Lago: His address.

Vice Mayor Keon: His name and address.

Commissioner Lago: His name...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Oh.

Commissioner Lago: His address.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: His address is 7345 Southwest 55<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Yeah, and he's for. Next is Doctor Duane Schultz, 7700 Southwest 47<sup>th</sup> Court. Good morning, sir. Three minutes.

Duane Schultz: Thank you for the privilege of speaking to you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Mr. Schultz: I've lived in High Pines area for 52 years. It's been my experience and the experience of my neighbors that the garbage and debris collection and the police and fire department responses have been more than adequate. And I do not believe that Coral Gables

will lead to any improvement. Secondly, this has already been addressed, but I don't appreciate being told what color my house should be or whether I should have a red roof or the other recommendations, if you live in Coral Gables. Third, if we are annexed, I would no longer be able to use the Chapman Field dump. I do my own gardening and take my cuttings out there, and they do not allow people with a Coral Gables address to dump their things there. You have to go to a much farther place. So, I feel the major reason for this annexation is financial because of all the new building that is going on in our area. And so, I strongly object to the annexation. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, sir.

(APPLAUSE)

City Attorney Ramos: I need everyone to understand we have rules of decorum. There will be no yelling from the audience. There will be no clapping.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And we will vacate the room if this goes on. We really will. We'll call the speakers to come. You can watch on television outside, but let's have decorum here, please. Everybody has his or her opinion and that should be respected. The next is William Jones, 7345 Southwest 55<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Morning.

William Jones: Yes, that is my address. I am a lifetime High Pines resident. I was born and raised there. I went to Sunset Elementary. And when I became an attorney, I moved back into High Pines, and I am in the last 30 days of building a brand-new home where I have lived for 30 years. There is an absolute difference between the services that we get through Metro Dade County -- and I understand that there's some people that are happy the way it is. But there's no one in here that can absolutely say to themselves, gee, if I had a choice and nothing else would change, I would select Miami-Dade County to be -- I want to stay there for that reason. There may be money reasons. There may be other types of reasons. Some people are worried about

building and zoning, even though I keep hearing that you all are stressing that you're going to let High Pines stay the way it is. Some people just don't believe it. But what I do know is here every day I go out of my house and I look down at Sunset Drive and I see Coral Gables police riding back and forth, they never come down my road. And I want security. I just invested a lot of money to live in High Pines. I'd like to have that investment. And if you look at the real estate records -- these are for investment people. If you look at the real estate records, I think you will find as soon as you would be adopted in the City of Coral Gables, your square footage -- yes, it will -- your square footage will go up in price. So, the fact of the matter is my house would be worth more money when it -- when I can say that I live in the City of Coral Gables. And so, I'm an investment person...

Commissioner Quesada: Excuse me. Can you just direct your comments at us?

Mr. Jones: I'm an investment person. I'm an investment person, and I believe that the long-term investment for being in the City of Coral Gables, besides the services, I think that people will get their bang for their buck. We close the doughnut hole, so everything flows through comfortable, whether -- you know, 80<sup>th</sup> Street, all the way through. Police are flowing back and forth to reach their destinations. We all are winners here. And I think, at the end of the day, when you go to sell your house, you make that money up, whatever the little bump in taxes were that you had to pay. So, I'm strongly for it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright, Jo Sumberg, 7407 Southwest 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.

Jo Sumberg: Hi.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good morning.

Ms. Sumberg: Good morning.

Commissioner Lago: Good morning.

Ms. Sumberg: Good morning. Thank you for having us this morning. My husband and I have lived in High Pines for 40 years. And personally, I look forward to being a part of an organized, responsive government that we can go to directly. I would also just like to point out to the people who are opposed and who feel it's a financial ploy by Coral Gables, that Dade County has been getting our taxes forever and they will continue if we don't do this, and frankly, they don't give us very much in return. So, I don't believe that this is a financial ploy by the Gables to get more money in their coffers. But I strongly support joining Coral Gables and thank you for...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Ray Burkemper, 7260 Southwest 53<sup>rd</sup> Court. Good morning.

Commissioner Lago: Good morning.

Ray Burkemper: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, Commissioners, City leaders and citizens of High Pines. Appreciate this...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No.

Mr. Burkemper: Opportunity, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Address us.

Mr. Burkemper: Yes, sir. I do live at 7260 Southwest 53<sup>rd</sup> Court, and I am in favor of it. I lived in Coral Gables for a little while, then I moved into High Pines when I married my wife. I'd like to say that -- I'd like to ask my fellow citizens of High Pines to be openminded and to look around. It appears that the County government is trying to withdraw from supporting these small, little enclaves. I personally have seen the County services decline. A house across the street was built with County supervision, and there were multiple Code violations. They tore down trees. They tore up the street. It wasn't until I got actively involved that we had somebody from DERM come out and stop them from digging up and almost killing three 60-plus year-old oak trees. So, they're destroying the canopy, and I believe that Coral Gables will help protect that. Just the other night, Coral Gables sponsored the police at Cocoplum Women's Club. They had the Coral Gables police come. They gave an active shooter brief for the citizens. I don't live in Coral Gables, but I kind of mooched in on that because I felt it was of value to us. I don't see the City offering us that. A couple of times, I've had issues with the -- with the County, correction -- and I've tried to call the County, and they say, oh, call this number, and they actually give me a number that's disconnected. The one time that I had an issue when I lived in Coral Gables, I was able to walk right into City Hall, go to your information desk. They pointed me in the right direction, went up on the third floor and I got my answer. So, I really appreciate that, and that's why I'm strongly in favor of Coral Gables. The County government has no face. This is the face of Coral Gables right here, so I really appreciate that. Also, the small block that I live on at one time had 13 children that were under 12 years old. I called multiple times because I understand the volume of traffic. They have to bleed off of Sunset, but they don't have to speed on my street. The County sent out a traffic study. They studied it for less than 24 hours. They said that our speed limit on our street was 30 miles an hour. That's the same speed limit that's on Sunset. I believe that's the same speed limit that's on Red Road. So, people can drive - - there's no shoulder. There's no dividing line or anything on our street. And the traffic study said there were some people going over 40 miles an hour. I believe Coral Gables would come in and lower and enforce that speed limit and protect our children. So, I do appreciate the

opportunity. I really hope that we do get annexed. And I do ask my fellow citizens to be openminded and do their own research. And also, I believe that our only other opportunity or -- would be approaching -- would be that South Miami annex us. If South Miami annexes High Pines, our taxes would go up even higher than what is being proposed by Coral Gables. And the last thing I'd like to say is that -- on Coral Gables leadership, I believe that some of our citizens are still reticent to the annexation because they don't have the full information and they don't quite believe or trust that you are going to keep our current zoning the way it is.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Burkemper: So, thank you, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Mrs. Peggy Brodeur, 5685 Southwest 85<sup>th</sup> Street.

Unidentified Speaker: Can she get a...

Commissioner Mena: Microphone? Can we get her a microphone?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Sure. We have one right here.

Commissioner Mena: Yeah.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Commissioner Mena: No. We'll bring her a microphone.



Vice Mayor Keon: We'll bring her a microphone.

Commissioner Quesada: As long as the green light is on.

Peggy Brodeur: Can you hear me?

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes.

Ms. Brodeur: Hi. I'm Peggy...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, we can't.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Ms. Brodeur: You can't hear me?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Now, you can.

Ms. Brodeur: Now, you can hear me. Okay, thank you. Well, it's good to see your smiling faces and everybody is so cheerful this morning and the sun shines and it rained a little last night. Isn't that good news? It rained last night. That's good news. Well, I've lived here since 1950, and I lived 25 years in Coral Gables. And I know Coral Gables of old. I know Coral Gables new, and I'm one of the founders of the Coral Gables Public Library. So, I was involved in Coral Gables for 25 years. I lived on 109 San Sebastian Avenue, so I'm very well aware of the good services and all the goodhearted and the good people in Coral Gables. I am now in a County, which when we analyze today your operation, I'm a little bit disappointed in your operation, not your trees or your lawns -- of course, the front lawn downstairs could use a lot of work, let me tell you. And the greens don't match. You've got a -- you've got one color green

on -- see, I notice things. But your own building needs a little bit of work, I would suggest. But one of the things at one of the hearings we had at the church was that you have \$225 million in pension unfunded. And every time -- and this is something that concerns is your debts and your capital. Is that going to go on us, the residents? That's one thing that is of a concern to me. The other thing is the report that this gentleman did that we all make \$158,306 -- will everybody get up here who makes \$158,000 and...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Madam, address us, please.

Ms. Brodeur: Three hundred and sixty- seven? I think that's wonderful, but I don't make it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Ms. Brodeur: I'm a widow. I'm retired. On my street are several women, retired. Those tall buildings you see as apartments, those aren't young people. Those aren't -- those are people who are in moderate circumstances. And your garbage and your \$799 expense with the garbage and the fire fee, I think it's a rather steep realization for those of us who have lived 46 years in the High Pines area. Also, the -- your assessed value -- you think you're going to get a \$1 billion base out of our area. Well, our assessments are only \$6 million. Also, I'm concerned, you're worried about -- everybody's worried about police. I'm concerned about the fire and the rescue. We're only one mile and a half from 5860 Southwest 70<sup>th</sup> Street. We have excellent fire...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am. Will you finish up?

