

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-1
January 26, 2010
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

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

City Staff

City Manager, Patrick Salerno
City Attorney, Elizabeth Hernandez
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Public Works, Ernesto Pino

Public Speaker(s)

H-1[Start: 9:52:11 a.m.]

Resolution accepting the recommendation of the Chief Procurement Officer to award the Ponce de Leon Boulevard Median Installation and Roadway Improvements (Phase II) Project to Tran Construction, Inc. pursuant to Section 2-828 of the Procurement Code and Invitation for Bid (IFB) 2009.12.01 in the amount of \$1,513,727.60 (one million five hundred thirteen thousand seven hundred twenty-seven dollars and sixty cents); further authorizing an appropriation of funds for this project.

Mayor Slesnick: Mr. Manager. Reverend thank you for being with us.

City Manager Salerno: Thank you Mayor. Item H-1 – Ernesto, that is Resolution accepting the recommendation of the Chief Procurement Officer to award the Ponce de Leon Boulevard Median Installation and Roadway Improvements (Phase II) Project to Tran Construction, Inc. pursuant to Section 2-828 of the Procurement Code and Invitation for Bid (IFB) 2009.12.01 in the amount of \$1,513,727.60 (one million five hundred thirteen thousand seven hundred twenty-seven dollars and sixty cents); further authorizing an appropriation of funds for this project. Ernesto is going to give a brief overview of this next and significant phase of work on this major roadway in the city.

Commissioner Withers: While you are setting up may I ask, I guess you are ready.

Mr. Pino: Good morning. I'm here this morning to give you an overview of the proposed Phase II Ponce de Leon Median Installation and Roadway Improvement Project; however, it is important to review the other successfully completed projects that lead to this phase. The right-of-way redevelopment of Miracle Mile...

City Manager Salerno: Excuse me Ernest, can you just speak a little closer to the mike – closer.

Mr. Pino: The right-of-way redevelopment of Miracle Mile which consisted of a raised landscape median, traffic lanes reduction from six to four lanes with dedicated left turn lanes provided the impulse for a similar program to be duplicated on a portion of Ponce de Leon Boulevard where a raised median did not exist. The Phase I Right-of-way Redevelopment of Ponce de Leon Boulevard between Almeria and Alcazar Avenue was completed in 2007 and has reduced traffic congestion, improved pedestrian safety, enhanced trolley operations, and provided new streetscape/landscaping and amenities. A total construction cost for this seven block segment was approximately \$1.6 million dollars and was funded by County impact fees, and FDOT financial assistant grant, and a developer's contribution. The present Phase II right-of-way redevelopment of Ponce de Leon Boulevard became a logical continuation of the Ponce de Leon Improvement Program and will complete the raised landscape median within the city's business district. Phase II was originally planned to continue to Southwest 8th Street, but however due to budget constraints, this segment had to be shortened to eight blocks and then terminating at the north at Salamanca Avenue. The project is very similar in scope to the Phase I project and the total bid price for the construction is a little over \$1.5 million dollars, well below the \$2.6 million dollar budget, almost a million dollars. The project's duration is 280 calendar days or just over nine months. The specifics of the projects are new sidewalks....

Commissioner Anderson: Check to see if the mike is on.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: It's off.

Mayor Slesnick: Try this one.

Mr. Pino: We are looking at the bottom plan in here, this is the proposed plan; it will have new sidewalks on both the east and west side of Ponce, paving and drainage improvements, curb and gutter realignment to provide conversion from the existing angle parking to parallel parking, it will have inner section curb bump-outs to allow easier access, easier bus access for passengers riding the Coral Gables trolley, it also includes three new traffic signal locations, which include a signal upgrade, at Ponce 1600 block, and replacement signals at Coral Gables Elementary School, and at Salamanca Avenue, and of course the landscape center median, which includes irrigation and accent lighting. The source of funds for the Phase II project is a \$1,036,796.00 from the Federal Stimulus Fund, and a balance of \$476,931.00 from County Impact Fees. Separate construction engineering inspection services for the project will be performed by SRS Engineering Inc., one of our on board engineering consultants in the amount of \$195,000 approximately, and will be funded for this purpose by the County Impact Fees. Upon approval of

this item, we will proceed to issue the letter of award to the contractor, Tran Construction, and we will expect the project to start sometime in April or so.

Commissioner Cabrera: Is this the same contractor we used for the other side of the corridor?

