

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA)/
PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING
VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2022, COMMENCING AT 6:03 P.M.

Board Members Present:

Eibi Aizenstat, Chairman
Robert Behar
Luis Revuelta
Venny Torre
Alex Bucelo

City Staff and Consultants:

Ramon Trias, Planning Director
Jill Menendez, Administrative Assistant, Board Secretary
Jennifer Garcia, City Planner
Arceli Redila, Principal Planner
Craig Collier, Special Counsel
Warren Adams, Historical Resources & Cultural
Arts Director
Melissa De Zayas, Senior Transportation Engineer,
Public Works

1 Also Participating:
2 Mario Garcia-Serra, Esq., on behalf of Items E-7 and E-8
3 Jorge Navarro, Esq., on behalf of Items E-9 and E-10
4 Alberto Cordoves, Architect Items E-9 and E-10
5 Maria Perera
6 John McWilliams
7 Luis Delgado
8 Maria Blet
9 Luis Arevalo
10 Gustavo Madrigal
11 Marianne Aleman
12 Raul G. Perez
13 Kelli Watson
14 Kevin Shea
15 Frederick Stromayer
16 Frank K. Janeczek
17 George Gonzalez
18 Scott Treanor
19 David Penchina
20 Guillermo Vidaurreta
21 Steffan Seuss
22 Maria Menendez
23 Daniel Veitia
24 Luis Delgado
25 Daniel Pelli
26 Agustin Rivero
27 Maria Cruz (Via Zoom)
28 Javier Banos Machado (Via Zoom)
29 Karen Shane (Via Zoom)
30 Brett Gillis (Via Zoom)
31 Simone Segredo (Via Zoom)
32 Linda Fernandez (Via Zoom)
33 Karelia Martinez-Carbonel (Via Phone)
34 Mayra Joli (Via Zoom)
35 Julio Webel (Via Zoom)

1 THEREUPON:
2 (The following proceedings were held.)
3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Good evening. I'd
4 like to call the meeting to order. This Board
5 is comprised of seven members. Four Members of
6 the Board shall constitute a quorum and the
7 affirmative vote of four members shall be
8 necessary for the adoption of any motion. If
9 only four Members of the Board are present, an
10 applicant may request and be entitled to a
11 continuance to the next regularly scheduled
12 meeting of the Board. If a matter is continued
13 due to a lack of quorum, the Chairperson or
14 Secretary of the Board may set a Special
15 Meeting to consider such matter. In the event
16 that four votes are not obtained, an applicant
17 may request a continuance or allow the
18 application to proceed to the Commission
19 without a recommendation.
20 Pursuant to Resolution Number 2021-118, the
21 City of Coral Gables has returned to
22 traditional in-person meetings. Accordingly,
23 any individual wishing to provide sworn
24 testimony should be present physically in the
25 Commission Chambers. However, the Planning and

1 Zoning Board has established the ability for
2 the public to provide comments. Normally the
3 internet comments or online comments are
4 non-sworn, but because of the new variant, they
5 will be allowed to be sworn testimony. As long
6 as the video camera is on and we do see the
7 individual, they will be allowed.
8 Lobbyist Registration and Disclosure, any
9 person who acts as a lobbyist pursuant to the
10 City of Coral Gables Ordinance Number 2006-11
11 must register with the City Clerk prior to
12 engaging in lobbying activities or
13 presentations before City Staff, Boards,
14 Committees and/or the City Commission. A copy
15 of the Ordinance is available in the Office of
16 the City Clerk. Failure to register and
17 provide proof of registration shall prohibit
18 your ability to present to the Board.
19 As Chair, I now officially call the City of
20 Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Board meeting
21 of February 9th, 2002 (sic) to order. The time
22 6:03.
23 Jill, if you'll please call the roll.
24 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
25 MR. BEHAR: Here.

1 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?
 2 MR. BUCELO: Here.
 3 THE SECRETARY: Claudia Miro?
 4 Luis Revuelta?
 5 Venny Torre?
 6 MR. TORRE: Here.
 7 THE SECRETARY: Chip Withers?
 8 Eibi Aizenstat?
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Here.
 10 Notice Regarding Ex Parte Communications,
 11 please be advised that this Board is a
 12 quasi-judicial board, which requires Board
 13 Members to disclose all ex parte communications
 14 and site visits. An ex parte communication is
 15 defined as any contact, communication,
 16 conversation, correspondence, memorandum or
 17 other written or verbal communication that
 18 takes place outside of a public hearing between
 19 the member of the public and a member of a
 20 quasi-judicial board regarding matters to be
 21 heard by the Board. If anyone made any
 22 contacts with a Board Member regarding an issue
 23 before the Board, the Board Member must state,
 24 on the record, the existence of the ex parte
 25 communication and the party who originated the

1 communication. Also, if a Board Member
 2 conducted a site visit specifically related to
 3 the case before the Board, the Board Member
 4 must also disclose such visit.
 5 In either case, the Board Member must
 6 state, on the record, whether the ex parte
 7 communication and/or site visit will affect the
 8 Board Member's able to impartially consider the
 9 evidence to be presented regarding the matter.
 10 The Board Member must also state that his or
 11 her decision will be based on substantial
 12 competent evidence and testimony presented on
 13 the record today.
 14 Does any member of the Board have any such
 15 communication and/or site visit to disclose at
 16 this time?
 17 MR. TORRE: I did. I drove by the site.
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: You passed by which
 19 site visit?
 20 MR. TORRE: For --
 21 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Torre, can you please
 22 speak into the mike?
 23 MR. TORRE: Sure. I passed by both sites
 24 that are on the agenda, 301 Madeira and the
 25 other is Catalonia.

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Anybody
 2 else? No?
 3 At this time, we would like to do the
 4 swearing in. Everyone who speaks this evening
 5 must complete the roster on the podium, as I
 6 had asked before. We ask that you print
 7 clearly, so the official records of your name
 8 and address will be correct.
 9 Now, with the exception of attorneys, all
 10 persons physically in the City Commission
 11 Chambers, who will speak on agenda items before
 12 us this evening, please rise to be sworn in.
 13 (Thereupon, the participants were sworn or
 14 affirmed.)
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 16 Jill, the record will reflect that Mr.
 17 Revuelta has arrived. Thank you.
 18 Zoom platform participants, I will ask any
 19 person wishing to speak on tonight's agenda
 20 items to please open your chat and send a
 21 direct message to Jill Menendez, stating the
 22 item that you would like to speak before the
 23 Board and include your full name. Jill will
 24 call you when it's your turn. I ask you to be
 25 concise, for the interest of time.

1 Phone platform participants, after Zoom
 2 platform participants are done, I will ask
 3 phone participants to comment on tonight's
 4 agenda items. I also ask you to be concise, in
 5 the interest of time. We will allow three
 6 minutes per speaker to go ahead and give their
 7 comments.
 8 At this time, what I would like to do is
 9 the approval of the minutes of December 8th,
 10 2021. Has everybody had a chance to look at
 11 them?
 12 MR. BEHAR: I make a motion to approve.
 13 MR. BUCELO: Second.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: There's a motion and
 15 we have a second.
 16 Any comment? No?
 17 Call the roll, please.
 18 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?
 19 MR. BUCELO: Yes.
 20 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 21 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.
 22 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 23 MR. TORRE: Yes.
 24 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 25 MR. BEHAR: Yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.
 3 The procedure that we will use tonight is
 4 as follows: First we'll have the
 5 identification of the agenda item by
 6 Mr. Coller, second will be the presentation by
 7 Staff, and then the presentation by Applicant
 8 or Agent. The reverse may be done, where the
 9 applicant may present first and then the Staff;
 10 also, we'll have an open public comment in
 11 chamber, then Zoom platform, then the phone
 12 line platform. Afterwards, I will close the
 13 public comment. We will have Board discussion,
 14 a motion, and discussion, if any, a second --
 15 and a second of the motion, Board's final
 16 comments and a vote, if appropriate.
 17 Before we begin, I'd like to take a second.
 18 I want to address a comment that was posted on
 19 a local app, that is NextDoor.com. I don't
 20 want to mention the author, though. The post
 21 was under, Urgent Political Corruption Alert on
 22 Development in Coral Gables. It further
 23 stated, "Shocking fact, the architect serves on
 24 the Board in Planning and Zoning and will
 25 decide on a project. Will the Board Member be

1 we had, in the Neighborhood Meeting, he kept
 2 interrupting and insulting, and I, as the Vice
 3 Chair, I request that a police officer come to
 4 make sure that he behaves in the same -- and he
 5 assaulted me vulgarly in the last meeting -- he
 6 is removed from here.
 7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I never met this
 8 gentleman before. I don't know what he's
 9 talking about.
 10 MR. BEHAR: You have neighbor --
 11 MR. COLLER: Mr. Chairman --
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Excuse me, let's have
 13 order, please.
 14 MR. COLLER: There are rules of decorum
 15 that are already in our rules and they're to be
 16 followed by all parties. If the rules are not
 17 followed, and somebody becomes disruptive, then
 18 there are appropriate remedies.
 19 At this point, I just want to advise
 20 everyone, this is almost like a court
 21 proceeding. There's a court reporter taking
 22 everything down. You cannot speak from the
 23 crowd, because when you speak from the crowd,
 24 the court reporter doesn't have any idea who's
 25 speaking and we want a verbatim record of this

1 voting on his own project?"
 2 All of us, we all have a right to agree and
 3 to disagree, that's a given right to all of us,
 4 but no one has a right to intentionally slander
 5 any individual, whether a politician, a Board
 6 appointee or just your neighbor. That's just
 7 wrong. Thank you.
 8 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Chair, if I may just add to
 9 that a second, please. I would -- since this
 10 author named me personally, I would say that
 11 this was posted by Mr. Frank Janeczek, in which
 12 he names me -- specifically by name calls me
 13 out, and I don't know if he's here now, but
 14 that is not true.
 15 And what I say to this, know your facts
 16 before you post something like this, that
 17 you're slandering me and is hurting me. That
 18 is not right and will not be tolerated. I'm
 19 insulted, and all of us should be insulted that
 20 such an insinuation is made about us by this
 21 individual.
 22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What's the slander?
 23 MR. BEHAR: Okay. By the way, this
 24 gentleman, I will -- if you can, please request
 25 that a police officer come. Last meeting that

1 proceeding.
 2 So the only time you should be speaking is
 3 when you're at the podium and you've been sworn
 4 in. If you've chosen not to speak, then you
 5 shouldn't speak. If you've chosen to speak,
 6 then you wait until your name is called, so
 7 that a full record can be taken, so that we can
 8 have an orderly process, and this is for this
 9 record. So I appreciate everyone's indulgence
 10 in doing it that way.
 11 MR. BEHAR: Thank you, Mr. City Attorney.
 12 I want to continue. We're not an elected
 13 board -- you know, Elected Officials. We are
 14 volunteer Board Members. We're appointed.
 15 We're not public figures. We are not -- we
 16 cannot be and we will not tolerate to be
 17 attacked in such a manner. Furthermore, that
 18 same goes for Staff, nobody has the right to
 19 insult or harass, the way that some of you have
 20 done it. It is not acceptable.
 21 As to the comment of conflict of interest
 22 and me voting on my own project, let it be
 23 clear, as long as I serve, and it goes back 25
 24 to 30 years as a volunteer on this and many
 25 other Boards, I have always recused myself when

1 one of my projects comes up to the Board. It
 2 is mandatory and required by the Florida
 3 Statutes. I cannot participate. I've never
 4 done it, and I will never do it. So just to
 5 clear it up, I don't vote on my own project.
 6 It is not allowed, just to clear that question.
 7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 9 Let's continue with the items on the
 10 agenda. Does anybody want to make any changes
 11 to the agenda or we will proceed as it is?
 12 MR. BUCELO: Mr. Chair, I'll recommend that
 13 we go with the, I guess, the more -- the last
 14 two items, better said, E-7 and E-8, as they're
 15 related, and then E-9, in the interest of time.
 16 People are going to be speaking on those items.
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So what you'd like to
 18 do is move the two projects forward, and then
 19 do the City items last?
 20 MR. BUCELO: That is correct. Yes, sir.
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I'd like to ask my
 22 fellow Board Members if they're in agreement
 23 with that?
 24 MR. TORRE: I'm fine with it.
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Venny is okay. Luis

1 by.
 2 MR. REVUELTA: I don't even know if we have
 3 a quorum, if he doesn't show up --
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We do have a quorum.
 5 We need four votes.
 6 MR. REVUELTA: Well, it would be beneficial
 7 to have five members --
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct.
 9 MR. REVUELTA: -- for the rest of the
 10 items, if everybody agrees.
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, but he can't be
 12 here for his own.
 13 MR. REVUELTA: No. No. I understand.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And I will do a yes,
 15 also. So let's go ahead and move items -- the
 16 two projects first.
 17 Mr. Coller, would you --
 18 MR. BEHAR: Before you do that, Mr.
 19 Chairman, I will recuse myself at this point,
 20 since the first item is coming up.
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 22 MR. COLLER: Item E-9, an Ordinance of the
 23 City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida
 24 granting approval of a Planned Area Development
 25 pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process,"

1 is okay.
 2 MR. BEHAR: I'm okay.
 3 MR. REVUELTA: I have one question. If
 4 Robert needs to recuse himself --
 5 THE SECRETARY: Sorry, we can't hear you.
 6 MR. REVUELTA: If Robert has to recuse
 7 himself, what would be the most beneficial time
 8 or most efficient time for the Board to hear
 9 items, so when he recuses himself, we still
 10 have the benefit of having --
 11 MR. BEHAR: I could be on standby. If you
 12 get over -- I will recuse myself for the item,
 13 I'll be on standby, and I'll come back in.
 14 MR. REVUELTA: Well, again, I ask the
 15 question, because at this point --
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If we take the item --
 17 the first item which would be the project that
 18 Robert is the architect, he'll be leaving the
 19 chambers. He has to leave the Chambers.
 20 MR. REVUELTA: He has to --
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: He has to leave the
 22 Chambers. He can be on standby and we'll
 23 notify him to come back in.
 24 MR. REVUELTA: Okay.
 25 MR. BEHAR: That's fine. I will be close

