

Planning and Zoning Board Meeting

The City of Coral Gables

4/13/2022

1 **MR. CRAIG COLLER:** Okay. Great.

2 **MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT:** Thank you. And Mr.

3 Coller, would you please read item E-2?

4 **MR. CRAIG COLLER:** We need a motion --

5 **MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT:** To defer?

6 **MR. CRAIG COLLER:** Yes.

7 **MR. ROBERT BEHAR:** I make a motion to defer.

8 **MR. CHIP WITHERS:** Second.

9 **MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT:** All in favor, say aye.

10 (Multitude of Ayes).

11 **MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT:** Anybody against? It is

12 deferred. Thank you.

13 **MR. CRAIG COLLER:** Okay. Item E-2, an

14 Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables,

15 Florida providing for a text amendment to the City

16 of Coral Gables official Zoning Code by amending

17 Article 14, "Process", Section 14-103.2,

18 "Membership; Terms; Vacancies; Removal," to allow a

19 certain percentage of the Board of Architects

20 members to not be residents or have their principle

21 place of business in the City of Coral Gables,

22 Florida; providing for severability, repealer,

23 codification, and an effective date. Item E-2

24 public hearing.

25 **MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT:** Thank you. Mr.

1 (Inaudible) --

2 **MR. RAMON TRIAS:** Mr. Chairman, we had a

3 chance to discuss this the last time. It's the

4 same concept. The only change is that there was a

5 preference to have fifty percent or less -- in

6 other words, no less than fifty percent as opposed

7 to no less than five, which was the language prior

8 to this. So staff is recommending approval.

9 **MR. CHIP WITHERS:** I'm sorry, Ramon. No less

10 than fifty percent. Meaning it has to be more than

11 fifty percent?

12 **MR. RAMON TRIAS:** It says that no less than

13 fifty percent of the members shall be residents.

14 **MR. ROBERT BEHAR:** Or have offices in the

15 Gables.

16 **MR. CHIP WITHERS:** So how many members on the

17 Board are there?

18 **MR. RAMON TRIAS:** At least seven, there could

19 be more. So that's the --

20 **MR. CHIP WITHERS:** So fifty percent is

21 three-and-a-half.

22 **MR. RAMON TRIAS:** Yes.

23 **MR. CHIP WITHERS:** Is that --

24 **MR. RAMON TRIAS:** There would be four.

25 **MR. CHIP WITHERS:** Four -- why don't we

1 just -- okay.

2 **MR. RAMON TRIAS:** However --

3 **MR. CHIP WITHERS:** I understand.

4 **MR. RAMON TRIAS:** There could be more because

5 the way that the ordinance is written, there could

6 be more members appointed to maybe ten or twelve at

7 some point. So that's why the fifty percent makes

8 sense.

9 **MR. VENNY TORRE:** So -- Robert, you've been on

10 the Board. So I guess before they were asking for

11 five minimum, now it's four. That means -- let's

12 pretend -- right now three could be non-residents?

13 **MR. ROBERT BEHAR:** Correct.

14 **MR. VENNY TORRE:** How do you --

15 **MR. ROBERT BEHAR:** I think it's great. It

16 gives the opportunity -- it opens it up to have

17 more opportunities. And I think it's -- like I

18 mentioned last time, I think this is a good thing

19 for the city and for the Board of Architects.

20 **MR. CHIP WITHERS:** How about the chairperson?

21 Should that be a Gables resident? Do we care about

22 that?

23 **MR. ROBERT BEHAR:** Chip, I don't think so. I

24 think that the best qualified person should be the

25 chair. You know, with the time -- I'm not a

1 believer that just because you live in the Gables

2 you're going to do the right job anyways. So to

3 me, the best qualified person could become the

4 chair.

5 **MR. CHIP WITHERS:** I'm more concerned about

6 the optics of residents thinking that the Board has

7 now been hijacked by non-Gables architects. That's

8 my --

9 **MR. ROBERT BEHAR:** I mean, I don't see it that

10 way. I will see it -- I think this is a good

11 opportunity to bring other good qualified

12 architects to serve in the city. And you don't

13 have to be a resident, you don't have to have your

14 primary business in the Gables.

15 And I think that could be, for us, the

16 same thing that's -- it's mandatory, for example,

17 that you have to be registered. Well, I know a lot

18 of great talented professionals that are not

19 registered but they cannot serve on the Board.

20 That's a different conversation. But just because,

21 you know, you don't live here doesn't mean that you

22 cannot be an asset to the Board of Architects.

23 **MR. CHIP WITHERS:** So is it Dade County or is

24 Broward, Palm Beach -- is it limited to Dade or

25 does that matter to you?