Mr. Pino: No, it was not, it's a different contractor.

Commissioner Cabrera: That's a good starting point.

Mr. Pino: Yes. If you have any questions...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes, let me just ask you a couple of quick questions; the bump-outs, you are going to have bump-outs similar to how you have in the other portion?

Mr. Pino: Phase I – correct.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: The same type of landscaping and everything?

Mr. Pino: It would be a continuation of the same design concept.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Very good – and how many, just curious, how many parking spaces will we lose by going from diagonal to parallel parking?

Mr. Pino: I can't tell you that right away, but I can....

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: You can send it to me, that's OK; there will be some loss to that, but the improvements will far enhance that, there is no doubt about it; this is really going to bring the north end of Ponce new with the south end...

Commissioner Anderson: They've been waiting for a long time.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Oh God, yes, long time; they have been waiting for a long time.

Commissioner Anderson: Promising it.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes.

Commissioner Cabrera: Given the fact that there is going to be a reduction in parking, I mean, I'm going to vote on this, I'm not going to stop it from going forward, but given the fact that this is going to have an impact on parking along the northern corridor, how do you feel about making a decision without knowing the impact of lost parking spaces?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: How do I feel?

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: You know, I would feel...I would have a problem supporting it if it was further to the south, but I know that the parking is a lot less intensive down in the northern end of the quadrant there, and I don't think that this will impact that parking in that location.

Commissioner Cabrera: So you are comfortable making a decision without knowing how many parking spaces?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I think I've seen it before; I was just trying to ask the question to reflect again on my mind exactly how many parking spots are lost, but I don't think it's substantial.

Mr. Pino: It really isn't and the further south and north you get, the less dense it becomes, so it's...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Does anybody know the parking...

Commissioner Cabrera: The 800 block is already parallel.

Mr. Pino: Yes it is.

Commissioner Cabrera: So – I'm sorry, it's not the 800. The 800 and the 700 block is parallel, the 600 block of Ponce begins diagonal or angle parking, if I'm not mistaken.

Mr. Pino: 600? – I'm not sure.

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes, the 800 is Southwest 8th Street and Ponce de Leon Boulevard...

Mr. Pino: That is parallel.

Commissioner Cabrera: And that's parallel; well there is hardly anything there. There used to be two gas stations there, now there is a failed money laundering Mexican restaurant there, and then the gas station...

Mayor Slesnick: Parallel in front of American Airlines too.

Commissioner Cabrera: Right – no it's not; in front of American Airlines....

Mayor Slesnick: Against the hedges – there are two American Airlines buildings...

Commissioner Cabrera: I'm sorry, the southern one at 666 Ponce de Leon, or 999 Ponce de Leon, I'm sorry.

Mr. Pino: The second block from 8th Street, it's still parallel parking remains.

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes, yes – and then from that point on it becomes angle parking, so you are absolutely right.

Commissioner Anderson: Well I intend to support the project, but I wanted to get back to your thing about the parking. I also think we have to figure out what we are going to do there; I mean, I think there are some issues with the parking, developing some parking incentives, nodal parking garages in the area. I don't know how that will happen; I think we need to have some type of plan as it further redevelops.

Commissioner Withers: I think robotic parking might be...

Commissioner Cabrera: With metal roofs. (Laughter)

Commissioner Anderson: And outdoor dining. (Laughter)

Commissioner Cabrera: It should be all financed with G.O. Bond money.

Mayor Slesnick: Mr. Manager, we have at least three brand new large buildings up that way with private parking garages, according to the owners of these new buildings our parking requirements have exceeded their needs. I mean, that's what I hear, and we have been successful somewhat in trying to work with private garages to provide public parking options. I know it is required in two of the large buildings downtown, the Gables Grand, which is underlying city property, and they must provide so many spaces, and then when we permitted 10 Aragon, we required so many public parking spaces at public parking rates I might add. So there may be an occasion here for us to speak with the owners of the larger buildings with the new garages that are sitting somewhat empty about having public parking at public parking rates, and arrange with the city; maybe there is something we can offer them in return. I don't know, but Ralph that might be a way to talk about providing parking.