1 Section 14-206, "General Procedures for Planned
 2 Area Development" for a mixed-use project
 3 referred to as "Alexan Crafts" on property
 4 legally described as lots 5 thru 27 --
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Mr. Coller --
 6 MR. COLLER: Did I count that wrong?
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: -- let's do E-7 and
 8 E-8 first --
 9 MR. COLLER: Oh, I'm sorry.
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: -- the items Robert
 11 has recused himself. We'll take Items E-9 and
 12 E-10 afterwards.
 13 MR. COLLER: My fault. Okay.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 15 MR. COLLER: Item E-7, an Ordinance of the
 16 City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida
 17 granting approval of a Planned Area Development
 18 pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process,"
 19 Section 14-206, "General Procedures for Planned
 20 Area Development" for a multi-family project
 21 referred to as "301-341 Madeira" on property
 22 legally described as Lots 4 thru 24, Block 1 of
 23 Revised Plat of Coral Gables Section K, Coral
 24 Gables, Florida; including required conditions,
 25 providing for a repealer provision,

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1 severability clause, and providing for an
 2 effective date.
 3 Item E-8, a Resolution of the City
 4 Commission of Coral Gables, Florida granting
 5 Conditional Use approval pursuant to Zoning
 6 Code Section 2-400, "District Overlays,"
 7 Section 2-405, "Residential Infill
 8 Regulations," for a multi-family project
 9 referred to as "301-341 Madeira" located on
 10 property zoned Multi-Family (MF2) legally
 11 described as Lots 4 thru 24, Block 1 of Revised
 12 Plat of Coral Gables Section K, Coral Gables,
 13 Florida; including required conditions;
 14 providing for a repealer provision,
 15 severability clause, and providing for an
 16 effective date.
 17 Item E-7 and E-8, public hearing.
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 19 Mr. Trias.
 20 MR. TRIAS: Thank you very much,
 21 Mr. Chairman. May I have the PowerPoint,
 22 please?
 23 The request is two aspects, to the PAD and
 24 Conditional Use Site Plan. This is the site,
 25 which is on Madeira. To the north of the site,

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1 and Zoning meeting. Letters were mailed to
 2 property owners within 1,000 feet, including
 3 people north of the City limits. There were
 4 two letters sent to property owners. The
 5 property was posted twice, the website posting
 6 was also twice, and there was one newspaper
 7 advertisement for this meeting.
 8 The application is consistent with the
 9 Comprehensive Plan and Staff recommends
 10 approval, with conditions.
 11 Thank you.
 12 MR. COLLER: Mr. Chairman, one housekeeping
 13 measure on this item, and I know Counsel is
 14 familiar with the ruling that he has, as a fact
 15 witness, someone from the Behar Firm, but that
 16 person is not going to be presenting the
 17 project. The presentation of the project will
 18 be done by counsel, who's very equipped to be
 19 able to do that.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you for the
 21 clarification.
 22 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Thank you very much,
 23 Mr. Coller and Mr. Chair.
 24 Good evening, Board Members. My name is
 25 Mario Garcia-Serra, with offices at 600

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1 that's Dade County, so it's at the City limits,
 2 just south of the City limits. You can see it
 3 there on the plat. The red is the
 4 Unincorporated Dade County. And then the City
 5 is to the south and the east. The Zoning is
 6 MF2 and the Land Use is Mid-Rise; however, in
 7 the Zoning designation, there's an Overlay, the
 8 Infill Overlay, which the Applicant is taking
 9 care of.
 10 Request Number 1 is a PAD. As the project
 11 has evolved, they are less and less PAD aspects
 12 to the project, but you can see that the
 13 community park and the quality of the site are
 14 still there, and the applicant will explain
 15 that in more detail. The project is 1.4 acres
 16 and it's a 100 square acre, which is what is
 17 allowed under the Infill Overlay. The PAD,
 18 again, enhances the ground level spaces. The
 19 Conditional Use Site Plan, as you can see,
 20 follows the requirements of the Infill Overlay,
 21 and the applicant will explain it in more
 22 detail.
 23 The Board of Architects looked at this in
 24 December, there was a Neighborhood Meeting in
 25 January, and today we're having the Planning

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1 Brickell Avenue, here this evening representing
 2 the property owner and the applicant Urban
 3 Madeira 301, LLC, and I'm joined today by the
 4 principals of that firm, Mr. Erwin Sredni, Mr.
 5 Jonatan Sredni, and Mr. Scott Alcus, who are
 6 here with us this evening. The Srednis -- they
 7 are all family -- have a long history of being
 8 owners and developers of Multi-Family
 9 residential developments, including here in
 10 Coral Gables, and it's a very good reputation.
 11 For them, this is a long-term investment and a
 12 long-term hold, and part of their family
 13 legacy. We're also joined this evening by John
 14 McWilliams, with Kimley-Horn, our traffic
 15 consultant.
 16 Let's start by putting this a bit in
 17 context, and what's up there on the screen
 18 right now, and I want to make sure that --
 19 what's up on the screen right now are the
 20 Residential Infill Regulations for the City of
 21 Coral Gables. Now, these Residential Infill
 22 Regulations are a product of considerable work
 23 and study, having started in 2002. So, for
 24 about a fifteen-year period, the City, through
 25 its consultants, including Duany Plater-Zyberk,

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1 a very well regarding planning firm, went
 2 through the process of trying to determine how
 3 the future of the North Ponce area should be.
 4 And they identified an issue and a
 5 challenge which needed to be addressed, and
 6 that issue, that challenge, is the fact that
 7 much of the housing stock in Coral Gables, in
 8 the North Ponce area, has declined with time in
 9 quality. They have served a useful life, some
 10 of them fifty to seventy years, they've been in
 11 service as apartments, but they've gotten to
 12 the point that it is very hard to justify
 13 further investment in the maintenance or
 14 improvement.
 15 And so, in 2017 or thereabouts, the City
 16 Commission adopted these Residential Infill
 17 Regulations, which are an Overlay Zoning
 18 Regulation, covering the area of the City
 19 between the Central Business District, Eighth
 20 Street, and then Le Jeune and Douglas on the
 21 west and on the east. Those are the
 22 regulations that are before you now.
 23 And I'll read, sort of the relevant part,
 24 the more important mentions of purpose and
 25 intent in these regulations. If you look at

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1 FAR, which is exactly what the Residential
 2 Infill Regulations permit, and an FM2 permits a
 3 height of 97 feet. The Residential Infill
 4 Regulations permits three more feet in height.
 5 So instead of 97, it's 100.
 6 The big difference is density. The MF2
 7 regulations permit a maximum density of 50
 8 units to the acre. The Residential Infill
 9 Regulations permit a maximum density of 100
 10 units to the acre. Again, this was done after
 11 considerable thought and study, adopted by the
 12 City Commission, in order to incentivize new
 13 development within the North Ponce area.
 14 Now, let's talk about the site. As Ramon
 15 mentioned, it's about a 1.45 acre site, on the
 16 north side of Madeira, between Salzedo and Le
 17 Jeune, at the extreme northern end of the City.
 18 Immediately to the north is the unincorporated
 19 area commonly referred to as Little Gables.
 20 Now I'll talk about a little bit more
 21 context. Here are some pictures of the
 22 neighborhood. Again, what is existing on the
 23 property today are many dated buildings, dating
 24 anywhere from the 1920s to the 1960s in age,
 25 insufficient parking, quality of housing not

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1 them, they'll say, encouraging greater housing
 2 opportunities, providing greater housing
 3 opportunities in strategic areas of the City,
 4 promote and encourage pedestrian activity,
 5 protect and promote a garden like feeling in
 6 Coral Gables' Multi-Family Residential
 7 District, and encourage compatible and engaging
 8 streetscape. That's exactly what this project
 9 is about.
 10 This project is consistent with those
 11 regulations, it's meeting that long-term policy
 12 and goal for the City, and it is something that
 13 has been on the City Code and the City books
 14 for years now. This is not something that
 15 we're proposing or that we are inventing.
 16 We're proposing a project that is consistent
 17 with both, the City policy and the City Code
 18 calls for in this area.
 19 Now, how does it work? The Residential
 20 Infill Regulations actually work within the
 21 building envelope that is already permitted
 22 under the underlying MF2 Zoning regulations.
 23 In other words, if this Overlay didn't exist
 24 and the only thing that existed is the
 25 underlying Zoning of MF2, MF2 permits a 2.5

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1 very high, especially by today's modern day
 2 standards, and what we're looking to do is
 3 replace that housing that's going to last the
 4 City another 70, 100 years, and meet the needs
 5 of its residents.
 6 Now, let's talk a little bit about the
 7 project. The project is requesting both,
 8 Planned Area Development approval and Site Plan
 9 approval for the Residential Infill
 10 Regulations. Both of these require certain
 11 public benefit. In order to obtain these
 12 approvals, you have to provide public benefit.
 13 That is part of what the project is all about.
 14 The project's basics, I think Ramon already
 15 went over, 143 units, and then nine stories in
 16 height, and then nine live-work units on the
 17 ground floor.
 18 Here we're looking at the ground floor
 19 plan, the Site Plan for the property, and most
 20 of those benefits are indicated here on this
 21 ground floor plan, which we'll go into more
 22 closer detail.
 23 On the extreme east, we have a 4,080 square
 24 foot open space area, which we are proffering
 25 as a sort of community park, granting a

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1 perpetual easement to the public, so that the
 2 public, anyone, can come and use that as an
 3 inner city park, while we continue to maintain
 4 it and improve it. This plan, also, you'll see
 5 in greater detail later, widened sidewalks and
 6 landscaped pedestrian areas will abut the whole
 7 property, so as to, again, try to meet that
 8 goal of promoting and encouraging pedestrian
 9 activity and encouraging compatible engaging
 10 streetscapes.

11 We added the walkup townhome live-work
 12 units, also meant to activate and engage the
 13 street. The same streetscape improvements that
 14 we are proposing on the north side, we are in
 15 agreement with Staff's recommended Condition of
 16 Approval, that those same streetscape
 17 improvements that are on the north side, on our
 18 side of the street, we will also install on the
 19 south side, so as to have a continuous sort of
 20 treatment of that whole block of Madeira, at
 21 our cost, of course, and at our effort, subject
 22 also to City and public input, so it has
 23 been --

24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: One second. Could we
 25 please keep it down? Thank you.

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1 done that, so as to show the actual width of
 2 travel and what the areas are for parking.

3 Here you have a view of the facade from
 4 Madeira. This project went through
 5 considerable review at the Board of Architects.
 6 Literally, the latter part of 2021 was spent
 7 going back and forth with the Board of
 8 Architects and proceeding with their comments.
 9 Their comments concentrated a lot about making
 10 the building more Mediterranean style. We did
 11 receive Mediterranean approval from the Board
 12 of Architects, as is required by these
 13 Residential Infill Regulations.

14 Another big part of their comments and
 15 discussion was having a facade that had more
 16 variation, more give and take, and in deed,
 17 what the project architect has tried to
 18 accomplish by, as you see, certain portions of
 19 the building being recessed.

20 Here we have a view of the sidewalk and the
 21 streetscape in front, where you can see the
 22 walk-up units, the expanded sidewalk, the
 23 landscaping, the streetscape, the bulb-outs and
 24 the striped parking spaces, none of which, of
 25 course, exist right now.

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1 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: There has been some
 2 discussion with the neighbors as to whether
 3 they want to keep more on-street parking and
 4 less of the landscape bulb-outs, so there's
 5 still some refining that has to happen to see
 6 exactly what is it that the neighbors want, but
 7 whatever it is that they want, we will install.

8 And, lastly, we've agreed to make a
 9 contribution, a monetary contribution, to
 10 further the North Ponce streetscape
 11 improvements.

12 As you can see here, on the right floor
 13 plan, the parking garage, you can see it better
 14 in the renderings, completely lined. The only
 15 part of the parking garage that is exposed is
 16 the entrance and the exit.

17 Here we're taking you through the
 18 renderings and walking you around the building.
 19 There, in the foreground, you'll see a 4,080
 20 square public open space area. You start
 21 seeing how the sidewalk is being maintained.
 22 One point that came up in our neighborhood
 23 meeting is that this rendering needed to be
 24 revised to show the actual condition of the
 25 street, as far as on-street parking, and we've

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1 Here you've got a ground level view of the
 2 corner of Salzedo and Madeira, where the park
 3 will be open to the public, and here you see
 4 the other end of the project, the other end of
 5 Madeira, where you see, right there on the left
 6 side of the image, that is a parking garage,
 7 yet it does not look like a parking garage,
 8 because it is lined with habitable space, and
 9 also the property treated, from an
 10 architectural perspective. Again, it's very
 11 rare to see parking garages like this in Coral
 12 Gables. We're starting to see them now,
 13 although it is not historically how it's been.

14 Here is a better view showing the amenity
 15 deck above the parking garage, and then here we
 16 are back at the ground floor plan. The ground
 17 floor plan, now put in context with the other
 18 buildings around the property. On the south
 19 side of Madeira, within the City of Coral
 20 Gables, it's mostly Multi-Family. The north
 21 side is the incorporated area of Miami-Dade
 22 County, Little Gables, it's a combination of
 23 single-family, duplex and small apartments.

24 Being conscious of that, we've set back the
 25 building appropriately and we believe in

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1 context with the rest of the neighborhood. As
 2 you can see in this cross section, the Via
 3 Isabela Condominium building, which is on the
 4 south side of Madeira, is about 85 feet in
 5 height, and the top of our architecture is 100
 6 feet in height. So a 15-foot difference, which
 7 really, when you're talking about this scale of
 8 a building, is not necessarily something that
 9 can even really be discerned that much from the
 10 street.

11 On the rear side of the property, we're
 12 indicating there what the Zoning would
 13 potentially permit under the unincorporated
 14 Miami-Dade Zoning of RU-3, which is a 40-foot
 15 high building. Our building, the parking
 16 component of it, the parking pedestal, is three
 17 stories in height, about 33 feet in height, set
 18 back ten feet, and then the tower itself is set
 19 back another 28 feet from the property line.
 20 So a total of 38 feet in setback between the
 21 rear property line and tower, a considerable
 22 setback, to try to be respectful to the lower
 23 rising properties to our north.

