

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item J-5
January 9, 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
Assistant City Manager, Frank Fernandez
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Parking Director, Kevin Kinney

Public Speaker(s)

Timothy Plummer

Agenda Item J-5 [0:00:00 p.m.]

Update on Centralized Valet Proposed Locations by Timothy J. Plummer,
President of David Plummer and Associates.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Item J-5, updated on centralized valet proposed locations by Timothy Plummer.

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Agenda Item J-5 - Update on Centralized Valet Proposed Location by Timothy J. Plummer, President of David Plummer and Associates.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And so, this is a follow-up from the RFP that we're ready to issue regarding centralized valet parking. We talked to the Commission about postponing changes until after streetscape. We're happy to report that streetscape is almost completed. You all specifically wanted to know with centralized valet parking in the downtown, where City would run it, where would those stations be. And so, the Parking Department has been working with their consultant to identify those parking spaces.

City Attorney Ramos: Madam Manager, we just lost a quorum. We may want to wait until one of them come back before continuing.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, we appreciate you being here. We'll take a few minutes break.

Parking Director Kinney: We could ask for the PowerPoint to come up, if you could.

Vice Mayor Keon: Did we get the colored one?

Parking Director Kinney: There was a written report in the agenda, but this is also a PowerPoint that goes over the same.

Vice Mayor Keon: Right, but you know what your visual -- you can't really read when it's not in color.

Parking Director Kinney: The one that comes up will be...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Parking Director Kinney: Color.

Vice Mayor Keon: I thought that they had made the new color to -- well, I have one in color. Oh, I do. I have one in color. I do have one.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Even though the gavel was with Vice Mayor, may I go retrieve your quorum?

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah. Are we supposed to give up this dais at 3:30 or something?

City Attorney Ramos: Not today.

Unidentified Speaker: No, that's next meeting.

Vice Mayor Keon: That's next week. Okay, sure.

City Attorney Ramos: Don't worry. We're good.

Vice Mayor Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Mena: Let's try for that anyways.

Vice Mayor Keon: What?

Commissioner Mena: Let's try for that anyways.

City Attorney Ramos: It could happen. It's still early.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah.

City Attorney Ramos: Seeing as we have a quorum, please resume.

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Agenda Item J-5 - Update on Centralized Valet Proposed Location by Timothy J. Plummer, President of David Plummer and Associates.

Parking Director Kinney: We are prepared to go out with the RFP, but one of the items that was still on our checklist was to have Tim review his data and select the locations he recommends as centralized stands. And so, he's here to make a presentation on that.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: But before the -- Mr. Plummer presents, remember, the centralized valet parking, you would not be able to have your own valet operating in front of your restaurant. The only provisions, as I recall, are related to hotels. So, that the Colonnade, the Hyatt, they would be able to continue to manage their valet parking. But this way, one group controls all of the valet parking stations in the downtown, and then to this proposal, the City is that group.

Parking Director Kinney: That is correct.

Timothy Plummer: Good afternoon, everyone. Tim Plummer, with David Plummer & Associates. And, I'll try and get through my presentation pretty briefly. Just a little background, in 2014, we started this process with an evaluation of the valet parking areas for the restaurants in the CBD. Many restaurants were using surplus parking spaces, and it wasn't very efficient. So, we moved forward with the recommendation for the City to consider centralized valet for the CBD area. So, this year -- actually, last year -- excuse me -- in October, on a Saturday night, from 7 to 9, we went out and evaluated 12 different restaurants in the CBD area. Our study area is Giralda on the north, Valencia on the south, Douglas on the east, and Le Jeune on the west. And just a quick summary of some of the data we collected on how many pick-ups and drop-offs there were at those valet stations. Not a lot of surprises; Fleming's, Ruth's Chris, Abbracci, Graziano's, were some of the top users of the current valet system. So, some of the observations we had again in October of 2017, was many of the valet stations only had one attendant, even though they had somewhere between two and five parking spaces, so it wasn't very efficient. I mentioned this last time I was here. High-end cars stayed parked in valet stations, which caused problems with the pick-up/drop-off, as they were occurring in the street. One restaurant that was

supposed to be doing their pick-up/drop-off in the alley was actually doing it on Ponce and that negatively affects traffic flow. And, some valet stations were too close to the intersection, and this caused some operational issues with not only traffic, but pedestrians trying to cross the street. So, there's no doubt a centralized valet system can help improve these issues, because you're dealing with one vendor. I was asked by the City to come up with some guidelines for the centralized valet stations. There's much more in the report, but I've narrowed it down to six what I consider very important ones. And, one goal is to have -- one of the guidelines is to have one valet station per block, with the exception of Miracle Mile.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: When you say per block, that's one on each side...

