

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items F-2, F-3 and F-4 are related
February 9, 2021
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena
Commissioner Jorge Fors**

City Staff

**City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias**

Public Speaker(s)

**Jose Rohaidy
Karelia Carbonell
Stefan Zeus
Maria Cruz
Tania Cruz Gimenez
Rhonda Anderson
Javier Banos
David Winker
Maria Menendez
Jackson “Rip” Holmes
Julio Webble (phonetic)**

Agenda Items F-2, F-3 and F-4 are related

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Agenda Items F-2, F-3 and F-4 are related - Ordinances of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida amending the Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan, making zoning district boundary changes, and providing for a text amendment to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code for certain properties located in the Crafts Section, Coral Gables, Florida. Page 1

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida amending the Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-213, "Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments," and Small Scale amendment procedures (ss. 163.3187, Florida Statutes), changing the land use designation for certain properties located in Lots 25-39, Block 27, all of Block 28, and all of Block 36, Crafts Section, Coral Gables, Florida from either Single-Family High Density or Multi-Family Duplex Density to Commercial Low-Rise Intensity; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (07 29 2020 PZB recommended approval, Vote 7-0)

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida making zoning district boundary changes for certain properties located in Lots 25-39, Block 27, all of Block 28, and all of Block 36, Crafts Section, Coral Gables, Florida from either Single-Family Residential (SFR) District or Multi-Family 1 Duplex (MF1) District to Mixed Use 1 (MX1) District; and making the appropriate zoning map amendments to effectuate these changes, pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process", Section 14-212 "Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments"; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date.

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for a text amendment to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code by amending Appendix A, "Site Specific Zoning Regulations," Section A-36, "Crafts Section," by deleting provisions for height restriction for certain properties legally described as lots 16 and 17, lots 24 through 30, inclusive, and the west one-half (½) of lot 23, all in Block 36, Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (07 29 2020 PZB recommended approval, Vote 7-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, we go on to Item F-2.

Vice Mayor Lago: Crafts Section.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Madam City Attorney.

City Attorney Ramos: Yes, sir. F-2, F-3 and F-4, I will read into the record now. F-2 is legislative; however, F-3 and F-4 are quasi-judicial. Because all three items refer to or have to do with the Crafts Section in the interest of expediency and to avoid confusion, we're going to treat them all as quasi-judicial, consolidate the public hearing, and again, hear from the public in all three items at the same time. We do need to have everybody sworn in that's going to speak on any of those items, and the Clerk will take care of that. And finally, because F-3 and F-4 are quasi-judicial, I need the Commission to advise if there's been any ex parte communications, and if so, generally with whom those communications have been held.

Commissioner Keon: Where do you want to start?

Vice Mayor Lago: Madam City Attorney, if I may. You're asking about ex parte communications. So, I've had conversations with staff, obviously, with residents and the attorneys on -- interested attorneys, and along with other interested parties in regards to the section.

Commissioner Mena: Are we just going to go through this part first?

City Attorney Ramos: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes, go ahead.

Commissioner Mena: Same for me; residents, staff and attorneys that are both in favor and against the terms that are being proposed.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And residents have communicated with me too.

Commissioner Keon: I've spoken to residents, yes.

Commissioner Fors: For myself, same thing; all the residents for and against, and an attorney on behalf of an interested party.

City Attorney Ramos: Thank you, Commissioners for making those disclosures. With that, I'll go ahead and read the three items into the record. F-2, an ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida amending the Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-213, "Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments," and Small Scale amendment procedures, changing the land use designation for certain properties located in Lots 25 through 39, Block 27, all of Block 28, and all of Block 36, Crafts Section, Coral Gables, Florida from either Single-Family High Density or Multi-Family Duplex Density to Commercial Low-Rise Intensity; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. F-3 is an ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida making zoning district boundary changes for certain properties located in Lots 25 through 39, Block 27, all of Block 28, and all of Block 36, Crafts Section, Coral Gables, Florida from either Single-Family Residential District or Multi-Family Duplex District to MX -- Mixed Use 1, also known as MX1, District; and making the appropriate zoning map amendments to effectuate these changes, pursuant to the Zoning Code Article 14, "Process", Section 14-212 "Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments"; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. And F-4 is an ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for a text amendment to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code by amending Appendix A, "Site Specific Zoning Regulations," Section A-36, "Crafts Section," by deleting provisions for height restriction on certain properties legally described as Lots 16 and 17, Lots 24 through 30, inclusive of the west one-half of Lot 23, all in Block 36, Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. Mr. Clerk, can you swear in Mr. Trias?

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Trias, please raise your right hand, sir. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I do.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Trias, the floor is yours.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Mayor, I think -- I don't have a presentation. This has been explained multiple times, as you know. There are three items.

Commissioner Keon: Can I ask you one thing? I've been asked by a number of residents in the Crafts Section to please put on the record that -- and I think in their reading it and reading the lots and whatever else, they don't understand the technical description of what is involved -- that they've asked that we could please put it on the record that this discussion and this item refers only to that three-block area between Le Jeune and Salzedo, and could you name the streets.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes, it's only a three-block area. And on the west, there's Le Jeune; on the east, there's Salzedo; on the south is Santander, and then on the north is the alley that is behind the church, that is just north of Catalonia.

Commissioner Keon: Okay. And that is the only area in the City and the whole Crafts Section that this applies to.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: What we're talking about today is only one, three-block area; it doesn't apply to the Crafts Section as a whole.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Mayor, there are three items: land use, zoning, and then some size specifics. They are designed to implement MX1, which you have approved in the prior item, on F-1. Should you decide to do anything different than that, then the whole process will have to go back to Planning and Zoning. So, at this point is for MX1, for those two and a half blocks.

Vice Mayor Lago: Ramon -- Mr. Trias, excuse me.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: I apologize for that. Again, I'm in favor, after a long discussion with residents and really understanding and sitting down with staff. But I have to really acknowledge Commissioner Mena's concerns and his comments about the tapering down effect all the way down to the University. You know, are we incorporating his request to seeing a significant height reduction to 45 feet?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: No, only in the front, where it's already a requirement from Le Jeune, which is 45 feet for the first hundred feet.