24 We'll walk quickly through the floor plans.
 25 Here is the second floor, which shows the liner

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1 Park, which is outside of the City of Coral
 2 Gables, on the west side of Le Jeune, both of
 3 them over a third of a mile away. As many of
 4 you know, a quarter mile is sort of considered
 5 the appropriate distance for people to be
 6 walking. I think, even here in Miami, that's a
 7 bit of a challenge, considering the weather and
 8 the elements, and people don't even -- people
 9 can't even get to power walk maybe even a
 10 thousand feet. Here, having this park in this
 11 area, is a very significant public benefit,
 12 that will come at a considerable cost if the
 13 City had to acquire this property and build a
 14 park as its own, but it is part of the public
 15 benefit which is being provided as part of this
 16 project.

17 Here we go back to the street level
 18 rendering. The reason I bring this one up is
 19 that Staff is recommending approval with
 20 conditions. There are two conditions that we
 21 have issue with, and we would ask for you to
 22 consider. The standard enumerated conditions,
 23 we are all fine with, those regarding monetary
 24 contribution, streetscape improvements, so
 25 forth. The two suggestions that Staff has,

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1 units in front of the garage, the lobby are on
 2 the extreme right, the walkup units fronting
 3 Madeira, the parking garage concealed behind.

4 The third floor, similar situation. The
 5 fourth floor is where the amenities are, the
 6 pool, and small green area, clubhouse, that
 7 sort of thing, and then all of the Residential
 8 units, a combination of one, two and
 9 three-bedroom units.

10 Going up, floor plans Number 5, 6 and 7 and
 11 8 are very similar. 9, the top floor, is
 12 recessed a bit more in the middle and on the
 13 sides.

14 Here, a closer-up view, is the
 15 configuration of the proposed park, about 4,080
 16 square feet, as mentioned before. This would,
 17 of course, go through the planning process,
 18 with outreach to the neighborhood, through the
 19 City, so as to be able to create a park here
 20 that's really responsive to the needs of the
 21 neighborhood, a benefit that is significant in
 22 nature, especially when you consider how close
 23 any other park is. Here are the other next
 24 closest parks, Phillips Park to the east, which
 25 is on the other side of Ponce, San Jacinto

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1 which were to remove the stoops that front the
 2 live-work units, that you can see here on this
 3 street, and to remove the terraces that are on
 4 the street and above, because they encroach
 5 within what's called a step back area, are the
 6 ones that we're in disagreement with.

7 We feel the stoops are a key component of
 8 those ground floor units. The terrace is even
 9 -- the terraces are, I think, a very important
 10 function. If you go through all of those
 11 planning documents that the City went over 20
 12 something years ago, they talk about
 13 encouraging balconies and terraces, so that
 14 people have sort of an outdoor space, and even
 15 those encroaching the step back, that's one of
 16 the reasons why we're requesting a PAD.
 17 Planned Area Development is a Zoning
 18 designation that you can have for a particular
 19 Site Plan, that provides some flexibility on
 20 those sort of requirements so as to make a
 21 better project, and we think that the stoops
 22 and the terraces, in particular, are a key,
 23 very important component to the quality of this
 24 project, and, again, only have a positive
 25 impact.

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1 The distance from the facade where the
 2 balconies are, to the facade of one of the
 3 condominiums across the street, is in the 90
 4 something foot range, so it's a considerable
 5 distance. It's not like somebody's going to be
 6 standing on the stairs and looking into
 7 somebody else's condominium or apartment across
 8 the street, and it really makes for a much
 9 better project.

10 On the issue of neighbors, we had a
 11 Neighborhood Meeting a few weeks ago, had
 12 considerable amount of input there. There were
 13 changes and proffers that we were willing to do
 14 in response to that neighborhood input. We
 15 could go into more detail on that, when we go
 16 through -- after the public comment, where we
 17 have a bit of a rebuttal period, but we're
 18 willing to proffer and pay for a Residential
 19 Parking Zone, so that the residents who live on
 20 the block will be the ones who will be entitled
 21 to use the on-street parking, they and their
 22 guests, pursuant to a pass permit program.
 23 We're willing to designate visitor parking
 24 within the garage, so that there is assurance
 25 that there's easily accessible visitor parking

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1 and after considerable effort and study, the
 2 City Commission adopted the Residential Infill
 3 Regulations to ensure that the City will have a
 4 high quality and vibrant apartment district.
 5 This project will be a significant step in
 6 fulfilling that goal and I ask you to follow
 7 the Staff recommendation of approval, as
 8 modified, perhaps, by those two conditions that
 9 I talked about, as well as the Board of
 10 Architects' approval of this project. Sound
 11 planning decisions are not easy, but that is
 12 what we need today. Sound planning decisions
 13 backed by the Code and backed by over fifteen
 14 years of City study and effort.

15 Thank you very much for your time, and we
 16 have our professionals here, if you have any
 17 questions. I would like to reserve a little
 18 time for rebuttal, as we do expect some
 19 objection from the public comment period, and
 20 we can proceed accordingly.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: What I'd like to do at
 23 this time is, first open it up for public
 24 comment, and then, while Mario makes his
 25 rebuttal, we can go ahead and ask any questions

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1 for our guests in our building.

2 We're also willing to increase the parking.
 3 Now, the increase of the parking would require
 4 input from this Board, because the way we get
 5 there is by potentially removing some of the
 6 liner units on the garage, to open up that
 7 space and create 27 more parking spaces.
 8 That's something which we're willing to
 9 proffer, but we have to have discussion as to
 10 whether it's appropriate and how to treat the
 11 parking garage facade, and it would obviously
 12 always be treated to look the same as it looks
 13 right now, but it wouldn't have actual
 14 habitable space behind it.

15 Lastly, subject to approval by the
 16 regulatory authorities involved, we would also
 17 be willing to do a dedicated right-hand turn
 18 lane at the intersection of Madeira and Le
 19 Jeune, going north, so as to be able to open up
 20 more the accessibility needs of traffic flow.

21 I'll conclude by saying, Coral Gables is a
 22 great city, but remember it was planned and it
 23 is a city. It is in a hamlet. It's not a
 24 village. It's not a town. This site is part
 25 of the Apartment District of that great city,

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1 that we may have to the applicant.

2 MR. COLLIER: Mr. Chairman, I know that
 3 there were letters, I believe, on this project.
 4 The Board Members, that has been distributed to
 5 them earlier --

6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct.

7 MR. COLLIER: -- and I think they're also
 8 available at the podium, as well.

9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And they have been
 10 entered into the record.

11 MR. COLLIER: Correct.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Thank you.

13 What I'd like to remind everybody, please,
 14 is that we're giving three minutes per speaker.
 15 There is a timer that's there, and there's also
 16 a light. It will be green, then it turns to
 17 yellow, and then it turns to red when your time
 18 is up. I would also ask you to please be
 19 concise, and if somebody has said something,
 20 maybe you could agree with their position and
 21 so forth. Thank you.

22 Jill, will you please call the first
 23 speaker?

24 THE SECRETARY: We have 16 speakers.

25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: How many?

1 THE SECRETARY: 16, and four via Zoom.
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.
 3 THE SECRETARY: Luis Delgado.
 4 MR. DELGADO: Good evening. My name is
 5 Luis Delgado.
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I think your
 7 microphone is not -- if you could speak into
 8 the microphone.
 9 MR. DELGADO: Okay. How's this? Is this
 10 all right? Okay. Thank you.
 11 My name is Luis Delgado. I'm a resident of
 12 City of Coral Gables. Am I still okay here?
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes. Yes.
 14 MR. DELGADO: All right.
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sorry.
 16 MR. DELGADO: I was born and raised here in
 17 the City.
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Would you state your
 19 name and address, for the record?
 20 MR. DELGADO: 4920 Pine Drive.
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And that's in Coral
 22 Gables?
 23 MR. DELGADO: Coral Gables.
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 25 MR. DELGADO: I am -- I've resided in the

1 what's going on with the rents in this area,
 2 and we need projects in that area that will
 3 encourage those types of rents, and that's what
 4 this is designed to do, which we sorely need.
 5 So I'm not going to take any more of the
 6 time. I'm sure you've heard it. I
 7 wholeheartedly support this and hope that this
 8 Board does, as well, and obviously, if you have
 9 any questions of me -- I know I probably have
 10 thirty seconds left -- I'll throw it back to
 11 you guys.
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 13 MR. DELGADO: Thank you.
 14 THE SECRETARY: Maria Blet.
 15 MS. BLET: This isn't the project that I
 16 was going to comment for.
 17 THE SECRETARY: Luis Arevalo.
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Jill, is the timer not
 19 working?
 20 THE SECRETARY: We're having some issue.
 21 We're working on it.
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. If not, I'll
 23 keep it up here.
 24 MR. AREVALO: Good evening. My name is
 25 Luis Arevalo, 1320 South Dixie Highway.

1 City most of my adult life. I've gone to
 2 school here. I own significant property in
 3 this City. I'm actually very familiar with
 4 this project, because when the Sredni family
 5 thought -- was buying and assembling this
 6 project, I'm the one that encouraged him. I
 7 really promoted the City, 'cause I thought they
 8 would be great people to develop in the City.
 9 I know them very, very well. I know them to be
 10 very honorable, very caring people and
 11 long-term players. They're not here to flip or
 12 to just profit from the City. They really want
 13 to make it better. I know they're super
 14 honorable people and they have the financial
 15 wherewithal to do what's right for the City.
 16 That's what's in their heart. I wouldn't be
 17 here speaking on their behalf if I didn't feel
 18 that way.
 19 I've also followed this project, because I
 20 have numerous properties very near this area.
 21 I think this will be a substantial upgrade for
 22 the area, will promote further investments of
 23 all types in the area, which are needed. I
 24 think, more importantly, it's going to bring
 25 more affordable type housing. We all know

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And that's in Coral
 2 Gables?
 3 MR. AREVALO: In Coral Gables, yes, that's
 4 correct. We are property owners of several
 5 sites on the North Gables and I would like just
 6 to make a distinction of two different topics
 7 here. One of them is the current North Gables
 8 Zoning Code that was developed starting on the
 9 '14, and it took about three years. The City,
 10 basically, they took initiative and they
 11 made -- they asked for the participation of all
 12 of the property owners of the area. That's why
 13 we got involved on the process, and the process
 14 basically was approved, and I believe that it
 15 was a big enhancement on the Zoning Code.
 16 The main goals were to try to handle the
 17 properties that were built sixty, seventy years
 18 ago, that probably the life expectancy of those
 19 properties are already getting to a limit, the
 20 structural component of those properties are
 21 not compatible with today's Code and especially
 22 the life safety means, they are not present on
 23 any of those properties on the North Gables.
 24 So the Code tried to provide a remedy for those
 25 conditions and create some rules that will

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1 enhance re-development. So that's -- and we
 2 were very blessed and fortunate to be able to
 3 participate on that process that was about six,
 4 seven years ago.

5 Now we have a project like this one in
 6 Madeira, which I believe that the developer,
 7 and the designer, they were able to interpret
 8 properly the spirits and the goals of those
 9 regulations by providing this project that
 10 complies with all of the regulations, in terms
 11 of density and height, and also I believe that
 12 we have to point the fact that -- the
 13 participation of the green area, in that park,
 14 on the east side of the property, is a very
 15 important contribution to the City.

16 So, as property owners of the area, we
 17 welcome projects like this one, that basically
 18 comply with the Mediterranean design, it's a
 19 very quality project that was approved by the
 20 Board of Architects and we would be happy to
 21 see any other projects following this line of
 22 design. So we are basically here to support,
 23 not only this project, but any other project
 24 that complies with the regulations the way that
 25 they have been doing it.

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1 Then, also, it doesn't take into account
 2 visitors, delivery cars that are going to be
 3 going through that one little street that's
 4 already congested.

5 Furthermore, I think it will destroy -- you
 6 know, there's two buildings that were already
 7 kind of, you know, approved for historical, and
 8 that's an issue that I think they need to work
 9 on, as well, and I do not believe that the
 10 building meets the Mediterranean requirements,
 11 as, you know, the attorney spoke and said they
 12 were back and forth for a year -- about a year
 13 with the Board of Architects.

14 And give me one second -- yes, also, the
 15 ten-foot setbacks, I think, are an issue,
 16 especially, you know, because it's going to be
 17 casting shade, and then the drainage issues.

18 As for my personal issues with the project,
 19 to be frank and honest, I installed a pool two
 20 years ago, and now my house is going to be
 21 covered in shade, you know, permanently from
 22 this building. I also have a three-year-old
 23 daughter, and I don't particularly care for
 24 several units being able to look down on my
 25 property.

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1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.

3 THE SECRETARY: Gustavo Madrigal.

4 MR. MADRIGAL: Hello, good evening. My
 5 name is Gustavo Madrigal. I am not in the
 6 Gables. I am on the street behind, 1625
 7 Southwest 40th Avenue.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Your address, 1625 --

9 MR. MADRIGAL: 1625 Southwest 40th Avenue.

10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And that'd Miami-Dade?

11 MR. MADRIGAL: Unincorporated Dade, yes,
 12 sir.

13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

14 MR. MADRIGAL: I wanted to thank you guys
 15 for allowing me to speak today in this meeting,
 16 and I stand before you simply asking not to
 17 kill the project, but just reject it in its
 18 current size. I'm all for improvement and
 19 stuff like that, but the building, as proposed,
 20 is too big in comparison to the rest of the
 21 neighborhood.

22 My other issue is, 213 additional cars
 23 going through that street. With all due
 24 respect, that -- Madeira does not look like
 25 that, as rendered.

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1 I'd just respectfully ask the Board to send
 2 the project back to the re-imagined in a more
 3 Mediterranean style and more in line with some
 4 step downs, and that's about it. Thank you
 5 very much.

6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.

7 THE SECRETARY: Marianne.

8 MS. ALEMAN: Hello. This is Marianne
 9 Aleman. My address is also 1625 Southwest 40th
 10 Avenue, in the Little Gables area,
 11 unincorporated Dade. I just wanted to say a
 12 couple of things. That's my husband that just
 13 spoke.

