

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-6
May 31, 2022
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Works Director, Hermes Diaz

Senior Transportation Engineer, Melissa DeZayas

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-6 [Start: 5:25 p.m.]

Discussion regarding connection to downtown bicycles.

(Sponsored by Mayor Lago) (Sponsored by Commissioner Anderson)

Mayor Lago: Moving onto item G-6, Commissioner Anderson and myself.

Commissioner Anderson: Downtown bicycles. We've talked extensively.

Public Works Director Diaz: Yes, we have.

Commissioner Anderson: And you have a nice presentation to share with us your thoughts, right.

Ms. DeZayas: So, we put together a presentation that goes over concepts that we came up with internally for potential bike lanes on Valencia and Biltmore Way and Andalusia, starting from Segovia all the way to Ponce. As I mentioned, the project limits are Valencia Avenue from Segovia

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to Hernando, and then on Hernando we will go from Valencia to Biltmore Way, and then on Biltmore Way we'd go from Hernando to Ponce two-way, and then on the way back we were looking at from Hernando to Segovia for one-way westbound. So, the project is approximately a mile. So, we broke it down block-by-block; we were looking at the different rights-of-way, the different impacts that we might have. So, on Valencia Avenue from Segovia to Hernando it's a 60-foot right-of-way. This is strictly residential parking on this block. There are bump-outs, there is landscaping, unfortunately drainage issues, and we might have some signal and MDC coordination based on what we are proposing. So, this is an overhead shot of the existing conditions. So, as you can see, there are five different bump-outs, that would be impacted if we were to put in a one-way bike lane on the south side of Valencia. Within those bump-outs there are four trees.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay, but we already addressed this...a circulating pattern to avoid moving trees.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, we are going through that.

Ms. DeZayas: We are just going through it just to explain so that everybody that wasn't involved in the previous conversation understands what was there existing; and then we developed this concept or do a bike lane...so it would maintain parking on the north side and eliminate the parking bump-outs, and the potential trees on the south side. So, it would be a ten-foot, two-way bike lane with a three-foot buffer. We also explored another option which would be two one-way bike lanes with buffers; the buffers would be with the travel lanes and also with the parking lane. And then we also explored this one option, which is just the one-way bike lane going east. With this one we were able to maintain the parking lanes.

Public Works Director Diaz: And that's the option that will maintain the bump-out, with a one-way bicycle lane on the south side.

Ms. DeZayas: And this would be an option if we were to continue with the idea of moving forward with the westbound bike lane on Biltmore Way, from Hernando to Segovia.

Commissioner Anderson: Did you also study between Cardena Street and Segovia?

Ms. DeZayas: Cardena Street and what? – no, we didn't.

Commissioner Anderson: Cardena and Segovia.

Ms. DeZayas: We didn't do Cardena.

Commissioner Anderson: There are no trees there right now and there is minimal parking.

Ms. DeZayas: For northbound?

Commissioner Anderson: Both directions.
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Ms. DeZayas: We'll look into that, but we didn't do that. We did it from, basically Segovia where the existing bike lane is heading east towards Ponce and then going back west.

Public Works Director Diaz: The idea is to connect the bike lane from Segovia and loop back around...

Commissioner Anderson: I understand.

Public Works Director Diaz:...The mobility hub back into Segovia, but we are more than happy to.

Commissioner Anderson: I only ask because I had mentioned it, because it is a vacant area right now lacking trees and parking. So, let's go ahead and cover the Segovia to the mobility hub, basically to get to Andalusia, circulation pattern.

Public Works Director Diaz: I'm sorry, say that again.

Commissioner Anderson: Just go ahead with the presentation covering from Segovia heading east and circulating back.

Ms. DeZayas: We were heading east on Valencia; we could look at a two-way bike lane or one-way bike lane or two one-way bike lanes, those are the three options that we just did with the cross-sections. So now we're on Hernando and here we have extremely limited right-of-way, its 50 feet. The east side of Hernando would be where we'd proposed a one-way bike lane heading north to connect Valencia to Biltmore Way and Andalusia. There would be parking removal there, there are some bump-outs, potentially drainage and definitely some signalization...So this is the existing location. This is pointing north going right. So here we have five spaces that would be impacted by putting the bike lane on the east side and three bump-outs that would be impacted, if we were to put the bike lane. Here is the concept with the one-way bike lane going north on Valencia to Biltmore Way.

Commissioner Menendez: I have a question.

Ms. DeZayas: Sure.

Commissioner Menendez: Go back to the screen...so the bicyclists will be coming east on Valencia.

Ms. DeZayas: Yes.

Commissioner Menendez: Turning left on Hernando.

Ms. DeZayas: Yes, to go north to Biltmore.

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Commissioner Menendez: Biltmore Way and then from there obviously continue east eventually.

Ms. DeZayas: Yes. So, what we were looking at was doing a two-way bike lane on the south side of Biltmore Way to go east to Ponce and then they are coming back west on that two-way bike track; and then we were looking at the option of, once you hit Hernando going west one-way to Segovia, and then you would just have the eastbound direction if you were to do the one on Valencia.

Commissioner Menendez: Because I use that, I get to that stoplight and the bicyclists are just looking continue to flow regardless of the traffic signals.

Ms. DeZayas: So that would be the MDC signalization coordination that we would have to do. This is one of the impacts that I would be discussing later on. So, there are a lot of impacts when you are looking at redoing the striping and everything when it comes to these bike lanes. You are going to have to shift the bike lanes which would potentially impact the location of the traffic signals. We would have to see about the signal timing. So, there is a lot of cost associated with it, in addition to potentially a structural analysis on the...

