

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item E-1
May 8, 2018
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Commissioner Frank Quesada
Commissioner Michael Mena**

City Staff

**City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Public Works Director, Ed Santamaria
Historic Preservation Officer, Dona Spain**

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item E-1[10:08:38 a.m.]

Personal appearance by the Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables regarding the historic white way lights.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Personal Appearance – Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables regarding the historic white way lights.

Commissioner Keon: I don't think she's here.

Commissioner Lago: I'm not sure if Carrillo is here.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Mr. Santamaria: Good morning Mr. Mayor, members of the Commission. I'm here to answer any questions that anyone might have in connection to the historic white way lights. I don't know if the Historic Society is here to present any concerns that they might have.

Commissioner Keon: I don't see them.

Commissioner Lago: Well, I had met with them yesterday; I was hoping that Carrillo would be here. Basically, the focus of the conversation is going to be, like we mentioned before, we'd like to see prior to the budget season, actually starting or commencing, we'd like to see a drawn out discussion, really detailed in regards to what is the plan to deal with these 60 or so white way lights that we currently have and need to be addressed. I want my colleagues to understand that we are coming up now to budget season, I'd like to see if we can address it, if not in one year, in two years. I know the number is significant, but I want to get to an actual number. I've heard different amounts, it's still significant, to the tune of several hundred thousand dollars to address this issue, but I think it's an important issue that we need to face. Every day that goes by, these white way lights become more and more dilapidated.

Commissioner Mena: I agree with you Commissioner Lago, but I think we discussed this at the last meeting, right?- didn't we have this exact same discussion?

Commissioner Lago: But, the Historic Preservation Association actually wanted to come and speak.

Commissioner Mena: But they are not here, they are not here.

Commissioner Keon: They are not here today.

Mr. Santamaria: So I can provide a brief update, if you'd like.

Commissioner Mena: Sure.

Mr. Santamaria: So, we have had meetings with FPL to discuss a way moving forward where we do not take possession of the lights all at the same time, so we don't expose ourselves to unnecessary risk and liability and FPL was receptive to that plan. We've also put a number in the budget for next year, proposed number of around \$350,000 to allow us to take the first step forward, which is essentially installing the underground infrastructure for all of the lights. And, then the plan that we have is once that underground infrastructure is installed, we will work with FPL and take on circuits, in other words, a number of lights at a time to go ahead and start taking them into our control at the same time while restoring them working with Historic.

Commissioner Mena: In light of everything you just said, one of the things I think, at least I brought up at the last meeting was, I think we need to understand where these are exactly the ones that are remaining located and have an analysis of, do we want to fund that infrastructure for the entirety of where they are located, do we want to maybe try to focus on one main thoroughfare, what are our options as far as that how do we approach them? How do they impact cost?- because again, if there is one main street where we can preserve them on and maybe not the ones that are outside of that street or maybe we can relocate some of those to that one street. I just want to have that discussion of what our options are, so that we are not just agreeing fully to fund that infrastructure you just described for any location. So if you could come back to us again with, I don't know if you can provide a diagram of where they are located and give us some options as far as what our alternatives are and what the impact is on cost. I think for me that would be helpful. I don't know how my colleagues feel about that.

Commissioner Keon: I think it's providing the actual circuit, you know, because as they provide to restore the circuit, you know its multiple circuits would be involved in the variety of numerous lights. So if we can actually see those circuits, you know, then you'll know exactly because they will likely work by circuit...

Commissioner Lago: But that inventory exists already, because I know that Jessica Keller worked on that...

Commissioner Keon: But I think just making us aware it.

Commissioner Lago:...we've been working on that for four years now and we finally got it done, because four years ago it didn't even exist. So, there is a full inventory now of every single light in the City, that's number one...

Preservation Officer Spain: That's right and we've mapped where the white way lights are.

Commissioner Lago:...and the location of every single one of those. I think the real question, the real question and this goes to Dona is, where is the distress?- what is the need right now?- which are the ones that need to be taken care of so that we can address that, so we don't continue to lose any more of the actual fixtures as a result.

Preservation Officer Spain: Fortunately now when Florida Power and Light takes one out, they give them to us, so we have them. They are in disrepair but at least we have them, because in the past they were tossing them. We do have the locations of the white way lights; we can do a

presentation on that. It's not intended to be throughout the City, I believe University and Anastasia.

Commissioner Keon: Riviera.

Preservation Officer Spain: Riviera – is where they were originally located. It was our intent possibly to bring them back on those locations, but we can have that discussion.

Commissioner Lago: The biggest hurdle was addressed by Ed, since we had this discussion at the last Commission meeting, thank you for finding that out. It was whether FPL would allow us to take bites of this...

Preservation Officer Spain: That's right.

Commissioner Lago:...without have to take down this entire project. So what we have now, we have an actual way of addressing the issue that FPL has some flexibility, that's one good news from FPL, thank you. So now we need to find, in my opinion some sort of direction moving forward and I think that falls, not only in Public Works, but it falls in your lap because you are the Historic Preservation Officer and you need to tell us if we are going to do a two year or three year plan to address the budget, and as you know, we need to take into consideration maybe 10, 15, 20 percent for contingency, I would go even higher 25 percent, because the next three years you'll only see construction cost go up over the last six months and this is an expensive tedious process to really bring these back to their original glory and I think it's worthwhile, especially when you talk about historic preservation, that's what the City is all about. I'd like to see this on the agenda with a full discussion from Historic Preservation, presentation from you and from Public Works on how to address this, a schedule for delivery over the next two or three years, whatever staff deems appropriate before budget season, because I know Ed just said we have allocated \$350,000, that's awesome. I think we had on the books \$20,000 or \$30,000 before, so that means, that shows a commitment by the City. Now I want to make sure that we are careful that we spend that money as wise as possible, like we always do, but let's be careful because \$350,000 is a lot of money and I want to really drill down to what's the actual number. I've heard \$600,000, I've heard three hundred and change, what's the real number?- and I'm not an expert when it comes to lighting.

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

Mr. Santamaria: So, the \$350,000 is just for the underground infrastructure. The other piece of it, which is the restoration and all that's involved with removing lights, reinstalling them after they are restored that's where you get into additional cost.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's going to be \$3.5 million dollars.

Commissioner Lago: No, no, no. I think it's a lot less.

Commissioner Keon: You'll include the circuitry in there to show us how many lights or what lights are on...

Mr. Santamaria: Yes – and so the plan right now is to proceed along the inventory that we had of about 70 lights, 70 locations, that's where that \$350,000 number gets drawn from in terms of the infrastructure required to support those locations.

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

Commissioner Lago: The last thing we also have to take into consideration the ones that we have stored on 72nd, are we going to bring those back into the mix or are we going to use those for parts, what's the plan?

Preservation Officer Spain: That's a conversation that we need to have. Possibly we take those and we fill into those locations along just one of the routes...so that they are all the original and you get the feeling that it used to be in the 1920's and that's a discussion that we'll have.

Commissioner Lago: I think that's a great idea.

Commissioner Mena: What I don't want is to invest a significant sum in this, and I don't know the detail location, but if there are a few straggling light posts on a certain street, I don't think, I know you are Historic Preservation, but I don't think it's that critical to preserve those three light posts, but if we...move...

Commissioner Lago: Move.

Commissioner Mena: Yes, exactly and create the thoroughfare that you just described.

Preservation Officer Spain: As long as they put them in an original location, I think that's a great idea.

Commissioner Mena: Right.

Commissioner Lago: We've got to get buy-in from the residents and everybody.

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

[End: 10:16:56 a.m.]