Ms. Brodeur: Yeah.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Your time is up.

Ms. Brodeur: Alright. Was it three minutes? Oh, my goodness. Well, anyway, I feel that those who object and those of us who are satisfied should bring it up to you that we are satisfied in the County, and we -- other than police. That's right. You can't deny that the police isn't the best time response.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. Brodeur: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

City Attorney Ramos: Ma'am, could we have your name and your address, please?

Ms. Brodeur: Peggy Brodeur, 5685 Southwest 85<sup>th</sup> Street, corner of Red Road.

City Attorney Ramos: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Ms. Brodeur: And I'm next to all the traffic on Red Road...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Ms. Brodeur: So, I know all about traffic.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Daniel Sachar. Next, Daniel. Here you go.

Daniel Sachar: Thank you for pronouncing it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Daniel Sachar is 7261 Southwest 52<sup>nd</sup> Court.

Mr. Sachar: That's right.

Commissioner Lago: Good morning.

Mr. Sachar: Good morning. Thanks for having us. I'll be quick. We -- it's great to hear that so many people have lived in our neighborhood for so many years. I'm a relatively recent resident, four years with my wife and young children. My wife grew up in the Gables and had a wonderful childhood living there. I want to talk just very briefly about representation. During Hurricane Irma, when High Pines was one of the last neighborhoods to have power restored, we had very few people to contact and discuss the issue with. We're only represented by a single County Commissioner, who -- I might be wrong in the numbers -- I believe that one Commissioner represents more people than the entire City of Coral Gables is made up of. I tried calling. But I ultimately tweeted at him and eventually got, you know, we're doing our best kind of response. I had nobody to turn to. There was no City Hall that would listen to me. There was no immediate representation. That's one of the many reasons I'm very much in favor of Coral Gables annexing us. I'd like to add that as a relatively, you know, a four-year resident now and someone who hopes to stay 40 or 50 years, raise our children and live in High Pines for the duration, I'm not at all satisfied with County services. And in particular, my block, which you mentioned on 52<sup>nd</sup> Court, there are numerous ongoing Code violations. There is an abandoned home across the street that I believe was purchased as an investment and just left to rot. The grass is left untended. Garbage for a couple of homes are left 24/7 across -- out across the street. I've called 311 multiple times. I've literally spoken to a Code officer when they finally did show up. They said, well, they'll leave a note on their door. I said it's abandoned. There's nobody there. This is what we're -- it's been abandoned for years. It brings down our property value. It's terrible to look out across the street every day at garbage and an abandoned, decrepit home where I know squatters and drug users have broken into and used. I know a lot of people are worried about new codes. I would like existing codes enforced and to have trash picked up,

lawns mowed and houses not allowed to completely fall into disrepair. So, those are a couple of the reasons. I'm sure you've heard many others. But I am hoping to live many, many lives and would love to be part of Coral Gables. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, sir.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: B. McAulay. I think it's -- I didn't butcher anybody's name, yeah.

Bernadine McAulay: That's me, yeah. Could you pass me a mike?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Actually...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It would be better if you can come here. We can...

Ms. McAulay: Well...

Vice Mayor Keon: It's easier.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Inconvenience them. They like it.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Ms. McAulay lives in 7540 Southwest 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Welcome.

Ms. McAulay: Hello, everyone.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Ms. McAulay: And thank you so much for doing this. This is my first time ever at a function like this. And I came along this morning because I could because my schedule let me. Many people can't do that if they still are at work. I'm retired. And I have lived in the house we're in now, near Sunset Elementary, bought it when we had a little girl who wanted to go to school. We've lived there for 26 years. Before that, we lived in the Gables. And yeah, the bureaucracy can be annoying, you know. Bureaucracies are annoying. It's part of what they are. On balance, I'm very much for annexation, and I came along today because I'm old, so a lot of the people I talked to in the neighborhood are a similar age. Many of them are extremely concerned about change, almost a lot -- you know, any change. So, I came along today to be an old person who's for annexation, knowing that many of my neighbors who are younger wouldn't have the opportunity to show up. There are rumors flying around the neighborhood, like whoa, you know, like, oh, they're going to destroy the dog walk on 76<sup>th</sup> Street. Oh, they're going to make us do this, that and the other, you know. There's going to be an unspecified park area for noisy children. So, I'm sure you've dealt with this before when you've annexed other areas, but it probably would do something to calm the people who are anxious if you could find a way to assuage their fears, as it were. So, thank you very much for your time. This is kind of fun.

(LAUGHTER)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Ms. McAulay.

Ms. McAulay: And thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much for participating. And you're welcome to come back any time you want. Lynn Wheeler, 7222 Southwest 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Lynn Wheeler. There she is. Hello.

Lynn Wheeler: Thank you for...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Get close to the mike.

Ms. Wheeler: Taking our questions. Is that...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: There you go.

Ms. Wheeler: Close enough now?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Ms. Wheeler: Okay, good.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Don't swallow it, though.

Ms. Wheeler: Oh, okay. I'll be very careful. Hi.

Vice Mayor Keon: Hi.

Ms. Wheeler: I have owned a house in High Pines since 1980. I haven't lived there the whole time, but I've owned it. And it's a 1939 house, and you may have seen behind Red Road there are several houses like it with a concrete block kind of house in the front and a two-story wooden house in the back, so I have one of the few of those left. And I'm sort of wondering how much you're going to keep the rules going for us. Now, you said, like if you have a house that's painted a color y'all don't approve of, I can leave it that color. Mine's white. But if there's something else in my house that I want to leave the way it is, how long do those rules apply? Do I get to leave it that way and repair it that way if it's wrong, or do I have to change it as soon as I do a repair and go with the Coral Gables rules?

Vice Mayor Keon: No.

Ms. Wheeler: How does that work?

Vice Mayor Keon: Go ahead.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, I'm sure you were properly permitted for any of the work that you did in your house, so don't answer...

Ms. Wheeler: Probably.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Otherwise, okay.

(LAUGHTER)

Ms. Wheeler: Any lawyers here?

Commissioner Lago: Say yes. Say yes.

Ms. Wheeler: Of course, of course, yes.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, what we have said is if someone was properly permitted when they had their work done...

Ms. Wheeler: Okay.



City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We need to honor that work. If you're going to do new work, that will fall within the -- first of all, Building Code is everybody's Building Code, State of Florida Building Code. But we're talking about permitted with the County. And then if there are additional work that you want to have done or changed, then it would fall under our neighborhood specific, you know, to be developed code for the area.

Ms. Wheeler: Okay, I have jalousie windows on part of my house, and...

Vice Mayor Keon: That's alright.

Commissioner Lago: That's perfectly fine.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: You're allowed to have...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's fine.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Jalousie windows.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Ms. Wheeler: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: You're allowed to have jalousie windows in Coral Gables.

Commissioner Quesada: Yeah.

Ms. Wheeler: Okay.

Commissioner Mena: I do, too.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Unidentified Speaker: And it's okay.

Ms. Wheeler: Yeah. The rest of them are hurricane proof, but some of them are not. Okay, that's all I have to say. I guess I'm sort of against the annexation because I don't really think we need it. I think our police department and everything is fine. But I do think there's a certain efficiency of being part of Coral Gables or part of South Miami, since the County has to come across South Miami and across Coral Gables to get to us the way things are now. So, that's my feeling on it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. Wheeler: Okay, thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you for being here.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Charles Munroe, 7644?

Charles Munroe: (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Hi. 7641 Southwest 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.

Mr. Munroe: That's correct.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Morning.

Mr. Munroe: Good morning. I'm really here to -- thank you. Alright, I'm really here to address a number of issues, and I'd like to just get your comments on that. I think one of the most important issues, by the way, for us, my wife and myself, is that we've lived there for 26 years. We have no problems with living there. And so, that's my first reaction. I'm concerned about the overfunding of the -- or the underfunding, however you want to say it, of the municipal employees of Coral Gables because there's a big number up there and I suspect that you will use some of that increase in taxes to fund that with, and I don't need that. So, I'm concerned about that, and that's going to happen sooner or later. Sooner or later, that thing is going to explode and somebody has to pay for it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Sir, let me correct you. It's not going to explode. We're taking care of it. The hemorrhage stopped about ten years ago or eight years ago...

Unidentified Speaker: Yeah.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And we're handling the situation very responsibly, and we're not doing this -- if you look at the map, the reason for doing this not any pension plan or whatever. And when I was mayor the last time, which was 20 years ago, we also proposed annexation and the County couched it. So, this has nothing at all to do with any deficit anywhere.

Mr. Munroe: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think the...

Mr. Munroe: Thank you for that.

Vice Mayor Keon: Could you address the funding...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Yeah. I'm asking...

Vice Mayor Keon: Mechanism for...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Diana Gomez, our Finance director, couldn't get a seat because I told everybody that they -- staff had to be out. She'll come in. She -- the question was asked what is our unfunded and how are we -- we're on a -- we are repaying and actually bringing down the unfunded. We totally discussed that with the ratings agencies. Moody's, Standard & Poor's, Fitch, no other city in Miami-Dade County, including the County, have the AAA bond rating -- fully presented them our plan, with the unfunded and the changes that we have made, and they -- Finance director.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And then...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Seek and you shall find.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Twenty years ago, when we proposed this, we had zero deficit in our pension plan and it still makes sense for us to annex that...

