

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items E-2 and E-3 are related
February 14, 2017
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada
Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
Assistant City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias
Assistant Development Services Director, Charles Wu

Public Speaker(s)

Mario Garcia-Serra
Luis Arevalo
Henry Paper
Robert Behar

Agenda Items E-2 and E-3 are related [0:00:00 a.m.]

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting an amendment to the text of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Element, Policy FLU-1.1.2, "Table FLU-1. Residential Land Uses," pursuant to expedited State review procedures (S.163.3184, Florida Statutes) and Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review," Division 15, "Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments;" amending the "Multi-Family Medium

City Commission Meeting
February 14, 2017

Agenda Items E-2 and E-3 are related – Ordinances of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting text amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Element, Policy FLU-1.1.2, and the Official Zoning Code to allow as a conditional use appropriate redevelopment including increased density that promotes walkability and enhances East Ponce de Leon Boulevard.

Density” Land Use Classification to provide that a maximum density of 60 units/acre, or 75 units/acre with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code, shall be permitted for development pursuant to Residential Infill Regulations, with additional density permitted in accordance with any workforce / attainable housing density program; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (02 01 17 PZB recommended deferral until Attainable/Workforce Housing Study is completed, Vote: 4-3)

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, by amending Article 4, “Zoning Districts,” adding Section 4-206, “Residential Infill Regulations” to modify and supplement the existing Multi-Family 2 standards and criteria for certain properties located within the North Ponce area to allow as a conditional use appropriate redevelopment including increased density that promotes walkability, enhances East Ponce de Leon Boulevard, and provides a visual connection between the Douglas Entrance and Ponce de Leon Boulevard; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date. (02 01 17 PZB recommended deferral until Attainable/Workforce Housing Study is completed, Vote: 4-3)

Mayor Cason: Let’s move to E-2 and E-3, ordinances on first reading.

City Attorney Leen: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Items E-2 and E-3 are related. They’re ordinances on first reading. They’re public hearing items. Item E-3 is an ordinance of the City Commission of an Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida requesting an amendment to the text of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Element, Policy FLU-1.1.2, “Table FLU-1. Residential Land Uses,” pursuant to expedited State review procedures (S.163.3184, Florida Statutes) and Zoning Code Article 3, “Development Review,” Division 15, “Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments;” amending the “Multi-Family Medium Density” Land Use Classification to provide that a maximum density of 60 units/acre, or 75 units/acre with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code, shall be permitted for development pursuant to Residential Infill Regulations, with additional density permitted in accordance with any workforce / attainable housing density program; providing for a repealer provision,

severability clause, and providing for an effective date. This matter went before the Planning and Zoning Board on February 1, 2017. They recommended a deferral until Attainable/Workforce Housing Study is completed by a vote of 4-3. The second item is Item E-3. Again, these are related. Item E-3 is an ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, by amending Article 4, "Zoning Districts," adding Section 4-206, "Residential Infill Regulations" to modify and supplement the existing Multi-Family 2 standards and criteria for certain properties located within the North Ponce area to allow as a conditional use appropriate redevelopment including increased density that promotes walkability, enhances East Ponce de Leon Boulevard, and provides a visual connection between the Douglas Entrance and Ponce de Leon Boulevard; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date. This also went before the Planning and Zoning Board on February 1, 2017. Once again, the board recommended deferral until an Attainable/Workforce Housing Study is completed, by a vote of 4-3. These items are being consolidated for purposes of the public hearing, and each will require a separate vote. I'd like to add one point regarding the recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Board. My office has issued an opinion. This matter was requested to come before the Commission today. Obviously, the Commission can place matters on the agenda. In particular, Commissioner Keon asked that this be put on the agenda. The --, so it is on the agenda. The Commission, based on a recent ordinance that you passed, does not require a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Board to take action, but we put before you what they have requested by a vote of 4-3. You could act on this today on first reading, and then you could also decide whether to send it back or not or you could choose not to. It's completely within your discretion. So, with that, I would turn it over to Mr. Trias.

Mayor Cason: Ramon.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Thank you very much. May I have the PowerPoint, please?

Mayor, Vice Mayor and Commissioners, thank you very much. This is the last of the ideas that we are bringing to you on the North Ponce area. And you have been working very hard for the

past two years or so to come up with some ways to encourage better quality development, historic preservation, all kinds of very good goals that I think are going to make that neighborhood even better. Now, all of the information is on the webpage and there are multiple planning studies, multiple ordinances and so on. But, I think that the main idea is that they all work together very well. And the idea is to see if we can come up with a vision that keeps the good qualities of the area and also encourages good projects that are going to make it better. And you have approved or you have looked at the mixed use overlay along Ponce de Leon, which generally deals with fairly large buildings. You have also looked at the conservation districts, which is the area around that corridor. And this last item, from my perspective, provides a transition between the two, a transition that could be applied for large parcels, 20,000 square feet or larger and allows that midrange type of development in between the mixed use buildings on Ponce de Leon and the existing fabric of the neighborhood. So, that's the big picture. The actual requests are two. We have a request for a Comprehensive Plan amendment, which allows for the increased density. And then we also have a Zoning Code text amendment, which implements that density and also includes some landscape requirements and some additional things that you have dealt with already in some other requests for the North Ponce area. The summary of the request is very straightforward. This applies to properties that are 20,000 or larger in terms of the site area -- 20,000 square feet or larger. That's consistent with a lot of the language of the code that deals with development of larger scale. It allows an increase in density to -- it only applies to properties zoned MF-2. MF-2 is the zoning that is generally used in North Ponce. It allows an increase in density up to 75 units per acre. That will be the maximum density with the "Med" bonus. It allows an increase in intensity up to 2.5 FAR. It's applicable to 20,000 square feet or more. And it also anticipates some future language that may be adopted by the Commission on attainable housing. That's still being worked -- we're still waiting for the report from the consultant to give us the data that you can use to...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Are you saying the workforce housing?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Okay.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: So, request number one is a simple amendment to the Comp Plan. Its language is straightforward, 70 units or 75 units with Med bonus; the workforce-attainable housing bonus to be developed later on. The Zoning Code amendment implements all of that, I think, fairly clearly. It designates an area which is the whole North Ponce. In the past, we have had some discussions about limiting this to some particular areas of the district. But at the end, I think that it's best to be seen as a floating designation that applies throughout the North Ponce area.

Commissioner Keon: What is -- could you -- what are the parameters for the North Ponce area?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Eight Street in the north, Navarre in the south and Le Jeune and Douglas Road. So, basically...

Commissioner Keon: But, this applies to that entire area?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah. It would apply to the entire area, only for properties that are 20,000 square feet or larger.

Commissioner Keon: Right.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Commissioner Keon: Yeah, I know. I know. Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And this has -- the context of this discussion was that at some point there were some maps that designated a specific area. Those maps have been removed from the request. It's simply -- it applies to the whole area, okay. And the...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Let me just jump into something real quick, because I've gone through this. Peter and I have discussed this quite a bit, and so have the City Manager and I. You know, my concerns were related to -- I thought there were going to be changes by second reading to ensure that any of the paseo areas were going to be of a nature that, you know, we can force a developer to make it of a nature that is a meeting space, a gathering space and...

Commissioner Keon: That's a different ordinance.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I'm sorry?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Vice Mayor...

Commissioner Keon: That's a different ordinance.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Oh, my apologies.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah. That's going to be before you on the 28th.

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Got it.

Commissioner Keon: You know...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Never mind.

Commissioner Keon: I think some of the confusion -- and you need to be clear -- is last time, we heard the North Ponce Overlay District, which applies only to Ponce, and then that map from Ponce -- you know, that line from Ponce to that line on either side of Ponce. What we're talking about here is everything to the east and west of that line in that North Ponce area.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Got you. I thought -- okay...

Commissioner Keon: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I misunderstood. I thought it was...

Commissioner Keon: It's -- I thought this was going to...

Vice Mayor Quesada: All included.

Commissioner Keon: Come back on second reading. The other one was going to come back, but -- I'm sorry.

Mayor Cason: Continuing on.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah. And to make it very clear, on February 28, we anticipate to have all of the second readings, so it will be very clear that the different items match together and we expect to enhance the mixed use based on your comments.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Got it. Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: So, that's coming up next.

Vice Mayor Quesada: My apologies.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And staff has reviewed the request for compliance with the -- consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, and we believe it does comply, and also, with the Zoning Code. And staff recommendation is for approval. And as the City Attorney explained, the Planning and Zoning Board voted to defer the item, because they -- some of the members felt that they needed to have more information for the attainable housing program, which, as I said, you know, is not developed yet. We simply included language to anticipate that may happen in the future.

Commissioner Slesnick: Mr. Trias.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: When is that plan going to be presented to the Planning and Zoning Board?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It's up to you.

Commissioner Slesnick: I mean, how long will it take?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Let me -- I answered the wrong question. The attainable housing program is -- we're waiting for the consultant's report. Mr. Charles Wu has been coordinating that effort. I don't know the date. I don't know if he has any better information on that.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: The contract for the consultant, Mr. Robert Gray, was just signed late last year. I expect a preliminary report within four weeks about the data analysis, what he's compiled so far. He's trying to get some real estate information. I reached out to you for some rental rates. He's trying to get some information. We sent him our City employee's salary survey from the HR Department. He's compiling all that data, and we expect preliminary based on those raw data within four weeks about the supply and demand.

Commissioner Slesnick: And that's why it was a 4-3 vote. It was a very close vote, because they want to wait for that report?

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Yes. They thought that -- if you're talking about increased density, I'd...

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Like to see everything come back together, along with the workforce housing study. Unfortunately, this has been going on for a while. The Commissioners were anxious to try to wrap it up, so we have a clause that's saying any additional density will be revisited when the workforce study comes back.

Commissioner Keon: On the affordable housing item, you expect a preliminary report. So, when do you expect the final report?

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: It depends on workshopping with the City Commission...

Commissioner Keon: Six months away?

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Yeah. I think six months is...

Commissioner Keon: Six months, nine months...

Commissioner Slesnick: Six months for the final report.

Commissioner Keon: Could be a year.

Commissioner Slesnick: Well, this has been going on since 1985.

Commissioner Keon: But, this whole issue of workforce housing, the answers for that, we may not see from six months to a year before we see that. Is that right?

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: I would hope shorter -- a shorter period.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, at least six months.

Commissioner Lago: Just to be safe, it could be six months.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, thank you.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The nature of the discussion was some members were comfortable with just having the language that says in the future we may have a program. Some -- other members were not comfortable with that, so that was the discussion.

