

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item 2-1 and I-1 are related
October 22, 2019
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena (Attended by phone)

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Cultural Arts Specialist, Catherine Cathers

Public Speaker(s)

Bill Brady

Agenda Item 2-1 and I-1 are related [9:26:33 a.m.]

2-1: A Resolution of the Cultural Affairs Board recommending approval of the concept for a work of public art titled “Mean Average” by Tony Cragg in conjunction with The Plaza Coral Gables development project at 2901 Ponce de Leon Boulevard in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private development. (Unanimously recommended by the Arts Advisory Panel approval/denial vote: 4 to 0, and the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 6 to 0).

I-1: A Resolution approving the concept for a work of public art titled “Mean Average” by Tony Cragg in conjunction with The Plaza Coral Gables development project at 2901 Ponce de Leon Boulevard in fulfillment of the Art in Public Places requirement for public art in private development. (Unanimously recommended by the Arts Advisory Panel approval/denial vote: 4 to 0, and the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 6 to 0).

City Commission Meeting
October 22, 2019

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Item 2-1 which is related to I-1 and that is Cultural Affairs Board recommending approval of the concept for a work of public art.

City Attorney Ramos: And the vote from the Commission will be on I-1.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I-1 or 2.1? I-1 – go ahead.

Ms. Cathers: Good morning Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners, my name is Catherine Cathers, Arts and Cultural Specialist for the City. We have a PowerPoint up here.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

City Attorney Ramos: They have a PowerPoint.

Ms. Cathers: Ok. So, this is the Cultural Development Board making a recommendation to approve art work with The Plaza, so Agave Plaza Trustees constructing a mixed-use project at 2901 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, known as The Plaza. The board first chosen the option of petitioning for a waiver, but the Art in Public Places fee requirement by acquiring and installing artwork within the project in Zoning Code Article 3, Division 21. The developer reviewed over 50 artists with international acclaim and after consulting with Bill Brady and delivering as a board, the developer viewed similar work by the artist and confirmed their selection of artist Tony Cragg and the artwork titled "Mean Average." Tony Cragg was born in England and has lived in Germany since 1977, as one of the worlds most distinguished contemporary sculptors, Tony Cragg continues to amplify and define the sculptural medium through his thought-provoking work. Throughout his career he has drawn on both the natural world and industrial systems to create new forms that develop and add to the definition of sculpture. Tony Cragg is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Barnett Newman Foundation Award in 2016, and the Commander of Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. He has received additional awards throughout the world and represented Britain in the 43rd Venice Biennale in 1988, the same year he was awarded the Turner Prize at the Tate Gallery, London. This sculpture will serve as a landmark for The Plaza Coral Gables and further defining the area as one of cultural significance. Tony Cragg's "Mean Average" will be located in a high visibility location and then itself as a cultural landmark of importance. The sculpture will greet visitors as they enter from the Ponce de Leon entrance of The Plaza development. The sculpture will be the first introduction to The Plaza Coral Gables and further define areas a place of relaxation, beauty, sense of contemplation. The meaning of Cragg's sculpture lies in the celebration of materials, but its significance lies in the way it leads viewers to reflect on themes of form and material, changing their awareness, absorbing these issues into their thinking and feeling and therefore looking at the world in its materials differently and perceiving

*City Commission Meeting
October 22, 2019*

their surroundings in a different way. Cragg is very poetic in his conceptual practice in merging materials into unseen shapes are familiar to us all. This piece is a profile of a face spun in many directions. Here is a water view of how the artwork was set in the location. “Mean Average” is a cast bronze piece, approximately 19 feet high and about 9 feet at its base. The cost of the proposed art piece and installation is estimated to be \$1,238,149, which is less than the required one percent of the project’s total Art in Public Places fee estimate. The developer has expressed the intent to submit additional proposed artworks and also restoration of the historical building on site to make up the difference. The developer is required to provide for the perpetual maintenance of the artwork which will be the sole responsibility of the developer.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. A beautiful piece of art, and at the...in Paris this past week, I think this was a sensational week and...We are very proud to have this in Coral Gables if its approved. Do I hear a motion?

Vice Mayor Lago: I make a motion. This artist is one of the most important artists currently alive on the planet. His work was just exhibited in Park Avenue, it was a hit, they have about five sculptures, I think its five or six sculptures.

Ms. Cathers: This piece was in the Park Avenue installation.

Vice Mayor Lago: So, it comes already with a pretty distinguished pedigree.

Ms. Cathers: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: You’re talking about an artist, again, I think this Commission has talked about it on multiple fronts over the last few years. We want people during Art Basel to make Coral Gables a destination. I think that being involved in Art Basel as the named event, I think that having this type of work is going to set us apart from every other City. And I talked to the developer in regard to their proposal and what they are presenting in the near future. This is just one of several artists that are exceptional, and I want to commend the developer for really going above and beyond and delivering...

Ms. Cathers: They’ve been great to work with.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Motion has been made and seconded, will you call the roll please.

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Commissioner Fors: Yes

City Commission Meeting

October 22, 2019

Commissioner Keon: Yes
Vice Mayor Lago: Yes
Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes
(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

Ms. Cathers: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Lago: Congratulations.

[End: 9:31:51 a.m.]

[Note for the record: The Commission resumed this item at 10:42:18 a.m.]

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The first item of business I would like to take 2-1, go back to 2-1, acceptance of the Tony Cragg “Mean Average” sculpture. The Plaza are here, they were here – speak about the sculpture. I think it’s a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful piece and a great addition to Coral Gables

Jose Antonio Perez: Thank you so much. Jose Antonio Perez, address is 29 Ponce de Leon. We just want to thank the Commission, it’s a great effort followed by consultant, Bill Brady, he knows more about the piece. We have been pursuing that for the past two years, thanks to Commissioner Lago...And after these two years with Historic and all the boards, we want to thank you for all the support for getting that piece. Bill can speak more about the piece and the artist.

Bill Brady: Good morning Mayor, good morning Vice Mayor and Commissioners. I’m Bill Brady, I’m working with The Plaza and thank you for approving Tony Cragg’s “Mean Average,” which is a fantastic piece. It was first shown in London and then on Park Avenue and now in Germany and soon here in Coral Gables. If you are not familiar with Tony Cragg’s work, he originally started with collecting objects, assembling them on the walls, creating a palate for a country or a person. Then he moved onto stacks and the piece that you’re acquiring “Mean Average” is based on the stacks, but then also based on a person’s profile, and that person’s profile is spun around many, many times and stacked, and that’s how he came up with the “Mean Average.” And this piece was made in 2014. I’m very happy that its coming here to Coral Gables.

Commissioner Keon: So are we.

Bill Brady: Any questions?
City Commission Meeting
October 22, 2019

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: So are we. We are very, very happy with it. Its going to be a fantastic addition to our art inventory – fantastic.

Bill Brady: And I have to congratulate them for taking the chance and believing and looking at what I presented them and picking out really great art. They took the big chance and I commend them on that, because I brought them world class artist, but not everybody is familiar with what a world class artist is, but if you walk into any museum and any country in the world you are more than likely going to run into a Tony Cragg sculpture.

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

Speaker: These are all the pieces that...[inaudible]

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And we are glad you are here.

Speaker: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Lago: Your commitment to the City is making the City Beautiful a destination for art and culture. Just want to say thank you for believing in the City and that we are going to be good stewards to the investment that you made. So, thank you.

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

Vice Mayor Lago: Congratulations.

[End: 10:45:45 a.m.]