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes, I agree. I agree with Bill also, I don't think the problem...look, first and foremost it's a transient area, it's the most transient area of our city. It has great public transportation, both on Ponce with the trolley as well as Douglas Road and Southwest 8th Street. So I believe that, I concur with everyone here that the parking issue is not a deal breaker for me, it's just that I'm very sensitive anytime we lose parking, but on the other hand there has been a lot of development in that area, and every development has had the appropriate amount of parking there, so I don't know about the rest of you, but I don't get many complaints from those that live in the area for parking, so. I just wanted to, you know, I wanted to keep the meeting exciting and throw something in there, and since we did talk about the building, and we talked about parking, and we mentioned, Ms. Anderson mentioned solar panels on top of it, I think the trolley depot would work nicely there and we should just forget the museum and move it over there (laughter), I think the museum should go over there and I think we've all covered it, and then do it all, fund it all with G.O. Bonds.

Mayor Slesnick: It will take a while to digest all that.

Commissioner Cabrera: And have a dog park on the roof, I think we will all get what we want.

Mayor Slesnick: We are now going to adjourn for fifteen minutes to digest all those ideas and come back.

Commissioner Cabrera: I like the robotic parking.

Commissioner Withers: Can I ask a question about, you are stopping at Salamanca...

Mr. Pino: Correct.

Commissioner Withers...What would the additional cost be to take it all the way to 8th Street?

Mr. Pino: The way we are getting prices now, in hind sight we probably would have been able to do it; I believe there are five blocks between Salamanca and 8th Street, about five or six, about a million dollars; about a million dollars if I have to do a rough guess.

Commissioner Withers: A million – and it seems like this current \$1.5 million dollar project is pretty revenue neutral as far as cost to the city, it sounds like it's funded by County, State and Federal funds.

Mr. Pino: Federal funds and county impact fees.

Commissioner Withers: So those funds aren't available for the other million bucks if we wanted to go forward on that, or we missed the window of opportunity, or what?

Mr. Pino: The remaining funds, it's up to now we'll ask direction from the Manager and see what we can proceed and plans are ready for that final phase...

Commissioner Withers: I'm sorry.

Mr. Pino: The plans are ready for that final phase.

Commissioner Withers: I know, that's what I'm saying, now would be the economies of scale-- would be the time to do it if we did it.

Mr. Pino: That would be correct.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes, I agree with you; it's a shame to go this far and not finish it to 8th Street.

Commissioner Withers: Well because if we go to do it two or three years in the future it's going to cost two or three times probably...

Commissioner Anderson: For a smaller segment, sure.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Now is the best time to get contractors right now.

Commissioner Withers: I don't know how the rest of the Commission feels Mr. Manager, and I know that I'm not one to add more stress on an already stressful situation as far as budget goes, but I think we should really look at the opportunity there and see if there are – my feeling is since this was Vice Mayor Kerdyk's deal from the very beginning, his whole Ponce corridor, that we should probably throw the albatross around his neck to find the funds for the other million bucks.

(Laughter)

City Manager Salerno: That was my idea; I am very strongly in that regard.

Commissioner Anderson: Bill, how about partnership – anything?

City Manager Salerno: Even if it takes private funds, you know, let's consider a public/private partnership.

Commissioner Withers: In all seriousness, I don't know how the Commission feels, at least explore the opportunities.

City Manager Salerno: We certainly will, we are.

Commissioner Anderson: It will be good to explore it.

Mayor Slesnick: Well Mr. Manager, I think that almost all of us agree, I think all of us agree that we should explore that, and I wanted to let citizens know that we should repeat what you have already reported to us that this is being paid for by Federal stimulus and County impact fees. So there are ways even in challenging times for cities, and we've all said this in our own way to move forward and to keep going and to improve on themselves, so Mr. Manager. OK, do we have a motion on this item on H-1?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: So moved.

Mayor Slesnick: It's been moved by the Vice Mayor.

Commissioner Anderson: Second.

Mayor Slesnick: Seconded by Ms. Anderson, any further discussion?

Commissioner Withers: Yes, one last – even if it might take some time to do that, I don't know if the contract with the contractor allows you to get unit pricing for additional items like another mile of sidewalk, or a mile of median, I don't know how that contract is set up with them, but maybe if we could put at least unit pricing in place with the contractor now, if we did decide to move forward, we would already have the pricing in place. I don't know how that works, but...

City Manager Salerno: We'll explore all those options Commissioner.

Mayor Slesnick: Very good. Mr. Clerk.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes

Commissioner Withers: Yes

Mayor Slesnick: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Slesnick: Thank you – thanks to everyone for their good work.

Commissioner Anderson: It would be nice when it is done.

[End: 10:07:23 a.m.]