Commissioner Lago: Mr. Trias, just for my own edification, so I feel comfortable with it, the 4-3 vote came down to just that one workforce housing issue, correct?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: The entire P&Z Board was happy with all the other items specified in this ordinance.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's certainly my impression, yes.

Mayor Cason: Is that really accurate? Because, as I read through that, I thought the crux of the discussion was is the density enough for developers to be able to come in and build affordable, not workforce, but really affordable housing for renters. This area is 75 percent renters. In other words, are we -- is the density enough to attract developers that will build for the market? I mean, we know that two or three bedrooms of luxury --, but the real shortage is efficiencies, one bedrooms, two bedrooms, and I thought that was the real issue.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Well, no, you bring up a good point, because I think Commissioner Keon and I were the ones that brought up this whole -- the North Ponce thing originally. And one of the things that we discussed was -- what we have been discussing, all of us, is there's some older, you know, unsightly buildings there. How can we encourage it to be redeveloped in a positive way? And we've talked about, you know, other areas in the County that have done something. But, I mean, we've all discussed that this is the area that we were going to do it. Okay, we agree with that. Getting back to the Mayor's question...

Commissioner Keon: Oh, yeah.

Mayor Cason: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: That's a thought I've been having as well.

Commissioner Lago: But, I think what we talked...

Commissioner Keon: But, I think...

Commissioner Lago: No, no, please.

Commissioner Keon: I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Commissioner Lago: No, no, please.

Mayor Cason: Go ahead.

Commissioner Keon: You know, I think that that is the issue. I mean all of us -- it's one of the issues that we're dealing with in the City. And I don't know if it's better to just have Ramon complete his presentation and then have our discussion or if you want to...

Mayor Cason: Let's...

Commissioner Keon: Begin that discussion now.

Commissioner Lago: Let's do that.

Mayor Cason: Let's have him complete the...

Commissioner Keon: Why don't you complete and then...

Mayor Cason: And then let's get into that.

Commissioner Keon: We can talk about the whole issue.

Mayor Cason: Yeah.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Mayor, the last thing I want to say is that you are correct, that that is the key policy issue, is what is the right density. The way staff designed the program was to have the 75 and then additional density or workforce housing to be attainable. Certainly, that's the discussion that you need to have and you need to feel comfortable with the discussion. So, thank you very much. I'll be happy to answer any questions.

Commissioner Keon: That's the end of your...

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Commissioner Keon: Your conclusion? And your recommendation is 75 units?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah, the recommendation is 75 with a "Med" bonus. The upper limit is 75 and then leave open a future -- hopefully soon, a program that may deal with attainable housing.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And currently, it's 60?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Currently, it's actually...

Mayor Cason: Forty.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Fifty -- it's actually forty, plus fifty is with the Med bonus. Currently, it's fifty.

Commissioner Keon: Can you explain where you got the -- where did that number come from? Why is 75 the magic number?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The number has been a result of a discussion with multiple professionals and with the Planning and Zoning Board, and it has to do with the FAR and the type of size unit that is reasonable within the 2 to 2.5 FAR.

Commissioner Keon: What's the size of the unit that's reasonable?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It's -- I think the average turned out to be in the neighborhood of a little bit over a thousand square feet.

Commissioner Keon: The average is a thousand square feet?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Hmm?

Commissioner Keon: The average is a thousand square feet?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Approximately, if one maximizes the FAR. However, having said all of this, the main limiting factor here is parking. In any discussion about density, the limiting factor is how much parking you'll fit into the building, because the building is limited also by height. If...

Commissioner Keon: Okay, but we can talk about that. I'm just -- you know, I want to talk further. I'd like to talk further about, you know...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And the...

Commissioner Keon: What's the right number and what's the good number...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And the point I'm making is that...

Commissioner Keon: Where does the number come from?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: If there's no parking requirements, densities can be very, very high. The moment you have parking requirements, the densities go down.

Mayor Cason: Okay.

Vice Mayor Quesada: What's the average size of a one bedroom?

Commissioner Keon: I...

Mayor Cason: Let me let...

Commissioner Keon: I have to tell you...

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon start.

Commissioner Keon: I am -- I'm really -- when I saw this item and saw the minutes, you know, and we didn't -- I didn't see the Planning and Zoning Board telling them we don't -- you know, I have these minutes here, but not being able to see the video, it's -- you know, I can read it, but I would have liked to have seen it. You know, when I asked at the last meeting for this to come back, because it was -- it completes the discussion on -- or the companion discussion of the North Ponce overlay, this infill area -- now, I know that it has been before the Planning and Zoning Board. I think this is the third time -- is that right? -- that it was before the Planning and Zoning Board?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: I think it was before the Planning and Zoning Board three times, and yet, every -- it seems that -- from what I've seen and the one meeting I did watch and from the minutes that I've read, every time it goes before the Planning and Zoning Board, it doesn't -- the -- there doesn't seem to be a really clear message with a presentation or with advice from all of the professional staff on staff here in the City as to what we're looking at. Now, I don't know how or why workforce housing became the policy issue that took hold in this particular area of the city and affected the ability to look at an actual redevelopment policy for a particular area of our city that we want to retain and maintain as a residential area, know that it is a lot of aging buildings that are largely investor owned, that are selling to other investors that are not going to build, you know, a four -- rebuild a four-story building, a four-unit building where a four-unit building exists. We know that people are assembling properties in the area. So, before it takes, you know, it just starts developing on its own, we wanted to guide development and have planned development as we would in every other part of the City. Now, there was some discussion that there is an opportunity for more attainable housing in the area, because it also --, because it's going to be redeveloped primarily -- I mean, it's all multifamily. It's all MF-2. I mean, there are some existing single-family homes in there that, you know, under the conservation district and the other things we've done can be preserved and there's a lot, you know, to protect them. But, everything else going forward, we know -- or do you -- they're going to be multifamily; is that right?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: They're going to be multifamily. How did the issue of affordable housing hijack this whole discussion about the appropriate redevelopment of a whole area of our town? For one thing, there is not one planning principle that exists today that says you concentrate affordable housing in one area or in one neighborhood. So, whatever we do, whatever we do with attainable housing should be done throughout the city anywhere there is multifamily development, whether it's in the area -- the industrial area by Merrick Park, you know, whether it's where the Collection Residences are being built, whether it's in our downtown, in the CBD,

whether it's in, you know, the area to the south of the CBD, where we have -- that has been developed under our PAD regulations, or if it's in the North Ponce. This shouldn't -- this isn't a North Ponce issue. This is a city issue with regard to policy for people that can live and work in our city. Now, this happens to be an opportunity, but it certainly should not have hijacked this entire discussion on the redevelopment of North Ponce, and somehow, it was allowed to happen. How did that happen? How was that allowed to happen?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Commissioner, I think -- I have to agree with you in practically everything you said. And the only reason that this issue is being discussed in North Ponce is because you, as a Commission, are dealing with North Ponce. Now, if we were dealing with some other areas of the city, certainly, I think many of the same ideas will apply. In terms of why it took so much time to discuss this issue, I think that's the nature of the process. It's certainly not something that I would recommend. I mean, I don't think that's the main topic to discuss, but that's just...

Commissioner Keon: But, whoever was...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yeah.

Commissioner Keon: Advising the Planning Board -- the Planning and Zoning Board, whoever was conducting those meetings, whoever was channeling the discussion or guiding the discussion, somehow allowed this to go off into a whole affordable housing conversation and not a conversation on the development or the redevelopment of a sector of our city that needs to be redeveloped. Now, I certainly understand and -- I mean, that's -- you know, that at some point, to every single multifamily building in this city, there can be things that will be applied with relation to an affordable housing or attainable housing or however we want to talk about it or whatever name we give to it throughout our city. And you know, I know there's always concerns about the word we use, because people are afraid it means, you know, that it's, you

know, someone that couldn't live there now can live there and they're worried about it. What's the median income for our city?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The consultant is going to provide that information. I would like to wait for that information to be...

Commissioner Keon: Is it...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Prepared.

Commissioner Keon: Do we believe it's in the 70s range?

Mayor Cason: I thought it was -- the census said like 65,000, something like that, if I'm not mistaken.

Commissioner Keon: I thought it was around 70 or something. What's it for Miami-Dade County?

Interim Development Service Director Wu: If you give me a minute, I can pull that information.

Commissioner Keon: What is it for Miami-Dade County? And what's it for the City of Miami?

City Attorney Leen: So, what -- now, look, this is taken from Google, so understand that this is - - this may not be...

Commissioner Keon: According to Google...

Commissioner Slesnick: Excuse me. The median household income in Coral Gables is 120,000.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: But, they're...

Commissioner Keon: No, no.

Mayor Cason: Median.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: They're talking about median individual...

City Attorney Leen: It says...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Not household.

Mayor Cason: In that area, yeah.

City Attorney Leen: So, what it says is the income per capita is \$56,721 for Coral Gables, Florida. The income per -- all it says is the income per capita is \$56,721, which include all adults and children. The median household income is \$93,590.

Commissioner Keon: 93 is family, okay.

City Attorney Leen: But that, again, was just taken off of Google, so, yes.

Commissioner Keon: Okay. That's Coral Gables. What is it for City of Miami?

Mayor Cason: It was in the Miami Herald the last couple of days. There's been a whole bunch of articles on affordable housing.

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mayor Cason: It was in the 40s, I think.

Commissioner Keon: What is it?

Mayor Cason: Something like in the 40s.

Commissioner Keon: It's low. Go ahead. What is it?

Mayor Cason: Low. What we don't have is -- and I'm not sure your study's going to get it -- is you have the -- our employees' salaries. Not that many of them live in the Gables. But, what we really don't have, I think, is what are the current rents in North Gables to see whether what's going to be built is going to be affordable or are we going to gentrify it and drive out people...

Commissioner Keon: Well, we know that the rents in the North Gables are more affordable than they are in a lot of the areas of the city. But we also know that they are more affordable, because it is a housing stock that is deteriorating and probably needs to be replaced. So, it's not something that we should, you know, necessarily look to, because it's a deteriorating housing stock. And what you would like is a housing stock that is a more current housing stock, that is in accordance with all of, you know, your codes and, you know, your planning and whatever else. So, we shouldn't look at what's there and the rents that are -- I mean, what we'd like to see is a higher quality of housing stock at a rent maybe not so dissimilar.

Mayor Cason: Yeah.

Commissioner Keon: And how you're going to do that is by doing more. So, what do we have - what's Miami-Dade County? I think Miami-Dade County's...

City Attorney Leen: It would be...

Commissioner Keon: Is like what...

