

1 Before we go to the next item, Alice Bravo
2 is trying to send you an e-mail. She's not
3 able to send it to you. She sent it to me.
4 She's stuck on a plane coming back from
5 Tallahassee, and she's requesting an absent
6 waiver.

7 THE SECRETARY: Okay.

8 MR. BEHAR: Do we have a motion for --

9 MR. PARDO: So moved.

10 MR. SANABRIA: Second.

11 MR. BUCELO: Second.

12 MR. BEHAR: All in favor?

13 (All Board Members voted aye.)

14 MR. BEHAR: Opposed, none. Seeing none,
15 motion approved.

16 Mr. Collier, can you please read Item E-5
17 now please?

18 MR. COLLIER: Item E-5, an Ordinance -- Item
19 E-5, an Ordinance of the City Commission of
20 Coral Gables, Florida providing for text
21 amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official
22 Zoning Code by amending Article 5,
23 "Architecture," Section 5-500, "Roofs," to
24 clarify roof design standards including the
25 intent to incorporate a combination of pitched

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1 and flat roof forms and to establish that roof
2 designs proposed as entirely flat require
3 review and approval by the Full Board of
4 Architects; to remove Sections 5-503 and 5-504
5 and renumber subsequent sections; to delete
6 outdated parapet height provisions in flood
7 hazard districts; and providing for a repealer
8 provision, severability clause, codification,
9 and providing for an effective date.

10 Item E-5, public hearing.

11 MR. SOUTHERN: All right. This is another
12 text amendment, Planning & Zoning Board
13 Members, where we worked extensively with the
14 City Architect and the Board of Architects on
15 these. I'll just go ahead and read briefly a
16 little bit of background information pursuant
17 to the Staff report.

18 So, as Mr. Collier had indicated, this
19 proposed ordinance updates the City's roof
20 design regulations to improve clarity, remove
21 outdated provisions and better align the Zoning
22 Code with contemporary architectural practices
23 and the City's current architectural review
24 process.

25 Historically, Coral Gables Building &

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1 Zoning Regulations have required roof forms and
2 materials consistent with Mediterranean, and
3 similarly harmonious architectural styles,
4 including pitched tile roofs and limited
5 material options. Although flat roofs were
6 gradually permitted over time, and modern
7 architectural styles were allowed following the
8 2007 Zoning Code Re-write, certain roof design
9 requirements were not comprehensively updated
10 to reflect that policy shift. As a result,
11 portions of the current roof regulations are
12 outdated, when applied to contemporary modern
13 architectural styles.

14 The proposed text amendments address these
15 issues, by clarifying that high quality roof
16 materials not expressly listed in the Code may
17 be approved by the City Architect, and where
18 applicable, the full Board of Architects, based
19 on architectural style, neighborhood context
20 and sound structural principles, and by
21 clarifying parapet standards for flat roofs,
22 including the requirement that roof designs
23 proposed as entirely flat be subject to review
24 and approval by the full Board of Architects.

25 Roof designs remain an essential component

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1 of overall building design and visual
2 compatibility with surrounding development.
3 These proposed text amendments maintain the
4 City's architectural standards, while providing
5 clear, more consistent guidance for property
6 owners, design professionals, and all of the
7 reviewing bodies. As previously stated, we
8 took this ordinance, with corrections from
9 Staff, and it was reviewed and approved on
10 Thursday, January 29th, by the Board of
11 Architects.

12 If you have any questions, we have all of
13 the subsections, with strike-throughs and
14 underline, that have been changed and omitted.
15 If you have any particular questions, I'm here
16 to answer those.

17 MR. BEHAR: Okay. I'm going to go ahead
18 now and I'm going to open it up to the public
19 comment. Anybody, Jill, in the Chamber?

20 THE SECRETARY: No.

21 MR. BEHAR: Anybody in Zoom?

22 THE SECRETARY: No.

23 MR. BEHAR: Phones?

24 THE SECRETARY: No.

25 MR. BEHAR: I'm going to close the public

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1 comments.