Vice Mayor Lago: What do I -- I don't think we need to really -- there's not much discussion here. I think we've discussed this...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: Very thoroughly. I want to vote in favor of this today, but I need you to please help me incorporate Commissioner Mena's comments, and I think -- if my colleagues will support me on this -- I think it's the right measure and the right direction to head in.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: There are two ways to do it; one is to do site specifics and limit that last half a block, which is Block 38, either half the block or maybe even the whole block. I would advise...

Commissioner Keon: That's...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: If the block, so it faces the San Sebastian apartment. And you could have a site specific with MX1...

Vice Mayor Lago: But how can we treat it now?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Or...

Vice Mayor Lago: How can we treat the MX1 now? I want it on the Commission floor today, and I want the approval today.

Commissioner Mena: I think...

Vice Mayor Lago: In conjunction -- I mean, correct me if I'm wrong. I don't want to steal your thunder because you were the one that came up with this, and I completely agree, and I think it's the perfect move for this area. I need this to be tied to our vote today.

Commissioner Mena: Well, I don't know how we -- how -- that's a question for the City Attorney. I think the idea is we would at least approve the MX1 on the northern two blocks.

Vice Mayor Lago: Well, we did that already on the F-1.

Commissioner Mena: Well, we approved MX1 generally.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: But we're talking...

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: We still need to approve...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Right, this is an amendment.

Vice Mayor Lago: Changing the maps.

Commissioner Mena: Yeah, amending the maps here. So, the idea is approved MX1 on the northern two blocks.

Vice Mayor Lago: They'd have to bring it back?

Commissioner Mena: And then we'd have to -- I think we'd have to bring back the southern block. If there's a way to avoid that, I'm happy to vote on it today.

City Attorney Ramos: That's correct, Commissioner Mena.

Vice Mayor Lago: That's what I'm trying to do. Go ahead. Excuse me.

Commissioner Mena: And to clarify -- because I heard you saying something when I walked in -
- my idea is that the entirety of the southern block, not half a block, that the entirety of the block
be a lower designation so that it's more consistent with San Sebastian. It would be 45 feet. We've
talked about -- I spoke at length with staff about this yesterday. One option had been MF3, which
is 45 feet. There's some inherent issues with that because that's really designed to be more town

homes and things like that. There's some requirements about alleys, et cetera. I'm sorry if you guys already discussed this while I stepped out to the restroom.

Commissioner Keon: No.

Commissioner Mena: And the -- I think where we circled in was on an MF2, but with a site specific that capped the height at 45 feet, residential only, and it would still be subject to all the other setbacks, et cetera, that the rest of the blocks would be subject to.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Mena: That's the idea.

Commissioner Fors: Commissioner Mena, my concern -- no secret -- my concern has always been to address the concerns of the residents that specifically petitioned based on the things that they're experiencing in that particular area, specifically those things that are forthcoming, or especially those things that are forthcoming as the Plaza goes online. I've thought about the proposals that Commissioner Mena has touched upon. I think there's definitely a lot of good options. I would prefer -- I'm just sharing with my colleagues -- I'd prefer not to make the decision as to what to do with that southernmost block today on the fly. I want to hear the different options that we've...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Commissioner Fors: Touched upon. If I had my choice, we would -- I guess, you know, closing the circle of the map that we're amending, so we only address specifically the blocks of the residents who have petitioned to be rezoned, and then in short order -- (INAUDIBLE) best idea, decide the best way to handle and consider that scale up or scale down, however you want to look at it, that Commissioner Mena proposed.

Commissioner Mena: I think that's exactly what staff is saying, that we would vote to approve...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: The amendment to MX1 on the northern two blocks, and it's really a block and a half, because it's the...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It's half a...

Commissioner Mena: The middle block is a full block; the northern block is really a half block that's adjacent to the school, church that's there.

Vice Mayor Lago: Banyan.

Commissioner Mena: And then -- and Banyan, thank you. And then we would not take action on the southernmost block, the one that's immediately north of San Sebastian today, and we would come back with that proposal to be discussed at the next meeting. That's...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Commissioner Mena: That's, I think, the idea.

Vice Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Fors: I'll move it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Wait, wait. Commissioner Keon.

City Attorney Ramos: This is a public hearing. Anyone wishing to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait.

Commissioner Keon: Wait.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner Keon.

Commissioner Keon: You would treat that as a site specific on that one block?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's one option. Another option is to choose between MF3 or MF2. MF3...

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Already has the 45 feet maximum.

Commissioner Keon: Oh, okay. And it would be only residential...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: As opposed to mixed use.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: And you would...

Commissioner Fors: Correct.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes, yes.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, well, that's a good idea.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: So...

Commissioner Mena: Which is one of the impetuses behind it.

Commissioner Keon: That's a good idea.

Commissioner Mena: Right.

Commissioner Keon: Yeah, I think that's a very good idea.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. This is a public hearing. Mr. City Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, Mr. Mayor, we do have members of the public requesting to speak on this item.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: How many do we have?

City Clerk Urquia: Right now, we have 10.

City Attorney Ramos: And for the record, it's on all three items, F-2, F-3 and F-4. And Mr. Clerk, if you can swear them in, it'll be as they speak.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, ma'am. The first speaker is Mr. Jose Rohaidy.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Rohaidy.