City Attorney Leen: The New Times did an article on it in 2014...

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

City Attorney Leen: And what they said was -- this was for the whole census area, which includes Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach. It's Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach metro area. And they said that it's one of the lowest in the country, and it was \$46,946...

Commissioner Keon: As family...

City Attorney Leen: In 2013.

Commissioner Keon: As family income.

City Attorney Leen: The median income for a household.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, median income for a household in 2014 for the County was 46.

City Attorney Leen: Thirteen, sorry about that.

Commissioner Keon: Thirteen.

City Attorney Leen: No, they said that in 2013 it was that.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, 46,000.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And Commissioner...

Commissioner Keon: For Coral Gables, it's 96,000. We set the affordable housing rates based on the City of Coral Gables. And the program that we will develop will be based on numbers for the City of Coral Gables, which will be a -- much higher numbers than you're going to see likely in the City of Miami or in Miami-Dade County. So, that's why we are developing our own. I'm just...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And that...

Commissioner Keon: I'm very frustrated and I'm very disappointed that, you know, that this whole discussion on the redevelopment of an entire area of our city was hijacked over this discussion and nobody either helped or could convince the members of the Planning and Zoning Board to see that that wasn't what was before them. What was before them was this whole North Gables. And I know in looking at some of the information you have here and the map that you have here and even the language you have here, you -- it refers to and what first came to the Planning and Zoning Board was the Douglas Section, which is a very small section up in the very north part of that area. So, you know, it's -- I tell you, I think it has been a very confusing discussion before the Planning and Zoning Board on whether it was relating to that one Douglas Section, whether it then became expanded to the entire area, and that workforce housing was not the issue to be debated, and yet, that somehow all happened. So, what I would like to see us do today, I would really like to see us talk about this -- these issues with regard to the North Ponce area and have us, you know, either, you know, approve this or not approve it on first reading, and I would like it remanded back to the Planning and Zoning Board for their consideration with some very, very clear direction as to what is being debated here.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Commissioner, I think you're very right, and I think that that's exactly what's before you. What's before you is an approach to deal with the larger parcels by increasing density, not affordable or attainable -- simply by increasing density. And then we have some language that allows for a future city-initiated and city-based program for

attainable housing, if the Commission chooses to go that way. That's all it is. Now, if it was not said clearly enough, we can say it more clearly in the future, certainly.

City Attorney Leen: Well, Commissioner, I just -- I would like to provide a little bit of background here because I think the way this came into this was because, you know, the County was going forward with that workforce housing program and the City was very strongly supportive of it. And we were probably the strongest city in support of it actually when Commissioner Jordan was bringing that forward. And so, we did the workforce housing study, which was in process -- and this happened to be an area of the City -- and this is getting into more policy stuff, but it's a fact. This happens to be an area of the City where there is more attainable housing right now, and I think the goal was to preserve that. So, I think they just put the sentence in here just in case -- , so that when we actually adopted a workforce attainable housing density program, that it could be used, because this was what was coming before the Commission. Now, why, in the Planning and Zoning Board, that became the focus, I think is a valid issue to raise and I'm sure that when it's remanded to them, they will do whatever you ask. So, if you want them to address this without looking at that, that's what they will do.

Mayor Cason: But, you know...

Commissioner Keon: Right, but I don't think it is appropriate that this -- that that language with regard to, you know, affordable housing, be in this particular -- in this document at this time at this moment with regard to the North Gables; one, because we don't have one and because we have -- the rents in the North Gables are affordable, because it's a deteriorating housing stock. So, you're not -- if there were other places in the city where the housing stock was deteriorating, you know, you may do it. But, you're not going to -- the issue is we need to deal with a deteriorating housing stock, and that's an entirely separate and a different issue.

Mayor Cason: I think...

Commissioner Keon: And then we could come back and we will deal with the issue of housing for our workforce throughout the city, and there should be room in all of these, because it's going to be incentive based. So, there should be room for those incentives in whatever we do.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: If I can clarify one thing. The workforce housing study is going to be approaching the entire city. It's not area specific. There might be some areas that are more attractive to workforce housing and some areas will not. The way we came about this is that we have -- Mr. Trias has been working with the North Ponce for a few months, if not a couple years.

Commissioner Keon: For two years now.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: And that's why, as Mr. Leen said, that the workforce housing study came about as (INAUDIBLE) study. The concern was, if we start giving density to the limit, we'll have an opportunity to give a carrot for workforce housing beyond that after things already approved. So, we have language in there saying we're going to give an interim density increase because we thought it was appropriate. And I think one further; the workforce housing study will be the carrot to take that to the next level.

Mayor Cason: You know, I think that -- and I read yesterday, again, the transcript. And I think that they were getting to what I think is the crux of it, is the base density correct. I think Marshall and some others were talking that it's not. Seventy-five will not get you where you want to go. It's got to be higher. I think he mentioned a hundred. I personally believe the base density should be a lot higher, because I don't think you're going to be able to get the kind of development we want to attract, what we want to accomplish. And anything else is gravy, but I mean, that's a separate issue. But, they started getting into that discussion and then it sort of veered off into workforce housing and that whole debate. But, I would like to hear from developers. I mean, can they build it? Can they build...?

Commissioner Keon: Well, you know, what I would -- and what I would like to know and when I asked you where did that number come from, is that there are a lot of urban land institutes and - - that provide this information and do these studies and can talk to you about it. I know afterwards the -- one of the issues -- I talked to a couple of architects, people that build multifamily, and asked them where the numbers are they came from. One of the people I spoke to was Robert Behar. He also sits on the Planning and Zoning Board. So, I -- he told me he would come today. I asked him if he would join us and just talk about -- not from the Planning and Zoning Board, not as a Planning and Zoning Board member, but as someone in the industry who develops multifamily, where they get their numbers, how they get their numbers. Now, I don't think it's -- the discussion should be limited to one individual, so I think that, you know, we can have other developers or other architects have this discussion with us. But when you finish, I would like to talk about that number, because I think that number is crucial to what we're doing here.

Mayor Cason: Exactly. And...

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, I did talk to Mr. Behar about speaking today, because it was my understanding that you were requesting -- or a Commissioner was requesting that. And with the consent of the Commission, he can speak, but he actually should speak in his official capacity.

Commissioner Keon: He's not speaking as...

City Attorney Leen: No, but he...

Commissioner Keon: A member of the...

City Attorney Leen: He should.

Commissioner Keon: Planning and Zoning Board.

City Attorney Leen: He should. He should because you've appointed him as a member of the Planning and Zoning Board, because of his position. If he testifies in his individual capacity, he may not be able to sit on this matter when it goes back before the board.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

City Attorney Leen: Because then he will have...

Commissioner Keon: Well, it's fine with me. I don't...

Mayor Cason: Let me do...

Commissioner Keon: He can speak...

Mayor Cason: Let me -- first of all, we have -- let's hear from Mario Garcia. I guess -- you want to talk about this particular aspect of densities or are we on the right track?

Mario Garcia-Serra: Exactly.

Mayor Cason: And then we can -- anybody else...

Commissioner Slesnick: And I have a question, too...

Mayor Cason: Who wants to speak...?

Commissioner Slesnick: Later for Ramon.

Mayor Cason: Please fill out a card. Yeah, (INAUDIBLE)...

Mario Garcia-Serra: Good morning, Mr. Mayor and Commissioners. Mario Garcia-Serra, with offices at 600 Brickell Avenue. I represent two different property owners in the North Ponce area, Alliance Starlight Companies and also the (INAUDIBLE) Holdings Company. And indeed, we've been involved in the process since the very beginning. It's been about two years now of attending different, you know, sort of workshop type meetings, meetings of the Planning and Zoning Board, meetings of the City Commission. And I think it's important for us to sort of assess where we are right now, what we're trying to do, where we are and how do we get the ball across the finish line. And I just brought a couple of exhibit boards. I promise not to take up too much time. But as has already been stated, since the late 1980s, I think, Commissioner Slesnick mentioned there's been a consensus that the area -- the North Ponce area of the city has sort of not met its full potential either functionally or aesthetically. There are a lot of buildings that are aging in place, let's say, and not -- and living out their usefulness. And there was a desire to try to find a way to revitalize the area. There's been multiple studies. Unfortunately, most of those studies have pretty much just ended up on the shelf and not really been implemented or haven't become reality. This latest effort was to try to engage everyone involved to try to get something that would be implemented and would actually work and we would see new development and things changing in the North Ponce area. So, there were three different prongs to it, let's call it. The first one, which has already been adopted by the City Commission, was the conservation district. In other words, there was a desire, especially on the inner streets, let's call them, to preserve some of the garden district type feel and that small scale of building that there is around there. So, that's what the conservation district --, which was already adopted by this City Commission a few months ago -- aims to complete. The mixed use Ponce corridor, which was approved by the City Commission on first reading either a meeting or two meetings ago, aimed to try to see some new development that is more consistent with the neighborhood and a better transition along Ponce de Leon Boulevard. So, that was permitting a density of up to -- I believe no limit on density and a FAR of 4.375, if you were to utilize TDRs along the Ponce corridor. The last component of it -- and I would say probably just as important or more important than any of those other components was the residential infill regulation, which is what is the subject

of discussion today. And what exactly does that mean? Well, what that means can be seen in this aerial photograph. Believe it or not, in Coral Gables, one of the most desirable places to live in the world probably, with great real estate market now and the other real estate boom that we've had before --, but you look at this aerial photograph, we have vacant -- large vacant properties in Coral Gables. It's almost unbelievable. If you look over here, the property owned by my client, over 30 -- almost 40,000 square feet that have been vacant now for almost about 15, 16 years. Catty-corner to them, right by the Coral Gables Women's Club, another empty lot. You look on Santillane over here, another empty lot. Down here, I'm not sure which street it is, but close to Douglas Road, another empty lot. This is just looking for empty lots in this neighborhood. I mean, this is something that's characteristic of other cities, which are, you know, nowhere close to the category of Coral Gables, and that's not talking about the many underutilized properties that there are. We have some properties here that are 20,000 square feet that are only supporting six units. And in a time when we need, you know, to try to concentrate population and residents close to places of business, such as Douglas Entrance and close to different transit corridors, where this is ideally suited with bus lines along Southwest 8th Street, Douglas Road, the trolley that comes up Ponce de Leon and veers off on East Ponce de Leon to Douglas Entrance, we need to more responsibly utilize the land that's available for development here in this part of the City to meet various goals. One of those goals, as always discussed throughout this process, has sort of been let's call it what can the market permit that is attainable. Not necessarily workforce affordable housing, which implies more government intervention and trying to reach a certain price, but what is the right mix of development parameters here to bring about a unit where the next generation of Coral Gables families can potentially move in, young professionals coming from abroad, perhaps, can move into and sort of have a starter place to live in in the Gables. And that's a big topic that was just discussed in the last 15 minutes. And we have another sort of board that will help to inform that discussion done purely on, you know, my client's experience and knowledge in the market. Okay, if you look at this board, scenario one talks about what staff is proposing right now. So, here the maximum density is 75 units to the acre. We're assuming a 20,000 square foot property. That property at 75 units to acre yields 34 units in total. FAR of 2.5 yields this amount of net FAR. You yield the net FAR by the number

of units. You get an average area of 1,294. That's still a pretty good sized unit as far as what price can it command and...