2 I'm going to open it up to Board
3 discussions. Mr. Pardo, I'm going to start
4 with you, at that end.

5 MR. PARDO: Well, I have certain concerns.
6 I don't understand what the limitations, if any
7 that exist. For example, single-family homes,
8 now you can have a hundred percent flat roofs.

9 MR. SOUTHERN: Well, that's not correct. I
10 mean, they would have to put --

11 MR. PARDO: No, I'm asking. I'm not --

12 MR. SOUTHERN: Yeah. They would have to
13 put a proposal in front of the Board of
14 Architects, and the Board of Architects would
15 have to approve that, the full Board.

16 MR. PARDO: I have seen -- in other
17 municipalities, I have seen where there was a
18 theme for the particular municipality, and
19 then, all of a sudden, these particular types
20 of incompatible styles started to crop up.
21 It's really a stark -- it's a stark contrast,
22 and, again, I say, compatibility, because the
23 use is not the issue. It's the variation.

24 You can have variations. You're not
25 copying where it's a cookie cutter type of

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1 differences of design have to do with it. It's
2 not even mentioned in this proposed resolution.

3 MR. SOUTHERN: Well, I just want to add
4 that, in Section 5-502, we do actually call out
5 multiple lots and blocks of the Riviera
6 Section, the French Village, multiple others,
7 where flat roofs without a parapet -- I mean,
8 there's multiple components. If you take a
9 look at the Staff report and go through Section
10 5-502 -- now, granted, I'm in Planning &
11 Zoning.

12 This has been inspired by the City
13 Architect and the Board of Architects. That's
14 why we're bringing it in front of you, because
15 it is inside of our Planning & Zoning Code, but
16 they do actually have quite a few things that
17 aren't being touched, that talk about different
18 components in here. They call out certain lots
19 and blocks, but there is quite a few of the
20 existing regulations already there.

21 MR. PARDO: No. I think maybe I'm not
22 explaining myself correctly.

23 Contextual type of presentation to the
24 Board means several homes to the left, several
25 homes to the right, across the street, so you

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1 thing. I think this is going to continue to
2 degrade the City's architecture. I see it,
3 where -- in other buildings, such as commercial
4 buildings, where Mediterranean bonuses are
5 awarded to things that are obviously not
6 Mediterranean in style, look or feel. So I am
7 very concerned.

8 I think that this is a huge mistake.
9 People are going to be looking at this in such
10 a way, that what were they thinking, kind of
11 question. So I'm particularly concerned. I
12 think it's a very bad idea. I don't care if
13 it's unanimous, depending on who you have on
14 the Board, and it's just not right. So I have
15 a real problem with this particular way. There
16 are no limitations. There are no restrictions.
17 It's basically, you know, a full Board
18 approval, and that's it.

19 MR. SOUTHERN: There are some restrictions,
20 but this was --

21 MR. PARDO: Such as, for example, you don't
22 have a provision of context of the blocks in
23 there. That is crucial in just about every
24 city. Miami Beach has it. You name them, many
25 places have them. The contextual types of

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1 understand from the scale and --

2 MR. SOUTHERN: Right.

3 MR. PARDO: -- and detail standpoint. It's
4 not a cookie cutter approach, but many times
5 what I have seen with some of these flat
6 designs, the incompatibility, it just sticks
7 out like an eyesore. It looks more like a
8 sculpture than, you know, a particular home.

9 I have a real problem, because I don't
10 think it's been addressed properly, as far as
11 the contextual type of comparisons that should
12 have been written into the Code, and right now
13 it's just too willy-nilly. With all due
14 respect to the City Architect, I disagree, and
15 I disagree vehemently.

16 MR. BEHAR: Felix, but, I mean, I've seen
17 -- I don't do single-family, so I've never come
18 across --

19 MR. PARDO: Neither do I.

20 MR. BEHAR: Okay. But I've seen, at the
21 Board, where you have to demonstrate
22 contextually you are compatible, okay. I mean,
23 you're right, depending on who's on the
24 Board --

25 MR. PARDO: Exactly. And Robert, the

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1 biggest problem I see is that it gets back to
2 the restrictions of the Board. I see where the
3 Board gets into, let's say, a particular
4 detail, but they're not looking at the entire
5 venacular that is being used, and,
6 unfortunately, most of what you're talking
7 about here, denying Staff is, is that the
8 venacular is being stripped off a lot of the
9 vocabulary that could be used in a palliative
10 way.