Mr. Munroe: So, none of those...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Big hole in the doughnut.

Mr. Munroe: None of those expenses that we're going to be increased are -- have anything...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, no.

Mr. Munroe: To do with the unfunded...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Not at all.

Commissioner Lago: If I may, sir. And I know that our Finance director's going to go into this. But is it three years now or is it four that we've been paying not the minimum -- we've been paying for four years...

Mr. Munroe: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: Since I got elected...

Mr. Munroe: I yield.

Commissioner Lago: No, no. It's okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let -- yeah.

Commissioner Lago: We've been paying above and beyond what's required to expedite...

Mr. Munroe: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: This unfunded liability.

Mr. Munroe: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: And I want to just make sure that -- the Mayor didn't take enough credit for this. When he was mayor, we had zero unfunded, zero unfunded. And it was, like the Mayor said, prior to anybody sitting up here, we had a run where we -- the unfunded spiraled out of control and people made financial decisions which were not in the best interest of this community as a whole.

Mr. Munroe: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: And now, again, we're paying above and beyond what is required so we can pay this off as quickly as possible. But like the Manager mentioned, we also have to remember, we're the only city in Miami-Dade County that has a triple triple bond rating. That goes to show you how financially strong this community is. That's number one. And I think -- and correct me, if I'm wrong -- we're one of three cities in the state of Florida that have a triple triple bond rating. So, yes, do we need to address the unfunded? We're addressing it, trust me. Do you want to know why we're addressing it? Because we're paying almost \$4 million additional -- is it...

Finance Director Gomez: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: Almost \$4 million of money -- trust me, I'd rather spend that money on something else.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah. But we're...

Vice Mayor Keon: But I think...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let...

Vice Mayor Keon: I think the Finance director can...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Keon: Help you because we've heard that a number of times...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Keon: Now about the pension liability and that there is a plan in place, and we know approximately when that unfunded liability will be paid off with current revenues. So, it...

Mr. Munroe: Okay.

Vice Mayor Keon: Shouldn't be of concern, but we should let her give...

Mr. Munroe: I yield on that subject.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay. But give her...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Keon: The opportunity because...

Commissioner Lago: We want to be transparent.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think it answers...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, yeah.

Vice Mayor Keon: It answers a lot of people's questions on that issue.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Diana, brief.

Finance Director Gomez: Briefly, sure. So, yes, we currently have properly budgeted in current existing revenues the annual required payment, as well as an additional \$3.8 million, and that's

an increasing amount that we have an index that we increase it each year based on our current budgeted revenues. We do send additional funds each year in order to pay down the unfunded liability. We do not -- we are not looking for additional revenues in order to pay to the pension unfunded. We are just -- we are on a plan in order to pay it. We are trying to get it paid quicker, so we have a 20-year amortization...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Right.

Finance Director Gomez: But we're hoping to get it paid within 16, 17 years. So, it's something...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Finance Director Gomez: That's already planned for and budgeted for without the need for any additional revenues.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Munroe.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go on.

Vice Mayor Keon: Thank you.

Mr. Munroe: Thank you. So, I have just...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The floor is yours.

Mr. Munroe: A couple of more concerns.



Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, sir.

Mr. Munroe: And that is I'm concerned also about the cost of trash pickup in Coral Gables because it's a big number, and at the moment, that's funded for maybe \$400 from Dade County and \$850 or something, whatever it is, for Coral Gables, in that general category. And I just -- I don't...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That is not going to go up for you at this -- Diana.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes. No, the garbage fee will go up.

Finance Director Gomez: Right. So...

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah.

Finance Director Gomez: So, yes -- so, the garbage fee -- we have two possibilities with the garbage fee. You pay it early. I'm doing this from memory, so I apologize if I get it wrong. It's about \$750 if you pay early. That means before August 15. If it goes on the tax bill, it's \$869, or something like that for...

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Finance Director Gomez: I'm sorry?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No. We pick the garbage...

Finance Director Gomez: \$869.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We pick the garbage in the back of your house...

Finance Director Gomez: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Twice a week.

Mr. Munroe: You can't get in the back of my house. It's not enough space between the...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Well, okay, but we pick it wherever you put it. I mean, you don't have to roll it out like Miami does, you know, in those huge green dumps where you go down to -- down a Miami street, downtown and you're about to -- you may be able to hit one of those once in a while because they're horrible.

Mr. Munroe: Will you still be digging holes in the ground when you go to pick it up?

Commissioner Lago: Well, that's one of the things we're working on right now. We're trying to find...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: Different opportunities on how to address that. But like Commissioner Keon -- Vice Mayor Keon brought this up on multiple occasions, we are addressing our staff and trying to do everything we can to educate them so that those holes become less and less prevalent.

Mr. Munroe: Two more items.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: By the way, I'm getting rid of my trash pit, just so you know.

Mr. Munroe: What's that?

Commissioner Lago: I'm getting rid of my trash pit.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You can put your...

Commissioner Lago: And a lot of people are moving in that direction. The Mayor's going to say you can put your trash in mine, but you know...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's what I was going to say. You can put your trash in his.

Commissioner Lago: I read his mind. I could -- I knew he was going to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead, sir. Finish up.

Mr. Munroe: I forgot the...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You got two more.

Mr. Munroe: Well, the one that's the most amusing to me is that my wife wants to be in Coral Gables so she can join the Coral Gables Garden Club.

Vice Mayor Keon: And we would love her.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Beautiful.

Mr. Munroe: Anyhow...

Vice Mayor Keon: We would love her.

Mr. Munroe: I'll stop there, but...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Munroe: Basically, I'm not in favor of annexation. I'm not in favor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, sir.

Commissioner Mena: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, sir.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think also for people that live in multifamily dwellings, as opposed to single-family residences, your garbage fees are not going to change because Waste Management is your provider anyway, and that doesn't change. No, if you live in a multifamily residential area, you are picked up by Waste Management, and that's a negotiated rate...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Vice Mayor Keon: With Waste Management.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, next is Victoria Cummock, 7310 Southwest 47<sup>th</sup> Court. Ms. Cummock, how are you?

M. Victoria Cummock: Hi. How are you?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good to see you.

Ms. Cummock: Thank you for having me here. I'm here not only on my behalf, but for the neighbors of 47<sup>th</sup> Court, who are all very much in support of annexing into Coral Gables. We, in our neighborhood -- I've been in -- on 47<sup>th</sup> Court now for 20 years. Prior to that, I lived in Cocoplum for 15 years. The slow response by the police department, by ambulance and fire in our neighborhood has really been a huge concern to us. I'm also head of our citizens' crime watch group because, unfortunately, we've had break-ins right around my house. There was one break-in where my neighborhood Amy Lehman was home alone and someone came in and was bashing in her backdoor. She called 911. They -- it took them about 42 minutes to send somebody to her house. There actually was a car with three other people waiting to get into the front of her house while she was there. We were told that, unfortunately, the police department gets sent out on a priority basis and they had misunderstood that she was home while the break-in was occurring. When there have been other break-ins when people weren't at home, the response time has been about the same, which, you know, is really unacceptable. We've also have different emergencies that required ambulance response that took over 20 minutes to get the ambulance to our neighborhood, which resulted in one of our neighbors passing away. For our citizens' crime watch, after a lot of these break-ins, we had -- we were told, well, form a citizens' crime watch group and we'll help, you know, direct you into ways of making your neighborhood safer. We had a hard time getting anyone from the citizens' crime watch group in the police department to actually show up to our meetings. Sometimes they wouldn't show up; sometimes, they would show up late. The response in terms of debris removal and services, I was in Cocoplum during Hurricane Andrew. And for Hurricane Irma, it took -- for some reason, they look at 47<sup>th</sup> Court, which is a street between Irwin and Ponce, as two different areas. Half of the street, it took over six weeks to get debris removal and that was after Brian Keely, Susan Keely and I found a debris group on our street who had decided that they didn't like the street, it was too narrow. So, they were going to go away. We actually had to chase them down to keep them there. The rest of the street didn't have debris removal...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you...

Ms. Cummock: For over eight weeks.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Conclude, please.

Ms. Cummock: So, we are, like I said, in support of this annexation. My last question -- I do have a question, though. I live in a historically designated structure, and I would love to know who I could talk to about the annexation would affect my home.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes. Dona Spain is our Historic...

Commissioner Lago: Preservation Office.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Preservation Officer, and you can talk with her, yes.

Ms. Cummock: And how do I contact her?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: 305-460-5095 is her direct line. Dspain -- S-P-A-I-N -- at Coral Gables.com. And we're thrilled that you're a historic home.

Ms. Cummock: Thank you very much...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. Cummock: For your time. Appreciate it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thanks for appearing. Gary Timin? Gary Timin, 7541 Southwest 56<sup>th</sup> Court.

Gary Timin: That's correct.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good morning, sir.

Mr. Timin: Good morning. Good to see you. Appreciate the opportunity. Just very briefly. I think it's clear that this Commission's going to vote in favor of this process.

Unidentified Speaker: Can't hear you.

Unidentified Speaker: Could you move (INAUDIBLE)...