Commissioner Keon: It's a very big unit.

Mr. Garcia-Serra: How much -- it is. That could potentially easily be a fairly comfortable three-bedroom unit. You apply a \$2.50 per square foot rental amount, which...

Commissioner Lago: I think -- Mario, if I may interject.

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Sure.

Commissioner Lago: I think you're being conservative for a brand-new unit in Coral Gables at \$2.50. That's...

Mr. Garcia-Serra: There you go.

Commissioner Slesnick: That's very conservative.

Commissioner Lago: Very conservative. So, that number -- again, I wish it was \$2.50...

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Right.

Commissioner Lago: But...

Mr. Garcia-Serra: In reality, it's probably closer to 3.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah. I mean, right now you're seeing it at -- you're seeing \$2.80, \$2.90 for construction that's probably 10, 15 years old.

Mr. Garcia-Serra: So, being conservative and using that \$2.50, which I think almost -- especially the ones that are involved in real estate acknowledge is pretty low -- yields a monthly rental of \$3,235. A rental that really is not I think the rental amount that we're looking for just the market to support, not necessarily talking about government involvement. We raised it to 100 units. The only difference between this scenario and this -- and scenario two is the increase from 75 to 100. It's now yielding 46 units. I want to point out 46 units does not necessarily result in a very large building, you know. We have very many building in the industrial area and the Central Business District, which are between 200 and 300 units, even more in some other areas. So, we're talking about 46 units; same FAR, 44,000 net. You divide that by the 46 and you get 956 square feet. Now, we're getting closer to a unit that indeed could sort of be an entry point unit for new families in the Gables. You divide that or you apply the \$2.50 per square foot again, probably low, we end up at \$2,390.

Commissioner Lago: What's...

Commissioner Keon: You're almost a thousand dollars a month less.

Commissioner Lago: What makes me very -- what makes me nervous -- and you know when you look at this kind of breakdown -- I think this breakdown is very effective to educate not only ourselves, but everybody who's listening today. When someone is paying -- I think we talked about the median average was about 90,000 per family or a single individual.

Commissioner Keon: Well, that's for a family of four.

Commissioner Lago: No, but I'm saying a single was fifty...

Commissioner Keon: But, a single is around fifty some -- about fifty thousand, I think.

Mayor Cason: That's 50 percent of your income right there...

Commissioner Lago: That's what I was getting...

Mayor Cason: In either one.

Commissioner Lago: That's what I was getting at. That right there is a very unhealthy mix. If someone is paying over 50 percent of their income post tax -- post tax, which is a key word -- and more -- it's probably like sixty something percent. That's unattainable. It's unattainable, especially in South Florida, where we have no mass transit. They're forced to have a car. If they're going to -- if they're not going to work in the city, if they're going to work somewhere else, they're forced to have a car. Those numbers are unsustainable. I think that even at that number, we're not achieving what we're trying to do, which is keep a lot of these individuals closer, so that we avoid having the 700,000 cars that drive through our city on a daily basis.

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Sure.

Commissioner Lago: We want people that work in the city to live in the city, to use the trolley. That will -- that is the true measure of reduction in congestion. If they -- if we don't have mass transit, which we're very clear that we're not going to have mass transit for the next five or ten years, until the implementation, hopefully, of all six slides of the smart plan, which is being discussed and studied right now, the only way to resolve the issue is getting people to live closer to where they work.

Mayor Cason: You know what I'd like to know -- I mean, look at 396 Alhambra. I'd like to know the median income of the millennials that work there because those are the people that probably don't live here. They probably drive a long way to come in to work. But, that's the target we're looking for, people like that and can they -- and what we need to do is hear from somebody who's going to build this. Can you build it at 75 or 100...?

Commissioner Lago: Let me give you just some more facts, because I'm dealing with it right now and I just finished pricing a school that I'm working on, a rather large private entity. We ran our numbers for steel that we provided the owner three months ago, and the prices for steel have gone up 20 percent in three months. Think about it. When your line item just for steel is a million dollars, that's a \$200,000 increase on your budget item. You know, the prices for copper, for steel, have gone through the roof. It's...

Mr. Garcia-Serra: And that supposedly was something of a softening in some sectors of the market.

Commissioner Lago: And there's...

Mr. Garcia-Serra: It's softening.

Commissioner Lago: Why am I telling you? I'm telling you this because that -- there's a direct correlation between the cost of construction and the feasibility of whether something can be built and what they will build. So, you see, like we were just saying, you know what, we'll leave this product that is aging infrastructure -- excuse me, aging housing stock, like Commissioner Keon mentioned. It's producing income. By the way, the rents in North Gables right now are going up and up and up, even with that aging stock. It's not about rent. It's about numbers. It's about numbers, about quality numbers without compromising what Coral Gables stands for.

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mayor Cason: And I wouldn't be afraid of more density in this area, because we've been talking about making it a more fun place to live, the amenities, the shops, the little cafés. You're going to want to have enough people with the income living there that can afford to keep those businesses going. We saw this in other areas of the city where they failed, because there wasn't

enough volume of people that had the money. I think it gets back to what is the correct density. I'd like to ask Luis Arevalo if you would come up. He's a -- he came to see me. He's a -- with T.A. Builders. And I'd like to ask you, as a builder, what -- talk to me about density, what you think the density needs to be in this area for you to build.

Luis Arevalo: Luis Arevalo, T.A. Builders, 1390 South Dixie Highway. We believe that the -- we share the vision that the City has in trying to accomplish quality building on the North Gables area. However, the numbers that we just saw here (INAUDIBLE) is very, very conservative. That these numbers that we have here as \$2.50 a square foot is extremely conservative. And still with that number, we are reaching to some rentals per month that probably are still a little bit high.

Commissioner Lago: Let me ask you a question.

Mr. Arevalo: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: And I'm sorry if I cut you off. Because you know that my bread and butter is private and public education. I work for the School Board and private institutions and I do medical work also. I don't have any experience -- I've never done multifamily. That's what you guys build. That's what you guys are known for. Are you feeling the same level of increase in construction -- not only in labor costs because there's a huge labor shortage in South Florida right now that is quality labor, but also in the material cost, which are increasing. Are you also feeling that in...?

Mr. Arevalo: Yes, yes, that is correct. The tendency is basically an increase in overall construction costs.

Commissioner Lago: On a monthly basis.

Mr. Arevalo: Yes, yes.

Mayor Cason: Put the mike a little closer.

Mr. Arevalo: Yes. So, probably the only way that we can try to provide that type of housing is by increasing the intensity or having more units on -- with a fixed cost that we're going to have on management and on land costs is basically having more density within the same envelope that is already allowed by the Code. We have already the main parameters, setbacks and height and parking ratio. I believe that those are sufficient with the numbers that we have to get together -- and I think 100 units an acre will probably give us the ability to provide...

Commissioner Lago: If I could just also interject one second because...

Mr. Arevalo: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: Like Commissioner Keon was mentioning -- she didn't use these words, but I'm going to use them. The conversation gets hijacked. Just like, for example, the US 1 corridor conversation gets hijacked and people just start discussing falsehoods, which are not the truth. For example, you mentioned to me that's very important, the issue of height. We're not talking about increasing the height. And we're not talking about, you know, changing from what the character is of Coral Gables. We're talking about if you go now and you drive through North Gables and you see this little corridor or this pocket that we're talking about, the housing stock is not in the best shape. It's not unkempt. There's a lot of properties that need to be repainted. There's properties that have jalousie windows, roofs need to be cleaned. It's not the most desirable area, in my opinion, for people who are looking for; you know, quality -- because there really isn't that quality in that area. And prices are expensive. Prices are very expensive and they're only getting more expensive. So, we need to always emphasize when we have the discussion that we're talking within the existing building envelope, which the Code already allows for. And that's the comment that needs to be mentioned over and over again, because I

want to be very careful that these conversations are not hijacked with the idea that, oh, we're allowing for skyscrapers and -- that's not what we're talking about. We're not doing that. We're not doing that.

Mr. Arevalo: We basically share your vision and we are proud to be members of this city with that vision and what you have established for the North Gables, which is basically replacement of the existing old housing, unsafe housing with housing that is within the existing parameters of the government can come to a number that will enable us as developers to build quality buildings that will provide affordability -- not affordable housing. To bring the affordability issue to the City, we will have to basically address the density issue. Without increasing the density issue, the formula is not going to work.

Mayor Cason: Let me ask you...

Mr. Arevalo: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Between 75 and 100, you're saying with 100, you think you could produce quality, affordable housing within -- for rental within the -- all the other...

Mr. Arevalo: The existing parameters, yes. The existing...

Mayor Cason: Parameters.

Mr. Arevalo: Parameters, yes.

Mayor Cason: Let me ask Henry Paper if he'd come up, also a developer, and see where you stand on this issue.