Jose Rohaidy: Good evening. I need to be sworn in.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir. Please raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

Mr. Rohaidy: I do.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Mr. Rohaidy: Jose Rohaidy, on behalf of my parents, Jose and Leonela Rohaidy. They live at 30 Sevilla Avenue, in the Crafts Section. I have been here on their behalf the last three -- this will be the fourth meeting. I have read statements from my parents. I'm not going to do that today. I'll just be speaking based on what they have told me. I went ahead and I sent an email -- or they went ahead and sent an email to each of the members of this body. Unfortunately, only two of them responded, and I do appreciate those two responses, while I disagree with the positions and my parents do as well. Here are some of the concerns and the reasons why my parents are against upzoning the Crafts. Commissioner Keon, you went ahead and you said that this only affects those three blocks tonight. What you are failing to leave out -- and I would like to know from Mr. Trias' position, what kind of a ripple effect is this going to have on the other side of Ponce de Leon Boulevard, where the remainder of the Crafts Section lies. Mr. Trias, could you answer if by passing this measure tonight, doesn't that mean that eventually -- be it in two weeks, two months, two years -- that the rest of the Crafts Section could be bought out, much in the same manner that those three blocks are about to be bought out? Mind you, many of the residents of that section do not desire to be bought out. Unfortunately, residents of those three blocks, even though their concerns are valid, are sinking the ship proverbially for everyone else. That is wrong. I understand the Mayor has boasted, and most certainly admonished, even though he has no right to do it, many of the residents claiming that there has been ample notice over the time that this has been up. However, none of the residents on the east side of Ponce de Leon Boulevard have had any notice, be it by mail and flyer, email, absent these three meetings. If you really had proper notice, you

would not have almost 200 people at the meeting tonight. You would not have had almost 2,000 residents speaking out in some way or another exercising their concern or their downright opposition to this measure. So, this is a deeply flawed process. This is (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Rohaidy, will you finish up?

Mr. Rohaidy: Is operating within an eco-chamber, and it just doesn't seem to use any form, reason or logic in its decision-making process.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Mr. Rohaidy. Thank you very much. Next.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, the next...

Commissioner Keon: I think he asked Mr. -- yeah, I think he asked a question of Mr. Trias.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Well, I can -- I would never predict what the future is going to be like based on the many comments that I have made today. As far as notice, everybody was noticed within 1,500 feet, which goes all the way to Ponce de Leon, so I personally spent several hours attaching addresses to envelope, so I do know that that took place. And I think that it takes place every time, and every time staff hears this comment, we're really surprised because, frankly, those notices go out and people get them.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Mr. Urquia.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, the next speaker is Ms. Karelia Carbonell.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Karelia.

Karelia Carbonell: Yes, hello. This is Karelia.

City Clerk Urquia: Just one second.

Ms. Carbonell: I...

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Carbonell, just one second. Miriam, I'm sorry, but am I allowed to swear her in even though she's on the phone?

City Attorney Ramos: No, you cannot swear her in. So, she can speak, but it's not considered testimony.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

City Attorney Ramos: Also, Mayor, because this is quasi-judicial, we should not stick to a strict two-minute. We should allow people to testify.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Carbonell, go ahead.

Ms. Carbonell: Okay, I am -- I've been listening all along (INAUDIBLE). You know, basically, what I continue to, you know, unfortunately understand is that there is such an overwhelming position from the residents that all these decisions should be deferred. I was pleased when the Miracle Mile item was deferred, but now I hear this whole Crafts Section being discussed. And you know, again, I don't know how else to -- you know, over 2,000 residents -- I keep saying that number, and I know a few Commissioner have asked me how I'm getting that number, and I have explained it. And it's really people commenting on any issue that has to do with any upzoning. And I think the reason being is what we're seeing happening now. And I think that the City really has lost credibility in that sense as far as any type of zoning issues. So, you know, again, now with

the Crafts Section, I feel like we're back to, you know, discussing it and wanting to vote on something, you know. This F-1 was voted on. I really didn't understand what that was all about, but please take into consideration when -- you know, stakeholders are saying to, you know, stop and to listen. I would urge that you do. It's kind of like explaining the indefensible that we continue or you and staff continue to say the same thing over and over. One thing that the Mayor said was that residents have spoken. And you know, you're correct, Mayor. We have spoken, and we have spoken in great numbers. And the numbers say, "Please stop this until we really understand what this all means." And I agree with the previous caller, you know. When is it -- you know, one neighborhood is going to be upzoned. You know, how long is that going to take for others? The Crafts Section is a historic district; and district meaning it was part of George Merrick's vision. The Plaza on Ponce is absolutely a monstrosity. It's Godzilla versus King Kong. That's what I -- you know, I was looking at it the other day. We have the little arts headquarters there, really, you know, squished in, and I feel that that's the metaphor for our city. You know, we are -- you know, the historic integrity of our city is being just squished with all this mixed-use high rise. But so, please, you know, listen to your constituents. That's all we're asking is to please take a step back and not vote on this issue, you know, as part of the, you know -- we're asking that no vote on any zoning or land use amendments take place. Thank you.

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

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, the next speaker is Stefan Zeus.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Who?

City Clerk Urquia: Stefan Zeus.

Stefan Zeus: And actually, I spoke already before under F-1, and I think I made my point there also in reference to the Crafts Section. So, thank you very much.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Zeus: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, the next speaker I have is Ms. Maria Cruz.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Ms. Cruz.

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Cruz.

Maria Cruz: I'm here.

City Clerk Urquia: Please raise your right hand, ma'am. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

Ms. Cruz: I do.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, here we go again. Little by little, one area at a time, Coral Gables will stop being what we expected it to be when we moved here. I live right next to the university. I can see it happening already. Little by little, University has been buying property. Eventually, then my neighbors will sell because they'll offer a lot of money, and I'll be left by myself in the middle of the street because I will not sell and I will not move, and this is what you're allowing in the Crafts Section. Little by little, people have been buying property. People have been living there six months and they already realize that that is not what they want, you know. Money, money, money. It all boils down to money. Developers want to make money. The people that lived there for 30

years and did not realize that there were no trees and that the street was very wide. It took them 30 years to realize it. How many other areas we have in the City where four, five, ten, fifteen, twenty residents could decide we're sitting on top of a gold mine. Let's get together, find somebody who wants to buy our property and leave. That's what you're allowing to happen. And you know what? Shame on you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Maria.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, the next speaker is Ms. Tania Cruz Gimenez.

Tania Cruz Gimenez: Good evening. Tania Cruz Gimenez.

