

FW: Letter regarding the Mark

Menendez, Jill <jmenendez@coralgables.com>

Wed 4/10/2024 6:27 PM

To: Garcia, Jennifer <jgarcia4@coralgables.com>; Aguerrebere, Emilee <eaguerrebere@coralgables.com>

fyi

Jill Menendez
Administrative Assistant
Planning & Zoning Division
Development Services
City of Coral Gables
427 Biltmore Way, 2nd Floor
Coral Gables, FL 33134
Direct (305) 460-5211
planning@coralgables.com



From: Henry Pinera <hpinera1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 6:16 PM
To: Menendez, Jill <jmenendez@coralgables.com>
Subject: Letter regarding the Mark
Importance: High

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Hi Ms. Menendez,

I'm hoping you can please pass this along to the Planning and Zoning Board as I may not be able to make it in time to speak on the development known as the Mark.

I'm writing the board with 2 roles in mind : my role as a Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) member and as a resident that will undoubtedly be impacted by the development.

First as a TAB member, I would like to clarify that while the developers came in front of the board and presented the development, they did not bring anyone that could speak to traffic questions, and we were not able to get any of our traffic-based questions answered. We asked whether they would come back in front of the TAB, and they indicated that this would be up to Coral Gables. The TAB has since requested a resolution to be sent to the commission requesting that any large development requesting zoning changes be forced to come before the board and answer questions that may not be addressed in a traffic impact study (TIS).

We know that TIS do not measure the impact the of traffic to a neighborhood. They measure the ability of the roads to bear the traffic typically only during busy hours. We ask that you consider that the developers come back to the TAB and address the concerns that were very prominent in the community meeting that I attended.

Second as a resident that lives 3 blocks from the development, I don't think that this development with massive density and insufficient parking should be allowed. This zoning

change is contrary to the principle that Coral Gables espouses of notifying immediately impacted residents of changes. The property zoning was only recently changed to mix use during Covid. No personal notification was sent to the immediately impacted neighbors. The only notification I'm aware of, was an advertisement that was not sent to individual homeowners and grouped several City-wide changes all together. This was done in the middle of Covid. A further up-zoning within such a short time frame just accentuates that this was a coordinated event and will subject the city to more litigation.

Lastly, I would ask that you hold the Mark, at least to the same standards that you have held other developments along US 1. Both the Paseo de la Riviera and the UM building have restrictions on egressing on to Madruga avenue. I can't fathom why similar restrictions would not be placed on this development.

Thank you,


Henry Pinera
Transportation Advisory Board Member
1215 Aduana Ave

FW: Tonight's meeting of the Planning and Zoning regarding The Mark

Menendez, Jill <jmenendez@coralgables.com>

Wed 4/10/2024 3:50 PM

To: Aguerrebere, Emilee <eaguerrebere@coralgables.com>; Garcia, Jennifer <jgarcia4@coralgables.com>

 7 attachments (716 KB)

Buses parked on Caballero in front of The Thesis blocking access to US1 - Picture 1.jpg; Delivery Trucks parked on Madruga Ave behind the Thesis - Picture 1.jpg; Delivery Trucks parked on Madruga Ave behind the Thesis - Picture 2.jpg; Delivery Trucks parked on Madruga Ave behind the Thesis - Picture 3.jpg; Delivery Trucks parked on Madruga Ave behind the Thesis - Picture 4.jpg; Delivery Trucks parked on Madruga Ave behind the Thesis - Picture 5.jpg; Delivery Trucks parked on Madruga Ave behind the Thesis - Picture 6.jpg;

Ladies...Debra Register's email and pictures re The Mark.

Jill Menendez
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planning@coralgables.com



From: Debra Register <rdeb@registerco.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 3:47 PM
To: Menendez, Jill <jmenendez@coralgables.com>
Subject: FW: Tonight's meeting of the Planning and Zoning regarding The Mark
Importance: High

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Jill

I am unable to attend the meeting tonight since I had made previous commitments months ago.