Henry Paper: Good afternoon, Henry Paper, Alliance Starlight Companies, 340 Minorca Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida. Thank you for your time. I think I can say comfortably that we - - our company and our related companies are the major property owners in this neighborhood, and we've been owners there for close to 20 years. And these vacant lots that Mario was kind enough to refer to on the aerial are ours. And in the past, we have made application for permits and actually did get permit back around 2002, 2003 for a building on Santillane, which is a 30,000 square foot lot. We couldn't build it, because of economic conditions, and we haven't built anything for the last almost 20 years, because of economic conditions. And if you'll look at the issue, I -- in small view, which is the density and the residential development issue that we're talking about in the longer view, the life blood of the city. If you look at the North Ponce corridor, which is what we're talking about here too, it's dead. You go up there at 7, 8 o'clock on weeknight, you know, Miracle Mile is thriving and businesses are thriving and pumping. You walk up in that area; you could lay in the middle of the street and not get run over. There's nothing going on. There's nothing going on. All those storefronts are all dead. And why is that? That's because you need redevelopment. I've done this my whole life and I've seen this over and over and over again. You guys today got it. What you're talking about here, what Commissioner Keon has said and what the Mayor has said, Commissioner Lago, Commissioner Quesada, you guys got it. If you do this, you're going to see not only all of this decrepit, old housing stock be redeveloped. You're going to see a whole new generation of people coming in over here that are going to add vitality to the city. These are the kids and the younger people -- and even older people who want to really downsize and not have anything too big and spend too much can live over here and they're going to light up the North Ponce corridor. They're going to ride their bikes. They're going to walk their dogs. They're going to take the kids in their strollers. You're going to bring life over here. And the numbers that Luis referred to and that Mario referred to are dead on. If you do 100 units an acre on these properties and I would tweak -- personally, I would tweak the FAR maybe to 2.75 over 2.5; and why is that? Because you'll get the density, you'll get the right number of units. You'll be able to size the units around 900 square feet, which is what I would do, average, maybe a hair lower, so that you get around somewhere \$2,000 a month, maybe a little bit lower, so that the people will enter the threshold

and the community can live here -- spend the money and live here, but you need that little extra FAR because you want to have amenities in your building. You want to have a nice gym area. You want to have a nice lobby area, you know. The new buildings have these doggy rooms where you can go in and wash and groom your dogs and pets and stuff. You want to have that because that's what the market demands over here. And if you help out by allowing this, you are going to do such a good thing for this city. It's going to be an act that will reverberate for generations and generations and generations. I get calls -- I spoke to the managing director at the Douglas Entrance last week -- well, one night last week I bumped into him. And he told me that he cannot wait for us to develop over here because all the folks in the Douglas Entrance, they'll live in these properties and they'll walk to work. They'll walk a block from our property. You could throw a stone and hit the property. They'll walk there. They'll take the trolley. They'll go down to Houston's. They'll go down to Bugatti's. They'll stay in the town. And just like Commissioner Lago said, you don't have this flood -- it's crazy. If you go -- try to come into the city in the morning -- 8, 9 o'clock in the morning, you know, you're taking your life in your hands. There's floods of traffic coming this way. And at night, floods of traffic going back. We've got to do something to stabilize all that and that's what we're talking about here today. So, the short answer is, yes, I agree with Luis. You get the densities up to a reasonable amount. No one's asking for crazy, crazy development. We're not asking for any additional heights right now. We're talking about a height that's as of right today, 97 feet. It's as of right. No one's come in here and suggested 160 feet. You won't hear it from my voice). We're not -- you know, that's not who we are. Maybe you might tweak it -- I don't know. You'd have to ask somebody like Robert Behar. Maybe you might tweak it an extra story, maybe, but certainly, no more than that. It's (INAUDIBLE) -- and if you look in the area -- another point you got to keep in mind, if you go and you stand on our property -- this highlighted one -- if you stand on this property and you do a 360, what are you going to see? You're going to see 14- and 16-story buildings all around that area. Douglas Entrance is 14 stories. I have a 14-story apartment building directly across the street from me. The stuff on Ponce de Leon is 14 and 16 stories. It's all high, and that's what Merrick had envisioned anyway, if you look at the old maps. He

envision that corridor to be a very intense, you know, high density --, but we're not asking for that. I don't think you need to do that.

Mayor Cason: So, the bottom line that I've heard is 75 won't do it; 100 will do it.

Mr. Paper: A hundred will do it...

Commissioner Keon: Well, 100 could do it, but...

Mr. Paper: Maybe 2.7...

Commissioner Keon: I'm sorry.

Mr. Paper: Go ahead, Commissioner.

Commissioner Keon: I'm sorry. No, no, no, go ahead.

Mr. Paper: No, please.

Commissioner Keon: No, I think that -- I mean, rather than us like, you know, sit here today and say it should be 100, it should be 125, I would -- this is where I'd like it to go back to the Planning and Zoning Board. I would like the issue of affordable housing out of this conversation. I would like the planning for the redevelopment of North Ponce to be the conversation. I would like -- if you have to have experts in the field from, you know, of urban design, urban development, whoever it is, find those people and have them have that conversation.

Mr. Paper: I know Mario wants to say something. I'm speaking as a private citizen. Those people terrify me. With the exception of...

Commissioner Keon: Can you get closer to the mike?

Mr. Paper: With the exception of two or three of the members over there, of the Planning...

Commissioner Keon: Of the Planning and Zoning Board.

Mr. Paper: Yeah. I mean, and this Commission only has so many more meetings left before the election happens...

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Mr. Paper: And it's changing. My plea would be for this Commission to take some action. If you want to send it back for recommendation, that's fine.

Commissioner Keon: Well...

Mr. Paper: I would love to see the Commission take some action today, vote on first reading what you think is right because you know the issues are pretty well defined already.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Mr. Paper: They're pretty well defined. Nothing new is going to come out. So, if you could do that and then send it back for recommendations, likely with that strong hand being applied here, likely you'll get a little law and order down below you and they'll take it under advisement again. Nothing new is going to be presented. Maybe they would recommend the higher density. Maybe they recommend a slightly smaller -- and they could come back to you and we'll be finished.

Commissioner Keon: Well, I -- you know, I...

Mayor Cason: (COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Commissioner Keon: I have a strong feeling about the, you know, value of the Planning and Zoning Board to the City. And out of respect for the Planning and Zoning Board, if given the appropriate direction and control of the meeting by the staff that are having the meeting, I would believe that they would come back with, you know, -- I hope that they would come back with recommendation related to the development of the North Ponce corridor. You know, if they don't then, you know...

City Attorney Leen: We'll find out.

Mr. Paper: But, it's a time...

Commissioner Keon: We'll see. But, I think...

Mr. Paper: It's a timing thing too, though.

City Attorney Leen: Commissioner...

Commissioner Keon: Yes, it is. But, I think...

City Attorney Leen: Commissioner...

Commissioner Keon: That you have to have -- there has to be another Planning and Zoning Board meeting scheduled. This issue of only having one Planning and Zoning Board meeting between January and February is a -- still don't see any justification for that. So, if another one has to be scheduled, so that this comes back in March to the City, I think that that's appropriate.

I would like -- if -- Robert is a member of the Planning and Zoning Board. He cannot speak as a private citizen, because then he can't be part of the discussion at the Planning and Zoning Board meeting, and I think his input is valuable. I would like -- I would ask that you will allow him to speak as a member of the Planning and Zoning Board.

City Attorney Leen: Yes. So, if the Commission agrees, it's just important that he not testify as an affected party. So, you should not be talking about your own projects in any way. You should just be giving your thoughts based on your experience on the Planning and Zoning Board. And it should also be clear that he's not speaking on behalf of the entire board, just on behalf of himself as a member of the board, if the Commission's okay with that, Mr. Mayor.

Commissioner Keon: Is that alright? Does anybody mind?

Vice Mayor Quesada: I have no problem with that.

Commissioner Lago: I have no issue.

Mayor Cason: No problem.

Commissioner Lago: Robert is not only a resident, but he's also a business owner in the city. I mean -- and I think you've served -- how many years have you served on the P&Z in this community?

Robert Behar: Six months.

Commissioner Lago: No, no.

Mayor Cason: Go ahead.

Mr. Behar: Probably -- between the Planning and Zoning Board and the Board of Architects, for over 25 years.

Commissioner Lago: I think it's the least that we can do is let you speak.

Mr. Behar: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Go ahead.

Mr. Behar: Thank you very much. Good morning. It's still morning? Oh, good afternoon, unfortunately. Thank you for allowing -- Robert Behar, 4533 Ponce de Leon Boulevard. Again, I'm speaking as a board member, not necessarily on behalf of the board. I think Mr. Paper hit it right on cue. I think that it needs to be up to that density. I have a slight disagreement on the size of the unit, because the size of the units matter on what you're going to get for the rent, and that's the key. And some of the projects that has happened throughout the City, a little bit smaller unit, an average between 850 to 875 average, which gives you a one bedroom about 625 to 700, the two bedroom between 875 and 950 gives you a smaller square footage. When you put the factor -- and I agree with all of you that \$2.50 a foot is kind of low. And today, if you look at Gables Ponce, which is the newest residential building in Coral Gables, they're at about \$3 a foot. So, what you need to do is you need to keep the units smaller in order to be able to get the rents to be as low as possible. The average, in my opinion, is about 875, not 1,000 square feet, not -- and that makes a big difference, because even as Luis' example, 75 square feet that represents almost \$200 a month. And today, the market's looking for as low as possible they need to pay. Whether the bedroom is 12 by 12 or 11 by 11 is not a matter. They want to be in the city. They want to have access to the city and without having to do -- Mr. Paper also alluded to something, which is very critical. In order for you to compete in the market, you have to provide amenities, and that's where the additional 2.75, which I happen to agree with him, is important, because that's going to give you nicer amenities; wider corridor, air-conditioned corridor not open corridors, the public spaces, a multipurpose room and all that. That is

necessary in order to compete. And so, I agree with what you heard so far. Not only am I an architect. We develop as well. And I try to keep that very quietly, because I don't have my clients to think that I'm competing against them, so that's a marketing strategy that we could keep there. But, we participate in a lot of the buildings that we do. Over the last -- the course of the last ten years, we probably, between the office that we have here in the Gables, which is our principal office, we have an office just outside of Atlanta, and we have now an office in New Haven, Connecticut. We've probably done over 10,000 units. And the square footage that I'm telling you is what the markets call for. I am currently doing -- working with two municipalities, the City of Atlanta and the City of Austin, Texas to be able to put unit sizes in a very similar to what we're doing -- we're looking at today here. Increase the density where the units become attainable for the renters that are going to come in and live here in the downtown cores, because it's more of an urban area. So, that's my input. If you have a question...

Commissioner Keon: You know, I do -- I also want to be very careful that we don't allow micro-units. You know, I really would like us to be able to set a square foot that we won't go below, the minimum square footage. You know, at -- and I'm not sure what that is, and so, I would have to rely on the market and people familiar with real estate to tell me. I mean, I know, you know, we have seen a project that looks at 650 square feet for a studio, which I think is a comfortable studio.

Mr. Behar: That's a very comfortable studio.

Commissioner Keon: A very comfortable studio. So, I'm -- it's a little tight for a one bedroom and I think you need to be in the 800s...

Mr. Behar: Commissioner...

Commissioner Keon: But, I really would like the Planning and Zoning Board to also come back to us -- or I want our staff to tell us, you know, we -- other cities are having micro-units and they

feel they need it, because they need that density and for affordability and whatever else. We have a different standard and a different aesthetic in the City of Coral Gables. So, I would like to see us set what the minimal square footage for a unit is.