Mr. Timin: I'm sorry. I was saying I think the outcome of the Commission process here is clear, so I'm not trying to dissuade you from the course that you're on even though, personally, I'm quite happy being in the County, where I am. Of all the slides that were shown, the one the most telling is that the one showing that the City expects to come out \$40 million to the good per year, and so the benefit is more clearly to existing residents of the City.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's over eight years.

Mr. Timin: That's over eight years?

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

Mr. Timin: Thank you for clarifying that.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And our budget is almost \$200 million a year, yes.

Mr. Timin: I don't question that this group is now conducting the affairs -- fiscal affairs of the city responsibly and I appreciate that. On the other hand, I personally don't feel that the increase in taxes that I'll incur will be justified by the appreciable increase in services. I understand others disagree. Since I feel the outcome here is clear, what I would urge you to take into consideration one thing, what I think is most benefiting the area right now is the rapid pace, almost probably unique in the area, of redevelopment, private redevelopment, lot by lot, where many homes are being essentially remodeled or lots are being cleared and much larger, more expensive homes are being built, which is increasing the property values and the attraction to the area. And I think it would benefit the area to make -- that you all make sure that process can continue if the annexation goes through.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think it will.

Mr. Timin: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think it's important -- Mayor, if I may -- to -- in your statement that we will approve it or we'll pass it on, we don't -- we're not really approving anything. What we are is that there were enough votes by the residents for us to be able to pass it on to the next phase, which is to the County. They'll have all the hearings in the County. A final vote will be made by the electors of your area. And if there is a majority -- or what have we said, 60 percent of the voters in the area?



City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: In the -- we're past that discussion.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, in the -- it will be the majority of the electorate...

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: That voted when that happens.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay. Do you...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: If it goes through that whole flowchart...

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: That they showed.

Vice Mayor Keon: Right. So, you have another opportunity. I mean, we only -- our -- this is a process by which we pass it from the local jurisdiction to the county -- the regional jurisdiction, which is the County. And you know, you eventually will have...

Mr. Timin: Yeah. I think I do...

Vice Mayor Keon: A final decision to make in that. It isn't -- it's not our decision, and we started the process generally from interest of people in the area asking about the potential annexation, and we started to move forward. That's why we didn't do anything without this vote that gave a vast majority of the people that voted asked to continue the process. So, it isn't so

much the City going out and seeking these neighborhoods. It is -- it came from within the neighborhoods and our reacting to that.

Mr. Timin: I think I do understand the process. I appreciate those remarks.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Mr. Timin: I see it somewhat differently, but I'll look forward to the vote and other opportunities that I and others will have to speak to the process. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir. Jorge Diaz-Silveira, 5200 Southwest 80<sup>th</sup> Street. Good morning, sir.

Jorge Diaz-Silveira: Good morning. Thanks for the opportunity. Just quickly want to echo those in support of annexation. I've lived in the neighborhood close to 50 years. I'm overwhelmingly in favor of it. Principally, I point to those that are against it to consider, yes, it is an increase -- minimal increase in taxes. However, please consider the enormous difference in the response time. I know the numbers have been published. I didn't see them this morning. But the enormous difference in response time, a, in the police, and b, in the fire-rescue. I think it's enormously important to all, especially those of us as we age, that the fire-rescue response in the City of Coral Gables is markedly improved over unincorporated Dade County. The other thing in a personal nature, I see a number of my neighbors here. One thing we've been dealing with the County for many, many years is a neighbor who's running a halfway house -- essentially, a halfway house in our neighborhood. I know the Mayor knows the individual. There's eight or nine registered voters living in one house that are not related by marriage or genetics that are living in this one home. It's something we've tried repeatedly to get Dade

County to address. It's been repeatedly ignored, and I believe -- I firmly believe -- and I know a number of my neighbors that are here believe...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I know who you're talking about.

Mr. Diaz-Silveira: That the City of Coral Gables will be successful in addressing this issue. Thank you very much.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Jorge. I know who you're talking about. Elise Brodeur Teague. Good morning, 5685 Southwest 85<sup>th</sup> Street.

Elisa Brodeur Teague: Miami, Florida. There's a couple things I want to address in that no city is perfect regarding their hurricane response. I lived just a few blocks from here, from where our first home was when I was a child, Aledo Avenue. And our electricity was out for eight weeks in Coral Gables. Trash wasn't picked up for eight weeks in our neighborhood. So, no city -- every city has that area where there's a problem. My mom, with the hurricanes recently, she kept calling the County, and she found out who she needed to speak to and she got that person and eventually trash got picked up by her house. So, I think diligence -- due diligence upon you, as an individual, for where you live is very important to know who to contact, who to get in touch with and what needs to be done. Now, I'm not saying Coral Gables is not a wonderful area. I love Coral Gables because I first lived here as a child. But I also grew up in -- where my mom is now. The other thing I want to talk about is I'm a chief financial officer, and I also work in merges and acquisitions. So, something that's important is when you're doing a merger -- you're doing an acquisition or a merger, you have to provide the community or you should provide the community your balance sheet and your information so that they're educated in knowing what they're getting involved in. I think not being completely forthright regarding all of the costs and your balance sheet for the City of Coral Gables is extremely important to these people. Many of the people in my mom's area, which is a unique five-street area that's no cut-through -- you can't drive through -- are older people who are retired on a fixed income. So,

their concern is the increase in their tax base, which will cost -- which will have a great increase and impact on their fixed income. And that's something that you really need to think about regarding many of the people in this community. I have a lot of respect for the people who are saying yes. But everyone I've seen that's saying yes is younger than my mom, so -- and I know a lot of the people who are older in our neighborhood, they still live there. They've lived there for 50 years, the original owners from 1961 from when that community was built. So, it's just something that I'm addressing to the Commission and I think it's really important that you need to address their financial concerns of their fixed incomes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let me address something you said about transparency. Our financial records are on the webpage. They're on the Coral Gables page. And if you take the trouble of going there, you will see 100 percent of our financial information.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: And I understand that, but many of these people don't know how to use...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Well...

Ms. Brodeur Teague: A computer.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: If they can't read financial figures, that's not our fault.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: No, that's not what I said.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Some people don't get on the computer. They don't have...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Well...

Ms. Brodeur Teague: They're older. They don't like...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You can get it...

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Getting on it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You can get a printed copy here, too.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Okay. So, is there...

Commissioner Lago: Would you be kind enough to maybe give us a list of individuals that have this concern and we can mail it to them?

Ms. Brodeur Teague: That's -- most of -- well, some of them are here, so...

Commissioner Lago: I'm saying, but...

Ms. Brodeur Teague: It's...

Commissioner Lago: If they don't have access to the Internet, I'm more than willing to give them a copy.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Sure.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: So, Vince...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We can mail them a copy.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Can I ask -- can you just provide...

Commissioner Lago: Of course.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Can you just email it out or I mean...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It's there, ma'am.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Not email, mail it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We can't email it if they don't...

Ms. Brodeur Teague: No.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Have access to a computer.

Commissioner Lago: There's a few things...

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Oh...

Commissioner Lago: That the City of Coral Gables does that no other city does. We're by far -- probably I can say this with all certainty that we're the most transparent city in...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: Miami-Dade County.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Oh, I believe it.

Commissioner Lago: You could -- right now if you're -- let's say you're at home and you're incapable of attending today's meeting. You can get on our website and not only can you watch this meeting, but you can also partake and ask questions in this meeting.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And this meeting is being televised live.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: I know. I...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Watched it in order to watch the slides I couldn't read over there.

Commissioner Lago: So, if you give me a list of individuals that would like to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And mail it to them.

Commissioner Lago: Have our financial statement from this year and the past year, I will make copies of it and we can deliver it to them. It's not a problem.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Okay.

Commissioner Quesada: I would also...

Commissioner Lago: I mean, I think my colleagues would agree with me, right?

Commissioner Quesada: Yeah, of course. Of course, but...

Commissioner Lago: Make sure I'm not -- that everybody...

Commissioner Quesada: Something also that we've implemented recently is on our website we have a tab called financial transparency.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Commissioner Quesada: And you can click on it and our staff has done a great job with it. It breaks down to the penny where every penny goes in a visual format, so it's very easy to follow.

Commissioner Lago: And that was just recently implemented. We have a full transparency section on the website.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We may be criticized, but not for a lack of information.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: No. And I know Coral Gables is great for that, so...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Ma'am, another thing to -- which we're happy to look at with you is just like Miami-Dade County, that 3 percent cap for increases with homestead exemption, that applies here as well so that even if property values increased dramatically with the annexation, you're still protected by that. It could not increase more than 3 percent...

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Three percent.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Per year.



Ms. Brodeur Teague: I think that's information you should be providing to all the people in these homes.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Understand.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Because that's their greatest concern.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: And I said, your appraised value stays the same, so we're not...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Keon: No. You mean...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Vice Mayor Keon: Taxable value.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Keon: Your taxable value.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's...

Vice Mayor Keon: Your taxable value remains.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let -- conclude, I mean -- yeah.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: No, and just one last...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Sure.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Thing. Do you have a future -- anything about future liabilities, mainly in capital and your pensions? I know you addressed it, but do you have a future liabilities projection for this area?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I have no idea what you're asking but...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: In terms of what the expenses are anticipated as capital improvements?