City Clerk Urquia: Good evening, ma'am. Please raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

Ms. Cruz Gimenez: Yes.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Ms. Cruz Gimenez: I just have a few comments since I was really going to speak on Miracle Mile. First and foremost, I oppose the Crafts rezoning. But I'd like to thank Vice Mayor Vince Lago for having scheduled the last couple of public meetings. Apparently, he's the only one that's willing to take the time to listen to us. But despite these meetings and all these public meetings that we're discussing, it seems that there's a disconnect. The residents still do not understand what is happening. They are opposed to it. And if they're opposed to it because they don't understand, then perhaps someone has not done a good job of communicating what the issue is. And when the Mayor goes out of his way to call out residents by name, whether it be Sue Kawalerski, Rhonda Anderson, Javier Banos, Mayra Jolie, or anyone else, that only serves to chill free speech. They're exercising their First Amendment rights...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can I make a comment?

Ms. Cruz Gimenez: And if they want to (INAUDIBLE) ten times...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can I make a comment, please?

Ms. Cruz Gimenez: And I'm sorry, going and speaking over me is not a reasonable time, manner and place restriction. And what's interesting to me is that when anyone has spoken out of turn in favor of the Crafts rezoning project, you've allowed them to go and you've allowed them to continue. So, you're picking and choosing who you're allowing to speak, okay. So, this is not your job. We are entitled to speak. We have a First Amendment right. And again, to reiterate what my husband said earlier, Carlos Gimenez, if you didn't want the job, you shouldn't have run for it, because no one asked you for it. And the same way no one is asking me to run for it, okay? So, listen to your constituents. And if they don't understand, then clearly you have failed at explaining to the residents what it is that you're proposing to do. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am. And I'm, you know, intrigued that the people you said I didn't allow to speak are candidates in the next Commission meeting, and they have all of the right they want to speak and they exercised it. I didn't interrupt anybody. They spoke and they made their points, and they're expressing their opinions are welcome, including you, a candidate again. It's very, very welcome that you express your opinion. Thank you very much. Next.

City Clerk Urquia: The next speaker is Ms. Rhonda Anderson.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Ms. Anderson.

City Clerk Urquia: Good evening, Ms...

Rhonda Anderson: It takes a couple clicks to get on so...

City Clerk Urquia: Good evening, Ms. Anderson. Please raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

Ms. Anderson: Yes.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. Anderson: First off, I want to just commend the Planning -- bring out to the point that the Planning and Zoning Board itself is volunteers, and the Chairman, at the beginning of the zoning rewrite, asked about the notice that was provided to the public, because no public was involved in those meetings. It was a Zoom notice. It was after the pandemic, and I think it's telling that there were no residents that appeared. And perhaps the best thing to do with this is to send it back to Planning and Zoning for further deliberation. Now, I've asked on behalf of the residents of the surrounding areas for a comprehensive traffic study to address the impact of the traffic in the surrounding neighborhoods, and that's been defined, both while I was on Planning and Zoning and afterwards. The people that came -- the people that bought in the Crafts Section came to that nuisance. What you're going to do by allowing upzoning in that area without addressing it with a comprehensive traffic study, the impact on the surrounding area is basically a de facto Bert Harris situation, where you're going to be impacting these surrounding areas with so much traffic. As other speakers have said, you're now going to be devaluing the homes that surround the Crafts Section. Those are my comments. And I think you need to vision the impact of what you're doing. Do not do it blindly; do it with facts, do it with a comprehensive traffic study that apportion the impact upon every development in a comprehensive manner, not this piecemeal situation where you miss the traffic impact because it puts it in one drop at a time, or one domino at a time. When they all crash in, then the City's going to end up having to pay for the traffic impact, or the residents will pay for the traffic impact, and that'll be the next area where people will want to move out

because you have -- by upzoning the Crafts Section without dealing with the traffic -- devalued the properties surrounding it.

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

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, ma'am.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Next.

City Clerk Urquia: The next speaker is Mr. Javier Banos.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Banos.

Javier Banos: Good evening, City Commissioners.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Banos, please raise your right hand, sir. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

Mr. Banos: I do.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Mr. Banos: You know, I had the opportunity to walk this entire area. The Santander Avenue itself, there's a number of duplexes in that area which seem to be rental property. They're very -- there are three very nice town homes, single-family residences that are one or two stories at the very end of Santander Avenue, and there are some seemingly abandoned and uninhabited properties that are on the north of Catalonia Avenue. So, we're really talking about a situation where three rows of houses are the ones making the determination to what could have an impact that is far beyond just what the three rows of houses are going to have. I've spoken with residents

from Malaga, all the way from one point of the Crafts Section to the other on the Douglas side. I've spoken with residents on Santander on the same area. Everyone is very much concerned about the impact the Plaza is having on their quality of life and the impact traffic will have on their quality of life. And if you move over Le Jeune on the other end, the neighbors are equally skittish about the possibility of what's going to happen there. They're very, very concerned. There's some multi-unit residents that happen to be on the other end, that are -- you know, they're in the same line as the apartments on University, and they're multi -- they're residential, but there's a set of town homes that look very, very, very nice. And I will hope that what this is trying to do is encourage the growth of those same three properties at the end. So, if the Commission and Mr. Trias could give a little more explanation as to what the MF1 designation will be, what the true impact of 45 feet will be there, and specifically how it would actually impact not only traffic, but the quality of life for the folks that are there. I'm not entirely sure. I mean, I know for a fact that some of these are -- on the north end of a Malaga, you have some rental properties as well as the south end of Malaga. So, I'm not sure how many residents you really are impacting here. You know, this seems to be a situation where it's -- at the -- I'll admit fully, there is -- there are very few trees. It doesn't look like other areas of Coral Gables. It could be massively improved in some other ways. And either neighbors (INAUDIBLE), but explain exactly to me and to all the residents how exactly is this MF1 designation going to impact these residents, what effect it's going to have to the traffic adjacent to it, and how is this going to -- you know, is this going to have a spill-over effect over the other areas on the other side of Ponce de Leon. I would like to have the answer, by the way, if possible.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir. Mr. Urquia, the public hearing is closed if there are no other...