11 MR. BEHAR: Well, that's there today. Am I
12 not correct?

13 MR. SOUTHERN: That's correct.

14 MR. BEHAR: Unfortunately, in 2007, that
15 was modified, where today you're allowed to do
16 it.

17 MR. PARDO: Right. Well, the way that it's
18 being done now is, you're freeing that even
19 more, and I have a real problem with that. You
20 won't have my support the way it's presented.

21 Now, if Staff would go back and research
22 and do something different, where it becomes
23 more --

24 MR. BEHAR: Limited.

25 MR. PARDO: No, that's -- I don't think

1 I would like Staff to go back, basically,
2 to the drawing board, and come up with
3 something that reflects that, as an example,
4 where people know what they're getting, because
5 it's easy to go in and tear down, and then
6 you've just changed that, and it's very sad, in
7 the places that I've seen, where they all look
8 like an eyesore, and I'm not saying that it's
9 bad architecture, I'm just saying, it just
10 doesn't fit.

11 MR. BEHAR: Before we take that, let's get
12 other Board Members to -- Mr. Alvarez.

13 MR. ALVAREZ: So if I'm understanding this
14 correctly, there is no criteria. So I can go
15 in front of the Board of Architects, and they
16 say, "Make changes A and B." There's an
17 election. There's a new Board, and then they
18 can tell you, "No, I'm throwing this out. We
19 are going to go a different direction."
20 There's no -- it's all going to be dependent on
21 the Board --

22 MR. SOUTHERN: So we have Section 5,
23 Architecture, within the Zoning Code. It's
24 filled with all different kinds of forms and
25 criteria. If you want to get specific about

1 that's the right word.

2 MR. ALVAREZ: What criterias.

3 MR. PARDO: The criteria or the
4 presentation for the compatibility within the
5 neighborhood, and the neighborhoods can change
6 from one to the other, but sometimes, you know,
7 you just can't -- you just can't think that
8 you're in a vacuum. You have to be looking
9 at -- I mean, I would be very upset if someone
10 put something that just didn't go along with
11 the rest of my neighborhood, because when I
12 bought there, I was buying into the
13 neighborhood.

14 Now, if you're saying, well, this
15 neighborhood is more modern, it has flat roofs,
16 it has this, I could understand that. In fact,
17 the one that we just changed the height onto
18 the second story, I could see it working there.
19 Why, because it's directly across the street
20 from commercial. It's directly across the
21 street from flat areas.

22 Do you understand what I'm saying now?

23 MR. BEHAR: I get it.

24 MR. PARDO: I think that is a perfect
25 example, and it's right in our face.

1 flat roofs, flat roofs, if that's the area that
2 we want to talk about specifically, it's all in
3 front of you, inside of the Staff report, and
4 within the Ordinance there. It's Section
5 5-502, Flat Roofs.

6 And like I said, I mean, it's in the
7 Planning & Zoning Code. We have to bring it in
8 front of you, but this was a recommendation
9 from not only the City Architect, but the
10 entirety of the Board of Architects. So if
11 there's recommendations or whatever, we can
12 definitely take it back to that Board, and --
13 if that's -- if you have specific
14 recommendations.

15 MR. PARDO: I think my concerns were very
16 specific, you haven't addressed them yet, but I
17 would like Staff to be able to address them
18 with the Board of Architects and the City
19 Architect, because, again, it depends on where
20 you are. There are certain areas that are very
21 different, and it's very concerning that we're
22 changing many things, where these are existing
23 neighborhoods. This is not a brand new
24 development here. These are existing
25 neighborhoods, with existing homes, and,

1 unfortunately, some people, you know -- it
2 would be great if you were living on certain
3 parts of Miami Beach and you're using flat and
4 you have Art Deco and you have this and that, I
5 can see that all day.

