

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-1
September 28, 2021
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Arts and Culture Specialist, Catherine Cathers

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item H-1 [2:22 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission approving artists for public art proposal submittals associated with the new public Parking Garage 7, Minorca Garage. (Unanimously recommended by the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 5 to 0).

(Lobbyist: N/A)

Mayor Lago: Alright. Moving on to the final issue today, which is H-1.

City Attorney Ramos: There's also another ordinance, Mayor.

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Agenda Item H-1 - Resolution of the City Commission approving artists for public art proposal submittals associated with the new public Parking Garage 7, Minorca Garage.

Mayor Lago: Which one?

City Attorney Ramos: We may want to leave that one for the end.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, let's do this one first.

City Attorney Ramos: Okay, let's do H-7 first...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, the other one is...

City Attorney Ramos: Or H-1.

Commissioner Menendez: H-1.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Good afternoon, Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners.

Mayor Lago: Thank you for your patience.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Thank you.

(BREAK IN AUDIO)

Mayor Lago: Providing them with a fee for the conceptual drawing or concept?

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Yes, so today, we're also asking for access to the Art Acquisition Fund for \$15,000 -- up to \$15,000, I should say, to cover those costs.

Mayor Lago: Okay, I don't have any issues moving forward. I had a nice meeting. We went over all the details. But I just want to put certain things on the record, and I spoke to the Manager about this. I would like to see in the near future, since we have certain projects that are significant, but when you add up the numbers of the fees in regards to the art acquisition that if we potentially put them all together in a bundle, we could significantly acquire a world-class piece of art versus doing five smaller works that are going to require a lot more maintenance. And we could potentially chase a work of art that could be -- again, it doesn't have to be huge, but it could carry a significant weight in regards to international stature. You have certain projects like 427, you have Parking Garage 7 that we just talked about, and you have the Fink Studio.

City Manager Iglesias: Fink Studio.

Mayor Lago: I think the Fink and 427 are smaller projects that you could bundle together and potentially do something great with either a local artist or an international artist, using an outside consultant that we have multiple that have helped out here in the City with different projects or, you know, speak to the Arts Advisory Council. See if they can recommend anybody. But I've just thought about maybe bundling some of these projects together. If Parking Garage 7 does not meet what my expectations are in regards to the cost, I tell you now, I will vote no. I'm not going to vote yes in favor of projects that in my opinion do a disservice to the art portfolio that we're building here in the City. That does not -- that's not an indictment on the artist. I think all the artists are great, but I want something exceptional. I want something that is beautiful and that is, again, that is inviting to the community, that really sets a benchmark in regards to quality. So, I just want to put that out there, and I spoke to the Manager about that, and maybe you can brief my colleagues alone. It doesn't have to be now, and potentially see if we can run with that idea to bundle some of these smaller projects together.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, you're thinking about bundling the parking garage, 427, and Fink together, all three is possible?

Mayor Lago: Yep.

City Manager Iglesias: To look at that possibility. Let's look at that possibility. We will look at that possibility and come back, depending on what we have in Parking Garage 7.

Mayor Lago: So, again, I just...

Commissioner Anderson: Alright.

Mayor Lago: That's just an idea that I had. And I also mentioned to -- and I'll put it on the record here. In regards to the beautiful parking garage that we're having conceptual designs for on Andalusia, I don't know -- I know my colleagues maybe have had potentially an opportunity to see that garage. It is beautiful. Something that I had the pleasure of enjoying, and we have them here in the City, and the Carlos Cruz Diaz crosswalks. If you look at Carlos Cruz Diaz works internationally, we're talking about probably in 40 or 50 different cities all over the world, he has vertical hanging sculptures that have been used in metal steel buildings, so they would fit perfectly well with that proposed conceptual design for that parking garage. I've spoken to the estate, and a lot of that -- he designed a lot of work before his passing, so maybe that could be something that we consider that would fit in perfectly, you know, with the design of that building. But I asked you to take a look at -- if you can, take a look at some of his work internationally in other public buildings throughout the world, where you can see how maybe -- how there's a nexus between the artist and the conceptual design of the building.

City Manager Iglesias: And we are looking at presenting to the Commissioner preliminary work on the Mobility Hub in October.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: So, for clarification, right now the budget for that garage itself, for the artwork there, was at \$400,000. Are you proposing that we use that fund plus the other buildings that you mentioned towards a project outside of that and not consider these artists, or still consider these artists?

Mayor Lago: No, I would consider these artists, but I want to see what they have. But I'm putting it on the record now...

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Okay.

Mayor Lago: That if I'm not happy with what's proposed and it's not -- I'm not even looking for good; I'm looking for exceptional.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Understood.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: So, we would move forward with that, with the proposal at that fee, and then moving forward, the other buildings that you mentioned, and perhaps the fire station...

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: And bundle so that we can build up...

Mayor Lago: And I would like for you to have -- you know, for my colleagues to consider that. We don't have to vote on that today, just to consider it. But it's a good opportunity to minimize maintenance and it's an opportunity to really get a world-class piece of art instead of having three

different works that, again, maybe they are world-class, but we could potentially afford something even better.

Commissioner Anderson: I would agree.

Mayor Lago: And I throw that out there for consideration. We need a motion for this if we accept this resolution.

Commissioner Anderson: I'll move it.

Commissioner Menendez: I'll second.

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Arts and Culture Specialist Cathers: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Thank you so much for your patience.