Mr. Plummer: East...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Or one on...

Mr. Plummer: One per block, on either the north side or the south side. No valet stations on Ponce, unless the side street is closed to vehicular traffic, like we have at Giralda. Valet stations should be midblock, whenever possible. We want to keep them away from the intersections. They should be located -- if they're going to be closer to an intersection, they should be located a minimum of 150 feet from the intersection. And, we want to see them near side of the intersection, not far side. So, if we have operational issues and there's some backup, if we get a heavy demand at some period, the queuing will occur on the street. But, we don't want -- if they're far side -- is for them to -- that queuing to spill back into the intersection. That really causes some issues. And then, whenever possible, we want to alternate on the east-west blocks from north side to south side, so we don't have them all on the south side or all on the north side. We'd like to alternate them block by block. Those are the guidelines -- the general guidelines that we came up with. Now, if you look at this exhibit here, what we have in red are the proposed five valet stations on Miracle Mile. What you see in green is eight that we're going to be talking about today that we are proposing for this first phase. And, then what you see in light

blue is potential future locations. Right now, there's not enough restaurant demand or any restaurant demand at all. But if redevelopment occurs that way, we should be open to having one of these centralized valet stations on each and every one of these blocks. So, I was asked, of those eight, to kind of look and go out in the field, and we met Kevin out there and discussed where we should locate some of these. So, the first one, Giralda Avenue between LeJeune and Salzedo -- and all of these stations will have three valet parking spots. This one will be on the south side and this will service Graziano's and Tap 42. Aragon Avenue between LeJeune and Salzedo, we are recommending on the south side at about midblock. That will service Ruth's Chris and Abbracci. The reason we picked the south side here was there's a paseo that connects you to Miracle Mile, so we also think some of the Miracle Mile demand can be taken care of here. Then we have Giralda Avenue between Salzedo and Ponce, and that is midblock on the south side. And that will service Mesa Mar and some of the smaller restaurants. Here is the one station on Ponce, and this is at...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Looking at the Aragon Abbracci/Ruth's Chris, if it's raining, you're going to get really, really, really wet.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah. I was just think...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Huh?

Commissioner Lago: I was just thinking the same thing.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, you're really going to get wet. Whereas, today, maybe there should be only one in the north and the south side, but closer to the canopies or the -- whatever it is.

Mr. Plummer: Yeah. We -- again, these are guidelines for kind of starting points, and there will be issues like that, but there can be concierge service too from the valet attendants, and that's

something that can be -- go out in the RFP when we get into those situations. Maybe we have umbrellas and they walk folks.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Think of it.

Mr. Plummer: Yeah, those are something that have to be considered, absolutely. So, then here's our one valet station on Ponce at Giralda. Right now...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I'm going to interrupt one second. Kevin, you counted the number of parking spaces in the downtown that were being used either directly or indirectly for valet parking. And so, Mayor, the goal of centralizing is to free up a lot of those spaces for our residents and our customers. Many spaces were being used in the downtown for valet parking, whether it was City or BID controlled or private...

Parking Director Kinney: Within the boundaries of this study area, we have had up to 78 spaces occupied by valet.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, that's what was really...

Parking Director Kinney: So, the plan...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Prompting this.

Parking Director Kinney: The current plan that Tim is proposing, the maximum would be 39, so we would be saving half of the spaces. And, those would be open and available for every resident to pay at the metered spaces.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Enforcement was also difficult when somebody would -- a valet would park a valet customer right back at a meter and not at the off-site location. And so, this way, when it's only the City that is managing the valet parking, the accountability becomes much easier.

Commissioner Lago: And...

Parking Director Kinney: When I would get a call about a valet issue, the first thing I would have to do is find out which valet company...

Commissioner Lago: I think you're also...