It's our tax prep time and I missed the deadline for yesterday, but I want to tell you my thoughts on The Mark Project

Hopefully, you will be able to use this email regarding a resident who is opposed to the project. Developers don't always disclose how the residents attending the meetings react to a proposed project.

There have been 4 resident meetings that I have been involved in.

1. The first one was only 3 residents since the developer asked that we had just a few for our first meeting. We were shown around the Verena project and explained how they build,

- hold and manage their properties.
2. The second meeting was a much bigger group or around 25 residents. This group was not happy about the project and explained why.
 3. The third meeting was a much larger group and might have been 70 residents or more (held at the Cocoplum Women's club). Again, at this meeting the residents strongly expressed their opposition to the project.
 4. The fourth meeting was smaller than the third meeting and held at the Cocoplum Women's Club. As in the previous meeting the residents were again very vocal about their opposition.

This developer is asking for zoning changes, and we have a zoning code which should be honored.

Our residential area is a walkable community which does not have sidewalks and the traffic that will result from a project this size flowing onto Madruga Avenue, Caballero Blvd., Hardee Road and all the residential street is not appropriate.

The back of the proposed project has a very narrow street, Madruga Avenue, which consistently has delivery trucks and buses, pictures attached, parked on the street behind The Thesis. The Thesis was approved based on all delivery vehicles being contained within the property and not on Cabellero Blvd. and Madruga Avenue. Why I am giving you this example is the City of Coral Gables approves a project and does not follow-up on what that project is or isn't doing as approved.

The Mark project has two exits on Madruga and one exit on US1. Madruga cannot handle the amount of vehicle traffic that will come from this project, as well as Mariposa where the bridge over US1 was built. The vehicles that will use Madruga to visit the retail/commercial establishments since now the entrances and exits will be on Madruga Avenue and not on Mariposa. Many of the residents in our area use the Mariposa traffic light to turn south on US1 since we cannot use Caballero Blvd. due to the vehicle traffic at the The Thesis.

The condominium owners behind the proposed project objected to the exits and the bays that are being proposed for the deliveries, garbage pickup, etc. , along with myself. Many of the neighbors use this street to walk to CVS, UPS store, Bagel Emporium, etc. With the addition traffic that was not there before the street would be more dangerous to individuals who walk or bike. The shopping center exits were on US1 or Mariposa at the light.

The project should have the same step back that was required of the Paseo de Riviera so that there is not a concrete wall, refer to City Commission meeting where the Paseo de Riviera project was approved and Commissioner Keon's concern for the condominiums on the east side of Madruga Avenue.

In a nutshell this project does not fit our neighborhood and I object to the size, density, entrances and exits and the changes to the lifestyle that we as residents made our decision to purchase our homes.

I hope that the Planning and Zoning Board will review this project and not make a hastily decision to approve based on the proposals that the developer is presenting.

Thank you.

Debbie Register

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Debra Register
1240 Placetos Avenue
Coral Gables, FL 33146





BlueStar

Fuel Economy

113 Range
14.8 mpg Average

2026 Miles

82°

D









fedex

Ground

Fuel Economy

207
Range

General Comments re the Mark (Planniing & Zoning Board - April 10th)

Roberta Neway <robertajn@att.net>

Mon 4/8/2024 6:39 PM

To:Planning <planning@coralgables.com>

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Hello,

I live within a mile of the proposed project, and I feel that this project will be an asset to the area and, by extension, to all of Coral Gables.

The Mark will:

- be aesthetically pleasing;
- encourage micro-mobility (walking and biking); and
- provide a mix of housing options (personally, I would prefer there to be some work-force housing here, but a mix of unit size is certainly a move in the right direction.)