14 It's disappointing when people appointed or
 15 elected to serve the people choose to side with
 16 the developer, that is not interested in this
 17 community, and with all due respect, the two
 18 folks that did speak and they said that they
 19 were in the Gables, this isn't affecting them
 20 personally. It does affect our home.

21 So I just wanted to say that this project
 22 is completely out of scale and character with
 23 the neighborhood and destroys the viewshed of
 24 so many residents. It also destroys any light
 25 and visibility into the yards of surrounding

1 homes, including ours. The project should
 2 taper down into the Single-Family Residential,
 3 which is thoughtful urban planning.
 4 The opposition in this community is heavily
 5 organized and will be fighting this project
 6 every step of the way. It is against the will
 7 of the people, and what's worse is the idea
 8 that the architect sits on the Board, and, you
 9 know, personally, obviously, you can put this
 10 on the record, it smells of corruption. It's
 11 truly unacceptable. How do we know that the
 12 fellow Board Members are not being influenced
 13 by the recused member?
 14 And, then, you are turning City Beautiful
 15 into City Concrete with these gargantuan
 16 projects being approved, and it has to stop.
 17 And another observation is that the renderings
 18 there, the street of Madeira doesn't look like
 19 that. That looks like it's, I don't know, Le
 20 Jeune or something, but it's really a lot
 21 smaller than they rendered there. And,
 22 obviously, this all sounds like a sales pitch,
 23 not me, but before, and don't fall for it.
 24 Listen to what's -- actually the community
 25 wants, and then, if you approve this massive

1 here to help him.
 2 He's concerned because he counted --
 3 MR. COLLER: We need your name and address.
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Can we have your name
 5 and address, too?
 6 MR. RIVERO: Agustin Rivero. My name is
 7 Agustin Rivero. I don't live in the Gables
 8 anymore.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Just your
 10 address, for the record, please?
 11 MR. RIVERO: What?
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Su direccion, for the
 13 record.
 14 MR. RIVERO: 2130 Southwest 94th Court,
 15 Miami.
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 17 MR. RIVERO: Okay. His concern is that he
 18 counted the apartments. According to the
 19 plans, it's not -- it doesn't correspond to
 20 what they say that they have. That's one of
 21 the main concerns. Same thing with the parking
 22 spots. So he would like you to check, I mean,
 23 the count of the apartments, because according
 24 to his count, there's a total of 150, okay, and
 25 the parkings, according to him, there are only

1 project, you will have George Merrick rolling
 2 in his grave.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 4 Just hold your applause, please, but I do
 5 want to say something. I do take offense to
 6 you saying corruption to this Board. If you
 7 have any evidence of any, the attorney is here,
 8 there's a City Attorney, there's a City
 9 Manager, and I encourage you to proceed that
 10 way. Thank you, ma'am.
 11 MS. ALEMAN: Sure.
 12 THE SECRETARY: Raul Perez.
 13 MR. PEREZ: My name is Raul Perez, 322
 14 Madeira Avenue, in front of the building.
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Can you say your
 16 address again? I'm sorry, I couldn't hear it.
 17 MR. PEREZ: 322 Madeira Avenue.
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: City of Coral Gables?
 19 MR. PEREZ: City of Coral Gables.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 21 MR. PEREZ: In front of the building.
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 23 MR. PEREZ: I'm sorry, I don't speak English.
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: It's okay.
 25 MR. RIVERO: His is worse than mine, so I'm

1 199. So it looks like there is a shortage on
 2 the parkings, according to the apartments.
 3 What else? That's it.
 4 Okay. He's concerned about the park -- the
 5 place that they designated as a park in the
 6 front of the building -- at the side of the
 7 building. He says that the side is the -- they
 8 call the front of the building the small
 9 street, which is Salzedo. So Madeira is the
 10 longer street, so it's supposed to be the
 11 front. According to him, Madeira is supposed
 12 to be the front, but the park on Salzedo is
 13 supposed to be six thousand -- okay. He's
 14 concerned about the park -- the area for the
 15 park -- on Salzedo.
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.
 17 MR. RIVERA: And check the setbacks,
 18 because, according to the height -- he says
 19 that the setbacks are not according to the
 20 heights of the buildings.
 21 MR. PEREZ: My building is seventeen feet
 22 high, not eighteen. It's seventeen. By the
 23 drawing --
 24 MR. RIVERA: Thank you.
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

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1 MR. PEREZ: Thank you very much.
 2 THE SECRETARY: Kelli Watson, please.
 3 MS. WATSON: Hi. I'm nervous. Thank
 4 you --
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: No worries.
 6 MS. WATSON: -- for the opportunity to
 7 speak here. Kelli Watson, 322 Madeira Avenue.
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: In Coral Gables.
 9 MS. WATSON: My husband and I live directly
 10 across the street from where -- from the center
 11 of where the building is going to be built, and
 12 we're very concerned that the size of the
 13 building is not commiserate with the area. So,
 14 the number of units that is being taken out is
 15 about 50 right now. It's being replaced with
 16 almost 150. There's already parking and
 17 traffic issues on that street.
 18 I work from home and I sit with my window
 19 looking directly at Madeira Avenue. Just
 20 yesterday, there were cars backed up halfway up
 21 the block -- it had to have been eight to ten
 22 cars -- trying to get onto Le Jeune going west,
 23 and so that's with nobody living across but
 24 four or five units right now. So I'm very
 25 concerned about the safety of the streets

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1 Looking at the subject property, it is a
 2 catalyst project for the improvement of North
 3 Ponce. This is what the planners are looking
 4 to create. They're looking to create density
 5 and implement a vision that was a result of the
 6 community and adopted by the City Commission.
 7 The project team also brings a vision of
 8 improving the housing stock in the North Ponce,
 9 something that is needed, something to bring a
 10 housing stock that's going to meet today's
 11 Codes. This type of project and the reason the
 12 planners looked at creating additional density
 13 is because that density and this proximity to
 14 Downtown is actually going to reduce the amount
 15 of trips, local trips, being generated in the
 16 community. The projects and the overlaying
 17 Codes were designed to improve walkability,
 18 encourage walkability, its proximity to
 19 Downtown for work, entertainment will do just
 20 that. It will improve pedestrian uses and
 21 safety by reducing curb cuts. It's going to
 22 contribute to an improved streetscape program
 23 that's going to improve trees along all of
 24 Madeira, that, again, is going to contribute to
 25 that walkability of the neighborhood.

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1 there, and, then, there are just too many
 2 people who would be living there at that time.
 3 And It would take out too much parking in the
 4 area.
 5 Thank you very much.
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.
 7 THE SECRETARY: Daniel Vietia.
 8 MR. VEITIA: Good afternoon, Daniel Veitia,
 9 1193 71st Street, Miami Beach, Florida. I want
 10 to talk a little bit about the planning process
 11 taking place in North Ponce, beginning with the
 12 study in 2002 that was looking to improve
 13 walkability, improve transportation options,
 14 improve streetscape plans. And as a result, we
 15 fast-forward to 2015, 2016, and apparently that
 16 didn't do enough.
 17 They went through another Charrette
 18 process, created a Visioning Workshop with the
 19 community in 2015, and following planning
 20 meetings in 2016, all that resulted with the
 21 Commission passing the Infill Regulations and
 22 also the Conversation District for the North
 23 Ponce area, these regulations were designed to
 24 incentivize development, while also providing
 25 some incentivization for Historic Preservation.

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1 This project is also going to contribute to
 2 the overall North Ponce Streetscape Improvement
 3 Program. It's going to provide that public
 4 community gathering space, which is in the
 5 historic nature of Coral Gables. The Staff is
 6 also recommending approval based on all of its
 7 finding of facts that support the project.
 8 The process of going to the Board of
 9 Architects, six hearings, it was not a rush
 10 process, through one year. I think, if you
 11 look at the beginning renderings of the project
 12 and what resulted after those six hearings, you
 13 have a much better design, that interacts much
 14 better with the streetscape.
 15 I was at the community meeting. I saw the
 16 concerns of the residents, heard the concerns
 17 of the residents. I understand the applicant
 18 is testifying that they're working on a
 19 Residential Parking District, which I think is
 20 a very positive step. At that community
 21 meeting, they also discussed concerns about
 22 parking, and you hear the resident (sic), you
 23 know, proffering to designate a certain amount
 24 of spaces within the garage toward guest,
 25 visitor parking, to lessen the demand on the

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1 street.

2 The Staff Conditions, I certainly support

3 Staff's -- may I finish?

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you'll just wrap it

5 up, please.

6 MR. VEITIA: Okay. Well, thank you for

7 your time and I certainly --

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you have a short

9 version to continue, I mean, if it's just --

10 MR. VEITIA: On the Conditions, I think

11 it's great that they're doing both sides of the

12 street. I am concerned with the terraces. The

13 eyes on the street, the interaction of the

14 residents with the street is something that's

15 very historic with Coral Gables, and I think

16 the terraces are important to activate that

17 streetscape.

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

19 MR. VEITIA: And I certainly recommend your

20 approval today. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.

22 THE SECRETARY: Luis Delgado.

23 MR. DELGADO: You already heard from me.

24 THE SECRETARY: Daniel Pelli.

25 MR. PELLI: Good evening. My name is

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1 changes to the project, other than its

2 appearance. Most importantly, the Staff report

3 contains proposals for fundamental changes to

4 the building well beyond its Mediterranean

5 appearance. The Staff proposal envisions

6 reductions in building size and footprints,

7 which these recommendations have vanished.

8 Let's scrutinize the 2021 Staff report,

9 which stated explicitly that, and I'm quoting,

10 "The proposed massing of the PAD is not

11 compatible with adjacent properties in the

12 North Ponce area with regard to building bulk

13 and size." What happened to that? And I ask

14 that of the planner there, because he spoke

15 about it, but that concern has disappeared.

16 And critical for the Board's consideration

17 today is that the current Staff report walks

18 away from this very firm conclusion. For this

19 reason, the original Staff report explicitly

20 states that to help the proposed PAD fit into

21 the current context, it is suggested that the

22 PAD be proposed with smaller building

23 footprints. Again, I ask, what happened to

24 that suggestion? It disappeared. Sadly, the

25 original Staff report suggestion has vanished

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1 Daniel Pelli. I live at 475 Lakewood Drive in

2 Winter Park, Florida, and I conduct a lot of

3 business here in Coral Gables.

4 I'm here to register my formal opposition

5 to the proposed project of 301 Madeira. I'm

6 going to focus today on the Staff reports,

7 which evaluates the project, because these

8 reports, perhaps more than anything else, are

9 going to provide the foundation for the

10 decision that this Board makes, which, in turn,

11 will be the basis from which the City

12 Commission will make its final decision.

13 And scrutinizing the 2021 Staff reports,

14 the original ones, we learned that the Staff

15 was originally quite critical of this

16 development. Let's be clear, since 2021,

17 meetings with the BOA resulted in significant

18 changes to the Mediterranean appearance of the

19 building; however, no changes have been made to

20 the building's proposed height, number of units

21 and lot coverage, despite explicit

22 recommendations in the Staff report.

23 Now, in 2022, for some inexplicable reason,

24 the Staff report transformed into support for

25 the development, without any significant

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1 with no explanation. What was true then is

2 true now. It is arbitrary and capricious for

3 this Board to ignore these substantial and

4 fundamental concerns about the building size

5 and to approve the building despite these

6 concerns that persist, despite the aesthetic

7 modifications of the building. Again, the

8 size, height, number of units and lot coverage

9 of the building, all concerns highlighted by

10 the original Staff report, have not been

11 addressed, and, therefore, the Board's sole

12 reliance on the aesthetic improvement is wholly

13 insufficient. This Board cannot arbitrarily

14 and capriciously ignore prior findings and

15 recommendations that go to the heart of this

16 development and its impact on the neighborhood

17 and community.

18 Finally, I have one more thing to say --

19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you could please

20 wrap it up.

21 MR. PELLI: We almost missed this meeting,

22 because I was at 301 Madeira and I was driving

23 here. I budgeted more than enough time. As I

24 was trying to negotiate from Madeira to Le

25 Jeune, it took maybe five times as long.

1 Emergency vehicles are not going to be able to
 2 get to all of the households on Madeira. There
 3 is going to be a tragedy one day, and since
 4 we're on the record, if this building and the
 5 parking and the streetscape is not addressed --
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could you please wrap
 7 it up?
 8 MR. PELLI: I will wrap it up, sir -- there
 9 is potential for tragedy, because emergency
 10 vehicles are not going to be able to find room
 11 on Madeira. There is just no infrastructure
 12 there. Thank you very much.
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 14 THE SECRETARY: Frederick.
 15 MR. STROMAYER: Good evening. My name is
 16 Frederick Stromayer. I live on 441 Zamora
 17 Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida. I've been
 18 living here since 1993, in Coral Gables, on
 19 Zamora Avenue.
 20 I have the following concerns, for the
 21 record. The first one is process. Let it be
 22 known, just for the record, there is a Robert
 23 Behar at Gunster. Gunster was hired by the
 24 developer. They invited us to the meeting on
 25 January 26th. There's a Robert Behar at the

1 The parking exit is right next to Madeira
 2 Avenue. There's only that one small building
 3 next to it. That's only five car lengths. How
 4 on earth is everybody going to leave that
 5 building? And imagine the congestion backed up
 6 on Madeira and into the building itself.
 7 Another comment on the building is
 8 sustainability. A minimum allowable setback of
 9 10 feet to the neighbors behind is
 10 exploitative. Is there infrastructure for the
 11 water runoff? When it rains, where is all of
 12 that water going to go? What about the
 13 sunlight, the perpetual shade cast on those
 14 neighbors? What about the combination of those
 15 two things, moisture and lack of sunlight?
 16 What's it going to do to the health and safety
 17 of us, the residents, that live behind that
 18 building? And the third part to that is, why
 19 doesn't the renderings show the back of the
 20 building? Because it's one huge big wall of
 21 three-story garage, that everybody is going to
 22 be looking at. The aesthetics apparently are
 23 only Madeira.
 24 What about us? Half of the people here
 25 happen to live behind this building.