Mr. Behar: From my...

Commissioner Keon: Is that appropriate to do?

Commissioner Lago: No, I think...

Commissioner Keon: From both...

Mr. Behar: But, I think 800 is too large. I think today...

Commissioner Keon: No.

Mr. Behar: A micro-unit is less than 500 square feet...

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Mr. Behar: And we don't want to go there.

Commissioner Keon: No.

Mr. Behar: The one bedroom unit, 625 to 650 is very comfortable and that's what will allow developers to be able to maintain the rent lower. If you put a one bedroom at 800 square feet and you're looking at \$3 a foot, that's at \$2,400 a month. If you put it at 650, you're already dropping it by \$300 a month.

Commissioner Keon: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: Let me give you an example. Let me give you an example. And you're very familiar because you live adjacent to this property. I lived -- I still own the property -- at 100 Edgewater. It's a three-story building. Obviously...

Commissioner Keon: They're huge.

Commissioner Lago: I mean, again, the units -- the one bedrooms are 750 square feet. I lived in one with my wife for about four years when we got married. Again, it's not huge, but it's adequate and it met our needs. It's a perfect opportunity for a starter, you know, apartment. So then, obviously, in four or five years when you start a family, you can move on to either a two bedroom or three bedroom, or potentially a home in the Gables. I agree with Commissioner Keon and I want to make sure that we memorialize that. I don't want to go to the point where it's under 600. I want to be, you know, higher than that in reference to square footage sizes for units because I think that micro-units, to me, are not something that we want to really engage in. Something that I want to make sure that the -- that Mr. Trias is aware of and I want to bring it up to the Planning and Zoning Board is I'm a firm believer -- and I know that we're working on the open space ordinance...

(Emergency Vehicle Passing in the Distance)

Commissioner Slesnick: Can you wait a second?

Commissioner Lago: Yeah. I'll throw our Historic director a bone here. We got to work on these windows here.

(LAUGHTER)

Mayor Cason: They're historic.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, they're historic. I want to make sure that we keep in the discussion the open space ordinance, where we really solidify what is open space, not second floor mezzanines, not second floor...

Commissioner Keon: Ground floor.

Commissioner Lago: Going to be ground floor. You know, I want to really find out and really define what is the open space requirement for the future of the City. And maybe, just maybe, since the Vice Mayor was talking about real quality of life issues, that's what we're trying to get away from, you know, connect ability, you know, having buildings that actually have beautiful amenities. We should have cities -- we should have -- we should build that part of the city with development that has significant open space. And if that means that we provide a bonus, I'm all for providing a bonus, because you can never have enough green space, and I think that's what sets the city apart from other municipalities.

Commissioner Slesnick: Commissioner Lago, you speak about 100 Edgewater, which is -- even though it's an older building -- very old building...

Commissioner Lago: It is, it is.

Commissioner Slesnick: It has a lot of open space because it's built with a courtyard and a lot of parking, but it's a very popular building, especially for young professionals coming into town. And that -- I want to chime in on the University Inn project, across from the University of Miami, started -- it's a condo project, but there's a lot of rentals there. It also has a very open interior with a pool and lots of palm trees inside, and those units have always sold very, very well. They're -- the two bedrooms are 910 square feet, which is a large unit. Kitchen, dining room, living room and two bedrooms and two baths on each side; always very popular. So,

something around the 900 square feet is very acceptable for a two-bedroom unit as opposed to the 950. I mean, it'd be great to have 950. But nowadays, people in Coral Gables are paying 40 percent of their income for the privilege of living in Coral Gables, because they enjoy the ambiance and the restaurants and the...

Unidentified Speaker: The quality of life.

Commissioner Slesnick: Facilities, proximity to downtown and the area and so forth. So, people are paying 40 percent of their income, especially the younger people moving in.

Commissioner Lago: And let me tell you, just -- since you -- I forgot to mention about 100 Edgewater. The open space, the concept that you're living amongst all this beautiful foliage in the middle of the building is spectacular. But, they do have a problem there. They have limited parking, extremely limited parking, and that's derived from a parcel of land that 100 Edgewater owned, but then ended up selling to a developer where they built a home on the water and they lost, you know, a significant amount of their parking. So, they're always having issues and having to park on Edgewater Drive, because I think they only have maybe like ten guest parking spaces and you're having -- it's a building that has 130 units. But, we lived very comfortably for four years in that building, 750 square feet. Obviously, we outgrew it. We have two young girls. But, you see a lot of people who put up their units for rent, and in 24 hours, units are rented. You don't need to even advertise. People are constantly visiting the building in an effort to see what's come up for rent in that building.

Mayor Cason: Let me ask the Vice Mayor -- he wants to chime in.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Well, go ahead.

Commissioner Slesnick: I'm just going to say -- I -- and you know how I am about height of buildings. But, I agree with Commissioner Lago about having open spaces and having enough

parking for people to come in, but having open spaces, so that you feel green around you and not having block buildings. So, I would probably even favor having a little bit additional height, not 20 extra stories, but a little bit of additional height.

Commissioner Lago: I'm so happy you mentioned that. I mean, that's made my day.

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: Okay, let me tell you...

Commissioner Slesnick: In order to have green space, so that people can enjoy...

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Slesnick: Living in their apartments and seeing trees outside and not other buildings.

Commissioner Lago: And I think that you just made -- I think that's -- this is probably one of the most important probably discussions that we're going to have today, because we get -- and I wanted to bring up the issue of the envelope, which I did before, because I don't want this conversation to be derailed in that we're, you know, allowing these staggering FARs. No, you're not. It's already -- you're allowed 2.0 FAR. This is going to a 2.5, which is not a significant amount. And then you're just talking about really density here, the unit mix, which you're trying to get away from having these giant units, which are un-rentable to people in this community. You know, you can't pay 4 or \$5,000 for a unit. But, when you talk about heights, if you allow one floor of additional height that I'll challenge anyone to stand in front of a building and say unless you count the units that they can tell the difference between a nine-story building and a ten-story unit -- building. That allows the developer the flexibility to give this community a significant swath of land, you know, on the ground floor. And it's an amenity not only for the

unit owners, but it's just such a different feel if you have this done on a street where you have four or five buildings that have been redeveloped and you have that green space. Look at all the pocket parks. I probably received -- I don't know, we've received probably a half a dozen to a dozen emails over the last two or three months in reference to people who said thank you for putting a 10,000 square foot park in my neighborhood. We use it on a daily basis. It's just a haven for the neighbors to get out of their homes, out of their backyards and interact with their neighbors. So, to me, I didn't want to enter that discussion, because I didn't want to derail it. But, if we're talking about something like that, I mean, there's -- it's just a win-win situation for the City and for everybody who lives in North Gables.

Mayor Cason: Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Ramon, two quick questions.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Sure.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Average size of a one bedroom in Coral Gables; do you know? Average size of a two bedroom in Coral Gables.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: We could certainly find out.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Okay, if you can just for second -- is this second reading?

Mayor Cason: First.

Commissioner Keon: Well...

Vice Mayor Quesada: That's what I thought.

Commissioner Keon: I think that -- I think if you ask...

Unidentified Speaker: First reading.

Commissioner Keon: You know the average size of a one bedroom in a building built in 1950 or 1940...

Vice Mayor Quesada: It's true.

Mayor Cason: It depends.

Commissioner Keon: It's very different than what the average size is today. And I think someone who has built -- what is...

Mr. Behar: That's correct. The one bedroom average is about 650 square feet.

Vice Mayor Quesada: In the City?

Mr. Behar: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Of the new buildings.

Mr. Behar: The new projects...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, I got you. I got you.

Mr. Behar: It's about six...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, but let me just...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Well, like Gables Residential...

Commissioner Lago: But, let me give you...

Vice Mayor Quesada: The one that's doing incredibly well.

Mr. Behar: Correct. That goes between 625 and 675.

Commissioner Lago: Do you know how much the units are renting for right now barely renovated in Edgewater?

Vice Mayor Quesada: How much?

Commissioner Lago: There's no unit under \$1,500 for a one bedroom. I'm talking -- and you're talking about 750 square foot units that are renovated...

Vice Mayor Quesada: No, no. They're not renovated.

Mr. Behar: Commissioner, that's \$2 a foot. When you look at the market today -- and the Gables Ponce is the catalyst in...

Commissioner Lago: Of course.

Mr. Behar: This market, it's at \$3.

Commissioner Lago: No, but that's average. I've seen units -- now they're almost at \$2,000 a rental for one bedrooms in that building. They're going up.

Mr. Behar: So, the one bedroom at 650 average, it -- what it needs to be in order -- my daughter just moved in and in order for her to stay in the city and to enjoy the quality of life, she had to get a smaller unit because at \$3, it was over \$2,000.

Commissioner Keon: Well, I don't think the issue is really the upper limit of the size of the building, because I think the market is going to take care of what the upper limit is. I think what we want to be careful of is what the smaller unit -- is that it be no less than...

Vice Mayor Quesada: I just want to make sure that whatever it is we agree to is not less than what the current average is throughout the city.

Commissioner Keon: Well -- right.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And I know Gables Residential -- I mean, you talk to people in the real estate industry throughout the County, and they'll tell you that's probably the most successful apartment project in the County.

Commissioner Slesnick: It is.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And I've heard that...

Commissioner Keon: But, you know...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Quite a bit.

Commissioner Keon: But, there are people that are building 400 square foot units for studios.

Mayor Cason: No, we're not talking about that.

Commissioner Keon: That's what I'm saying. So, all I...

Mayor Cason: That's part of our guidance...

Commissioner Keon: Want to see...

Mayor Cason: Back to the...

Commissioner Keon: Right. All I want to see is that we don't allow those type -- that type of unit or that...

Vice Mayor Quesada: So...

Commissioner Keon: Small a unit.

Mayor Cason: Second question.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, my second question -- well, it's more of a statement. Is what I think we should do is I think we should vote today. And I think we should have -- I don't know when the Planning and Zoning Board meets, whether it's at the end of February or the beginning of March.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: It's -- March 15 is the next meeting scheduled.

Commissioner Keon: Can you move it up?

Mayor Cason: Can you move it up?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: We certainly could (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Cason: Let's try to move it up.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Try to move it up...

Commissioner Keon: Then you can move it toward the beginning of March.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And then we'll have the second reading after that so that way it addresses Commissioner Keon's concern of going before the Planning and Zoning, but we keep it moving forward and we can try to have this Commission decide this issue.

Commissioner Slesnick: When's our...