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Roberta Neway
1236 South Alhambra Circle
Coral Gables, FL 33146

April 7, 2024

Gemma Rosello

760 Valencia Ave

Coral Gables, Florida 33134

To whom it may concern:

We are writing this letter in support of the above-referenced project. It is our understanding that the proposed buildings will be a minimum of eight stories with all parking within the building and with a large paseo dividing the two buildings. We understand that this is a changing area but also agree that this building is smaller than the adjacent buildings and are more in line with the neighborhood.

Thank you for your assistance.

Gemma Rosello

Support for The Mark by Landmark Coral Gables

Kim Flores <kimberlymallery@yahoo.com>

Tue 4/9/2024 10:29 AM

To:Planning <planning@coralgables.com>

Cc:Lago, Vince <vlago@coralgables.com>;Anderson, Rhonda <randerson@coralgables.com>;Menendez, Kirk <kmenendez@coralgables.com>;Fernandez, Ariel <afernandez3@coralgables.com>;Castro, Melissa <mcastro@coralgables.com>

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Dear Commissioners,

I wanted to offer my support for the project called The Mark by Landmark Coral Gables located on US1 across from the University Metrorail Station. I think this project would be a nice improvement to the area. Some great highlights of the project include:

- Public Paseo Area
- A Mid-Rise on US-1 (NOT high-rise) so less of an impact to area
- Street and Sidewalk Improvements
- Mediterranean Design versus the current design that doesn't really fit in with Coral Gables

Thank you for your time and attention.

Best regards,

Kim Flores

Coral Gables Resident

Fwd: The Mark - 1250 South Dixie Highway - University Shopping Center.

Laura Russo <laurar@laurarussolaw.com>

Tue 4/9/2024 12:38 PM

To: Aguerrebere, Emilee <eaguerrebere@coralgables.com>

Cc: Laura Russo <laurar@laurarussolaw.com>; Jessie Pineda <jessyp@laurarussolaw.com>; Garcia, Jennifer <jgarcia4@coralgables.com>

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Hi Emilee,

Please see below for letter of support for The Mark.

Best regards,

Laura

Laura L. Russo, Esq.
2334 Ponce de Leon Blvd.
Suite 240
Coral Gables, Florida
Tel: 305-476-8300
Fax: 305-476-8300
Cell: 305-801-9002
Laura@laurarussolaw.com

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NOTE: Due to the overwhelming number of fraudulent cashier's checks circulating in Florida, we require that all cash to close be tendered in the form of a wire transfer.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Never trust wiring instructions sent via email. Cyber criminals are hacking email accounts and sending emails with fake wiring instructions. These emails are convincing and sophisticated. Always independently confirm wiring instructions in person or via a telephone call to a trusted and verified phone number. Never wire money to our firm without first checking that the wiring instructions are correct.

Our outgoing wire cut off time is 3:30 pm.



Support for the Mark

Manuel Dobrinsky <mdobrinsky@DDRLawyers.com>

Wed 4/10/2024 8:33 AM

To:Planning <planning@coralgables.com>

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Dear Members of The Planning and Zoning Board.

This email is to state my support for the Mark Project. As a resident who lives near the proposed Mark project, I believe that the project will enhance our community and will be a benefit to those of us who live near the project. As you are well aware, there is a need for additional housing and the proposed project addresses that issue while creating a positive visual aesthetic.

Thank you for your consideration.

**Manuel L. Dobrinsky,
1000 Matanzas Avenue**

The Mark - we need a new traffic study

Denise Yahoo <dedinba@yahoo.com>

Wed 4/10/2024 10:25 AM

To:Planning <planning@coralgables.com>

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I had the opportunity to read the package submitted by the developers of The Mark and the conclusions of the traffic studies were very illogic, the new development with an additional 1,000 people, 700 parking garages, with retail would have almost no impact on the traffic in the neighborhood (that I estimate to have 3,000 inhabitants without The Thesis). Since I had a meeting with Commissioner Castro on Wednesday, she gave me a copy of the full Traffic study that in my opinion should have been made available to the public. It has wrong premises and is totally biased to show that this development won't make the traffic worse.