City Clerk Urquia: No, Mr. Mayor. We have more speakers.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: One more? Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: No, we have three more speakers. The next speaker is Mr. David Winker. Mr. Winker, please raise your right hand, sir. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

David Winker: Yes, I do.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Winker: David Winker, with law offices at 4720 South Le Jeune Road. We residents keep being told by the people that we have elected that we have had ample opportunity to speak on these zoning items. Speaking on an item is not the same as meaningfully participating in the development of zoning changes that will shape what Coral Gables looks like in the coming decades. Yes, we residents are speaking, but City employees and our elected officials are not listening. Just look at this meeting today. What is happening in the City of Coral Gables right now is shameful. The Mayor and Commissioners haranguing, harassing and interrupting residents. Frankly, I'm embarrassed to be involved in this mess. The residents deserve better. The bottom line is that our comments are not being heard. Our ideas and concerns are not being incorporated into the proposed amendments to the Zoning Code. Mayor Valdes-Fauli, Commissioner Pat Keon, and Assistant Planning Director Ramon Trias keep saying over and over again that we haven't read the amendments. We don't understand what they mean. We don't know that the changes are intended to help us. Nothing could be further from the truth. We understand exactly what the amendment say and what they mean for the future of our city. And we have vehemently and loudly and almost unanimously told you, our elected officials, we don't want those changes, full stop. Commissioner Fors and others keep saying that the projects that we residents are complaining about are allowed by the current code, and that is why we need to revise the Zoning Code. That is simply not true. The large projects are not a creature of the current zoning code; rather, they are a result of lobbyists convincing City employees and elected officials to grant developers exceptions, waivers and other upzoning concession. Just look at Ponce Park Tower. The City staff has approved giving the developer 13,000 square foot proportion of University Drive, a public

street that belongs to us, in order to allow the developer to build 17 stories instead of the 7 stories that the developer can now build as right. I would encourage everyone on this call to be at that Planning and Zoning meeting tomorrow night to speak out against this monstrosity. We can disagree if zoning changes are a good idea, but what we must agree on is what the process should look like, and frankly, how we should be treating each other. The public has spoken again and again on this process, and overwhelmingly voiced its desire that this decision be postponed until meaningful public participation takes place. We organized a resident rally today at City Hall in the middle of a pandemic, because we residents are outraged at what is happening, and we are frankly at our wits end on how to get you to understand. We don't want these changes, and we don't like how you are treating us. Are residents going to have to begin hiring lobbyists, the same lobbyists that represent the developers to meet with our Commissioners and City staff to get our voice heard? What is happening is not good governance and not what we expect from the City of Coral Gables. Please listen to us and vote no on the zoning change. Thank you.

Commissioner Mena: Mr...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

Commissioner Mena: Mr. Winker, are you speaking as the attorney for somebody or as a resident?

Mr. Winker: I am speaking in two capacities. I am speaking as a one-time...

Commissioner Mena: A resident of Coral Gables?

Mr. Winker: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: Okay.

Mr. Winker: And I represent and I'm registered to lobby...

City Commission Meeting

February 9, 2021

Agenda Items F-2, F-3 and F-4 are related - Ordinances of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida amending the Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan, making zoning district boundary changes, and providing for a text amendment to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code for certain properties located in the Crafts Section, Coral Gables, Florida. Page 24

Commissioner Mena: Okay.

Mr. Winker: On behalf of the Ponce neighbors.

Commissioner Mena: And who is the Ponce neighbors? Is that an association?

Mr. Winker: Yes, a neighborhood association made up of the Crafts Section.

City Attorney Ramos: Mr. Winker...

Commissioner Mena: Okay.

City Attorney Ramos: If you're speaking as a resident, could you please also state your address for the record?

Mr. Winker: My home address is 2222 Southwest 17th Street.

Commissioner Mena: Okay. I would just say that -- a few things. You know, it's -- you can't -- I would encourage you to not make reckless statements about having to hire a lobbyist to meet with us and things of that nature. Perhaps you...

Mr. Winker: You know, listen...

Commissioner Mena: If I may finish.

Mr. Winker: You're not here to lecture me.

Commissioner Mena: If I may finish.

Mr. Winker: No. You're not going to...

Commissioner Mena: If I may finish, please, and I'll let you talk.

Mr. Winker: Listen, this is inappropriate. The Clerk...

Commissioner Mena: Can I please finish speaking?

Mr. Winker: (INAUDIBLE) City Attorney help?

Commissioner Mena: Can I please...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Please let the Commissioner speak.

Commissioner Mena: Can I please...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We have let you speak.

Commissioner Mena: Can I please say something? And then I'm happy to have you respond.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Right.

Commissioner Mena: Is that okay? You were just talking about how we treat each other, so I didn't cut you off. I'm speaking and then if you want to speak, I'm happy to hear from you. We meet with residents every day. I've had Zoom community meetings with residents in this area. No lobbyists involved. So, you know, we're -- you have five people up here who serve this community in a certain capacity, and when you make statements like that, that you need to hire a lobbyist to speak with us, you really have no basis for that. And so, I would encourage you not to do that so

flippantly, because it's just not true and it's totally divorced from reality, because I know in my case, I meet with anybody who wants to meet with me in person or via Zoom, and there's no lobbyists involved. So, that notion is, I think, a bit unfair. The other thing I would say is, I've seen you at several meetings now, and while I appreciate your criticism of the process and you're welcome to state it over and over and over again, I would also encourage you if you have a substantive point to make about the zoning decision we're making relating to the Crafts Section, please make it so that we can consider it. You're asking for us to have engagement with the public, you say you're here speaking both as a resident and a lawyer representing a community association, tell me what substantive comments you have about what we're discussing as it relates to the Crafts Section, and let's spend less time talking about deferrals and criticism you have of the process. I hear you on that; you're welcome to criticize it. I've heard it now many times, but if you want us to take substantive feedback from you and/or your client, please provide some so that we can consider it in making our decision.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Commissioner Mena: I'd like to give him an opportunity to respond because I was being...

Mr. Winker: You know, I think one of the breakdowns that's happening, Commissioner is, you know, this haranguing of residents. No, this is not how this works. We get to make public comment. And I would say to you that I think that reasonable minds can differ about what Miracle Mile should look like.

Commissioner Mena: Agreed.