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1 MR. ROBERT BEHAR: To me -- listen, I will
2 give you an example. If we could get, you know, an
3 architect -- Robert Stern.
4 MR. RAMON TRIAS: He's knocking at the door
5 trying to join us, yes.
6 MR. ROBERT BEHAR: To come to -- you know,
7 let's -- that, you know, he wants to participate in
8 the Gables because he resides in South Florida, you
9 know, on the winter times, and he wants to sit on
10 the Board, I think that could be an asset. So to
11 me, I don't want to limit to specifically -- what
12 do you think --
13 MR. RAMON TRIAS: This is a weekly Board. I
14 mean, for four hours every week. And we don't have
15 that many --
16 MR. CHIP WITHERS: I understand. As I said
17 the last time, I have no opinion on this. And I'm
18 deferring totally to someone --
19 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: I think the concern that
20 I heard Chip say is specifically on one, position,
21 which would be the chair for the optics. And in a
22 way, to me, that kind of makes sense. But I'm open
23 either way.
24 MR. RAMON TRIAS: We could forward those
25 comments to the comission and see what they --

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1 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: Just as a comment, and to
2 be clear, there doesn't have to be fifty percent
3 resident architects sitting at a time. It's just
4 the makeup of the Board --
5 MR. RAMON TRIAS: Yes, sir.
6 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: I just want to --
7 MR. RAMON TRIAS: Yes, sir.
8 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: -- be clear on that.
9 MR. VENNY TORRE: To follow up, how does the
10 chairman get elected to that?
11 MR. RAMON TRIAS: Well, a vote --
12 MR. VENNY TORRE: By the Board.
13 MR. RAMON TRIAS: -- by the Board, yeah.
14 MR. VENNY TORRE: Oh, yeah, that's the chair
15 right there, I guess.
16 MR. ROBERT BEHAR: I mean, the chairperson
17 could be -- it's not a --
18 MR. RAMON TRIAS: Yeah, I wouldn't over think
19 it. I think it's a good idea to open it up. It
20 gives us a chance to appoint. It gives the city
21 manager a chance to appoint --
22 MR. ROBERT BEHAR: I think -- to me, that's a
23 fundamental reason that this is good, because it
24 really is going to open up to a lot more.
25 MR. VENNY TORRE: Are there any discussion? I

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1 make a move for approval.
2 MR. ROBERT BEHAR: I will second it.
3 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: We have a motion to
4 approve, we had a second. As recommended?
5 MR. RAMON TRIAS: Yes.
6 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: Any discussion?
7 Call the roll, please.
8 MS. JILL MENENDEZ: Robert Behar?
9 MR. ROBERT BEHAR: Yes.
10 MS. JILL MENENDEZ: Venny Torre.
11 MR. VENNY TORRE: Yes.
12 MS. JILL MENENDEZ: Chip Withers?
13 MR. CHIP WITHERS: Yes.
14 MS. JILL MENENDEZ: Eibi Aizenstat?
15 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: Yes.
16 Okay. The next item, E-3.
17 MR. CRAIG COLLER: Item E-3, an Ordinance of
18 the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida
19 providing for a text amendment to the City of Coral
20 Gables Official Zoning Code by amending Article 14,
21 "Process," Section 14-204, "Transfer of Development
22 Rights (TDRs)" to allow the City Commission to
23 designate a TDR receiving site when located in a
24 Planned Area Development (PAD) and zoned MX2 or
25 MX3; providing for severability, repealer,

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1 codification, and an effective date. Item E-3 of
2 the public hearing.
3 Just to check on Item E-2, I don't think
4 there was anybody on Zoom or --
5 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: Yeah, I did not ask.
6 MR. CRAIG COLLER: Maybe before we move on, we
7 just want to double check --
8 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
9 MR. ROBERT BEHAR: -- on that.
10 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: Jill, did we have anybody
11 on Zoom platform that wanted to speak on Item E-2?
12 MS. JILL MENENDEZ: No. No request was made.
13 MR. CRAIG COLLER: Let the record reflect
14 that.
15 MR. EIBI AIZENSTAT: Right.
16 MR. CRAIG COLLER: Okay. Item E-3 public
17 hearing.
18 MR. RAMON TRIAS: So Mr. Chairman, this is
19 exactly what the city attorney said, there's just
20 one sentence. And it adds the entity as long as
21 it's zoned MX2 or MX3, meaning in which it's only
22 (unintelligible) as I was saying for TDRs. That's
23 all it is. It's one more option for the city.
24 MR. ROBERT BEHAR: I don't have any comments.
25 If not, I'll make a motion to --

5 (Pages 14 to 17)