

City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
December 8, 2015

ITEM TITLE:

Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida urging Miami-Dade County, through the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, to resolve the dispute with the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Foundation regarding the Bahamian Village project, and granting the City Manager and City Attorney full authority to take any necessary action to facilitate resolution of this matter, including directing the City Attorney to seek to appear in the litigation as amicus curiae. (Sponsored by Commissioner Keon and Commissioner Lago).

DEPARTMENT HEAD RECOMMENDATION:

Approval

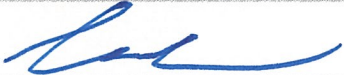
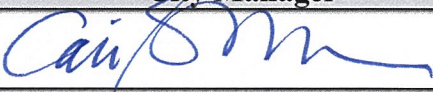
BRIEF HISTORY:

The Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association represents the residents of the MacFarlane Homestead and Golden Gate neighborhoods of Coral Gables, which includes the MacFarlane Homestead Historic District. This geographic area of Coral Gables has an extraordinarily rich and important history, as it was built by the Bahamian settlers who worked with George Merrick to build the original homes throughout Coral Gables. The Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association represents a number of Coral Gables families with lower incomes, and received a land grant through the related Lola B. Walker Homeowners Foundation that includes a duty to build a community center at the corner of US-1 and Grand Avenue. At this time, there have been delays related to development of the property over the past decade that have caused concern by all stakeholders; although it should also be noted that a significant economic recession occurred during this time.

The City has approved the site plan for the community center and recently approved a regulatory covenant regarding the community center that will allow it to proceed once a permit is issued; and

Litigation is occurring involving the owner/developer of the property and the County that could impede or delay the ability to complete the community center. The County named the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Foundation in the litigation, and is taking a position that could effectively divest the Lola B. Walker Homeowners Foundation of its entire interest in the property. The City is significantly concerned with the impact the litigation may pose to the community center and the surrounding neighborhood, and, as such, the City wishes to urge Miami-Dade County, through the Board of County Commissioners and the Mayor, to reach a settlement with the parties to the litigation and allow them to proceed to complete the community center project, as well as seek to appear in the litigation as an amicus curiae.

APPROVED BY:

City Attorney	City Manager
	

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Resolution to be approved.