Parking Director Kinney: And there's seven of them.

Commissioner Lago: And, we've had this discussion many, many times because I'm the one -- I'm one of the few people that calls you to complain, because I see people doing this all the time, and it just bothers me beyond any belief. And, one of the biggest concerns that I have is the fact that these people are paying \$25, \$30 additional to valet in these spots, high-end cars. And then, what ends up happening is you have a lot of elderly people who are forced to walk into the middle of the street to pick up their cars because, obviously, the valet drivers are making an additional cut for parking those nice cars in the front. And, they're forcing these elderly people - - I mean, in walkers and wheelchairs, to load into their vehicles -- number one is the liability. And the number two, like we discussed with the 18-wheelers before, is the amount of traffic that that results in, you know.

Parking Director Kinney: Well, must to give some round numbers to this, the current centralized valet program does in excess of 60,000 cars a year that we know of. We anticipate that with this new program, it would be 120,000 cars a year. If that's the case, then let's say the valet rate is \$10. Then that one company has a \$1.2 million stake. So, we have -- they have an interest in...

Commissioner Lago: You have leverage.

Parking Director Kinney: To comply.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Parking Director Kinney: So...

Mr. Plummer: So, a lot of these issues should go away.

Commissioner Mena: What do we -- do we do anything to ensure the quality of the service being provided in terms of just turnaround time per vehicle, things like that?

Parking Director Kinney: That is all in the scope of service. We've asked for a 15-minute turnaround as a max, when it's busiest. And I worked with both Economic Development, the Chamber and the BID in developing the scope of service. So, yes, we're worried about branding. We're worried about level of service. We're requiring that there be electronic apps that people can pay without cash or without credit, making use of phones.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And there was also damage to vehicles. And frequently, they -- we would get calls in our office, and it turned out that it wasn't the BID valet. It was a private valet, and the ability to have them make sure that they address that damage was much more difficult with a private company. But, if it was a BID -- or in this instance, the future City valet company -- they would be much more responsive, we're confident.

Parking Director Kinney: It became a little convoluted because usually I would have to call the restaurant, because the restaurant had the agreement with the valet company. And, the restaurant

would try and put pressure on the valet company and they satisfied the customer. But, if I just called the valet company, their interest is -- they don't care.

Vice Mayor Keon: Zero.

Mr. Plummer: So, the station on Ponce, today for servicing Giralda, is on the north side of the intersection. This is what would be considered the far side, so we're going to relocate this to the south side. So, as we get heavy demand, the queues on the Ponce, not into the intersection. Galiano Street between Aragon and Giralda. This station is going to be on the south side of -- I'm sorry. Yes, we got Galiano. So, this is the temporary or additional valet stand in case we have heavy demand or have special events on Giralda. We wanted to have a location, and that is on the west side of Galiano, just south of Giralda. Then we have a stand on Aragon Avenue between Galiano and Merrick Way. There's one parking space we're going to use, but there's also -- and it will be on the south side. There's one parking...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: There is one there right now.

Mr. Plummer: Yes. There's -- so, we're going to have one -- we'll use one parking space, but there's also a loading zone. So, the loading zone's only going to run until 11:30 am, and then we're going to convert that into the valet stand, so we can cover that as well. Then we move to Andalusia. Andalusia, we've got a valet stand on the north side, about 175 feet west of Ponce, and that will service Bulla, BrickTop's, and possibly, Swine. Then, as you go east on Andalusia, we have another one midblock, as well. And that one will be on the south side. There's two parking spaces that we're going to use, and there's a truck service area. So, we're going to use the truck service area after hours and -- to give us our three parking spaces for the evenings. And that'll service...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Now, in order to walk from there to -- what's the name of that restaurant?

Mr. Plummer: Fleming's.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Fleming's.

Mr. Plummer: Yes, that is correct.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You have to walk the whole block.

Mr. Plummer: You have to walk less...

Vice Mayor Keon: A half a block.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: (INAUDIBLE) people...

Mr. Plummer: Less than half the block.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What?

Vice Mayor Keon: Less than half.

Mr. Plummer: Less than half the block you have to walk.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Less than half.

Commissioner Mena: How are we handling -- I know the City Manager mentioned this excludes hotels, but what about condos, the Palace. Will those -- you be -- have to use...