6 I'm just saying that protecting the
7 neighborhoods and the contextual relationship
8 is important.

9 MR. BEHAR: And, Felix, you're right. I
10 mean, to your point, some streets, like
11 Columbus --

12 MR. PARDO: A hundred percent.

13 MR. BEHAR: -- you know, I could see it
14 there, but -- Ignacio, any other comments?

15 Nestor.

16 MR. SANABRIA: I have some comments. Go
17 ahead.

18 MR. MENENDEZ: No, no, go ahead.

19 MR. SANABRIA: No, go ahead, please.

20 MR. BEHAR: I'm going to come to you.
21 Go ahead, Nestor.

22 MR. MENENDEZ: So what's the City's stance
23 right now on flat roofs? I mean, what are we
24 really addressing here? Are we trying to
25 define, further define --

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1 gives you a thumb up. So that is a concern.

2 Is there any way to add guardrails, and I
3 would -- I'm not an architect, so -- and I've
4 never served on the Board of Architects. I
5 think two of my colleagues have. Is there any
6 type of guardrails that could be added to maybe
7 assuage some of Mr. Pardo's concern, and mine,
8 as well, because, again, I do get it, that
9 there's -- you know, there's a certain look and
10 feel to a neighborhood, and then somebody comes
11 in, they buy the property, and they put a flat
12 roof, and maybe not now, but in twenty, thirty
13 years, you have a row of flat roofs, because
14 everybody just came in and bought houses and
15 changed them.

16 I'm not saying that's going to happen, but
17 I do share the same concerns as Mr. Pardo.

18 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Bucelo.

19 MR. BUCELO: I do agree with Mr. Pardo. I
20 do think there should be some sort of criteria.
21 My question is, if this were to pass, it would
22 get presented to the Board, does the Board
23 itself look at the neighboring properties? Is
24 that something that they do?

25 MR. SOUTHERN: Yes, of course. Yeah, they

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1 MR. SOUTHERN: Further define. Further
2 define and give more authority and power to not
3 only the City Architect, but also the Board of
4 Architects, where if it is proposed to be a
5 flat roof, they know that there's no
6 administrative approvals whatsoever. Any
7 proposed flat roof would have to go in front of
8 the Board of Architects.

9 MR. MENENDEZ: Is that how it is now?

10 MR. SOUTHERN: No. No. Right now, if I
11 remember correctly, I think it's, if you have
12 like a six or eight-inch slope, that could be
13 considered non-flat. Now, granted, there's
14 other components in here, but we are actually
15 trying to give more authority to the Board of
16 Architects when they make these decisions.

17 MR. MENENDEZ: So just to echo Felix's
18 concern, I kind of whole-heartedly support
19 that. Like it's a slippery slope, I think. I
20 think that we -- you know, when looking at,
21 somebody's applying to have a flat roof, you
22 should look at the neighborhood, and we don't
23 want to destroy the neighborhood, even though
24 you're technically allowed to do it, if the
25 Board of Architects and the City Architect

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1 look at every case, case by case proposal.

2 MR. BUCELO: Okay.

3 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Sanabria.

4 MR. SANABRIA: Thank you.

5 I find something funny here, "Fake, but
6 variegated."

7 MR. SOUTHERN: Where are you at, I'm sorry?

8 MR. SANABRIA: I see that Under ED. But
9 anyway, it's just a funny phrase. Some day,
10 you'll translate it for me.

11 But in the meantime, Craig, what about
12 metal roofs?

13 MR. SOUTHERN: What about, what, I'm sorry?

14 MR. SANABRIA: What about metal roofs?

15 MR. BEHAR: Metal.

16 MR. SOUTHERN: Metal roofs?

17 MR. SANABRIA: Yeah, metal roofs. How are
18 we treating metal roofs? I see some allusions
19 to copper materials, but what about metal
20 roofs, per se? I mean, I don't understand
21 where --

22 MR. SOUTHERN: If you go to Section 5
23 dash --

24 MR. SANABRIA: I read it. I'm trying to
25 understand it.

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1 MR. SOUTHERN: Roofs and Materials, you'll
2 see we have standing seam metal may be used.
3 This is what would be proposed as the
4 re-lettered Number K. It's already existing,
5 but all of that --

6 MR. SANABRIA: Well, I'm trying to ask a
7 question.

8 MR. SOUTHERN: I don't do architectural
9 reviews for single-family houses.

10 MR. SANABRIA: I hear you, but I'm trying
11 to ask you a question. What about metal roofs,
12 are they approved under this Ordinance? Are
13 metal roofs approved under this Ordinance, yes
14 or no?