Ms. Brodeur Teague: As in capital improvements.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Okay, so we do have -- we did make a -- we're happy to provide that. We do have a capital improvement plan that is not only the City's five-year capital plan, but we have an obligation to invest in a neighborhood if we annex it, and so we have that plan also anticipated as a part of our budget. And so, we can provide that as well.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: That would be great.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. Brodeur Teague: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: David...

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Denham. David Denham, 7251 Southwest 52<sup>nd</sup> Court.

David Denham: Good morning.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good morning, sir.

Mr. Denham: I'm opposed to the annexation. I've lived in High Pines about 45 years. I was sort of the blockbuster when I came along. Most of the homes were built in the '40s and '50s, and I was the young buck that came in as the neighborhood was turning over. Now, my neighborhood is sort of a tear-down neighborhood, where these older homes are being demolished when the people expire or move away or go to a nursing home. And then the big, two-story McMansions are put up. The tax increase, maybe it's only a little more than \$1,000 a year, that's still significant to people that, you know, are retired on a fixed income. My neighbor was complaining about the electric service not coming back so quickly after Irma, but that was a special case. We were on -- we share one transformer for four homes, and that blew out early. FP&L and their contractors have to fix the big high-tension lines that feed a lot of homes first before they get down to getting in somebody's backyard and fixing one individual transformer. And the neighbors across the street that don't take in their trash cans, it's some college students that are running the house. And you know, they're not so responsible. I talk to them and they'll call them back once. And as far as garbage pickup in the backyard, I'm not interested in having somebody come in my backyard. It's pretty inefficient to make somebody, you know, carry that trash around to put it in the truck. I don't have any problems wheeling the can out twice a week. And I'm still -- even what the financial person said about the unfunded pension, that's an awfully big figure. And in 17 years, if it's all paid down, that's great, but I'll never see the end of that process. So, I'm sure some of my tax money...

Unidentified Speaker: We can't hear you.

Mr. Denham: Will be coming...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, we can't -- you have to get closer to the microphone.

Mr. Denham: Some of that money would be coming out of my little contributions from the higher taxes. I guess that's it. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Mr. Mayor, Mr. Sachar had made a comment about an abandoned home across the street from him. And I think the City Attorney's program for abandoned properties is aggressive and successful. And we have every property -- because that's a security issue. It's a safety issue, not just an aesthetics issue. We have no patience for abandoned properties that are disinvested, and so, the legal approach that the City has had in the last three years have been fiercely successful. So, if he would give us his -- that address again, we're happy to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Sure.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Assist with that.

City Attorney Ramos: Absolutely. We have a very aggressive approach to getting abandoned properties to comply. Many of those properties, during the financial downturn, were taken back to the bank, and the banks were not doing what they needed to do to get the properties up-to-speed. And we have, through legal action, been very successful in doing that. We add properties all the time. As we see them we add them to our list, and we continue to keep that list active. Aside from that, there was a comment about it being overgrown, the lot being overgrown. We,

the City, will go in and we'll mow the lawn and assess that cost to the property owner so that in the meantime, while we work through the court system, at least the grass is mowed. We don't have mosquitoes and other types of issues.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And just as...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Clarification, the abandoned properties are non-homesteaded. We are not doing this to a homesteaded property. We're doing it where somebody has walked from the site, where it's a bank-owned and they've turned their back on the neighborhood.

City Attorney Ramos: That's correct.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Catherine Koch or Koch. It's Koch?

Catherine Koch Espinosa: Koch.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Koch, 7225 Southwest 55<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Good morning.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Good morning.

Commissioner Lago: Good morning.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: It's actually Catherine Koch Espinosa. I've lived at my home at -- just off of Sunset. It's one house off of Sunset, across from the Tropical Audubon Society.

City Attorney Ramos: Could you give us your address?

Ms. Koch Espinosa: So...

City Attorney Ramos: Could you give us your...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: 7225 Southwest 55<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Is there a -- whatever it is, can you turn it off, please?

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. I'm sorry, ma'am.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: No, no problem.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You want my undivided attention. Go ahead.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Oh, doesn't matter. One of our concerns is we have had pretty much unparalleled growth all around our area. And on Sunset Drive, which, as I said, is a house away from where we live, we've had incredible growth of commercial buildings, incredible growth of traffic, virtually uncontrollable, and that's your side. Your side has grown. We've had absolutely no involvement in any of that growth. Nobody's ever come to us and asked us do we agree or disagree with the building. There's an enormous building that's being built right next to Yumuri that's been built for several years. I believe it's the (INAUDIBLE) family, the (INAUDIBLE) Corporation. Nobody ever asked about that. It's bigger than any other structure there. We had no involvement in that, and that's going to increase traffic even more because there's an enormous number of people employed there. Baptist, you know, is over there, as well. But on commercial, there's so much growth and there's a restaurant there called George's, that I personally have fought against and all my neighbors pretty much have fought against for years

because they violated all the noise requirements. And, in fact, my neighbors have gone to hearings and have gone and argued and Coral Gables really did not do anything to help us. They kind of left us in the cold. We've gone over and talked to the police officers that are Coral Gables cops. And finally, it's gotten a little bit better, but I don't know if it's gotten better because they finally listened or because they're a little concerned with the annexation process. But we're afraid that this unparalleled growth is going to come over to our side. Because we've got houses there that could be torn down, so we wanted to know is there any guarantee that Coral Gables will not cross over and build on our side, the High Pines side?

Commissioner Mena: So, we don't build those buildings. These are private landowners who either have certain property rights or don't...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: True.

Commissioner Mena: And obviously, who have the right, as they do now in the County, to propose to do something different with their land, and it will be dealt with at that time. But...

Commissioner Quesada: Yeah, but I don't think that's really...

Commissioner Mena: When you say Coral Gables...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Zoning. That's with what...

Vice Mayor Keon: No, but I...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Regards to zoning.

Vice Mayor Keon: I think all of the properties that you are talking about...

Commissioner Lago: Are residential.

Vice Mayor Keon: Along Sunset are zoned residential and they're zoned...

Commissioner Mena: Right.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Right.

Vice Mayor Keon: Single-family...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And that is not going to change.

Vice Mayor Keon: Residential. We don't rezone properties that are single-family residential for commercial. And I am sorry that you weren't involved in it because you're a different municipality. You're outside of our jurisdiction. Currently, you're outside of our jurisdiction. Had you been within our jurisdiction, you would have been noticed and you would have been part of the conversation about that development. I know it's different -- difficult when it is so close to you, but because it's a different jurisdiction, there wasn't much that we could do about it with regard to that neighborhood.

Commissioner Mena: But there is...

Vice Mayor Keon: We don't rezone -- if you are single-family residential, you will remain single-family residential.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Because of that -- okay, that's part of the...



Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Worries of our neighborhood.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We're not changing anything, no.

Vice Mayor Keon: No. You will remain single-family residential.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: And what about traffic control. Will you all be involved in traffic control on Sunset and Red Road?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We have lowered our speed limit to 25 miles an hour, as opposed to -- and that's in Coral Gables. And we're putting up the signs now as it is. We have cameras that take a picture of your license plate if you're exceeding -- I think it's 5 miles more than the 25 miles. So, we are very much involved in traffic control, yes.

Vice Mayor Keon: But Sunset is a County road. And so, the County...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's on Red Road.

Vice Mayor Keon: Just like for us and for you, the jurisdiction with regard to -- we enforce in that area because it's in the City -- or we enforce in that area because the north lane is in the City; the south lane is in the County. But, you know, if the annexation goes through, yes, we will enforce all along that area.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: And if the annexation goes through, do we, in our area then, have much more control over the commercialization of what is basically our neighborhood?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Well, we would pay...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: The whole south Gables area.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Attention to you...

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And you would come here and would complain to us versus the County...

Commissioner Lago: Going to the County.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Which is...

Commissioner Quesada: Something you also should keep in mind, Coral Gables traditionally, when it comes to single-family residential neighborhoods, we've been very strict on not allowing change. For example, lot splits, when there is a bigger lot that wants to be cut in two...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Right.

Commissioner Quesada: So they build two smaller homes, we're typically very strict against it. Actually, we stopped one last week, this group up here, and that's really even prior to this Commission. Past Commissions have been very strong about that as well. Something -- a similar neighborhood, it's a little bit further away, the most recent annexation that we've had is King's Bay, a single-family residential neighborhood. It might be a good idea to drive by over there or maybe talk to some of them, and you'll see that what we've done is we've added more trees. We've given -- you know, working on giving them a park.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Would you have any control -- because in our area, we've had -- as other residents have stated -- we've had, you know, these nice, old houses torn down and, you know,

it's private residents, I understand that. But there has been no control over torn down trees building...

Commissioner Lago: Well...

Commissioner Quesada: We'll have...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: To the edge...

Commissioner Quesada: We're very...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Of the lot.

Commissioner Quesada: We are very strict...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: But you're strict in...

Commissioner Quesada: In preventing them...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Coral Gables, but would you be strict...

Commissioner Quesada: Yeah.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: If we were annexed...

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: If you were annexed, yes...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Would...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We would be, and we have a very active historic preservation department, and our -- we have arborists...

Commissioner Mena: And we just...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And they're -- very, very much.