Parking Director Kinney: The Palace actually has an off-right-of-way valet. They would not, under our current Code, be allowed to have a valet, but it's on their private property, the valet. Condos can have loading zones, but they can't have valet.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, Kevin, this is what you get when you go on vacation. You come back sick. So, just to be clear, you're saying that if -- by design, the private development has incorporated an off-site valet ramp. They're not using City spaces, then they could still have it, like as in the Palace.

Parking Director Kinney: Yes.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: But, if they are requiring City right-of-way in order to service their valet, they'd have to be a part of the centralized valet parking.

Commissioner Mena: But, the same would be true...

Parking Director Kinney: Well...

Commissioner Mena: For any condo, right?

Parking Director Kinney: No.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah.

Parking Director Kinney: No. Right now, under the Code, you're only allowed valet if you're a hotel, motel, or restaurant. Now, you can have valet that's not in the right-of-way...

Commissioner Mena: Right.

Parking Director Kinney: If you're a residential building. So, those don't even come into the equation. The Hyatt and the Westin, or The Colonnade, they have valet in the right-of-way.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The Westin doesn't. I mean, the Hyatt has its own entrance (INAUDIBLE)...

Parking Director Kinney: You're correct. The Hyatt is actually out of the right-of-way, so...

Commissioner Mena: The Westin is in the right-of-way.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The Westin is in the right-of-way...

Vice Mayor Keon: Is in the right-of-way.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And facing the opposite way.

Parking Director Kinney: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: When you get -- when you're coming to get your car, you -- the east-west traffic -- and when the traffic is going east on the southern part of the street, and you get your car, your car faces west on the east side of the street. You follow me?

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Vice Mayor Keon: Oh, yeah.

Commissioner Mena: Because they come out of that garage.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: They come out of that garage and they go against traffic...

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah, they...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Which is very dangerous.

Vice Mayor Keon: That is.

Parking Director Kinney: Which is technically...

Vice Mayor Keon: They shouldn't...

Parking Director Kinney: A violation.

Vice Mayor Keon: Well, but...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Of course, it is.

Vice Mayor Keon: You know what, but they need to be -- that needs to be enforced, you know. They need to head east and go -- circle around the block and come back.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Parking Director Kinney: I have seen police officers issue that citation.

Commissioner Mena: But so their...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You what? I'm sorry?

Parking Director Kinney: I've seen police officers issue that citation.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: (COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD).

Commissioner Mena: But, are you not saying that they are not going to be able to have that anymore?

Parking Director Kinney: No, no, no, no.

Vice Mayor Keon: Because they're a hotel.

Parking Director Kinney: We are not addressing hotels.

Commissioner Mena: Oh, okay, okay. You're right.

Vice Mayor Keon: Because they're a hotel. But that should be enforced.

Parking Director Kinney: Yes, they should be going around the block. It's something that they've been told.

Commissioner Mena: Do we know how many condos that's going to impact that currently offer valet on public right-of-way?

Parking Director Kinney: There are none that are allowed on public right-of-way, because the current Code doesn't allow it.

Commissioner Mena: Okay, okay.

Vice Mayor Keon: And I don't think there are any.

Commissioner Mena: Yeah, I don't...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It sounds like a good beginning. It sounds like a good plan.

Mr. Plummer: And the last station's on Valencia, about 175 feet west of Ponce that will service Marrosh and Son Cubano.

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Mr. Plummer: So, there's five on Miracle Mile, eight, and then the potential temporary one for Giralda, so that's going to be the first phase.

Vice Mayor Keon: You know, this is a very big cultural change for our city, and we're going to get -- we're going to hear about it...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, we're going to hear about it.

Vice Mayor Keon: From restaurants and from people, because everybody wants to park by the front door. And also, this issue of not being allowed to leave your car, to pay extra and have your car remain in the...

Commissioner Lago: Front row.

Vice Mayor Keon: In the front row. I mean, those are cultural issues that are going to be as difficult to deal with as bikes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: (INAUDIBLE)

Vice Mayor Keon: There's just big...

Commissioner Lago: Redoing Miracle Mile.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah. I mean, they're just very big cultural issues. And, I think it's great that we're doing it, because I think the amount of spaces that have been taken up by the number of valet stations and the quality of the valet stations throughout the City vary tremendously.