Mr. Winker: That is fair. People can vote and decide they want to upzone the Miracle Mile. They want to make changes that will result in changes on Miracle Mile. To me, that's fair. The beef that I have is with the process. What you're seeing and the frustration you're seeing is people feeling their voice isn't being heard and you guys are reacting to that, instead of saying like, you

know what, we need to fix that. We're going to have another meeting and you guys sit there and residents speak, and they -- and it just gets into a vacuum, and frankly, nothing gets accomplished. So, I'm going to be quiet now, but I disagree. There's a reason people are pissed off. There's a reason there was something today. And you guys can look at that and be like, oh, you're not offering solutions, and that seems to be what your reaction is. And you know, this idea -- and I know. I don't appreciate being lectured to. Honestly...

Commissioner Mena: Me neither.

Mr. Winker: I've never done work in Coral Gables. I'm being hired to do work in Coral Gables because residents are fed up. They are hiring lobbyists. They are hiring litigators to sue the City, frankly, because you guys are not doing the right thing.

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

Commissioner Mena: Mr. Winker, I would just say, with all due respect again, I'm asking for substantive feedback. You make statements like people are frustrated because they don't have an opportunity for public feedback, and it goes in one ear and out the other, or whatever that was that you just said. Meanwhile, the reality is what we've done now is have multiple additional community meetings -- I've attended every single one. I've heard you speak at every single one, along with many other people. I hear everything the residents are telling us and I'm considering it, and I'm factoring it into my decision making. And I believe all my colleagues have been on those meetings for the most part as well, so you can't -- just because you say something doesn't make it true. Just because you say that we're ignoring people doesn't make it the reality. I'm not ignoring anybody. I sit through hours and hours of these public meetings. We're here tonight at 8 o'clock, continuing to have this meeting. We did it later in the day so that more people could participate; these are facts. I don't live in a post-fact world. And with all due respect, people hiring litigators, filing lawsuits, let me be very clear. The lawsuit that you filed is frankly frivolous. I think it's frankly sanctionable, and I think it has no basis in the law whatsoever. And I'm not saying

that in my capacity as a Commissioner. I'm saying that in my capacity as a lawyer. And so, you say you represent this neighborhood association. I've sent you multiple emails asking you about it and who the members are so that I can get their feedback; you don't respond. You file these lawsuits. You say you're a Coral Gables resident, all these things, but yet I just asked you if you have any actual substantive feedback on the Crafts Section item that we're discussing, and I got nothing. So, you can't, on the one hand, say you don't listen to substantive feedback, and on the other, not provide any. So, I welcome it; we're here to listen. I think there are a lot of people who have spoken who have had substantive input, and we can have another five meetings to complain about the process and to continue saying that there's not enough public feedback, or we can have meetings where we actually get to the substance of the issue. That's what I'm about. I'm about talking substance, I'm about getting to solutions. That's what I'm here for. If you have some, please provide them. I welcome it.

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

City Clerk Urquia: Next...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Urquia, next.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker is Ms. Maria Menendez.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Maria Menendez.

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Menendez, please raise your right hand.

Maria Menendez: Yes.

City Clerk Urquia: Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

Ms. Menendez: Yes, I do.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. Menendez: Thank you, sir. Good morning, Mayor, Vice Mayor and Commissioners. For the record...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good morning, ma'am.

Ms. Menendez: My name is Maria Alberro Menendez, and I live with my family at 322 Catalonia Avenue. We have lived here for over 27 years. I also represent over 30 property owners and their families along the 300 block of Catalonia and Malaga Avenues. My neighbors and I signed a petition some years ago, formalizing years of discussion at public hearings, meetings among neighbors, City staff, City consultants and elected officials about the need to rezone our three-block area. Rarely do you see a group of neighbors that have been coming before the City time after time again with the same issues; resident safety and quality of life concerns. The petition to rezone our three-block area was signed by all the property owners and is driven by the diminishing quality of life brought on by the increasing development and commercial activity to the east and north of our three-block neighborhood area. One example and most impactful is the mixed use development approved in 2004 called the Old Spanish Village, later purchased in 2010 by the Agave Ponce Group and renamed the Plaza of Coral Gables, that is presently under construction. The Plaza construction is a series of assembled City blocks totaling 6.8 acres, not a typical commercial development, but a planned development with a building footprint consisting of over 640,000 square feet of office, retail and restaurant uses, 136 high-rise apartments, 15 townhouses, a 220-room hotel and a 2,600 parking space garage. This project is big. It's going to be beautiful. It's going to be a landmark development for our City, but it's at expense -- at the expense of our three-block neighborhood area. Our commercial corridor and skyline are forever changed with the new landmark project and it is attracting more development in our area, some being assembled

and others already in the pipeline to our east, just 50 feet away, and to our north, just 200 feet away, where an assembled commercial development at this time can be built up to 190 feet in height. Our three-block neighborhood area is an enclave separated from other residential neighborhoods, protected by existing barriers, such as Le Jeune Road on the west, a four-lane highway -- state highway with a landscaped median, and University Drive on the south, a four-lane collector that includes the historic four-story San Sebastian Apartments. In addition, there is a “Do Not Enter” sign at the intersection of University and Salzedo that further protects the residential neighborhoods to our south by prohibiting any vehicular traffic from the commercial area in our three-block area. Our area is not compatible to a typical Coral Gables single-family residential neighborhood. It has swales; it has no trees. It has no swales, and it has no trees. Our City founder, George Merrick, never intended the Coral Gables Crafts Section, where our three-block area is located, to be a single-family residential neighborhood. It was planned for a work and live environment; single-family is not compatible, its use for this three-block area. Our request and the City Administration's recommendation to rezone our three-block area to a mixed use MX1, the least intense, most moderate mixed use development category, will allow for the work/live environment to exist and succeed given the proximity to the existing commercial area. Last week, I submitted to the City a petition from 80 small businesses in our area that support our rezoning request. They see future development in this area and the increased foot traffic it brings as vital to their success and their survival. Most speakers opposing our request are not affected by the rezoning of our three-block area. Most live miles away and have never spoken against any development in our area, and some simply want to advance a political agenda tied to the City's upcoming election. Mayor, Vice Mayor and Commissioners, I want to publicly thank the City staff, various boards, and each of you for listening and working with us over the years. My neighbors and I respectfully request that you move forward and approve the rezoning of our three-block area to an MX1 zoning designation. We thank you for your consideration.