1 architect firm that designed this building.
 2 There's a Robert Behar on the Coral Gables
 3 Architectural Board. And there's a Robert
 4 Behar on this Board. Let it be known -- and I
 5 think that merits investigation, in terms -- to
 6 address the question, if there is any, truly,
 7 conflict of interest.
 8 The second is the Zoning change. We
 9 understood about the big Zoning change that
 10 took place; however, I believe the process is
 11 capricious and being exploited. Instead of
 12 having a step down from the Commercial
 13 District, for example, the Sofia, to this
 14 suburban residential homeowner neighborhood,
 15 we're having a step up. This building is
 16 higher than the one further north -- south,
 17 excuse me.
 18 So, to the building itself, 200 parking
 19 spots. Let's take the Pareto's rule of 80/20.
 20 80 percent of the vehicles leave in a 90-minute
 21 window on rush hour, 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.
 22 Taking the queueing theory that two vehicles
 23 leave per minute during that 90-minute window,
 24 could batch up to 10 to 15 vehicles trying to
 25 exit this building at any one time.

1 Historical landmarks, I thought a
 2 historical landmark was meant to preserve a
 3 building. There is Historical landmarked
 4 buildings on this property. What is the
 5 current status of those Historical landmarks?
 6 Did somebody decide to take them away? Big
 7 question.
 8 I know my time's up. I just want to make
 9 sure I covered all of my points.
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 11 MR. STROMAYER: So, finally, just in
 12 closing, the architectural renderings I think
 13 are highly elusive. Madeira is not as wide as
 14 Le Jeune Avenue. It's a small, narrow street.
 15 There is no infrastructure to support such a
 16 massive superimposed structure of rental
 17 apartments on our homeowner suburban community.
 18 Thank you.
 19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you for your
 20 time.
 21 Jill, before you call the next speaker, can
 22 you confirm to me, because the gentleman said
 23 that Robert Behar is on the Board of
 24 Architects. Is he?
 25 THE SECRETARY: Board Members are only

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1 allowed to serve on one Board or Committee in
 2 the City of Coral Gables.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So being that he's on
 4 this Board, he can't be on the Board of
 5 Architects; is that right?
 6 THE SECRETARY: If I'm not mistaken, yes.
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Excuse me.
 8 MR. TRIAS: He is not a member of the Board
 9 of Architects, sir.
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 11 MR. STROMEYER: Check the website.
 12 THE SECRETARY: George Gonzalez.
 13 Mr. Chair, we have various people that have
 14 signed up after. I will tell you when they
 15 need to be sworn in.
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 17 One second, please.
 18 Yes, go ahead.
 19 MR. REVUELTA: May I ask a question? Are
 20 there any laws in the City that prevent an
 21 architect that lives and practices all over
 22 South Florida to serve on a Board in Coral
 23 Gables, any laws that prevent that?
 24 MR. COLLER: No, and that's why we have
 25 situations where a project of an architect

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1 corruption, you don't like the word
 2 impropriety, but, you know, Mr. Behar is wrong.
 3 You are public officials. You've taken these
 4 volunteer positions. You're going to suffer
 5 through this, though.
 6 I guess what I'm objecting to is, Mr.
 7 Behar's response was quite combative and even
 8 bullying, so I'll just comment on his demeanor
 9 on that question. I don't think it's conducive
 10 to open public discussion. And, again, you are
 11 public officials and sometimes the language can
 12 get sharp. It doesn't make it slander.
 13 The one comment I'll make or two comments
 14 I'll make is that --
 15 MR. COLLER: Just speak into the microphone
 16 and slow down a little bit.
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So she can --
 18 MR. COLLER: She's here to take your testimony.
 19 MR. GONZALEZ: I'm sorry, I didn't realize
 20 I wasn't speaking into the microphone.
 21 So you heard my other stuff, okay? It's
 22 just more by way of decorum.
 23 MR. REVUELTA: I cannot understand what
 24 this gentleman is --
 25 MR. GONZALEZ: Forgive me, it's more by way

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1 comes before this Board, or if somebody is on
 2 another Board, they're required to recuse
 3 themselves, which they do.
 4 MR. REVUELTA: I'm an architect and
 5 whenever I have to present a project on a city,
 6 I do the same thing and I recuse myself and
 7 that is a very normal practice and it's a legal
 8 practice.
 9 MR. COLLER: Very normal practice.
 10 MR. TRIAS: And Mr. Chairman, there's a
 11 form that Mr. Behar has signed that documents
 12 that recusal. It's a public document. It
 13 could be reviewed by anyone.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Thank you.
 15 I'm sorry, sir.
 16 MR. GONZALEZ: No, it's all right. Thank
 17 you very much.
 18 My name is George Gonzalez, and I live at
 19 9982 Southwest 27 Terrace, Miami, Florida.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: In Miami-Dade?
 21 MR. GONZALEZ: Yes, Miami-Dade. Just a
 22 comment -- just on the comment -- I'm going to
 23 keep my comments brief, but just on the decorum
 24 question, and I thought that -- and I
 25 understand, you know, you don't like the word

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1 of decorum than anything else.
 2 In any event, this is the third rendering
 3 that we see of this building. So I saw one, an
 4 initial rendering. There was another rendering
 5 that was presented at the Neighborhood Meeting.
 6 And now we see a third rendering. And so, in
 7 other words, the real question, and this is
 8 something that I think really does press upon
 9 this Committee, is the representation of the
 10 building as it sits in the neighborhood,
 11 because I do not think we're seeing an honest
 12 rendering. I think we're seeing a disingenuous
 13 rendering. I think an honest rendering would
 14 point to the fact that the building really is
 15 fundamentally incommensurate with this
 16 neighborhood, and whatever the Zoning --
 17 whatever Zoning was set for the area, I do not
 18 think that they really are appropriate for this
 19 specific instance.
 20 And, again, people have already spoken
 21 about the traffic congestion in that area,
 22 which is really already quite significant. In
 23 the Neighborhood Meeting, they came up with
 24 seven visitor spots. I mean, seven visitor
 25 spots -- that's the number that I heard, that I

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1 remember at the meeting. Seven visitor spots,
 2 for 140 apartment units? I mean, those people
 3 are going to be parking on the street, right.
 4 You know, where are they going to go to park,
 5 right? Again -- just, again, it just speaks to
 6 the fact that the building is wholly
 7 incommensurate with this neighborhood.
 8 I mean, if you're going to do something,
 9 like widen both sides of the street, a broader
 10 re-hauling overhaul of the area, right, but
 11 just to plant that building in this area, just
 12 common sense, if you know that area and I've
 13 been connected with that area for well over 30
 14 years, through family and friends, I could tell
 15 you that that building is completely
 16 inappropriate for that area.
 17 You've had homeowners here, who have direct
 18 experience, who have direct knowledge and --
 19 again, the people that are here, that are
 20 speaking, from the neighborhood, I haven't
 21 heard one person from the neighborhood actually
 22 speak positively. We all recognize it's going
 23 to be a total disaster, again, the shade, the
 24 congestion already is terrible, the congestion
 25 on Madeira. You know, again, people have spoke

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1 MR. JANEKZEK: Oh, sure.
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Just so the -- thank
 3 you, sir.
 4 MR. JANEKZEK: Okay. Okay. How about that?
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Your name and address,
 6 please.
 7 MR. JANEKZEK: Sure. So my name is Frank
 8 Janeczek, and I live at 4116 Southwest 16th
 9 Terrace, and I want to thank you for the --
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: That's Miami-Dade?
 11 MR. JANEKZEK: Miami-Dade, yes.
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.
 13 MR. JANEKZEK: Yes, it's right behind the
 14 building, yes. I want to thank you for the
 15 opportunity to speak here. The work that you
 16 do here truly does make the City Beautiful.
 17 I'd like to address why I'm here today.
 18 The proposed massive development abuts my
 19 family homestead. I was raised on this
 20 property. I've lived here with my parents.
 21 Both of them passed while living in this home.
 22 This is more than an investment. It's my home.
 23 I mean, it's people like us that make the
 24 neighborhood and now our neighborhood is under
 25 assault.

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1 even about safety measures. Again, these are
 2 -- again, if you go to the site -- again, these
 3 renderings are disingenuous. The renderings
 4 that the developer is giving us are
 5 disingenuous, and this is a third iteration.
 6 I mean, the idea we have to go to a
 7 Neighborhood Meeting to tell them, "Look,
 8 that's not Madeira," and they said, "Yeah, it's
 9 true, it's not Madeira." I mean, there's a
 10 disingenuous sense here. There is a dishonesty
 11 here that I think this Board has to really look
 12 into and think seriously about the impact of
 13 this building on this neighborhood, because I
 14 can tell you, from experience, this building is
 15 incommensurate with this neighborhood. Thank
 16 you very much.
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you for your
 18 time.
 19 If would please -- please hold your --
 20 thank you.
 21 THE SECRETARY: Frank Janeczek.
 22 MR. JANEKZEK: Hi. My name is Frank
 23 Janeczek.
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could I ask you to
 25 lift the microphone?

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1 Although we take pride that the world has
 2 discovered Miami, which is growing by leaps and
 3 bounds, this Board has a responsibility to
 4 protect the character of our historic and
 5 charming neighborhoods. 396 concerned
 6 community members signed a petition asking that
 7 the Board reduce the size, the unit numbers,
 8 the footprint of this proposed development. In
 9 reaching this decision, the Board might want to
 10 consider how different countries approach this.
 11 In authoritative China, Historic
 12 neighborhoods like the Hutong are just
 13 bulldozed, and they've destroyed neighborhoods,
 14 families, you know, connections; no concerns
 15 for historic preservation or the impact on the
 16 existing community.
 17 Fortunately, in our country, we have set up
 18 a system that carefully studies the proposed
 19 developments, and in this case, the Board is
 20 empowered to protect this neighborhood and the
 21 communities that are very -- the very reason
 22 that the residents want to move to Miami, in
 23 general, and Coral Gables, in particular. The
 24 challenge is to gradually lift the density of
 25 North Gables, that's true, while leaving the

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1 results harmonious and minimizing their
 2 externalities on those around it.
 3 The proposed development is so large, in
 4 comparison to existing structures, it results
 5 in non-harmony. Further, Madeira is a side
 6 street, not spacious like Ponce. Building such
 7 a large massive structure on such a side street
 8 is unusual, and for a good reason. This
 9 development does not speak to the subtle and
 10 gradual entering of the neighborhood. Rather,
 11 it just almost devours it. This is not
 12 harmonious. It looks like spot Zoning, because
 13 of its location on a narrow side street.
 14 It's not part of the Downtown core. Its
 15 externalities are multiplied, as it dwarfs the
 16 Single-Family homes that I live in and my
 17 neighbors live in, and it chokes Madeira in
 18 rush hour traffic.
 19 I respectfully urgently beseech the Board
 20 to reopen the conversation initiated in the BOA
 21 on the sufficiency of the public benefits. To
 22 get a doubling of these allowable units, they
 23 should give back more than just the bare 25
 24 percent open space, to max FAR, on height, on
 25 number of units.

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1 as one of the Board Members of the Board of
 2 Architects noted, the fair number of units for
 3 this project may lie somewhere between the 72
 4 allowed under the MF2 Zoning and 143 allowed
 5 under the RIR and PAD.
 6 Think of the incentives for future
 7 development in the area. If assemblages of
 8 20,000 square feet are going to trigger RIRs,
 9 and RIRs translates automatically into a
 10 doubling of units allowed, moderate
 11 assemblages, with moderately increasing
 12 density, will be strongly disfavored. An RIR,
 13 with its accompanying doubling of units, will
 14 be the new standard. This will result in
 15 buildings like this, that are massive, both
 16 horizontally and vertically.
 17 The goal, and I think what Coral Gables
 18 residents support, is a gradual raising of
 19 density, that proceeds that in a harmonious
 20 way. This occurs when one or two story
 21 buildings on single parcels give way to four,
 22 five, six story buildings on two or three
 23 parcels. You see this, in fact, across the
 24 street from this building, at 322 Madeira. Yet
 25 this kind of gradual change will be completely

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1 We know that great architecture really does
 2 make great neighbors. To give -- to qualify
 3 for more as an RIR and PAD, though, it should
 4 be generous, to get with the community, to give
 5 and take, to smile in Coral Gables, and gives
 6 you the opportunity for profit, some, not all
 7 of that profit, and you take and you give it
 8 back to the community.
 9 Unfortunately, this building, I really
 10 feel, and a lot of the neighbors do, that it
 11 doesn't smile. Please send this building back
 12 to the drawing board, so that it meets the
 13 intention of the RIR and the PAD, don't just
 14 waive it through, please. We hope that the
 15 next building maybe increases Coral Gables'
 16 beauty, not decreases it, and don't just let
 17 this go through, but please take the time to
 18 insist that every building is a good neighbor
 19 and a credit to this City. Thank you so much
 20 for your time. I really appreciate it.
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 22 THE SECRETARY: Scott.
 23 MR. TREANOR: Good evening, Scott Treanor,
 24 4126 Southwest 16 Terrace, Miami-Dade County.
 25 Let me present an agenda for fairness. First,

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1 disincentivized if RIRs mean an automatic
 2 doubling of units and 100 foot height.
 3 With this, we get big bang development.
 4 This leaves the neighborhood looking
 5 snaggletooth, with some massive projects, amid
 6 one and two-story isolated parcels left behind,
 7 that will never be developed into more. We get
 8 the appearance of spot Zoning. Again, if RIRs
 9 and PADs mean only a modest bonus, then
 10 development can proceed at an incremental pace
 11 that will leave the North Gables harmonious.
 12 Second on the agenda of fairness is, take
 13 the legal requirements seriously, that to
 14 qualify for an RIR, the building must, quote,
 15 not adversely or unreasonably effect the use of
 16 other properties in the area. We are all here
 17 to tell you that it does adversely affect the
 18 other properties in the area. This building
 19 maxes out lot coverage, maxes out heights,
 20 maxes out units, maxes out FAR. Part of the
 21 public benefit is not causing so much public
 22 harm. With a reduction of units, the height
 23 could be reduced, the setbacks increased, the
 24 lot coverage reduced.
 25 I also note that a lot of these problems

1 could be solved by putting the parking
 2 underground. I believe that Coral Gables
 3 residents do not have a problem with taller
 4 buildings in the Central Business District and
 5 the Ponce corridor. However, this building is
 6 in neither. It is at least several blocks
 7 outside the Central Business District, at a
 8 point no longer walking distance to Miracle
 9 Mile. Sure, let's not kid ourselves, on the
 10 weekend, residents will stroll to Miracle
 11 Miles, but weekday mornings, 7:30 a.m. to 8:30
 12 a.m., it will be a parking and traffic
 13 spectacle.