Mr. Plummer: They do.

Vice Mayor Keon: So, I think it's really great. I hope we're willing to stick with it and not be subject to, you know, pressure to change it. How do we...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And another thing...

Vice Mayor Keon: Have we notified the restaurants that have...?

Parking Director Kinney: We have had...

Vice Mayor Keon: Valet?

Parking Director Kinney: Several meetings, but we've not given specific locations to date. We wanted to give specific locations to the Commission first.

Vice Mayor Keon: Oh, okay.

Parking Director Kinney: We've had general conversations about...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Parking Director Kinney: How we would locate.

Vice Mayor Keon: Oh, okay.

Parking Director Kinney: But, if this -- if we're blessed here, then we will go to the specific restaurants and talk to them.

Commissioner Lago: Is the...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Also, you have to consider -- and I'm thinking about Abbracci, Ruth's Chris or the Son Cubano in the south -- crosswalks where you have the valet, because whoever parks in the middle of that walk on Aragon and goes to Ruth's Chris, they're going to have a tremendous temptation to cross the street right there. And you know, that's a very busy street with a light at the end and people rushing to make the light and -- think of it.

Mr. Plummer: Yes, I agree a hundred percent. That's going to be one of our challenges. There is a signalized crosswalk that they're going to have to walk 175 feet...

Vice Mayor Keon: Right at the corner.

Mr. Plummer: And, cross to get to Ruth's Chris and other restaurants, depending on who they are.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Others like that, yeah.

Mr. Plummer: Yeah. Crosswalks will be very difficult. We're having challenges, as staff knows, with Miami-Dade County, getting crosswalks midblock, so -- when they have signalized crossings. I think it's something -- again, we start; we do observations. We make sure that...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Mr. Plummer: Safety is being addressed.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good.

Commissioner Mena: Is the plan to expand this north into Alhambra and those other areas of the...

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah. I was just going to ask you. Outside of the Central Business District...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: (INAUDIBLE)

Vice Mayor Keon: What about restaurants that want valet?

Parking Director Kinney: They would still be allowed, under the existing Code, to petition for their own valet. I do think if we can get this managed and working well, there is a potential that it would expand. But as for now, if you're outside of the boundaries here, then you're under the old program where you have to petition for your own valet.

Vice Mayor Keon: You know, though, I really don't like your old program, because it allows like neighboring restaurants to each have a valet, and that's where you start losing -- that's why you lose so many stations. I mean, I really -- you know, it's that -- it can't be just a right, you know. There needs to be some language in the provisions, in the policy, that give the discretion

to someone and someone has to use that discretion when, you know, allowing valet stations. I mean, you have to be able to say, you know, if there's, you know -- if your policy is if there's a valet station -- two valet stations within a block of each other, you're going to have one valet station and it's going to be whatever. I mean, you can't -- you know, I -- I mean, that's what happened within the Central Business District is we saw what happened when everybody could - - all you had to do was apply, and then you got a, you know, valet station. We're...

Parking Director Kinney: There were some that were denied. I will work with the City Attorney's Office to maybe strengthen the discretion. I will give you one example recently where your concerns were specifically...

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

Parking Director Kinney: Addressed. And that was with George's and the Sports Grill.

Vice Mayor Keon: Oh, down in...

Parking Director Kinney: They both wanted...

Vice Mayor Keon: Southern Gables.

Parking Director Kinney: Their own and they were forced to share one.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Parking Director Kinney: And that, -- it doesn't specifically say I can do that in the Code.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Parking Director Kinney: But it...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Parking Director Kinney: I have the...

Vice Mayor Keon: But the Code should say that, or the administrative language should say that.

Parking Director Kinney: So, I'll...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Parking Director Kinney: Talk to the City Attorney's Office to see if they can make that language a little stronger.

City Attorney Ramos: Sure. We can address that.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Anything else?

Vice Mayor Keon: No.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, thank you very much. Very...

Mr. Plummer: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good presentation and I wish you...

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The best.

Mr. Plummer: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: I'll move it. Do we have to move this, or is it just a...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, it's an update.

Commissioner Lago: It's an update.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You don't have to.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.