15 MR. SOUTHERN: Like I said, there is
16 already existing within the Code now some
17 components for standing seam metal.

18 MR. SANABRIA: Which components?

19 MR. SOUTHERN: Like I said, it's Section
20 5-503, Pitched Roof Materials. If you look at
21 this, you'll see a variety of different pitched
22 roof material types, A through L, and if you go
23 through Subsection K, "Standing seam metal may
24 be used on single-family homes." This is
25 already existing. "Metal roofs are prohibited

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1 MR. MENENDEZ: I'll second.

2 MR. SOUTHERN: Can Staff just ask a
3 clarification real quick?

4 MR. BEHAR: Sure.

5 MR. PARDO: Sure.

6 MR. SOUTHERN: District analysis and
7 contextual neighborhood context, and then
8 additional criterias, pretty much what I'm
9 hearing predominantly, correct?

10 MR. PARDO: I would say, pretty much,
11 that's it. And developing a mechanism, a
12 mechanism, contextual drawings, that provide
13 maybe the entire block, on both sides, not just
14 on the side of the property, but also across
15 the street.

16 And the other thing is that, in the flat
17 roof component, you know, this is all
18 encompassing, including commercial buildings,
19 correct, high rises?

20 MR. BEHAR: I don't think commercial --
21 this is for single-family, yes.

22 MR. SOUTHERN: This is for single-family.

23 MR. PARDO: Only single-family?

24 MR. BEHAR: This is only for single-family.

25 MR. PARDO: Okay.

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1 within Historic Districts and shall require the
2 additional approval from the Historic
3 Preservation Board." I mean, there's -- "Metal
4 roofs shall not immitate other materials and
5 may not be painted." There is some information
6 already here, when it's a pitched roof.

7 MR. SANABRIA: My comment is this, unless
8 there's an extreme urgency to approve this item
9 today for some unforeseen reason that I don't
10 grasp at this time, I think we should defer it
11 and have it come back to the Board.

12 MR. BEHAR: I will -- my comments are the
13 same as you heard, and I think maybe it's
14 prudent that we defer this and come back with a
15 little bit -- on the metal roof, it's very
16 specific. I don't think that gets affected,
17 because you cannot put a metal roof in a flat
18 surface. So that's already pretty much.

19 But I think you heard enough from us, that
20 I think that if anybody wants -- any Board
21 Member wants to make a motion to --

22 MR. PARDO: I'd like to make a motion to
23 defer the item today, and have -- and direct
24 Staff to please go back and express the very
25 specific comments by the Board.

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1 MR. BEHAR: Now, a question for the City
2 Attorney, do we have a put a time certain, do
3 we need to -- since we're going to, you know,
4 defer it?

5 MR. COLLER: Well, I think that -- this is
6 a general ordinance, so I don't think we did
7 mail notice for this, did we?