I did observations for each page I read below but I will summarize here:

- They compare a scenario of adding The Mark to today's traffic (Scenario 3) to a fictitious scenario that they grow the baseline by many factors that are not logic (Scenario 2) instead of comparing it to the real baseline today (Scenario 1). Instead of inflating a fictitious scenario to compare to the projections of the new building (that I don't even know if are accurate and not underestimating the amount of traffic that it will generate), there should be more worries about developing a new building of this proportion in an already saturated traffic place that will make the lives of your voters much harder. The consulting company should compare scenario 1 with scenario 3, otherwise, it is using wrong assumptions to lead to a biased conclusion that the new construction is harmless.

-Mariposa traffic light in front of US1 is already packed, without the development, imagine when The Mark is being built, and later when all people are moving with their furniture trucks and when all the 1,000+ people start living there and using that intersection. Re-timing of the light won't happen because in rush hours US1 needs green lights.

- They agree that Caballero is already jammed without the development AM and PM peak hours, but somehow they say it will be ok. I confess that I do not understand.

- They say that large trucks won't be able to enter Madruga, small Trucks should not turn right on Madruga. So if the small trucks have to turn left to enter Madruga, they will come from Caballero Blvd, in front of Jaycee park, where the kids of the neighborhood play. They don't even mention the possibility of the trucks entering through US1, as it will certainly stop the traffic on the main road.

THEIR CONCLUSION: "Based on the findings, the traffic impacts associated with the proposed redevelopment of The Mark it is concluded that most of the intersections will be able maintain similar conditions in reference to the baseline conditions.

As a result, the proposed re-development of The Mark is not expected to have a negative impact in the surrounding roadway network after implementing the recommendations included in this report."

MY CONCLUSIONS:

1) the traffic is a big constraint for this project and a serious worry for us neighbors with kids that walk around the neighborhood

- 2) this report underestimates the impact of the traffic that this project will generate both during the construction and when it is up and running
- 3) Delivery by trucks will be an issue in this development and we need a solution for that before allowing construction
- 4) We need a better traffic study comparing scenarios 3 to 1 in a non biased way leading to the fair conclusions and we need a presentation about the traffic study with right premises to the neighborhood so they all know what is going to happen. The full report should also be available to the public without the need to ask for it
- 5) We need to discuss the assumptions used in this report and ways to decrease the impact of a project like this to mitigate the traffic. There was no good alternative in the report. We need more work from the developer and the city. The Thesis development has buses for the students living on the building. The Mark could do that. We also need more retail for the people living in the building, so that they don't use their cars.
- 6) Jaycee park needs to be preserved during this huge construction. The neighborhood kids deserve that. We don't want any truck traffic through Caballero Blvd and we want many speed bumps once the construction is ready. Find a way of turning trucks in Madruga Avenue without using Caballero Blvd.
- 7) the city of Coral Gables and Miami should be more worried about the increase in traffic before allowing such big constructions like this one.
- 8) The report states that this segment of US1 will be able to increase traffic demands in the future and will be able to operate in acceptable levels of service, which I don't agree. Ask my neighbors and they will say that they don't agree either. They contradict themselves by saying that, as in other portions of the report they say that there is already traffic on Mariposa Ct and Caballero Blvd.

Page by page below:

PAGE 6/7 – conclusions –“most of the intersections will be able to operate with acceptable LOS compared to “scenario”

The intersection of Mariposa and US1 is already saturated, but with the new development will be ok with additional traffic studies, re-timing? The re-timing won't happen because you have to give preference to US1, so the traffic from Mariposa will go to Caballero as an alternative.

Caballero and us1 – I don't understand what they say in the paragraph

Mariposa and US1 is already packed! They say turning left is still ok, I don't agree.