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

City Clerk Urquia: Next is Mr. Jackson “Rip” Holmes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. Holmes.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Holmes, please raise your right hand, sir. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

Jackson "Rip" Holmes: I guess so. I wasn't really going to offer...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I guess so? No, do you or don't you?

Mr. Holmes: But I do have an opinion. So, the answer is yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Holmes: But I preface in my remarks by saying the following is my opinion. I'm not offering it as facts, and so here it is. I believe that what is happening today is proof that money rules Coral Gables, developer money, and this is a horrifying nightmare. By the way, I believe Mr. Winker is correct, and Commissioner Mena is wrong on all points. What I submit to those who are listening, I'm just going to check now, there's still 141 people attending, which if you figure how deep we are into this meeting, that's more than four hours that's already elapsed here. It tells you that everyone in the City, the residents are upset. Although there have been speakers tonight on the other side, by and large, it's been unanimous on one side of the -- what is my point here? Money is beating voters, and so what I call upon all of the people who are listening, the voters, we need to become forensic accountants. We need to start studying all of the contributions that have been made to City Commissioners. I would -- if a voter asked my opinion, I'd say, do not vote for any incumbent. If need be, write your own name in. We need to oust the incumbents. I'm going to urge Jeannett Slesnick to run for Mayor. She's the only one in my opinion who is trustworthy.

And I think what -- this is my call then, it's to -- for everyone to become a forensic accountant. Go to the websites of the donors of the people who are on the City Commission and start studying it, because I think what we're going to find is if they're making mistakes -- and those mistakes we need to take to the authorities because democracy is being defeated tonight. Thank you very much.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, Mr. Holmes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Is that it, Mr. Urquia?

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker is Mr. Julio Webble (phonetic)? Please raise your right hand, sir. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you will offer today is the truth and nothing but the truth?

Julio Webble: I do.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Webble: Good evening. I just wanted to thank the Mayor and Commissioners and the board for listening to us for all these years. It's been a long ways since we signed the petition 10 years ago, and finally, and hopefully, we get a resolution on this area. It's been -- it's really unbearable to live around here, anymore. It used to be, 30 years ago when I moved in. So, I want to thank you everyone, and I hope you approve the rezoning of the Crafts Section. Thank you, everybody.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, sir. That's it, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's it? Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: I do have two...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The public hearing is closed.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, I have two emails I have to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Oh, no, you have some comments?

City Clerk Urquia: Read into the record.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay, the first email says, "Dear Members of the Commission, with all due respect, the cat is out of the bag. We know what's going on. You are quick to criticize the former Commission for allowing the Aloft building to be built in a residential area. Practice what you preach. Vote no to the proposal to upzone and change the land use map for the residential area of the Crafts Section. Most of the small group of people requesting upzoning do not even live here. These are mostly rental properties that the owners have allowed to deteriorate. If they want to fix up their rentals, nobody's stopping them. If they fix them up, then they could ask for higher rents. This proposal would just push another neighborhood up against commercial. I would like to remind you that the 300 blocks of the Crafts Section, Catalonia, Malaga, Santander Avenues have been zoned residential since at least 1963. Their sidewalks are in better condition than mine. They're on a City sewer and have free trolley a block away and a free shuttle called Freebee that we don't have west of Le Jeune. These are all perks that they have enjoyed. These have been an in-town residential neighborhood my whole life. Do not change it. I would also like to remind you that one of the ring leaders of this proposed upzoning is a former Assistant City Manager that appeared before the Historic Preservation Board to convince them to declare 333 Catalonia as not

historic, stating that as a 1920 two-story apartment building, it was out of scale and context with their single-family neighborhood. Now, this same person is turning around once it has been declared not historic to request the neighborhood be upzoned to allow six to seven stories of mixed use commercial. Upzoning this area would just push crime, traffic and parking overflow issues into the abutting neighborhoods. The residential areas of Bird, Red and Le Jeune Roads face much busier corridors. What are you planning to tell these residents if you upzone the Crafts Section? It is just not fair. On top of this, to introduce a new mixed-use commercial district so close to Miracle Mile when Miracle Mile is struggling so much already is insane. Please do not sell us out. Preserve our neighborhoods. Thank you, Mr. Brett Gillis.” And the next email, Mr. Mayor...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Brett Gillis, yeah.

City Clerk Urquia: Is from -- “My name is Albert Cabrera, and I am the owner of 145 Madeira Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida, and I’ve owned this property for about five years. I support the City's zoning update and the Crafts Section rezoning. I have been attending the City's workshops meetings, and public hearings for more than two years. I have the support -- I support the Zoning Code update as they are immaterial and aim to clean up the Code by encouraging smaller development. Further, I support the Crafts Section rezoning as well. The Crafts Section should not be residential when you have commercial buildings and a major highway surrounding that little neighborhood. As a business owner, I would like this to be residential in the future in order to bring more pedestrian traffic to the neighborhood restaurants and shops. Thank you, Mr. Albert Cabrera.” Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Is that it? Thank you very much. Alright, does the Commission want to make a comment or do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Keon: Can we have -- Mr. Trias, can you explain on the northern two blocks, MX1, what is MX1, for the record, just for the public.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, MX1 would be mostly residential, but it does allow commercial downstairs. What does commercial mean? Well, it includes live/work, includes a variety of things that are probably compatible -- I think most people would agree -- with what's going on in the area; staff certainly thinks so. In terms of height, the whole area is capped at 45 feet on Le Jeune for the first hundred feet. So, that may give you four stories maybe, and then the rest of the block could be up to six stories, so that's the gist of it all. From what I've heard, if you're interested in removing the southernmost block, that can be done through -- on the floor by changing the boundary of both the land use and the zoning request.

Commissioner Mena: Yeah, so I would make a motion to approve the MX1 designation for the two northern blocks, but exclude the southern block and direct staff to bring back a proposal for the southern block at the next meeting.

City Attorney Ramos: So, that's on F-3 specifically.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Is there a second?