8 MR. SOUTHERN: No.

9 MR. COLLER: Okay. So I don't think we
10 need a time certain, because the City is going
11 renoteice it.

12 MR. BEHAR: So whenever you're ready, you
13 could bring it up to us.

14 MR. SOUTHERN: Okay.

15 MR. BEHAR: Okay. We have a motion and a
16 second.

17 Jill, can you please call the roll?

18 THE SECRETARY: Sure.

19 Felix Pardo?

20 MR. PARDO: Yes.

21 THE SECRETARY: Gonzalo Sanabria?

22 MR. SANABRIA: Yes.

23 THE SECRETARY: Ignacio Alvarez?

24 MR. ALVAREZ: Yes.

25 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

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1 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 2 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?
 3 MR. BUCELO: Yes.
 4 THE SECRETARY: Nestor Menendez?
 5 MR. MENENDEZ: Yes.
 6 MR. BEHAR: Thank you.
 7 MR. COLLER: Mr. Chairman, there's one
 8 issue before you leave.
 9 Getting back to the Alice Bravo and the
 10 Board voting on it, there's been changes to
 11 attendance and there's -- I don't recall, I
 12 have this in my head, that the Board doesn't
 13 have the authority to waive her attendance,
 14 although she has a very justified reason.
 15 She's stuck on a plane. I tried to reach
 16 Christina to see what the position is.
 17 So I know the sentiment of the Board has
 18 been expressed. I need to get back to
 19 Christina on how the process works for things
 20 of that nature. So I just want to advise the
 21 Board that I'm looking into that.
 22 MR. BEHAR: No problem.
 23 MR. BUCELO: Thank you.
 24 MR. BEHAR: Okay. At this time, again, I
 25 will recuse myself. Mr. Bucelo, please.

1 MR. BUCELO: Thank you.
 2 Mr. Coller, I guess, if we can have the
 3 next item.
 4 MR. COLLER: Okay. So I just want to make
 5 sure, we're on --
 6 THE SECRETARY: E-1.
 7 MR. BUCELO: E-1.
 8 MR. COLLER: E-1, right?
 9 Okay. Item E-1, an Ordinance of the City
 10 Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, approving
 11 the vacation of a public alleyway pursuant to
 12 Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section
 13 14-211, "Abandonment and Vacations" and City
 14 Code Chapter 62, Article 8 "Vacation,
 15 abandonment and closure of streets, easements
 16 and alleys by private owners and the city;
 17 application process," providing for the
 18 vacation of the forty-five foot wide alley
 19 which is approximately one hundred twenty-five
 20 feet in length lying between Tract A and Lots
 21 27 through 31, Book (sic) 156, Riviera Section
 22 Part 8 (1250 S. Dixie Highway), Coral Gables,
 23 Florida; providing for a repealer provision,
 24 severability clause, and providing for an
 25 effective date.

1 E-1, public hearing.
 2 MS. RUSSO: Good evening, Mr. Chairman,
 3 Members of the Board. For the record, Laura
 4 Russo, with offices at 2334 Ponce de Leon
 5 Boulevard. I am here this evening representing
 6 LCD Acquisitions, Inc., the contract purchaser
 7 of the property that most of you will recognize
 8 as the University Shopping Center, where
 9 Fridays used to be located, and the Bagel
 10 Emporium.
 11 That property is bounded by US-1 on sort of
 12 the northwest side, by Mariposa Court --
 13 Mariposa Court, and on the south side by
 14 Madruga. Madruga being a very narrow street,
 15 that for many, many years most people were
 16 convinced that Madruga was actually an alley
 17 behind the building, but it's actually a
 18 platted street.
 19 We are here this evening requesting to
 20 vacate the alley that is seventy-five feet wide
 21 by a hundred -- no, forty-five feet wide by a
 22 hundred and twenty-five feet deep, and that --
 23 it actually starts right at one of the
 24 entrances, access points, into the property,
 25 and goes into the property about a hundred

1 twenty-five feet.
 2 This mess all got created back in 1950.
 3 The original Riviera Section 8 plat was
 4 replatted to vacate the alley that bifurcated
 5 this block, as it did in other blocks that
 6 abutted US-1, the common scenario of an alley
 7 bifurcating, and they replatted in 1950, and
 8 they vacated what they thought was, I guess,
 9 the whole alley, but there was a portion -- the
 10 upper northwest corner of the property was not
 11 included in that replat, and so the alley is
 12 located just south of that portion that was not
 13 part of the replat.
 14 And so we are here, the shopping center was
 15 built in the early 1950s. The alley has not
 16 been used by the City for any public purpose,
 17 and it actually is part of the access-way and
 18 part of a landscaping median inside the
 19 shopping center surface parking lot.
 20 This property will be developed under the
 21 new City's Rapid Transit Overlay Ordinance that
 22 was created in order to combat the Rapid
 23 Transit Zone of Miami-Dade County. So we are
 24 here this evening requesting that this alley be
 25 vacated. We meet all of the requirements of