Commissioner Mena: Three meetings ago, we had...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Commissioner Mena: An hour and a half conversation about a tree...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: About a tree.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: But you would be...

Commissioner Mena: We really did. I'm not...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: If we were annexed, you would be involved...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You would be a part of...

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Coral Gables.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: But at what point would...

Commissioner Lago: And just so you're...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: You be involved in the new houses?

Commissioner Lago: From...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Madam, you can't tear down...

Commissioner Lago: Immediately.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: A historic property, and then the new house has to come -- we're the only city that has a Board of Architects that approves the look of the house, the only city. And we have it, and we're very proud of having...

Commissioner Lago: And we're...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: A Board of Architects.

Commissioner Lago: Just so you're also aware, we also just went through a tree succession endeavor where we cataloged every single tree in the right-of-way. I think it's over 50,000 trees or around that. We know where are the trees all. That hadn't been done in I don't know how many years in the City of Coral Gables. And we just planted almost 4,000 trees in the medians, and we're continuing to do that because some of them, obviously, fell down during...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Right.

Commissioner Lago: This hurricane.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: If we annexed...

Commissioner Lago: And when you talk about -- when you...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: From that point on...

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: You would be involved?

Commissioner Lago: Yes, but when you talk about...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: From that point on.

Commissioner Lago: When you talk about tree protection in the City, especially specimen...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: We bought a park -- we bought a piece of land based on a tree in the North Gables area.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Lisbon Street.

Commissioner Lago: On Lisbon Street. We bought two pieces of property that were going to be built into two homes because there was a beautiful oak tree that I recommend you drive by and

check out what we did with that park. Check out what we did in regards to Alhambra, the Alhambra park, which is now called Betsy Adams Park. We have...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: I'm just...

Commissioner Lago: Bought...

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Concerned -- the neighbors are concerned because we're seeing...

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: You know...

Vice Mayor Keon: You're losing your canopy.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Houses are being built to the...

Unidentified Speaker: Okay.

Ms. Koch Espinosa: Edge of the lot, which I didn't think they were allowed to in Dade County, and we're losing our look of our neighborhood.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah. That's why I asked Mr. Coller when in the process do the proposed building sites that are currently -- that plans have been submitted for, are in the permitting process in Dade County, when would they move to the City of Coral Gables? I asked him that before and...

Mr. Coller: Right. I -- with regard to building permits, if somebody has pulled the building permit, that's a different issue.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Mr. Coller: But if they're going through the process prior to and have not pulled the building permit yet, then the City could -- as part of the interlocal -- could take over immediately.

Vice Mayor Keon: Oh, okay.

Mr. Coller: If that's what we want to do.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's...

Vice Mayor Keon: In the City of Coral Gables, when you submit your plans for building or the survey for your lot, before it goes, in the very beginning, there is a tree survey required in the City of Coral Gables, and all of those large specimen trees have to be noted on the survey. So that, as we look at the plans for the home, you have to look at them with regard to the specimen trees so that they don't get torn down. Now, if a tree sits in the center of a lot and you cannot build on that lot because of a tree, then you have to make some accommodation.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's...

Vice Mayor Keon: We can't prohibit that. But we do preserve and we do make people build around specimen trees.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. Let's go on. Anything else, madam?

Ms. Koch Espinosa: No, thank you.



Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Larra Call Waldmann.

Larra Call Waldmann: Here.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: 5100 Southwest 75<sup>th</sup> Street. Good morning.

Ms. Call Waldmann: Yes, sir. I'm Larra Call Waldmann. How do you do? I'm a resident of 5100 Southwest 75<sup>th</sup> Street.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You have to get closer to the microphone, if you can.

Ms. Call Waldmann: Sorry. Okay, is that better?

Commissioner Quesada: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: Yes, ma'am.

Ms. Call Waldmann: I guess I represent a small minority here of people who actually sought out a house in High Pines when I moved from South Miami so that we would be in a neighborhood in an area that was less heavily regulated and with a less bureaucratic heavy hand. We did look at a lot of properties when we thought to move our family to High Pines, and we found that -- we came from Chicago, which is also very heavily regulated in zoning or building ordinance, a heavily regulated area, but we were attracted to High Pines because of the lower threshold, if you will. The concern for us, I think, is if we are annexed, that there will be -- continue to be a lot of bureaucracy. You're taking another 1,500 residents. I'd like to know from the Commissioners, please, if you're planning on also streamlining your zoning and building ordinance processes, if you're going to add more people. You're adding another 700 homes. Are you going to also add

a commensurate number of people who will staff and offer us a permitting system that is more tenable than the one you currently have? The reputation that the City has is abominable.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Madam City Manager.

Commissioner Lago: Can I answer that question?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Lago: When you talk about reputation of the City, I'm going to tell you something and I -- actually, take my word on it, okay, because this is what I do for a living. I do construction. I don't do it in the City of Coral Gables on many occasions, only once in a while. But I talk to a lot of home builders here and contractors who do commercial work. The reputation here may be what you state abominable, but it is completely the opposite. We have streamlined the process already in the last few years immensely. For example, before, you needed to have permits to do interior painting, flooring, doors, baseboard, simple things like that. That's no longer the case. We removed that. We also removed permit costs, like there's no reason why you should do \$500 worth of interior work and pay \$500 worth of permit fees. That's been reduced. Another thing that we've done, which is incredibly important and, you know, you've got to credit this Commission for doing it, along with the leadership of a lot of our employees, especially our employee of the year last year who came up with this idea and came to see me. What do we do about elderly, about the elderly? What do we do about people who served in a capacity in our Armed Forces, single parents, individuals who are disabled? What we do -- and we were the first city to do it and now a bunch of other cities in Miami-Dade County have adopted our standards -- is we have an electric vehicle which will go to your home and help you permit your bathroom remodel, your painting of your exterior home, your changing of your roof tile, up -- maybe even up to -- I think it's up to an addition, correct? Or an addition and below. So, we make it as simple as possible so you don't even need to come down to City Hall.

We'll meet you at your own residence and make sure you can pull a permit from the confines and the comfort of your homes. So, when you talk about streamlining the process, I'm willing...

Ms. Call Waldmann: Sir, can you account for the fact that when a contractor comes to my house to give me a bid, it's \$2,000 less because I live in High Pines because he says that Coral Gables is so difficult to permit?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's what the contractors say, but that's not true.

Commissioner Lago: We have a city...

Ms. Call Waldmann: But that's a direct cost to me, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What?

Ms. Call Waldmann: It would be a direct cost to me, regardless.

Commissioner Lago: Can I give you another -- can I give you...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Get a different contractor that knows what he's talking about...

Commissioner Lago: My final point?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Or she's talking about.

Commissioner Lago: I'm going to be honest with you, and I think that's what you want. I can't do anything about that. But what I can do and I can do and the word is getting out there by you making these comments and by us putting it out on the news and being really forthcoming about this is that when you come to do an addition, let's say...

Ms. Call Waldmann: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Your contractor or yourself has direct contact with our City ombudsman...

Ms. Call Waldmann: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Who is in the City Manager's Office. And they know, at every single moment, where your permits are and where the snags are...

Ms. Call Waldmann: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: And where the processes are and what needs to be done so that when your permit is returned back to you and it's denied for X, Y and Z comments, you've already been able to address those X and Y and Z comments and resubmit immediately, depending on what the issues were. So, we have implemented, over the last few years -- I mean, we've revamped the entire system where we are the gold standard, so if a...

Ms. Call Waldmann: Mr. Lago, what do you say to people who want a metal roof on their house like I have and can't have it in Coral Gables?

Commissioner Lago: I will tell you -- can I tell you? I'm going to tell you about...

Ms. Call Waldmann: That's the kind of freedom we would like...

Commissioner Lago: But let me tell you...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Maybe you...

Commissioner Lago: But can I tell you about that? Can I answer your question?

Ms. Call Waldmann: Sure.

Commissioner Lago: And I agree with you. I've been fighting for that for four years. That's what I'm going to tell you. You know what I'm going to tell you also? Commissioner Quesada -- if you look at the agenda -- and if you'd like, you can have my copy...

Vice Mayor Keon: There's an item.

Commissioner Lago: The item on the agenda today to talk about metal roofs is...

Commissioner Quesada: To allow them.

Commissioner Lago: The item on the agenda to discuss metal roofs is...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Discussion...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, but she's not talking about metal roofs. She's talking about our regulations, more than...

Commissioner Lago: By the way -- hold on...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: One issue.

Commissioner Lago: Hold on. Is -- which item is it?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Under Commission...

Commissioner Lago: It's on the agenda. You can have this. But by the way, your standards in your area are going to stay the same.

Ms. Call Waldmann: You understand that my issue is...

Commissioner Lago: But wait -- I want...

Ms. Call Waldmann: That we want freedom, right?

Commissioner Lago: Wait, but I'm saying...

Ms. Call Waldmann: We want freedom to do what we want to do with our houses, and that's why we love living there.

Commissioner Lago: But let me explain to you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: Let me explain to you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's go on.