Commissioner Fors: I'll second it.

Commissioner Keon: I'll second it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner Keon seconded it. Any comments? Will you call the roll, please.

City Clerk Urquia: Madam City Attorney, are we taking a roll call on F-3, first?

City Attorney Ramos: Yes, sir.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay.

City Attorney Ramos: That's the motion that was made.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

City Attorney Ramos: We're going to go back to F-2.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll, please?

Vice Mayor Lago: Wait a minute.

Commissioner Mena: Do you need any direction from us on F-2?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It has to be the same map.

Commissioner Keon: The same thing.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The same map.

Commissioner Mena: The same motion as to F-2.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, the same map, yes, correct.

City Clerk Urquia: I'm sorry. Who made the motion on F-2?

Commissioner Mena: I'm making the same motion as to F-2.

Commissioner Keon: I'll second.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay. Commissioner Keon?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner Keon seconded.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Commissioner Keon: Okay. Now, do you make the motion about the first block?

City Attorney Ramos: We have F-4 left.

Commissioner Keon: Oh, okay, sorry.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, F-4 deals with the site specifics on the block that we will bring back to you, so you may or may not take action on it today.

Vice Mayor Lago: Well, we don't need to take action then.

Commissioner Keon: Do you need direction on that or no?

Vice Mayor Lago: If we don't need to take action then let's not vote.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I don't -- I mean, since we're going back with the block, I think that it may be okay to do it later.

Vice Mayor Lago: Okay.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I mean, unless the City Attorney disagrees.

City Attorney Ramos: So, you're not going to take a vote on that today, Ramon?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I don't think it's necessary; it doesn't affect the other two blocks.

Vice Mayor Lago: Ramon, are you -- in regards to the most south -- the south and third block, are we going to have that legislation at the next Commission meeting?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: As soon as we are able to advertise it and send the notices.

City Attorney Ramos: Ramon, are you going...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: If that works.

City Attorney Ramos: To Planning and Zoning on that?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Well, yeah, you're right. We have to go back to...

City Manager Iglesias: This has -- may I say this has to start over to Planning and Zoning. We will look at bringing it back with an MF2 concept, with a limited height of 45 feet. And we will bring it back...

Vice Mayor Lago: But I want to be clear. I want to be clear, okay. I want this to come back. I don't want to hear six months later that this didn't come back.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Right, right.

Vice Mayor Lago: That it was...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: But that one block is what's going to come back.

City Manager Iglesias: Vice Mayor, we will bring it back. You just have to go through all the procedures...

Vice Mayor Lago: No, I understand that.

City Manager Iglesias: To bring it back.

Vice Mayor Lago: And I, again...

City Manager Iglesias: And we propose to bring it back, yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: I understand. And I understand it's got to go through all the -- it's got to be done correctly, and it's got to go to P and Z, and it's got to be, you know, properly noticed. But we've had instances here where we've made some...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And part of the reason is that it does require a change of land use also, so it's a significant work effort.

Vice Mayor Lago: And I got it, but I just want -- I want your word, Mr. Manager, that this is going to come back.

City Manager Iglesias: You have my word, Vice Mayor. We will bring it back as MF2, but we have to go through the same procedures that we did through this -- through MF1.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

City Manager Iglesias: So, we will work on it immediately to get that through.

Vice Mayor Lago: Okay, I just want this to be a priority, please.

Commissioner Mena: Can I just ask a technical question? If it has to...

City Manager Iglesias: It is a priority.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you.

City Manager Iglesias: We will make it a priority.

Commissioner Mena: If it has to go through...

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Commissioner Mena: That whole process, so be it. I guess what I'm -- my question for the City Attorney or staff is, it seems like what we're suggesting is a lesser intensity, high density, et cetera,

than what P and Z already approved -- right? -- because they approved MX1 for this. So why would that have to go back to the P and Z? I mean, I'm fine if it does, I don't care. But it seems like if they've approved going to 70-plus feet and whatever the density is for MX1, all that, and what we're proposing is less than that, then why would there be any objection from P and Z, and why does it even need to be...

Commissioner Keon: It's a map use change.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: I think...

Commissioner Mena: But if it does, so be it. I mean, I...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, I think the...

Commissioner Keon: Map use.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The easiest answer is that we have to make a land use change, and usually we forget that that's the most significant change we make.

Commissioner Mena: Sure.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The one that we're making with MX1 is to commercial, and then therefore, we're able to do MX1. If we're going to do residential, we have to have a residential land use.

Commissioner Mena: Okay.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's the easiest answer.

Commissioner Mena: Understood. Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: When is the next Planning and Zoning Board meeting?

City Attorney Ramos: Tomorrow.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The next meeting is tomorrow.

City Manager Iglesias: So, I would like to clarify...

Commissioner Keon: Is when?

City Manager Iglesias: That...

Commissioner Keon: But can you bring it on first reading to the -- to the Commission on first reading at the next meeting, then go to Planning and Zoning and then bring it back?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: We can discuss it further with the City Attorney and see...

City Attorney Ramos: So, normally...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: What the options are.

City Attorney Ramos: Commissioner, we have done that for minor changes. This is pretty significant, so I'd rather not play with the process.

Commissioner Keon: So, you'd rather go to Planning and Zoning...

City Attorney Ramos: Yes.

City Commission Meeting

February 9, 2021

Agenda Items F-2, F-3 and F-4 are related - Ordinances of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida amending the Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan, making zoning district boundary changes, and providing for a text amendment to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code for certain properties located in the Crafts Section, Coral Gables, Florida. Page 43

Commissioner Keon: In March, and then come back?

City Attorney Ramos: It just makes it...

Commissioner Keon: Oh, okay.

City Attorney Ramos: More defensible.

Commissioner Keon: Alright.

City Manager Iglesias: And I think it's clear.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Anything else?

City Manager Iglesias: If I may say, I think it's clear that it's MF2, with a limit of 45 feet, so I think instead of bringing it back next Commission meeting, we will bring it back at the appropriate time.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: But we will proceed immediately on it.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Vice Mayor Lago: Okay, thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Meeting adjourned.