City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-8
June 13, 2017
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, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)
Maggie Fernandez

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Agenda Item G-8 [4:38:12 p.m.]

A discussion regarding the City supporting Active Design Miami, an approach to encourage design and policy strategies for healthier communities developed by the Miami Center for Architecture and Design. (Sponsored by Commissioner Lago)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The next item is a discussion regarding the City supporting Active Design Miami, an approach to encourage design and strategies for healthier communities developed by the Miami Center for Architecture and Design.

Commissioner Lago: This is a real simple, just an idea and a concept that I wanted to bring before the Commission. Active Design that's one of the things in reference to rolling out communities and really emphasizing quality of life. So I wanted to show you this little quick presentation so you can get immersed in it, see if we adopt this Active Design.

Ms. Fernandez: So my name is Maggie Fernandez and I love local government, so it's been a pleasure to spend all day with you here today. I've learned a lot about the issues in the City of Coral Gables. I do not live in the City.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I wish we could say the same.

[Laughter]

Ms. Fernandez: I don't live in the City but I live in Coral Key, which my house is like a half a block away, so I'm like an adopted resident. So anyways, I'm here to present to you Active Design Miami, do I tell when to go to the next slide? So what is Active Design? Its evidenced based strategies for healthier communities and the concept originated in New York City, they were the first ones to adopt Active Design guidelines; and about two years ago the Center for – CDC provided a grant to the Florida Health Department so that the Miami Center of Architecture, have any of you been there?- it's in downtown, the old Post Office, OK, that's the home of the AIA Miami, the Architects Institute of America, anyway so they were contracted by the Florida Health Department to create an Active Design manual for Miami-Dade County. It was an inclusive process, it took about a year and-a-half, we met with over 20 cities, including Coral Gables, and those 20 cities accounted for 94 percent of the population. So we worked with a bunch of different other organizations, like UM, etc. So why it matters?- it matters because the built environment really influences how it affects our health. So Active Design Miami was created specifically toward Miami-Dade County and, sorry, excuse me, the context of Miami-Dade County in mind, so it differed from New York's, because New York has a different environment. We have more urban sprawl, they have higher buildings. So the guiding principles for Active Design Miami were – we looked at it with physical and mental affects to health, so we didn't only look at the physical part, but also the mental part. There was a study that said through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation that said that people in Miami, 34 percent of the people in Miami have experienced depression every day for two years, so that's not good. So we are hoping that – we also looked at safety – safety was also very critical in the way that we looked at active design, equitability, equity in the way that we design public spaces was also looked at, and sustainability, which you all are leaders on. So there are four different areas of Active Design; there is parks and open spaces, development master plans, transportation and mobility, and buildings; and I have some examples here, but just in today's agenda you have one of the strategies. We have 69 strategies which are play streets; play streets is one of the strategies in the Active Design Book, so you are already ahead of the game actually, because it also includes complete streets and a lot of the initiatives that you have already undertaken are strategies in active design. So how do we want to use Active Design strategies?- well to inform your design of buildings, to shape local policies and plans – like Miami-Dade County is using Active Design and incorporating it into their CDMP, they are going through a rewrite now; support pop

leadership which is exactly what you do and inspire the community to act. So there are 69 strategies, but we know that one size doesn't fit all, so the way that Active Design is intended to be used is for municipalities to decide what best suits their municipality, and suits their residents, so it's not a one size fits all. So what we've been doing the last three to four months is, we've been going out to municipalities and to Miami-Dade County, to seek support of the work, of the body of work of Active Design through some sort of supporting legislation. It's a non-binding agreement, but it will help in our grant reporting to the Florida Health Department and also it will just get standards across municipalities for design and policy strategies to make healthier communities.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you – Commissioner Lago – very interesting.

Commissioner Lago: I just wanted to bring this up to you and I also wanted you to get a little immersed on this issue and what they are doing here in South Florida. How many municipalities are putting this into play?

Ms. Fernandez: Right now we have eight. I have the list – Surfside, Miami Beach, Miami, South Miami, Biscayne, Pinecrest, Miami Lakes, Aventura, and Coral Gables, and then Miami-Dade County has also supported this; and right now each City is using the guidelines in different ways, Pinecrest is putting them into their CDMP, because it's going to be updated right now, Miami-Dade County is doing the same, Miami Beach has included it in their resilience master plan, Surfside is doing some pilot projects to tackle some issues regarding lack of sidewalks and traffic in their City, so there are many different ways to use the manual.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much ma'am – very nice presentation and thank you for staying here so long.

Commissioner Lago: Can you get it to you.

Ms. Fernandez: I will bring you a hard copy, we ran out of copies, but I will make sure to get you one and to anybody else. So we are just looking for your support.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You got it.

Commissioner Lago: Should we do a resolution, do you want to do a resolution on this?- or does staff want to get more immersed on this, what do you recommend?

Ms. Fernandez: We've met with staff repeatedly.

Commissioner Lago: Is staff behind it 110 percent?

Ms. Fernandez: City of Coral Gables was the first city we met with.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli:…we support Active Design Miami as a strategy for healthy communities.

Ms. Keller: As a general matter, absolutely support Active Design, it's very well aligned with most of the things that I do. The Sustainability Advisory Board did review it and they supported it; I don't want to speak for Ramon, I'm not sure if he's here, there he is, Ramon also took a look at it. It's been limited to us; I don't know if anyone wants to take a look, as a general matter we support Active Design.

Commissioner Lago: I make a motion to support Active Design.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll please.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I'll love to have a copy of it, if we are going to be implementing it.

Ms. Fernandez: I would be happy to bring you all copies.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: If it's there we'll take it, we have it on digital and we'll circulate it to the Commission.

Ms. Fernandez: Wonderful – yes. Thank you so much.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll Walter.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes
Commissioner Lago: Yes
Commissioner Mena: Yes
Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes
(Vote: 4-0)
Commissioner Quesada: Absent

Ms. Fernandez: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

[End: 4:46:22 p.m.]