14 So let's scale it back, say, a hundred
 15 units, reduce its heights, increase the
 16 setbacks, put the parking underground. True,
 17 all of these proposals reduce the profit of the
 18 developer, but as it stands, there's such an
 19 enormous profit on the table, that taking away
 20 some still leaves plenty of juice to get this
 21 project done. We have the chance to do this
 22 right. We have the chance to do this fair. We
 23 have a chance to do this in a way so that Coral
 24 Gables residents really think their city works
 25 for them, with them, not just goes above them.

1 Gables. But, you know, you talk about the
 2 community, I do live in the community. You
 3 know, you guys have tried to annex our
 4 community.

5 I'd like to start -- tonight, I've learned
 6 a lot here, and I've taken some notes, besides
 7 the stuff that I've put together in the past,
 8 but I didn't come as prepared as I wanted to
 9 be. But I'd like to start, because there was a
 10 lot of discussion by the builder on the MFSA
 11 Code section, you know, how, in so many ways,
 12 they are obeying it, right, but I found many
 13 ways in there in which they are not.

14 In fact, when I read just the core of it,
 15 the purpose and applicability states, the
 16 purpose of the Multi-Family Special Area
 17 District is to accommodate various forms of
 18 Multi-Family housing to meet the housing needs
 19 of a diverse community, while ensuring that
 20 there is a transition to Single-Family
 21 neighborhoods, which protects the integrity of
 22 those neighborhoods. It protects the integrity
 23 of those neighborhoods. This building does
 24 not. As many people have said before me, it
 25 doesn't transition. In fact, it goes higher.

1 Let's take that chance. It's what's fair.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.

3 MR. TREANOR: Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Please hold your
 5 applause. Thank you.

6 THE SECRETARY: The following speakers need
 7 to be sworn in. David, Guillermo and Kevin.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Would you please rise,
 9 if your name is called, to be sworn in.

10 Can you state those names again?

11 THE SECRETARY: David, Guillermo and Kevin.
 12 (Thereupon, the participants were sworn.)

13 THE SECRETARY: David.

14 MR. PENCHINA: Hello, good evening. I
 15 apologize, I wish I was a little bit more
 16 prepared, but it's difficult. I'm not an
 17 architect and I don't have --

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Would you state your
 19 name and address, for the record, please?
 20 Thank you.

21 MR. PENCHINA: Oh, yes. David Penchina,
 22 325 Mendoza Avenue. That is unincorporated
 23 Miami-Dade officially, which is why, you know,
 24 I feel kind of helpless in some way, because,
 25 you know, I'm not a voting resident of Coral

1 It completely smacks in the face more against
 2 the neighborhood, right.

3 I recently did -- one of my other neighbors
 4 also mentioned his swimming pool. I recently
 5 spent a large amount of money on solar panels,
 6 which from a solar -- a shade study I've seen
 7 already, I know is going to block at least
 8 probably my southern exposure, my most valuable
 9 exposure. In the winter time, when the sun is
 10 in the south and there's that building blocking
 11 my sun, when I'm supposed to be building energy
 12 to pay for my winter energy bills, are they
 13 going to pay my energy bills for the next 30
 14 years? I don't believe so. Right now, my last
 15 month's bill was nine dollars, doing good, but
 16 after a ten-story building goes up, I don't
 17 know what will happen.

18 Another thing I've heard talk of is this
 19 park, and, again, I think -- you know, there's
 20 a lot of these renderings, like people have
 21 said, there's no room for a park on that block.
 22 I'd like to see the dimensions of it. I find
 23 it ludicrous to insinuate.

24 And second of all, there's another property
 25 at 232 Salzedo that I believed was at one time

1 historical, and when I first moved here, I
 2 thought it was quite charming. It had that
 3 nice Miami framing on it. It's been torn down
 4 about five years. It's just a black
 5 construction fence. Across Ponce, there's a
 6 huge block. I don't know the dimensions, but I
 7 bet it's an acre, and I'm pretty sure they can
 8 put a nice 10-story building there that doesn't
 9 have Single-Family homes abutting it. A sound
 10 planning decision? Definitely anything but.
 11 I also want to comment briefly about your
 12 offense to the image of impropriety. People
 13 are saying that -- whether they have proof or
 14 not, it does smell of bad taste, and, you know
 15 what, I take offense that my home was called
 16 exactly an abomination and old and decrepit.
 17 My home was built in 1992. It is anything but
 18 old and decrepit. I certainly wouldn't
 19 consider it an abomination.
 20 Second of all, I've been to the
 21 Mediterranean. I'm a ship captain. I spent
 22 many years in the Mediterranean. And they
 23 don't tear down old homes, they preserve them,
 24 and I believe that that's what Coral Gables
 25 used to do at some point, but it doesn't seem

1 believe that there has to be a common ground
 2 between the developers and the City. As an
 3 architectural student at the University of
 4 Miami, they taught me a lot about what the City
 5 Beautiful was all about, and looking at these
 6 renderings, I don't think this building is
 7 within scale of the surroundings, it's
 8 completely out of scale. It's a massive
 9 structure that really doesn't have any
 10 character, and I think that, really, you guys
 11 should reconsider your points.
 12 So, like I said, I wasn't ready to speak.
 13 I just felt moved to give my two cents. Thank
 14 you very much for your time, and hopefully you
 15 guys will make the decision. You know, that
 16 area needs to be developed, but I think that
 17 currently, the way it is, it's just too big,
 18 you know. There has to be a common ground
 19 between the developer and the City and also the
 20 community around it, so that everybody is happy
 21 about it. Right now, that building is just too
 22 massive. Thank you very much.
 23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 24 THE SECRETARY: Kevin.
 25 MR. SHEA: Thank you. My name is Kevin

1 to be the case anymore.
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 3 THE SECRETARY: Guillermo.
 4 MR. VIDAURRETA: Yes. Good evening. My
 5 name is Guillermo Vidaurreta, currently
 6 residing at 347 Madeira Avenue. I'm a civil
 7 engineer and architectural engineer --
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: In Coral Gables,
 9 correct?
 10 MR. VIDAURRETA: Yes, Coral Gables -- civil
 11 and architectural engineering from the
 12 University of Miami in '87. I came here not
 13 with an agenda to speak, but I was moved to
 14 give my two cents. I think the building is
 15 definitely out of scale. I live right on the
 16 corner there, overlooking Le Jeune and Madeira,
 17 the only building that is going to be left
 18 there. There's always accidents -- first of
 19 all, there's already a sign there of someone
 20 that passed away. In the mornings, the traffic
 21 is unbearable. It's a small street, and I
 22 think that all of these units, I don't know the
 23 details, is going to bring a lot more problems.
 24 I don't know if there's been traffic
 25 analysis studies done for this project. I

1 Shea. I live on 322 Madeira Avenue. My wife
 2 just spoke earlier.
 3 We've been there for five years, and I'm
 4 only going to speak on one particular point,
 5 because I think it's -- you can't solve it.
 6 The street cannot handle that huge building. I
 7 drive out -- go out on Le Jeune, and many times
 8 I take a left, and it's very dangerous, but
 9 sometimes I take a right and do a U-turn.
 10 The problem is, now, with COVID, it's not
 11 the traffic it was five years ago. When
 12 everything gets back to normal, it's going to
 13 be brutal. The street isn't that wide. The
 14 traffic, you can imagine, at 7:30, 8:30, 9:30,
 15 people are coming out. You're increasing the
 16 population four-fold from what it is now across
 17 that street and it's just not going to work.
 18 So, imagine, like at the end of Madeira,
 19 going onto Le Jeune, if somebody parks near the
 20 end, you can hardly get out. It's really just
 21 a one way narrow street. Okay. A big truck,
 22 he's going to move out, he's going slow, he's
 23 got to wait for the traffic. Now you've got
 24 people ten, fifteen cars. What are they going
 25 to do? They're going to turn and go the other

1 way. They're going to get off Madeira, because
 2 all of the other streets have problems. I
 3 don't know how you solve it. It just is too
 4 much for that street. The building can't take
 5 that population.
 6 One other speaker previously had a good
 7 point. When there's emergency vehicles coming
 8 down, it's going to be jammed up. There will
 9 be accidents. It's just my thought, because
 10 I've seen how bad it is when traffic gets back
 11 to normal. So I would say you've really got to
 12 tone that down or not approve it. Thank you.
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 14 Do we have any more?
 15 THE SECRETARY: No. The rest will be via
 16 Zoom.
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. How many do we
 18 have on Zoom?
 19 THE SECRETARY: We have six right now.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.
 21 THE SECRETARY: Someone else just joined
 22 that would like to speak on this item.
 23 Ms. Cruz.
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Is Ms. Cruz there?
 25 THE SECRETARY: If all the speakers via

1 was very interesting, the only two or three
 2 people that support this project are people
 3 that do not live in the area, they do own
 4 property and they will benefit if this goes
 5 through, because, of course, they'll be able to
 6 also build something similar.
 7 So you listened to a whole bunch of people
 8 that will be really affected. They've been
 9 very clear that they're not opposed to a
 10 building, they're opposed to this humongous,
 11 humongous building that's being proposed,
 12 that's going to really affect their
 13 neighborhood.
 14 In listening, I also realized that we're
 15 talking about compatibility. How can this be
 16 compatible? This doesn't fit there. And you
 17 know what, I do remember looking at the plans,
 18 and, yes, there's a sign, the part that you
 19 don't see, the part that they don't show you,
 20 is the complete solid wall that they will be
 21 facing.
 22 Now, we talked about encroachment. Yes,
 23 but why should we allow any encroachment? They
 24 want everything plus more. They don't want to
 25 do what the Staff told them that they needed to

1 Zoom could raise their hands, please, use their
 2 feature.
 3 MS. CRUZ: Ya me pusiste?
 4 THE SECRETARY: Yes. Ms. Cruz.
 5 MS. CRUZ: Yes.
 6 THE SECRETARY: Can you open your camera,
 7 please?
 8 MS. CRUZ: It's open.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Ms. Cruz, if you'd
 10 like to be sworn in, we need to visually see
 11 you.
 12 MS. CRUZ: Okay. I'm here.
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. We're
 14 going to swear you in.
 15 (The participant was sworn.)
 16 MS. CRUZ: I do.
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Go ahead, please.
 18 MS. CRUZ: Okay. Good evening. My name is
 19 Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. I've been a
 20 resident of Coral Gables since 1976. Of
 21 course, you can see, by my address, I do not
 22 live in the area, but I have been known for
 23 taking interest in everything that happens in
 24 our City Beautiful. I've listened very
 25 carefully to everybody who spoke tonight. It

1 do. They want encroachment. They want every
 2 benefit so they can make more money. That's
 3 the bottom line.
 4 And the last comment I have to say is that
 5 respect goes both ways, and when you have a
 6 Member of the Board that speaks in a way that
 7 is abusive and demeaning to the rest of the
 8 people, that does not show respect, and I'm
 9 sorry, it's time for people to leave their
 10 bullying behavior home and treat people the
 11 right way. That's what we do in this City.
 12 That's what we're known for. We can have
 13 different ideas, but we don't have to bully
 14 anybody. And I'm sorry, this project does not
 15 fit there and the best thing you can do is send
 16 it back and tell them to make it more
 17 compatible and make sure that it fits in the
 18 neighborhood. Thank you.
 19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.
 20 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Banos.
 21 MR. BANOS: I'm sorry, I tried --
 22 THE SECRETARY: The mike is open.
 23 MR. BANOS: I tried to speak before, but I
 24 couldn't speak.
 25 All right. Thank you very much Board

1 Members. I just wanted you to hear from a
 2 resident of Coral Gables --
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could you state your
 4 name and address, for the record, please?
 5 MR. BANOS: I was about to do that,
 6 Mr. Chairman. I apologize. Javier Banos
 7 Machado, I live at the intersection of Casilla
 8 and Madeira, at 1801 Casilla Street. Madeira
 9 run right by my house. I travel east in order
 10 for me to go to work, and I pass through
 11 Madeira, all of the way through the North
 12 Gables, to go to my place of work, and then
 13 come back. I wanted you to hear from a Gables
 14 resident, who does utilize this street on a
 15 regular basis. I can tell you, it is a very
 16 narrow street, okay. It doesn't have the
 17 prominence, the space, that apparently was
 18 illustrated on the project.
 19 I'm not sure I'm going to add more to what
 20 has been said before, but understand --
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Mr. Banos, if you
 22 don't mind, we needed to swear you in.
 23 MR. COLLER: It's his choice. If he just
 24 wants to speak, it's --
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Would you like

1 I think, the commentary at the very
 2 inception, that this is what the City wishes
 3 for the North Gables, I don't think anyone who
 4 was in this original Charrette, who was in that
 5 process, envisioned this. The park is too
 6 small. There's not enough benefit to the
 7 public. The building is just out of scale with
 8 the surroundings. It is not Mediterranean. No
 9 one can possibly think it's Mediterranean.
 10 Now, does the North Gables need
 11 improvement? Absolutely. Is it some version
 12 of this building, some structure, a positive
 13 way to move into the future of North Gables,
 14 that is very possible, but I don't think the
 15 residents are asking for you to deny this
 16 project completely, but just to scale it back
 17 and scale it down to something that is more in
 18 line with what, at least us, as Coral Gables
 19 residents, were to hope that exist in our North
 20 Gables.
 21 I appreciate your time and I appreciate
 22 your effort and I appreciate your public
 23 service, and thank you for your time.
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 25 THE SECRETARY: Karen Shane.