Mayor Cason: And I think we can give the guidance based on what we've been discussing today to them...

Commissioner Keon: Right. I'd like to give some very specific...

Mayor Cason: Very specific guidance.

Commissioner Keon: If we could give some very specific, Mr. Mayor, to the Planning director...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Well, how about this?

Commissioner Keon: And to the City Attorney in guiding the conversation with the Planning and Zoning Board.

Mayor Cason: So, we don't lose another six months of...

Commissioner Keon: Yeah, I don't want to see this (INAUDIBLE)...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Commissioner Keon, I nominate you as Commission representative to attend the next Planning and Zoning Board meeting.

Commissioner Keon: Well, actually, I was going to ask...

Vice Mayor Quesada: To communicate that.

Commissioner Keon: That we would direct the City Manager to go before -- to maybe attend the next Planning and Zoning Board meeting, so that -- to represent us collectively at that meeting in addressing the Planning and Zoning Board, so it's not viewed as an individual, but it's viewed as collective wisdom.

Mayor Cason: Ramon, you had...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I'm happy to attend.

Mayor Cason: Eager to say something.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Mayor, so I understand things and I can advise the Planning and Zoning Board members, the issue of attainable housing is one sentence that can be removed...

Commissioner Keon: Please remove it.

Mayor Cason: Please remove it.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And it wouldn't damage anything. The issue of the landscape, Commissioner Lago, I'll be happy -- we have a section that deals with landscape already in terms of open space and so on, so -- in pages 3 and 4, so we can expand it if we need to.

Commissioner Lago: But, we were supposed...

Commissioner Keon: On Exhibit A, you also have -- you -- as whereas -- and you're referring to the Douglas Section. Anything that refers to the Douglas Section should be removed as it -- we -
- as this references the area...

Mayor Cason: The whole area.

Commissioner Keon: Between Navarre and 8th Street, so...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's a very good point.

Commissioner Keon: Please take out the Douglas Section.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: That's a very good point.

Mayor Cason: And I think the third point ought to be -- at least from my perspective -- we start at a hundred...

Commissioner Keon: Well...

Mayor Cason: Density of a hundred.

Commissioner Keon: I'd like to see a density of a hundred. You can go to an FAR of 2.7. You can go to...

Commissioner Lago: But, -- I don't have an issue going to a hundred, but there has to be benefits provided by the developer to the City.

Commissioner Keon: Well, no. I think a hundred is -- the benefit is that you're going to get a unit that is affordable. So, I think it still gives you -- at a hundred, it still gives you the opportunity to move that a little bit for other things.

Commissioner Lago: No, but I don't have an issue with that. But, I just want to be clear -- and this is -- first off, I've been waiting a few months, patiently waiting on my open space discussion. I know that it was canceled last time, because we didn't have quorum and I know we'll have it eventually. But, I want that to be a part of this discussion. So, if you're going to go to a hundred, you have to provide a certain amount of open space. Just trust me. I know my colleagues trust me on this. This is important because we're going to build a very special place in North Gables and it's going to be spectacular when you offer that sliver of land of open space. Because when you connect -- when you do one building next to another building and both of them have provided open space, the parks are only going to get bigger and the open space are only going to get bigger. That's what I'm envisioning. I'm envisioning our team with the City saying, okay, X project is being built with a swath of open land and Y project next door is being built. Let's connect these open spaces and build something spectacular.

Mr. Behar: Commissioner, if I may. You could achieve that, especially what Commissioner Slesnick said. You go a little bit higher. It would allow for you to have more open space, which I think is fundamental...

Commissioner Lago: That's what I'm saying.

Mr. Behar: And necessary.

Mayor Cason: Okay, so let's...

Commissioner Lago: I don't have an issue with...

Commissioner Slesnick: Mr. Mayor...

Commissioner Lago: And I don't have an issue with saying, okay, we're going to go one floor higher, but there has to be -- let me explain. And I hate to use the word selling it, but there has to be a way that we explain to the residents and to the people in the community who, again, they derail the conversation of why are we going higher in this area when you're allowed 97 feet. Oh, we're allowing for 107 feet or 105 feet, or whatever it may be, based on the following criteria, which are only going to increase quality of life. That's it.

Mayor Cason: Okay, so that's the...

Commissioner Keon: But, I think that's something that is...

Mayor Cason: Third point of guidance to the Planning and Zoning Board. Anybody else have another...?

Vice Mayor Quesada: One more point.

Mayor Cason: You have a point.

Commissioner Keon: Well, and one more point is the size of the...

Mayor Cason: Minimum unit.

Commissioner Keon: Minimum size of a unit. You know, I would put it at 650 to start now and they could discuss it. And when it comes back...

Commissioner Slesnick: I agree.

Commissioner Keon: You can change.

Mayor Cason: So, no micro-units...

Commissioner Keon: I don't care.

Mayor Cason: Is the fourth...

Vice Mayor Quesada: I think we agree with that.

Mayor Cason: Do we have another element you want to add?

Commissioner Slesnick: I just want to ask -- on the landfill issue -- infill issue, Ramon, currently, its 0.55 FAR for what's there, because we have a lot of older buildings. Is that correct? It's currently 0.55 FAR, which is 18,345 square feet for the buildings that are there because we have so many older ones and under space. But, there's -- the current zoning allows for 1 to 2 FAR, and you're proposing 2 to 2.25, according to what I read in the report, not 2 to 2.50 or 2 to 2.75.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The proposal is 2 and 2.5 with "Med" bonus.

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay, with the "Med" bonus. So, its 2.25 allowed --, so it's very underutilized now when you could have 1 to 2 and then we only have half and we're proposing 2 to 2.25 plus another 0.25 with the Mediterranean bonus. Is that clear?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The maximum will be 2.5, yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: So, it could be from 18,000 square feet roughly to 57,000 square feet. I mean, that's a lot of...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Right.

Commissioner Slesnick: A lot of more square feet.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: In terms of the increase...

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: I would like to say I'm not -- I'm opposed to raising it to 2.75 right now. I mean, I think 2.25 and 2.50 currently, unless there's some special reason to move it over.

Commissioner Keon: Well, I think it was more that the 2.75 is what allows you to build the additional number...

Mayor Cason: Amenities.

Commissioner Keon: Of units.

Commissioner Slesnick: I think you could get it under 2.5.

Mr. Behar: Commissioner, the density is not increasing past a hundred, so you're not going to build any bigger. What it does is that the fact of 2.5 and one of the analysis, it gives you like a 14 percent common area factor. Common area factor of 14 percent is very little. You really need to be close -- between 22 and 25 percent. That would allow not only the hallways to be a little wider...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Because at 14 percent, it's essentially a hallway any time you're in the building.

Commissioner Keon: It's in...

Mr. Behar: That's it...

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mr. Behar: And that's a very tight hallway.

Commissioner Keon: Amenities and hallways, so you'd have...

Vice Mayor Quesada: And if you're closer to 25 percent, it feels spacious. It feels...

Mr. Behar: That is correct. And it allows you to do the common spaces like the multipurpose room and the gym and the...

Commissioner Slesnick: The doggy baths.

Mr. Behar:

Commissioner Slesnick: No, really. Henry isn't here. I don't think -- is Henry still here?

Commissioner Keon: Yes, he is.

Commissioner Slesnick: Okay. Oh, there he is. I like the doggy bath because there are younger people and we want to have buildings that accommodate pets. We want to have buildings that have doggy bath areas and pools and exercise rooms, because that's what the younger people want. And you go to some of these buildings that don't have it, they're difficult to sell and you get mainly...

Mr. Behar: And unfortunately, our Code counts that as FAR, so that's why you need...

Commissioner Slesnick: Well, maybe we can make an exception that way as far as...

Commissioner Keon: Well...

Mr. Behar: But, it will be simpler if you just put a 0.25 additionally...

Vice Mayor Quesada: And we force that requirement to go...

Mr. Behar: You have those amenities.

Vice Mayor Quesada: To the common area.

Commissioner Slesnick: Well, but we are giving 0.25 additionally for the historic...

Mr. Behar: Well, from the 2.5 to the 2.75...

Commissioner Slesnick: Mediterranean.

Mr. Behar: Not increasing the density, so you cannot make any more units.

Commissioner Keon: You're not making more units. You're allowing better internal space within a building to allow better hallways, better circulation and some amenities.

Mayor Cason: So, let me ask this. Now, we...

Commissioner Keon: And you're not going to see the difference.

Mayor Cason: We have four or five guidance to the Planning and Zoning Board. Does anybody have anything else?

Vice Mayor Quesada: One last -- and this is hokey. This is just hokey. It's not...

Commissioner Slesnick: It's better than doggy baths?

Vice Mayor Quesada: I know. I guess since I'm so caught up on the paseos that are going to be in this area when it comes back to us on the 28th...

Commissioner Keon: On second reading, yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And I'm so hung up on the common area spaces and making sure there's green there...

Commissioner Lago: Open space.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And the open space. I really want to control -- maybe we can call this like the garden district or something like that later on. But, if we can think about this, talk to Planning and Zoning about it, if we can require that whatever buildings come in under this new code, require them to have foliage on the building. You know, sometimes...

Commissioner Keon: Have what?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Foliage on the building.

Commissioner Slesnick: On the buildings. Like vines coming over from the parking...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, whatever it is.

Commissioner Slesnick: Areas.

Vice Mayor Quesada: If you look at that parking garage on -- in South Beach that is -- it looks like a hedge in the sky...

Mayor Cason: (INAUDIBLE) walls or something...

Vice Mayor Quesada: I said it was hokey.

Commissioner Keon: Yeah, but you know...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Don't give me that face. I said it was...

Commissioner Keon: I don't think we should design buildings for...

City Attorney Leen: Okay, so...

Commissioner Keon: I think we have good architects...

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor...

Commissioner Keon: That can design...

Vice Mayor Quesada: I know (INAUDIBLE)...

Commissioner Slesnick: We want vines on the (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Cason: Let me ask the City Attorney -- he's got something he wants to say.

City Attorney Leen: Yeah. So, I'm going to read back what the guidance is that hopefully the Commission will unanimously consent to. Then we'll do the two votes on first reading. It needs a motion and a second...

Mayor Cason: Right.

City Attorney Leen: For each. So, first, you're going to vote on first reading today. You'd like this back, it sounded like, on February 28, but I would also add for some flexibility just in case they can't reset the meeting for the first meeting in March.

Commissioner Slesnick: That's fine.

Commissioner Keon: It could be...

Commissioner Slesnick: First meeting in March is fine.

Commissioner Keon: The first or second meeting. I think it -- whatever you can do...