Commissioner Lago: Manager -- Mayor, just give me...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: One second because this is important because you're putting out the freedoms. Frank, Commissioner Quesada, when he was here, he dealt a lot with annexation before when he was helping out with Vice Mayor Kerdyk. He can talk to you about when we

annexed other parts of the city, they stayed with the same standards, and they were allowed to have, for example, metal roofs. We're not taking that away from you. That needs -- that misconception, along with the fact that we're going to start changing the zoning from residential to commercial on Sunset has been perpetuated for over a year to the point where I've been talking with the residents and telling them that's not going to happen. I don't know how else to tell you it's not going to happen. I don't know how else to tell you. I mean, we are -- we can only be as transparent as you allow us to be.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And your contractors will tell you one thing, but that is not true. I mean, and my experience with contractors and talking to contractors is that our proceeding is miraculously simple in comparison to the County's. Anyway, anything else, madam?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Mr. Mayor, I have to say, though, we have had issues with contractors not wanting us to come in and inspect their work...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: To make sure that they followed the proper codes. And we absolutely do inspect the work. Up on the roof, a resident may not be an expert, but our roofing inspectors are experts and we make sure that the Florida Building Code is followed. Not every contractor likes to have that type of oversight.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The Florida Building Code. Thank you. Renee Diaz-Silveira.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No. If you're going to talk, please fill a card. Renee Diaz-Silveira.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, no, please. We're...

City Attorney Ramos: No. We...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Discussing annexation. Renee Diaz-Silveira. Renee Diaz-Silveira is not here. She's a proponent. Ryce Stallings is the last card I have. And if you want to speak, please fill out a card, but Ryce Stallings, 7901 Schoolhouse Road. Good morning, sir.

Ryce Stallings: Good morning.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Get close to the mike.

Vice Mayor Keon: Tall guy.

Mr. Stallings: So, I've been living on Schoolhouse Road for 33 years, and I've raised three kids in High Pines. And when I decided where I wanted to buy a house, I chose High Pines over Coral Gables for a number of reasons. You've been very good...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Please -- sorry.

Mr. Stallings: You've been very good at presenting your side of, you know, the argument, why you want to annex us, and everybody's going to have to make their decision as to whether it's good or bad for them. But as an architect for 33 years and having dealt with the County and City of Miami and Coral Gables, I can tell you that there's not an equivalency here. And you know, you presented all the positive side, and you've said, well, you know, the zoning's going to be the same, right? But what's not going to be the same is the process that you go through when you build something. And I'll give you, you know -- you said over the last couple of years, we've made our process better here in terms of, you know, pulling a building permit. Because up until



when you changed that, it cost more as an architect to work in Coral Gables. The contractor charged you more money to build here and the process was a lot more difficult. The one thing in your equivalency equation that you don't talk a lot about is the fact that when you go to pull a building permit, we're going to have to go in front of the Board of Architects. And I understand you're very proud of that, right? You know, they have this vision of the City Beautiful and they enforce it, and your Code Enforcement people enforce it too. I, you know, personally, I've been lucky enough that I've been able to work with three Pritzker prize-winning architects over the last, you know, several years. And I can tell you that none of those architects could build here in your city. And if you look around at what's been built, you know, everybody's going to have to make up their mind about whether it's good or bad or not. But I think the reason for regulation and the reason for government and everything is to foster the culture of an area. The reason that I bought in High Pines was because it was unregulated. It was more like a place that Jimmy Buffet could live, you know. And I understand why you want to do this. You want to fill in the little notch in the map and you get how many billions of dollars of taxes out of us, but I'm just here to lament, unfortunately, what I see is the loss of the culture of High Pines. My kids used to go out and play and there were whole blocks where they played in the street. They made messes in their front yard, you know. My son is a world champion fisherman. He's got a 29-foot boat in our yard. He's got trucks there and crap all the time, but it made him into a world champion, right? So, I mean, everybody, I think, you know, you can say, well, my house value's going up and, you know, everything's going to be wonderful if we're annexed by Coral Gables really needs to look around and worry about what we're going to lose.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir. Thank you very much. And the last one I have here is Patrick Burns, 7825 Southwest 53<sup>rd</sup> Place.

Patrick Burns: Yes, sir. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good morning, sir.

Mr. Burns: Let me take my hat off. Thank you, Commissioner, for hearing me for just a few minutes. First of all, early in this meeting, I heard High Pines get beat up like a lefthanded stepchild. They -- the police department was criticized. The garbage was criticized. The fire-rescue was criticized. I'm a retired police officer, and I will tell you that, in our neighborhood, if you get out at all, you cannot go a day without seeing police officers, particularly on the island that they talked about, that (INAUDIBLE) island. We have police officers everywhere. We have bike patrols. Our crime is way down. They go and they visit almost everyone, if you're home. They're going to stop and they're going to see you. The entire High Pines area is very fortunate to have this many officers, and they've had these many officers now that I've really paid attention to probably for the last seven or eight years. That was one. Fire-rescue is a mile and a quarter away. I had to use fire-rescue on two occasions for my daughter when she had croup, and within five or six minutes, I had fire-rescue here. And as far as the garbage goes, our guys are great. They come down the street -- yeah, every now and then, they bust up those plastic garbage cans, but they're not leaving giant holes in the front of our streets, when you can go to a lot of these Coral Gables area and you've got five-foot holes that are ten feet long. Coral Gables is a great city. There's no doubt about it. You've got a tremendous police department and the fire-rescue is great. There's no doubt about it. They're good, hardworking people. But I just feel like you just beat up this neighborhood. We take a lot of pride in High Pines. There's very few houses that aren't well groomed, well taken care of. I am opposed to -- a one-week architect student could come in and build these blocks that you're building now. We've lost a little bit of the integrity that we've had in our community. Really, this was a beautiful -- and we're putting in these big blocks. If we do get annexed, I hope that that's taken into consideration because you don't see those type of homes being built in Coral Gables. But I think I speak for a lot of people about the pride that we do have here in High Pines. And I've -- am a disabled veteran, so my taxes are a little bit different. But someone alluded to the age of the folks that are now living there and they are on fixed incomes. And what was it that Nancy Pelosi said, oh, we got crumbs. Well, this crumbs that this additional \$700 or \$800 is a lot of money to a lot of folks, so you really have to take a solid look at that and see if there's some flexibility in

there. But in the future, we don't need to beat up High Pines. We take a lot of pride, so thank you...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Burns: For your time.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

Mr. Burns: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Doris Llanes or Doris what?

Unidentified Speaker: Llanes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Llanes. Doris?

Unidentified Speaker: She's not speaking.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Oh, but she's -- she's not speaking, but she's a proponent. And Martha Chavoustie. I do not wish to speak, but she's a proponent, too. And I don't have any more cards.

Rafael Garcia: May I just ask a quick question?

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

City Attorney Ramos: Please step up to the podium.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, just step up here.

City Attorney Ramos: And state your name and your address...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Come on.

City Attorney Ramos: Please.

Mr. Garcia: Quick question. Rafael Garcia, 7241 Southwest...

Commissioner Quesada: And when you're done speaking, you still need to fill out a card.

Mr. Garcia: Okay.

Commissioner Quesada: For the record.

Mr. Garcia: No, I just want to ask...

Commissioner Lago: What is your name, sir?

Mr. Garcia: Is it just going to be -- Rafael Garcia.

Commissioner Lago: Your address.

Mr. Garcia: 7241 Southwest 55<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mr. Garcia: Will the annexation -- will people voting on it only be property owners or anyone living inside the boundary and even renters?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: It will be registered voters.

Mr. Garcia: Just registered voters.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: That's the way that the County has their...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Registered voters.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Annexation process.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Mr. Garcia: Okay, alright. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright, thank you. The public hearing section is closed. I don't have any more cards.

Commissioner Lago: You have one card. She has one card.

Vice Mayor Keon: Oh.

Commissioner Lago: Let her speak.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, last chance, and after this one, there's nobody else.

Unidentified Speaker: Alright, come on up.

Vice Mayor Keon: Go ahead.

Commissioner Lago: Come on up.

Commissioner Quesada: Since you're last card.

Vice Mayor Keon: You're up.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Laura Bon...

Laura Bon Simon: Bon -- Laura Bon Simon, 7261...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Laura Bon Simon?

Ms. Bon Simon: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, 72...

Ms. Bon Simon: Good morning.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: 61 Southwest 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.

Ms. Bon Simon: Good morning. I hadn't planned to speak. Many of the comments I would have made have already been made. But I lived in the Gables and loved it for 18 years. About eight years ago, I moved into High Pines. I love both areas. I think the annexation is a positive because I enjoyed the services. I know this gentleman that just spoke talked about a police presence. My alarm went off many times. I did not get anybody to respond. You've heard that many times before. But the repeated egging of my house was something that I found

problematic. My background was also law enforcement, and I wasn't sure if I was being singled out because of that. I contacted the City many times and the County. I put in cameras and, over the years that I've lived there, it's been repeated and it's destructive. I look forward to people looking at what Coral Gables can offer all of us. I understand the fixed income issues, but I think it's outweighed by the many services and support we'll get if we annex. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am. Okay, no more speakers. Now, the Commission will address the issue. Commissioner Quesada, do you want to start?