1 to be sworn in, Mr. Banos, or are you good the
 2 way it is?
 3 MR. BANOS: To the convenience of the
 4 Chairman, I raised my hand, as I was instructed
 5 before, while you were swearing in Maria, so I
 6 think I'm sworn in already, but I don't care.
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We would have to
 8 visually see you. So it's up to you, sir.
 9 MR. BANOS: Okay. You can just hear my
 10 comment.
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 12 MR. BANOS: Okay. But Mr. Chairman, with
 13 all due deference -- I respect everyone who
 14 dedicates their time to serve on these Boards.
 15 Sometimes the commentary is unfair, although I
 16 do want to clarify, you're all are public
 17 figures, irrespective of what anybody may say.
 18 And I understand some of it, it's not always
 19 proper. I received plenty of negative
 20 commentary in my tenure in public boards, but
 21 in this particular case, you have adjacent
 22 neighbors, who would be living in the County,
 23 but they're neighbors, just like they are going
 24 to be neighbors in Coral Gables who will be
 25 negatively affected by this project.

1 MS. SHANE: Hi. Sorry about the phone
 2 ringing in the background.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Would you like to be
 4 sworn in? If you would, please raise your
 5 right hand.
 6 MS. SHANE: Sure.
 7 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. If you'd
 9 start with your name and address, please, thank
 10 you.
 11 MS. SHANE: Yes. My name is -- excuse me
 12 -- Karen Shane. My address is 4375 Southwest
 13 13 Street in Little Gables. I've been a long
 14 time resident of Little Gables and have served
 15 as the President of the Neighborhood
 16 Association for over twenty years. At this
 17 time, we are not Coral Gables residents;
 18 however, I can only speak as a resident of
 19 Little Gables.
 20 Developers are looking to construct a
 21 nine-story building on the property where six
 22 two-story apartment buildings and two vacant
 23 lots now sit, right behind our neighbors who
 24 live on Southwest 16th Terrace. Not only will
 25 the demolition and construction create an

1 enormous disturbance to the lives of our fellow
2 residents, the enormity of the building
3 towering 100 feet in the air will black out
4 sunlight for them most of the year. Several of
5 the affected properties have pools and lots of
6 trees and old growth vegetation that will lose
7 its source of sunlight, and solar panels.

8 In addition, the vents from the parking
9 garages are being directed out the back of the
10 building in the direction of people's
11 backyards, which will be only ten feet away.

12 We are quite disturbed by the enormity of this
13 proposed project. The choice for this location
14 was with total disregard to how it will affect
15 the shallow Single-Family properties
16 immediately behind the project. Nine stories
17 overshadowing one story Single-Family and
18 Duplex homes, who does this serve?

19 To say that we're disturbed by the enormity
20 of the project is an understatement, and we
21 respectfully request a reduction in size, in
22 line with the neighborhood. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.
24 THE SECRETARY: Brett Gillis. Mr. Gillis?
25 MR. GILLIS: Hello. Brett Gillis, 915

1 Ferdinand Street.

2 So I sit here and I listen, and, you know,
3 I'm a Gables resident. It really breaks my
4 heart to hear things that our neighbors, maybe
5 not in the same city, but our neighbors, are
6 coming forward with. I mean, I think about --
7 I remember the Douglas Station project that
8 went up. You know, that wasn't supposedly
9 under Gables jurisdiction, how mad and
10 frustrated many of our residents were, and
11 we're going to turn around and do something to
12 the Little Gables? You know, I can see why
13 people from that area oppose the annexation
14 that the City of Coral Gables was trying to put
15 forward, and I think that you really need to
16 take a good look at this project and try to
17 improve it.

18 I take issue with the P&Z report. I object
19 to it. I do not believe that there's
20 sufficient public benefit for a PAD to be
21 approved here. I think that we need more step
22 backs, step downs and articulation to this
23 project to have it qualify for Mediterranean
24 architecture, especially the Mediterranean
25 Bonus 2. We're talking buildings like the

1 Biltmore, Fink Studio, Coral Gables City Hall.
2 This building doesn't hold a candle to them. I
3 don't understand how this could have even made
4 it this far.

5 Whenever we talk about buildings reaching
6 their lifespan, that somebody was speaking
7 about earlier, I think, you know, you go to
8 Europe, they're preserving buildings. In the
9 Middle East, you have buildings going back
10 hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years.
11 So to think a building that's 50 or 70 years
12 old is beyond its lifespan is ridiculous.

13 We need good architecture in Coral Gables,
14 so I would ask you to really go back and look
15 at this. And my final point, I would just like
16 to know, somebody else brought it up and I
17 haven't heard an answer from Staff yet, 335 and
18 341 Madeira, I'm looking at a letter here from
19 the Preservation Officer, that they did meet
20 the minimum criteria. I'm just wondering when
21 that public hearing is going to be, so that the
22 residents can come and try to save these
23 buildings. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
25 THE SECRETARY: Simone Segredo.

1 MS. SEGREDO: Can you hear me? Can you
2 hear me?

3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, ma'am.

4 THE SECRETARY: Yes.

5 MS. SEGREDO: Okay.

6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Would you please raise
7 your right hand, if you want to be sworn in.?

8 MS. SEGREDO: Yes.

9 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)

10 MS. SEGREDO: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. If you
12 could state your name and address, again,
13 please, for the record.

14 MS. SEGREDO: Sure. My name is Simone
15 Segredo. I live at 432 Madeira Avenue. I'm
16 not a proponent of the size, the height, and
17 the number of units of the building. It
18 doesn't fit the scale of the area, especially
19 the surrounding buildings and homes. I mean,
20 this is not Downtown Coral Gables. These are
21 the outskirts, and it's supposed to be, you
22 know, a quiet residential neighborhood.

23 I moved here in early 2020 with the
24 expectation that Coral Gables would keep its
25 character. The small streets are not made for

1 the size of the building, they're not made for
2 the amount of traffic even now. I have a very
3 hard time even leaving my house in the morning.
4 I live across the street on Madeira, on the
5 other side of Le Jeune, and people use it as a
6 cut through. There are people coming, making a
7 left, making a right, and cutting off people,
8 and that's without another hundred units in the
9 area.

10 Parking is abysmal. There's a real issue
11 with the traffic, and it's just too large a
12 building to put there. And if any size
13 building goes in there, and even right now, we
14 need a traffic light there. I mean, it's
15 pretty dangerous, and I don't think that we can
16 continue growing the amount of residents within
17 the area without addressing the infrastructure,
18 and that's it.

19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.

20 MS. SEGREDO: Thank you.

21 THE SECRETARY: Linda Fernandez.

22 MS. FERNANDEZ: Hello?

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, hi. If you'd
24 like to be sworn in, would you raise your right
25 hand, please?

1 agent, who starts out, I work with cash buyers
2 from all over the world, who want to purchase a
3 home in Coral Gables. Okay, so is this money
4 laundering money that's coming in? There's a
5 whole lot of it that goes up AIA.

6 There's a need for affordable housing, but
7 there's also a need to -- if you're going to
8 increase size, you do it in a moderate fashion,
9 and I have to let you know that, back in the
10 late '70s, I lived in Rio de Janeiro, and
11 everybody was, so Rio de Janeiro. Well, guess
12 what, Rio de Janeiro has no alleys, no parking.
13 People park on the sidewalks, the buildings go
14 up nine, ten, eleven stories next to each
15 other, and it's created an urban heat
16 byproduct.

17 So I think Coral Gables residents have some
18 concerns that once you start these RIRs and are
19 building bigger and bigger apartment buildings,
20 that there's a concern that it gets out of hand
21 and then you lose the character of Coral
22 Gables, and, you know, there needs to be
23 progress, but it doesn't need to be made at the
24 expense of the local residents. And that's it,
25 that what I have to say.

1 MS. FERNANDEZ: Sure.
2 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)
3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

4 Please state your name and address, for the
5 record.

6 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes. My name is Linda
7 Fernandez, and I'm a Coral Gables resident at
8 817 Minorca, and I don't live anywhere near
9 that, but I do understand the concern of nearby
10 residents, that this project seems to be way
11 out of scale for the kind of neighborhood it's
12 in. And, actually, you know, one of the nice
13 things about Coral Gables, I've been here since
14 2019 as a resident, is that when you drive into
15 Coral Gables from elsewhere in Miami, you
16 breathe a sigh of relief, especially in
17 residential neighborhoods. It's calm, it's
18 green, it's not fenced, and I can understand
19 where, in certain areas, you may want more
20 apartments.

21 Now, the question is, are these going to be
22 affordable apartments. They talk about
23 quality. Does that mean they're going to be
24 luxury? And, once again, today, in our mail,
25 we received a postcard from a real estate

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.
2 THE SECRETARY: We have someone on the
3 phone that wants to speak.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Go ahead, please.

5 MS. MARTINEZ-CARBONEL: Hello, this is
6 Karelia Martinez-Carbonel. I live on 532
7 Altara Avenue, but I'm speaking on behalf of
8 the Historic Preservation Association of Coral
9 Gables. I am currently its president. And I'd
10 like to -- there's a letter that was submitted,
11 but I'd like to read part of it, for the
12 record.

13 On behalf of the Historic Preservation
14 Association of Coral Gables, please accept the
15 letter on file in opposition to the proposed
16 development at 301 Madeira Avenue. The
17 proposal does not continue to support George
18 Merrick's vision, consistent with the
19 established historic building fabric of the
20 City, and as such, the proposal should not be
21 awarded the Mediterranean Bonus.

22 Sadly, two 1920s garden style apartment
23 buildings designed by noted architect HC Swebb
24 are slated to be demolished as part of the
25 project, only to be replaced by a 143-unit

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1 nondescript building that will further add
 2 traffic congestion and disharmony to the
 3 original built environment of the area. The
 4 Historic Preservation Association would -- or
 5 asks the Planning and Zoning Board to reject
 6 the Madeira Avenue proposal as submitted, and
 7 please heed to the neighbors that are speaking
 8 in opposition, it's important. And the
 9 developer doesn't live in the area, but the
 10 neighbors do. So please take heed on that.
 11 So thank you for allowing me to speak.
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 13 Any other speakers, Jill?
 14 THE SECRETARY: No more speakers.
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Seeing that there's no
 16 more speakers, at this time, I'll go ahead and
 17 close for public comment.
 18 Mario.
 19 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Mr. Chair, Members of
 20 the Board, thank you very much for your
 21 patience for this process. I'll try to be
 22 brief with the rebuttal. If we could also have
 23 control of the screen, to show some exhibits,
 24 please. We'll put a few exhibits up on the
 25 board.

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1 You keep on hearing mention of out of
 2 scale. So what helps to determine scale? You
 3 would think what the Zoning District dictates,
 4 as far as scale is concerned, both on height
 5 and of FAR, as permitted under both the
 6 existing MF2 Zoning, as well as the Overlay
 7 Zoning, is indicative of what the appropriate
 8 scale is and we are within that scale.
 9 If you look around to the other context --
 10 I'll come back to that later -- now let me just
 11 go to, right here, you heard mention of this
 12 building being bigger than other buildings
 13 further to the south, specifically the Sofia.
 14 It's just not accurate. This building is
 15 proposed to be a hundred feet in height. If
 16 you look here, you'll see the Sofia is
 17 considerably further to the south, about two
 18 blocks, considerably higher, reaching up to, I
 19 believe, 190 feet in height.
 20 Look at the other buildings across the
 21 street at 85 feet, 77 feet, and further blocks
 22 south, all within striking distance of what
 23 this building is proposed at. If you look at
 24 Ponce, there's going to be more intense and
 25 greater height on Ponce, also.

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1 I think my most important message to the
 2 Board right now is that, remember, as part of
 3 this process, this quasi-judicial process, your
 4 decision needs to be based on facts and
 5 fact-based testimony. Everyone is entitled to
 6 their opinion, but you're not entitled to your
 7 own facts, and whatever decision you make here
 8 today has to be based on testimony that is
 9 supported by facts.
 10 You see situations like, Mr. Penchina
 11 references how this is consistent with the MFSA
 12 Zoning. The MFSA Zoning District is not
 13 applicable here. This is MF2 Zoning. The MFSA
 14 Zoning District actually doesn't exist anymore.
 15 When it did exist, it existed in another area
 16 of the closer, close to the area around
 17 Valencia Avenue and Biltmore Way.
 18 There's mention of no projects ever
 19 previously being approved pursuant to these
 20 regulations. There were, at least to my
 21 knowledge, three other projects approved
 22 pursuant to these regulations, one on Zamora,
 23 one on Santillane, one on Sedonia, which this
 24 Board itself reviewed all of these previous
 25 projects.

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1 You heard discussion about how this
 2 building could potentially cast a shadow for
 3 blocks and blocks. Again, just not supported
 4 by the facts. Look at the shadow study.
 5 Anybody can do these shadow studies. In March,
 6 nine o'clock in the morning, that is where the
 7 shadow is, still very much within the property
 8 itself, as well as encroaching some on the
 9 abutting properties, but certainly not blocks,
 10 as were mentioned here.
 11 This is at noon. This is at 4 p.m. This
 12 is in the Summer, 9:00 a.m., 12:00, 4:00 p.m.,
 13 the shadow is not blocking any solar panels,
 14 it's not condemning anybody to be in the shade,
 15 in the shadow forever. September, very similar
 16 to March. December, indeed there is a longer
 17 shadow. This is December. This is that time
 18 of year where almost every building is throwing
 19 off shadows in Miami-Dade County.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sir, if you would
 21 please -- thank you, sir.
 22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's too upsetting
 23 to listen to the lies.
 24 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Again, these shadow
 25 studies do not lie.