Large trucks won't be able to enter Madruga, small Trucks should not turn right on Madruga.

If small trucks cannot turn right, they will have to turn left, to turn left, they need to enter through Caballero Blvd!!!! Imagine all the traffic in Caballero!!!! For construction and afterwards, when the units need to be furnished. They don't even mention the possibility of the trucks entering through US1, as it would stop the traffic in the main road. The conclusion is totally biased!!!! Jaycee park needs to be preserved during this huge construction. The neighborhood kids deserve that. We don't want any truck traffic through Caballero Blvd. Find your ways of turning trucks on Madruga without using Caballero Blvd.

PAGE 10 – 21,127 sf of ground floor retail proposed, against a 58,260 sf of retail today. They should provide more retail for their 1,000+ residents so that they have less need to leave the premises and drive.

PAGE 16: 3 days measurement. Was it raining? How were the weather conditions? We need more samples, other months, weather conditions. How can we trust these estimates and measurements?

Page 17 Season factor used just to inflate scenario 2 and compare to scenario and justify the construction saying it won't have any disturbance to the neighborhood

Page 19 is another way to inflate scenario 2 so that the construction is harmless (contains irony). If the traffic in the region is increasing over the years, that doesn't bring any established right for the mall to increase its traffic in the same proportion and say that the new project won't affect anything extra. What should be a concern for government is that the traffic is already increasing per se and putting a new building of this proportion in an already saturated traffic place will make the lives of your voters much harder.

Page 22 is forecasting an increase in traffic for the years up to 2027 (another way of inflating scenario 2) and together with the previous pages it is artificially inflating the scenario 2 so that in comparison to the new construction the traffic doesn't change. **The assumptions ARE WRONG! If you add this construction to the already jammed traffic we have, in 2027 everything will be even more jammed. The traffic company is using information in a biased way to try to convince that the new construction is harmless. They need to change the traffic study and compare scenario 1 with scenario 3.**

Page 24 – Another way of inflating scenario 2: they add a committed development project of SoMi Park LLC with 20 townhomes and 458 multifamily residential units and 15,160 sf of retail space that is already being developed in the neighborhood to the Scenario 2, when it would actually have to be considered a new impact, together with their proposition of scenario 3. The assumption is wrong and biases us to believe that The Mark project will have no impact.

Page 29 , Figure 6 peak hour trip distribution percentage. I don't know if it is morning or evening, I got very confused by this and I would like more clarification. Some numbers add more than 100%, I need a better explanation. Peak hours in the morning are totally different than the ones in the evening, we have no idea of what the pictures are depicting. Figure 7 is even more confusing (under parenthesis numbers and out of parenthesis numbers with no explanation)

Page 32, figure 9. I understand very little, my understanding is that they make it more confusing so that we cannot draw many conclusions. From what I can see is that they minimized the cars coming to the building by spreading it from various directions, which I don't believe it will happen. It will increase significantly the amount of cars in us1, also in caballero blvd, the roundabout Buena Vista and Mariposa Ct. But I didn't see it expressed in the numbers, there is always a way to justify that it does not increase that much. **But I expect a huge amount of cars on scenario 3, especially in Caballero Blvd and passing through the roundabout Buena Vida driveway. I would like to point out that we have Jaycee park there and kids from the neighborhood go to the park alone by bike in the afternoons. Other kids go in strollers. This has to be respected.**

Page 33 – says the traffic will not increase compared to scenario 2 (!!!), not a comparison to be made and level of service with the new construction (don't say anything about peak hours) will be good compared to the peak of scenario 2. So it compares “apples to bananas” and say that everything will be fine.