Commissioner Anderson: Let me ask you this question. There's a traffic circle on Valencia, you are all pretty familiar with it because you leave, probably head west on Valencia and you go through that traffic circle. You don't cross the intersection. You don't have any signalization problem at that circle. Instead of going on the east side of Hernando, you flow the bicycles on the west side of Hernando, then they are at a signal that already exist right outside here from City Hall at the intersection of Biltmore Way and Hernando.

Ms. DeZayas: It would be the same because ...

Commissioner Anderson: The signal exists.

Ms. DeZayas: Whether or not you go on the east side or the west side, you're still going to hit the signal when you get to Biltmore Way, correct.

Commissioner Anderson: But you won't have the bicycles crossing through the circle. You can feed them along the same, hug that same route there on the north side of Valencia. So, you're just making a left-hand turn on Hernando and not crossing the intersection yet, until you get to a stop where you can press a button and cross Hernando more safely than trying to cross Hernando through that circle.

Ms. DeZayas: Are you talking for the westbound direction, to have it on the west side?

Commissioner Anderson: No. I'm talking about going eastbound.

Ms. DeZayas: Because eastbound – if you're on the east side of the road, you wouldn't have to push the button, you would just be making a right, if you're on the southside on Biltmore Way.

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Commissioner Anderson: And yet you're going this way, you're heading east, you are making a left, whether you make it on the west side of Hernando or the east side of Hernando, you're still making a left. If you don't want bicycles going through that circle without signalization, you don't have to, you just keep them on the west side till you get to the signal that already exist at Biltmore Way and Hernando.

Ms. DeZayas: I don't think you can do that through a circle, because a bicycle lane enters the circle it merges in with the traffic and it has to follow the flow of the traffic.

Commissioner Anderson: I'm saying not to do that.

Public Works Director Diaz: The county will not allow that.

Commissioner Anderson: The county won't allow it to stay out of the circle, is that what you're telling me?

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct. The county's comments on previous circles that we've had is that unless its completely separated, you cannot have a bicycle movement through a circle.

Commissioner Anderson: That's exactly what I'm trying to avoid. Okay. A picture is worth a thousand words. Instead of going through the circle, you cross here and come on this side, you hug the road, stay on the same side of the road, heading east, head then north, go to the signal that already exist on Biltmore Way and Hernando, you press the button, you cross Hernando.

Ms. DeZayas: You can't do that unless it's a separate facility, because then the thing is then they would be going against the flow of traffic on the circle.

Commissioner Anderson: Those are parking spots; they are not flowing.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right, but unless you are fully separated it's unlikely – we can look at the geometry later, but yes, it's something that we're not sure. I think I understand what you're saying, but I'm not sure that's something the county will go for; and that means the bike lane will go on the north side of Valencia and not on the south side.

Commissioner Anderson: We're already going against the flow of traffic, its no different. You're heading from the west to the east, against traffic, you are making a left-hand turn against traffic, how is it different?

Public Works Director Diaz: So, the option we have on Valencia had the bicycle on the south side.

Ms. DeZayas: We had three options on Valencia.

Public Works Director Diaz: But the option that has a one-way...

Commissioner Anderson: But on the south side you've got to move trees. Villa Valencia plans included a provision for a bike lane. There is space there on the north side for a bike lane.

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct. But the bike lane as it approaches the circle has to be incorporated into the travel and then go around and follow the traffic just like everybody else.

Commissioner Anderson: You're not following the traffic already. So, what's the difference? You are able to go against the traffic heading east on Valencia.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, you mean a one-way traffic lane, a one-lane bike lane going against traffic on the north side of Valencia.

Commissioner Anderson: Correct. That's the side you have the space to do it.

Public Works Director Diaz: That's something that we will have to definitely take a look at further.

Commissioner Anderson: I thought we did.

Public Works Director Diaz: We looked at different options and we talked about a one-way lane, but I don't know if we specified on what side. I'm not 100 percent sure that that would be something that the county will be amenable to.

Commissioner Anderson: Why don't we come back on this.

Mayor Lago: I have one better for you. I'm going to figure this out for you really quick. Why don't we call, I'll call a friend of mine and we'll have the county come to the city and work on this issue, because this is important to the Commission and staff and if we are having concerns whether the county will accept one route versus another, we are looking for ideas on how to implement this. I can schedule a meeting with the county, and we can go and address this with the county. I think that when we show up here, along with the Manager, they'll see how serious we are, and we'll get answers immediately. That's it. If you'd like, I can schedule that meeting, after this meeting I'll make one phone call and I can have at the convenience of staff, I will have the county here and we can conduct a meeting here at City Hall.

Commissioner Anderson: That would be perfect, because ultimately, we are just trying to get to the mobility hub, and we have space on the west side of Segovia to also run, at least one more block worth of bike lanes.

Mayor Lago: So, if you remind me, the moment that we step out of this meeting, I will make that phone call.

City Manager Iglesias: And Mayor, one of the issues of the presentation is to show that we are limited to 50-foot rights-of-way, most of the places do 60-foot rights-of-way, so there is always going to be a give and take. This is a built-out community, it was platted 90 years ago, limited with

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60-foot rights-of-way. So, there is always going to be a give and take, because of the limited right-of-way.

Commissioner Anderson: Let's do that meeting.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, remind me when I finish the meeting and I will make the phone call right now. Thank you very much.

Public Works Director Diaz: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.