Commissioner Quesada: Yeah, I have no problem. I want to say thank you to everyone who spoke. Everyone was very professional and courteous, so thank you for that. We don't always -- unfortunately, we don't always see that, so even though differing opinions here today, I think it's -- I think it was nice to have everyone give feedback. Look, I've been -- I don't -- Mayor Valdes-Fauli, I don't know how involved he was with previous annexations, but I guess I'm a little uniquely suited. I dealt with one, even though I was not an elected official at the time, and I dealt with the neighborhood. And one thing that I know we do do -- or at least the last time we annexed -- is maintain the character of that neighborhood, as long as there are basic safety issues that are properly addressed. The Florida Building Code is something that's come up a few times today. It's important for everyone to understand that, look, if there's a violation of the Florida Building Code, it doesn't matter whether you're unincorporated Miami-Dade County or City of Coral Gables or Doral or anywhere else. I mean, that's something that has to be addressed. But you know, the metal roof conversation came up. King's Bay, when they were incorporated, some of the homes had metal roofs. They wanted to continue with it and add them to it, and we allowed it at the time, just because it was consistent with that neighborhood.

Vice Mayor Keon: And it's still allowed with them.

Commissioner Quesada: And it's still allowed in that neighborhood. So, you know, the City won't come in to aggressively force anything unless it's a safety concern. The City Manager

talked about our inspectors and contractors and that application. Look, it's important to have inspectors to make sure that the Florida Building Code is being required. It's going to help us prevent fires in homes in the future and other kind of incidents that can be prevented with proper professionals ensuring that things are done properly, for safety reasons. I'm for the annexation. I saw the numbers, and I see that it was more in favor than against. I think it makes sense from the geographically location for the City and for those reasons.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright, Commissioner Mena.

Commissioner Mena: So, when we discussed annexation in the context of Little Gables, I actually voted against it. So, you know, I wanted to be clear today that a lot of the concerns that I had with respect to that area are not present in this area. We talked about some of the commercial, now famous trailer park, that we discussed ad nauseum and some of those issues that we had in that area that concerned me do not exist here. I -- you know, for those of you who are here from that area, I live right behind the Whip'n Dip, two blocks off Sunset. I'm on the Coral Gables side of Sunset, but I think my neighborhood's probably much more akin to your neighborhood, and frankly, closer to you all than a lot of my -- than I am to a lot of my colleagues up here who may live in other parts of Coral Gables. So, I think our neighborhood still does have the sort of charm and relaxed feel that I think a lot of you may be concerned about losing with this type of change. I understand that concern. But I really do believe when you add it all up, this is going to be a benefit for everybody. I really do believe that our services are first-class. It's not -- as the gentleman said -- to badmouth whatever there is now, but the nature of this type of enclave and this type of location makes it difficult for the County to render certain services that we think we can do a better job with. So, again, I'm in favor of this. I think it's going to be a great thing for the area. And whatever side of the issue you're on today, I hope you all know that we're here, and if this goes forward and this area does become part of Coral Gables, we're here to represent you as well and we want to hear your concerns, and we want to work with you to make this as seamless as possible and to address any issues as we go along in the process that may come up. We take those things seriously and we want to serve you guys'



needs. And so, please, don't hesitate to contact us. Some people mentioned today that, you know, hopefully, you have more access to your local government. Well, in a lot of ways, that's us. And so, our contact information is available. I've got one cell phone and I provide my number to our residents and make myself available, and I know my colleagues do as well. So, you know, as we go forward, we want to work with you on this process, so I'm in favor of this proposed annexation.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Commissioner Lago.

Commissioner Lago: No, just to make a brief statement, I agree wholeheartedly with my colleagues, and I imagine we'll -- hopefully, this will potentially be unanimous. I agree in reference to the issue of annexation. I think it's potentially mutually beneficial for both parties involved, not only for the City of Coral Gables, but more importantly, for the residents that we're potentially going to annex. Every person who sits up here takes a lot of pride in being an elected official or being on the executive team, like our City Attorney and our City Manager, and the -- our City Clerk. You're going to be able to get in contact with us at any time of the day, and we're not telling you basically a bunch of hot air. We answer emails until 12 o'clock at night, in some cases, even until 1 in the morning. If you have not reached out -- if you have not been able to reach out to your elected officials and to your city staff, if you become part of Coral Gables, as you move forward in this process -- because, again, like the Manager mentioned, this is going to be a long process. You know, we're not making a decision today. This still has to go to the County for ratification and has to be approved by multiple different entities. So, my goal is to, hopefully, one day represent you and make sure that when you speak about being involved with Coral Gables, that it's an incredible opportunity and that you're happy with the representation that we're providing you. We're located on the second floor. You have the City Manager on the first floor. If you have any questions whatsoever, my number is -- you can either get it through my newsletter or you can get it on the webpage. We have quarterly town hall meetings where everyone is welcome to come and voice your opinion and give insight in regards to how we can be a better city. So, I'm looking forward to potentially and hopefully serving you, and I allow --

and I'm grateful that you gave us the opportunity and you gave us your time and you came out and voiced your opinion. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah, thank you all for coming here today. You now have a regional government that also provides you with municipal services. We are a municipality and all we do is provide municipal services. It is the only thing that is our agenda. The entire city is built around providing those services. You also have -- we don't serve in districts. We all serve at large. You have any one of us that you can come to and talk to and work with to address any issue or any problem you may have. I think the issue of annexation truly is your decision to make. We welcome you if you choose to join us. If you choose not to join us, then you will make that decision and you will continue the services you have. But you will do what's in your best interest. So, I will support this annexation based on the votes that we had where a majority of the people have requested the -- to be annexed into the City. I think -- I've lived here since 1974. I've lived here a long time. I've served on this Commission now for -- this is my second term in office. I think that it is -- we are very responsive. I don't think we -- we do maintain a certain aesthetic in our city that maintains the quality of life in our neighborhoods. We do ensure that the homes in your neighborhoods are -- retain their residential character. We don't rezone single-family residential areas for commercial use. I think that the focus of this government is primarily the single-family residential neighborhoods in our city. We do have a downtown that we do work for, we are grateful for, but, you know, our voters are the residents that live in this city. You are the most important element in the city government. So, if you want to join us, you are so welcome to do so. We will look forward to representing you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. And I wanted to address -- well, first of all, like we all have said, thank you for appearing. This is what makes Coral Gables unique or different from the County, that you're here, we have listened to all of you and our doors are always open. I get hundreds of emails, which I try to answer every day, and Coral Gables is an open city. We are

very communicative. Somebody that didn't have information on our finances, we try to communicate in every single way possible, except that after Irma, I drove around neighborhoods and Lisbon Street in North Gables, and I saw somebody working out in the yard picking up debris and this person, he came up to me offended and incensed that nobody had knocked on his door to tell him a hurricane was coming. Well, I'm sorry, sir, but I'm not going to knock on your door to tell you a hurricane is coming in the next time. I've been here longer than anybody who's sitting up here. I was mayor for four terms, '93 to 2001, and I presided over several annexations, Snapper Creek, your neighbors, Hammock Lakes, your neighbors, Pine Bay Estates, just south of you. Ask anybody in there whether they're happy with the annexation or not. We have respected their codes. We've respected Pine Bay Estates. They didn't want to have street names. Okay, so they have numbers, which causes a problem with the County who said you're not in Coral Gables; you have numbers. But that's their problem. That's what they wanted and they're living with that. Ask your neighbors and see if they're happy with the annexations, and I think, unanimously, they will tell you that, yes, they are happy. The services we provide -- drive down Miami and somebody will say they don't want the garbage picked up. But drive down Miami and look at those green, huge containers, the size of that podium or bigger, out in the street where cars crash into them and they're ugly. They're ugly. And we do have trash piles or we do have trash pits. We're working on that. We're working on that because, you know, we are a city that responds. Our finances, yes, when I left in 2001, we had a zero unfunded pension plan. It was fully funded. And suddenly, the deficit ballooned to \$250 million. We have, in the last administration and now in this one, we have confronted the issue and we're working towards it. The surplus that you saw there is an eight-year surplus. Our budget is almost \$200 million. And we have a AAA bond rating, one of the three cities in the state of Florida that have a AAA bond rating from every single rating agency. We are a very, very, very healthy city that you would be joining. Somebody mentioned the Board of Architects. Yes, we do have a Board of Architects and I'm proud to have a Board of Architects because it prevents some of the abominations we see around us, around us in other cities. I'm not going to mention any. But I am proud of having a Board of Architects. We're one -- I think the only city in Florida that has a Board of Architects. It is more bureaucracy, if you want, but I think it does

a wonderful service for Coral Gables. Trees. We have a full-time arborist. We are very, very conscious, as Commissioner Lago said. We planted 4,000 trees. We just planted 4,000 trees and have replaced many, if not most, of the trees brought down by Irma, excluding ficus trees, and we're going to get rid of those too. We're very, very conscious and our mission is to serve. Our mission is to serve the people of Coral Gables. Our doors are open. I am for annexation. It has worked in the past, in Snapper Creek, Hammock Lakes, Pine Bay Estates. It has worked in the past, and I think that you will be happy. This is the first step in a long process. It goes to the County. It comes back to us. There's a vote. And I think that it is a good thing, and I would like for someone to make a motion, please.

Commissioner Quesada: I move Item F-7 for approval.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second?

Commissioner Lago: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll, Mr. City Clerk?

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, everybody, for coming on this.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.