Vice Mayor Quesada: You don't have...

Commissioner Keon: With the Planning and Zoning Board.

Vice Mayor Quesada: To decide it right now.

City Attorney Leen: Okay.

City Attorney Leen: Okay, so there's some flexibility.

Commissioner Slesnick: I want you to have a -- you need to have a quorum and some people plan their trips on...

City Attorney Leen: Number two, you're referring/remanding it to Planning and Zoning for a recommendation at their next meeting, and then it will come back to you.

Vice Mayor Quesada: But, that's post -- the remand is post a vote today.

City Attorney Leen: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Got it.

City Attorney Leen: It will be post the vote today. Three, move the Planning and Zoning meeting sooner, if possible, so we're going to look into that. Four, do not hinge the discussion on workforce housing.

Commissioner Keon: Remove any reference to workforce housing from the item.

City Attorney Leen: Okay. So, workforce housing would be removed from the item, and you want their recommendation separate from workforce housing.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

City Attorney Leen: Next, the City Manager will present to Planning and Zoning the sense of the Commission today, as well as her own thoughts in implementing this (INAUDIBLE). And then, lastly, you would like foliage on the buildings, for them to consider that.

Mayor Cason: And no micro-units.

Commissioner Lago: And no micro-units.

City Attorney Leen: Okay.

Commissioner Slesnick: No micro-units.

Mayor Cason: No micro-units.

City Attorney Leen: And no micro-units. Do you need any more guidance, Madam City Manager?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I thought there was discussion regarding the amount of units per acre.

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Mayor Cason: And a hundred...

Commissioner Keon: The density moves to 100.

City Attorney Leen: So, you're also going to -- let's just add that.

Commissioner Keon: 100. The FAR is 2.75.

City Attorney Leen: So, you would like them to look at higher density.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, but I'd like to...

City Attorney Leen: Specifically the numbers are...

Mayor Cason: One hundred.

Commissioner Keon: We're looking at 100. If they want to recommend higher...

City Attorney Leen: The number...

Commissioner Keon: Or whatever, our recommendation is...

City Attorney Leen: Okay.

Commissioner Keon: A hundred.

Commissioner Lago: And I just want to...

Commissioner Keon: They can -- I mean...

City Attorney Leen: So, we'll likely also amend the title...

Mayor Cason: Yeah.

City Attorney Leen: For this.

Commissioner Keon: Yes, please.

City Attorney Leen: To reflect that.

Commissioner Keon: A hundred.

Mayor Cason: Ramon.

Commissioner Lago: And I want to...

Commissioner Keon: 2.75 FAR.

Commissioner Lago: And I just want us to put on the record if...

Commissioner Keon: And no units less than -- did we say 600...

Mayor Cason: And no micro-units.

Commissioner Keon: Or 650?

Commissioner Slesnick: 650.

Commissioner Lago: Like I mentioned...

Commissioner Keon: 650 square feet...

Commissioner Lago: Like I mentioned before...

Commissioner Keon: Minimum size unit.

Commissioner Lago: I want to be very careful. If we're going to move to a 2.75 FAR -- I mean, I'm in favor of finding a happy medium, but I want to see the value from the developer. If we're going to go -- if we're going to push above the 2.5 that staff is recommending, I want to make sure that there is that value. So, you know...

Commissioner Keon: Well, you will see it in the project.

Commissioner Lago: Well, I know, I know.

Mayor Cason: In the guidance.

Commissioner Lago: I know, I know.

Mayor Cason: As part of the guidance.

Commissioner Lago: I understand that. And the quality of the project, similar to what we did with Collection Residence, when we allowed a little higher building for a much beautiful -- which, by the way, only one story and no one would ever even notice. But, I want to make sure that the Planning and Zoning Board understands our request for the maybe additional one floor

of height for the additional FAR, but they have to put together something which, again, meets the requirements that we're discussing here today.

Mayor Cason: Ramon, to conclude this before we vote, what's your...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: The only other item in terms of metrics is the height. And from my discussion with Mr. Behar earlier, he was suggesting slightly more height, to 100 feet, instead of 97 to be able to accommodate the parking.

Commissioner Lago: I don't have an issue with that. Again, I give deference to my colleagues. I explained already what my vision is for this neighborhood.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And my advice to you is that height actually does benefit open space somewhat, but it's really about fitting parking. That's what it means in our Code.

Commissioner Lago: I understand, but that's why I want to be very careful that there's value and there's value provided by the developer. That's it.

Mayor Cason: Alright. Let's...

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: I still have one clarification, please. It's very important I get this clarified. One of the carrots for workforce housing and affordable attainable housing is increased density. My question to you as policy decision makers, let's say density has come up. Let's say its 100 dwelling units per acre. Is that the max absolute? Are we talking about...?

Commissioner Keon: No. I mean, I think that's what we're putting in here. It may come back when you have the workforce housing, but you know, we may find that it isn't through a workforce housing program, but it's...

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: I understand that.

Commissioner Keon: Through appropriate zoning regulations that we are able to achieve what it is. One of the biggest issues with workforce housing or -- is being able to enforce it, being able to track it...

Interim Development Services Director Wu: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Being able to ensure that it exists. It would be better for us than -- that -- to allow our Planning and Zoning recommendations and our Code to provide for housing that can be built at an affordable rate rather than us, you know -- why don't we look and see if we can't achieve that in this manner -- to what extent can we achieve that this way as opposed to, you know, having -- when the report from the consultant comes back that should have all of the means and methods by which you're going to track this, enforce it and everything else, then we can look at that and see what we can apply. Because I think that there is an opportunity maybe to tweak that a little bit. Now, in a person that's building, a developer, you can change the finishes on a particular unit and reduce the price or the cost of a unit over something that is, you know, maybe that's not all marble. Maybe its tile that can affect the affordability of a unit, and you might be able to require those elements within the unit. But, there's a lot of different ways you can do that.

Assistant Development Services Director Wu: Conceptually -- and I know we're getting down a rabbit hole, but conceptually, he's talking about a 20 percent increase for 10 percent to be workforce housing. Conceptually, that is what he's thinking. So, my question to you all (INAUDIBLE) about 100, is there another appetite to go 120?

Commissioner Lago: No.

Commissioner Keon: Not probably -- probably not, but I think you can convey that to them.

Mayor Cason: Yeah.

Commissioner Keon: And you can tell them at what point...

Mayor Cason: We're starting at 100 for density for the reasons we discussed, and everything else is gravy and we'll see what they come up with.

Commissioner Keon: And we'll see what...

Mayor Cason: So, let me suggest this now...

Commissioner Keon: When the affordable housing study comes forward, we'll address it. Right now, we're addressing the redevelopment of a very significant and important community within our city that is not targeted for, you know, affordable housing issues, that is being developed to provide housing for all of -- a whole incoming group of people that have the opportunity to work within our city.

Mayor Cason: Okay, I think we've made a lot of progress here. We've -- I think that the City Attorney has outlined our guidance. The City Manager will be there. Let's vote now on -- starting with E-2. Do we have a motion on E-2?

Commissioner Slesnick: I'll move.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Second.

Mayor Cason: Wait a minute. We have a -- do you have...

Commissioner Slesnick: Just one point of discussion.

Mayor Cason: Sure.

Commissioner Slesnick: I'm sorry. I want to make sure that if we move the Planning and Zoning Board, because it's such a close vote already on the recommendations, 4-3, that my appointee be able to attend that because he's a trial lawyer and he's out of town and he schedules his meetings to conform...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Where's our staff? She's directing a customer.

Commissioner Slesnick: That we make sure that we have seven members of the Planning and Zoning Board addressing this issue and not five.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: But, we do need a quorum, so we'll have to check and...

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Then we'll try to work with their schedules.

Commissioner Slesnick: Because I'm very concerned about that. I don't...

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: And there's advertisement...

Commissioner Slesnick: Raising the density...

City Attorney Leen: Commission -- the Commission can also authorize appearance by phone for this.

Commissioner Slesnick: Raising the density is of concern to me. I mean, I don't mind 2.25 and even -- 2.25 and 2.50, but raising it to 2.7 concerns me. So, I would like my representative to the Planning and Zoning Board to have full input, if he can, rather than to move the Planning and Zoning Board meeting.

Mayor Cason: Mario, your last...

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Mr. Mayor, yeah, last point on the very important issue of sort of minimum unit size and attainability and so forth. I think the consensus is here, just to sort of make it clear, that you want the Planning and Zoning Board and staff to look at the issue through the context of minimum unit size without it going below a certain size.

Mayor Cason: Exactly.

Mr. Garcia-Serra: That is a market sort of driven way to try to address the...

Commissioner Keon: The maximum size...

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Right.

Commissioner Keon: Certainly is market driven.

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Right.

Commissioner Keon: We would like the minimum size...

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Correct.

City Attorney Leen: And Mr. Clerk...

Commissioner Keon: For the quality of the development and the aesthetic of the community...

Mr. Garcia-Serra: Correct.

Commissioner Keon: In that area.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Clerk, do you think it'd be possible to have this transcript of this expedited?

City Clerk Foeman: Yes.

City Attorney Leen: So, we could provide it to each member of the Planning and Zoning Board.

Mayor Cason: Alright. Let's have -- let's start with E-2. Let's have a motion on E-2.

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Second.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon makes the motion. The Vice Mayor seconds. City Clerk.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Cason: E-3.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So move.

Commissioner Keon: Second it.

Mayor Cason: Vice Mayor makes the motion. Commissioner Keon seconds. City Clerk.

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And Mr. Mayor...

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Regarding the attendance at the Planning and Zoning Board, our commitment is to use our best efforts to get everyone there, to pick a date that works for the entire board, but I cannot commit that we can have a meeting in advance if the schedule of a board member is not available. But, we will...

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, what I will ask is...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Use our best efforts.

City Attorney Leen: The guidance that we discussed before, I'll put into a resolution. If you could move that and second it as just a resolution basically remanding it back with the instructions that I read and the additional ones that were added, also allowing them to appear by phone, if necessary, the Planning and Zoning Board, to try to achieve seven people, if it's possible.

Mayor Cason: Okay, who would...?

Commissioner Keon: So move.

Mayor Cason: Make the motion?

Commissioner Slesnick: Second.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon makes the motion. Commissioner Slesnick seconds. City Clerk.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes.

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes.

Mayor Cason: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: When would you like the second reading for this?

Mayor Cason: As soon as you can.

Commissioner Keon: By March?

Commissioner Slesnick: March.

Mayor Cason: In March?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Okay.

Mayor Cason: Alright.