Page 34 – They say that Mariposa ct and US1 is already saturated in scenario 1 (as is). And it is true. **And that's where they need to work to show how much more saturated it will be on scenario 3 compared to scenario 1. They do not do that and give vague suggestions to increase the time in the green light (signal retiming) (but also say that at the same time say it will be hard because it would mean red light for us1). This is a big problem and they don't give the right attention to it on the study as there is no solution. It will make something already bad much worse.**

On page 34, about Caballero Blvd, they also say that the intersection with US1 in peak hours it is already saturated in scenario 1, but they say that adding more cars in scenario 3 will be ok. They try to explain the logic with gaps that allow vehicles to turn left but I could not understand their logic. Because, maybe, there is no logic. I don't understand those gaps and turning left when you want to turn right. I live in Caballero Blvd and I use US1 all the time with a lot of traffic already mainly after Thesis and all the buses and cars that drop off people in front of it. What I want to know and the study didn't show is how much it will be worse with the new building. They do not show this information in an evident way.

On page 36 they say retiming of the traffic light in Mariposa Ct would be a way to mitigate but say additional studies need to be done and that may not work because US1 is more important. So there is no mitigation possible.

Page 38 Turn lane evaluation. It says it needs a right turn deceleration lane with a minimum of 150 feet of storage and 100 feet of transition if there is 80 or more right turn/hour at a speed of 45 mph or less. They say this won't happen with The Mark but I'm not certain it won't happen during peak hours in the morning.

Page 39 – They say that the concurrency analysis concluded that that segment of US1 will be able to increase traffic demands in the future and will be able to operate in acceptable levels of service, which I don't agree. Ask my neighbors and they will say that they don't agree either.

We need lots of speed bumps and trucks should not use Caballero Blvd to enter Madrugá Avenue.

In the conclusion, page 42, the number of trips in AM and PM rush hours is underestimated. The building will have 700 garage spots. I don't believe only 24% of the cars will be out of the building from 7 to 10 am, and I also don't believe only 22% of the cars will in/out of the building on afternoon peak hours. They don't say how many cars will be in the building, if 700 or less. **They have to estimate at their capacity, which is 700.**

Sent from my iPhone

"The Mark" zoning meeting 4/10/2024

Mimi Abella-Blanco <blancofam05@gmail.com>

Wed 4/10/2024 12:13 PM

To: Planning <planning@coralgables.com>

CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.

Dear Planning and Zoning committee members,

We purchased our home in the summer of 1997 and raised our children here because we fell in love with the neighborhood. It is a residential walking neighborhood with a park, kids playing in the street, neighbors walking their dogs, pushing babies in strollers, biking and jogging. There were no high rise or mid-size buildings and there was very little automobile traffic. The zoning regulations in our beautiful city and particularly in our neighborhood have maintained this wonderful character of our home and its surroundings for the over 25 years that we have been fortunate enough to live here.

The proposed building and zoning changes to allow "The Mark" to be built will significantly impact our neighborhood and quality of life. Particularly the change of land use to allow a mid-rise building and the zoning code text amendment to allow an increase in allowed building height and floor area ratio (FAR) are the opposite of what attracted residents to our neighborhood. An additional 393 residential units and 701 parking spaces will flood our park and streets. Those of us that work south of US-1 which is accessed via Caballero and Mariposa avenues will have a much more difficult time getting out of our neighborhood. The first meeting between the neighbors and the developers stressed the architecture and green space beauty of the proposed building and stated (when asked) that a traffic study determined there will be "minimal" impact to the traffic in the neighborhood. That is ridiculous. No intelligent, unbiased evaluation can possibly reach this conclusion.

Planning and zoning committee members, please help us maintain the peaceful beauty of our family neighborhood. We appreciate that change is inevitable and often welcomed, but it can be accomplished without the negative impact that these proposed changes to our current zoning laws protect. Please see the reality of what will happen to our street traffic and access to get out of our neighborhood on a daily basis if these zoning changes occur. There is absolutely no way that the impact will be "minimal".

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your consideration to your residents of our city beautiful.

Sincerely,
Mimi and Robert Blanco

Sent from my iPad