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1 There was a lot of talk about, this same
 2 area of the City was proposed to be -- the same
 3 area of Unincorporated Dade County, Little
 4 Gables, was proposed to be annexed into Coral
 5 Gables, and I think it was supported by a great
 6 number of the people who live and own property
 7 within Little Gables, and here's from the
 8 application of the City to annex this part of
 9 the City, and as you can see, they were
 10 proposing the same exact Comprehensive Plan
 11 Land Use designation that we have, which is
 12 Multi-Family Medium was going to be proposed
 13 for this area to the immediate north of this
 14 property, which is now within Unincorporated
 15 Dade. The same Zoning was being proposed for
 16 this area east of Le Jeune in Little Gables in
 17 Unincorporated Dade called MF2 Zoning. It
 18 would have also been included within the
 19 Residential Infill Regulations, just as that
 20 Code requires that properties within that
 21 geographic area been included. When all of
 22 this was proposed, no one complained. No one
 23 complained at that point in time that this
 24 Zoning is appropriate, this Zoning isn't right,
 25 because it was potentially being applied also

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1 through a more significant traffic study
 2 process. This one did not generate more than
 3 fifty additional peak hour trips. We have our
 4 traffic consultant here, who can discuss
 5 further about it, if you'd like. But on top of
 6 that, because of the issues and the complaints
 7 and the objections that we've heard and the
 8 observations that we've heard, we're going
 9 above and beyond, and even though no traffic
 10 study is recommending it or requiring it,
 11 proffering to do a dedicated right-hand turn
 12 lane to help with that congestion at Madeira
 13 and Le Jeune.
 14 Stormwater run off, there was talks about
 15 how this would flood the other properties.
 16 There's no building permit in the world, at
 17 least no building permit in Coral Gables,
 18 certainly, that will be issued unless we
 19 establish by proper engineering how we can
 20 drain all of our stormwater run off.
 21 People are questioning Mediterranean
 22 design. What's the Board that's supposed to
 23 approve Mediterranean design in this City?
 24 It's the Board of Architects, and the Board of
 25 Architects granted Mediterranean design

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1 to this neighborhood. Now, of course, there
 2 are complaints about it, because they are not
 3 currently annexed into the City of Coral
 4 Gables.
 5 There's even been an assemblage of
 6 properties within this area. Immediately to
 7 our right, Mr. Janeczek, who you heard, has
 8 assembled these five properties under a
 9 different ownership. Assembled them,
 10 essentially, in the hopes of future
 11 development. This has even been, to my
 12 knowledge, because realtors have asked me about
 13 it, been assembled as a potential redevelopment
 14 site and marketed as one. There's even been
 15 brief discussions between my client and him
 16 over a potential acquisition of this property.
 17 There's been discussions on other things, such
 18 as utility upgrades. There is already an
 19 anticipation, that even in this area of Little
 20 Gables and the Unincorporated area, that there
 21 will be re-development and there is an
 22 assemblage of properties that is going on.
 23 Traffic, the City has very rigorous traffic
 24 regulations. Projects that generate more than
 25 fifty peak hour trips are required to go

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1 approval. We have to have some faith in those
 2 experts. We have to have some faith in those
 3 facts.
 4 Staff recommendation did evolve. Do you
 5 know why it evolved? Because the project
 6 changed. At one point, this project was
 7 actually a story higher and was at 168 units to
 8 the acre. With time, it evolved, and the
 9 Staff's analysis of the project changed, also,
 10 resulting in the recommendation of approval
 11 that we have today.
 12 The last point, I think the Board has
 13 already sufficiently addressed it, but what's
 14 going on here today is appropriate. Mr. Behar,
 15 I've known for a long time. I've had the
 16 privilege of working with Mr. Behar for a long
 17 time. He's an honest, honorable person, hard
 18 working person, has served this City well, has
 19 served the City in multiple capacities, in
 20 multiple Boards, all as a volunteer, and
 21 whenever he's had a project come before this
 22 Board, he has recused himself.
 23 What's appropriate here is to not let
 24 personality attacks get in the way. Let's talk
 25 about facts. Let's talk about proper planning.

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1 Let's talk about goals, plans, long-term plans
 2 for the City, and if you look at all of that, I
 3 think you have to come to the conclusion that
 4 attacks on personality, going around saying
 5 that this is going to cast a shadow for blocks,
 6 and so forth, are just attempts to try to
 7 discredit the project. People may not like it,
 8 people may feel that it is too big, it is not
 9 supported by the facts, it is not supported by
 10 the Code, it's not supported by the law, and
 11 what we have to do here today, and I know it's
 12 very hard, and I know it's very hard when you
 13 have a room full of people objecting to you,
 14 you have to go with what's right for the City
 15 based on its Code and based on sound planning.

16 With that said, I'll conclude my
 17 presentation. We're here available for
 18 questions and comments, of course, and anything
 19 else you might need. Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 21 Alex.
 22 MR. BUCELO: I just have one simple
 23 question. In regards to parking, all of the
 24 individuals who spoke today, they seem to be
 25 concerned with parking. How many parkings are

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1 and the third floors. If you were to do that,
 2 it would increase the amount of parking overall
 3 by 27 parking spaces, potentially give more
 4 parking. It, of course, comes at the
 5 consequence of not having a habitable liner
 6 space. We could potentially, though, treat it
 7 in such a manner architecturally that it is
 8 still concealing the parking and looks like a
 9 habitable liner space.

10 That hopefully, I think, hopefully is a
 11 sufficient answer to your question.

12 MR. BUCELO: And my last one, because it
 13 seems that, again, everyone spoke or had two
 14 main concerns, traffic and parking. You said
 15 you had a traffic study done. If we can get
 16 like some sort of a synopsis of what that
 17 study --

18 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: I'll ask the traffic
 19 consultant, Mr. John McWilliams, to come up,
 20 and it was a traffic generation statement that
 21 was done. That's what's required by the Code.

22 MR. MCWILLIAMS: Good evening, Board
 23 Members. John McWilliams, with Kimley-Horn and
 24 Associates, with offices at 355 Alhambra. I
 25 have been sworn in, and I will sign in after

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1 allotted, and more importantly, for guests,
 2 which I think is what will be taking up most of
 3 the street parking?

4 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Okay. So right now
 5 there are 212 parking spaces, I believe. 210
 6 are required. In the City of Coral Gables,
 7 unlike in other jurisdictions, there is no
 8 requirement on a specific percentage or amount
 9 of visitor parking. It's left really up to the
 10 owner to decide how to allot between residents
 11 and visitors. That said, in our case, we're
 12 willing to do several things to try to improve
 13 upon that situation. One of them is to
 14 designate visitor parking. Somewhere on the
 15 ground floor, close to the lobby, there's an
 16 area there where we can potentially designate a
 17 certain number of parking spaces, so everyone
 18 has the assurance that those spaces are there
 19 for visitors only.

20 We also potentially could -- wait a second.
 21 You're looking at this. This is an alternative
 22 second floor plan. As you could see, we could
 23 remove the units that line the parking garage
 24 at that point and introduce some more parking
 25 spaces for tandem parking on both, the second

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1 this.

2 Okay. A few years back, the City changed
 3 their regulations for traffic impact studies,
 4 and one of the changes was, they established a
 5 minimum threshold in which a traffic study
 6 would be performed, and that is 50 peak hour
 7 trips, and that's new peak hour trips, and
 8 because of the number of units that already
 9 exist on that street and the number of units
 10 we're proposing, the project does not generate
 11 more than 50 net new peak hour trips.
 12 Therefore, a study was not performed.

13 I will mention this, previous to that
 14 regulation, this project was also before the
 15 City, where a traffic study was required, and
 16 we did perform one at the time, and at that
 17 time, we did not determine that the project was
 18 creating any adverse traffic conditions, based
 19 upon the City Code.

20 MR. BUCELO: Thank you.
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Alex.
 22 MR. BUCELO: That's it.
 23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Luis.
 24 MR. REVUELTA: A couple of questions. I
 25 heard before that for a long period of time,

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1 years, the City had been doing research and
 2 implementing the PAD and RIR. How many years
 3 did that go through?
 4 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Well, the initial
 5 studies of North Ponce started in 2002, and
 6 then the most recent effort, Ramon, I think
 7 would have been 2015, probably is when it
 8 started, resulting in the Ordinances that were
 9 adopted around 2017.
 10 MR. REVUELTA: And were there public
 11 meetings, the public was invited? Were there
 12 Charrettes?
 13 MR. TRIAS: Yes, sir, multiple. And there
 14 were also public hearing. Eventually the
 15 Commission adopted the rules that the attorney
 16 described so accurately. One of those issues
 17 was the extra density. That was a decision of
 18 the City Commission.
 19 MR. REVUELTA: How many hearings did the
 20 project have at the Board of Architects?
 21 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: This project, at the
 22 Board of Architects? I want to say, in total,
 23 as seven.
 24 MR. REVUELTA: So the project went seven
 25 times to the Board of Architects?

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1 MR. TRIAS: No, sir.
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.
 3 MR. REVUELTA: My question was, and I don't
 4 want to meddle with the Board of Architects,
 5 but I was not clear. If you were going to take
 6 the liner units and leave the facade exactly as
 7 the Board of Architects approved it, which is
 8 not something as an architect I like to do, I
 9 dislike to do it, it's like Disney
 10 architecture, but if the facade was exactly the
 11 same as the Board of Architects approved, and
 12 you would provide the additional parking, are
 13 you guys saying that the density would remain
 14 the same, because you would allocate those
 15 units somewhere else?
 16 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: I think so, yes.
 17 MR. REVUELTA: Okay. Are there any
 18 Historic designated structures on the site
 19 right now?
 20 MR. COLLER: I would like the Director or
 21 someone to explain the status of this Historic
 22 designation. I know it, but I'd rather have
 23 them come up and speak to it.
 24 MR. ADAMS: Good evening, Warren Adams, I'm
 25 the Preservation Officer for the City of Coral

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1 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct.
 2 MR. REVUELTA: And eventually they got what
 3 is right now written in the Code, in terms of
 4 Med Bonuses and qualification for PAD and RIR?
 5 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Right.
 6 MR. REVUELTA: If you were to reduce or
 7 increase the parking, as Alex was -- and you
 8 were presenting, how many less units would the
 9 project have, if you were to take out those
 10 units and increase parking, so some of the
 11 concerns about the parking hopefully will have
 12 been mitigated?
 13 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Well, potentially those
 14 two units could be made up somewhere else in
 15 the building, by changing the configuration of
 16 number of rooms. I see Mr. Trias getting up
 17 and Mr. Trias mentioned to me right now --
 18 MR. TRIAS: That option is not possible.
 19 If the project does not provide a liner, then
 20 the project does not qualify for the extra
 21 density under RIR.
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: But I think they were
 23 talking about providing the liner. Couldn't
 24 you provide the liner to took identical, just
 25 no residence behind it?

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1 Gables. And prior to the demolition of any
 2 properties in the City, the applicant must
 3 submit what is a determination for Historic
 4 significance, where my office looks at the
 5 property to see if there is any Historic
 6 significance and if a designation should be
 7 made for those properties.
 8 The main properties that were discussed I
 9 believe were 341 and 335. These properties
 10 were actually reviewed by the Historic
 11 Preservation Board back in 2005. At that time,
 12 the Historic Preservation Board, not Staff, the
 13 actual Board, determined that these properties
 14 should not be designated, and letters were
 15 issued. These letters were valid for a period
 16 of 18 months. The letters were reissued in
 17 2015, saying the same thing, and 2018, saying
 18 the same thing, and 2020, saying the same
 19 thing.
 20 I recently re-issued those letters,
 21 because, really, there has been no change to
 22 the properties. The properties are now as they
 23 were back in 2005. At no point, since 2005,
 24 could I find any appeals against these letters,
 25 could I find any applications for designations

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1 for these properties. In fact, it was really
 2 only in the past two months that we've received
 3 three designation applications for these two
 4 properties, and my determination was -- and the
 5 letter are being issued as we speak -- my
 6 determination was that these property hadn't
 7 changed since the Preservation Board made their
 8 initial decision, and, therefore, the Board's
 9 still stands on these properties.

10 Now, there are four other properties on
 11 there, all of which have been reviewed at
 12 different points over the past few years, and
 13 letters were issued, saying that in the opinion
 14 of the then Preservation Officer, they did not
 15 meet the Historic designation, either.

16 MR. REVUELTA: Thank you.

17 Is this property meeting all of the Zoning
 18 Code requirements?

19 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: It's complying with all
 20 of the requirements of MF2 and the RIR, with
 21 the exception of those encroachments within the
 22 step back for the terraces on the front and the
 23 stoops at the ground level.

24 And is the applicant requesting variances
 25 for those?

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1 issue that I was raising was the idea that
 2 somehow you could have additional parking by
 3 removing the liner units. If you do that, then
 4 you no longer qualify for the Infill
 5 Regulations.

6 MR. REVUELTA: I understand what you're
 7 saying.

8 MR. TRIAS: That was the only
 9 clarification.

10 MR. REVUELTA: Did the Board of Architects
 11 have any comments on the steps or the balcony
 12 encroachments?

13 MR. TRIAS: I don't recall specifically,
 14 but they did approve the project. So I --
 15 yeah.

16 MR. REVUELTA: I just think it adds to
 17 the --

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could I ask, just
 19 piggy-backing something, how deep are those
 20 balconies?

21 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Do you know?
 22 Six-foot-five are the depth of the balconies.

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And you're suggesting
 24 that they're encroaching forward by how much?
 25 MR. TRIAS: I don't recall exactly the

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1 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Well, as part of the
 2 PAD, we could request the relaxation of those
 3 requirements.

4 MR. REVUELTA: Other than that, you guys
 5 are not requesting extra density, extra height?
 6 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: No.

7 MR. REVUELTA: Nothing like that?

8 MR. TRIAS: But let me be clear, the design
 9 features that they have, such as the liner, the
 10 active liner in front of the parking garage,
 11 are requirements of the 100 units per acre
 12 density. So those are not an option, to remove
 13 them. If they were to be removed, then the
 14 project would no longer qualify for the Infill
 15 Regulations.

16 MR. REVUELTA: Understood. I personally,
 17 as an architect, don't have a problem when you
 18 have terraces or steps, I think, particular on
 19 all levels, because I think they add to the
 20 urban context or the European feel and I don't
 21 have a problem with that. What is the --

22 MR. TRIAS: The objection is not to do
 23 that. That, in my view, if the applicant truly
 24 believes that that enhances the project through
 25 the PAD process, that's possible to do. The

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1 number of feet, but we'll check.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. If we can get a
 3 number while -- I'm sorry.

4 MR. TRIAS: Yeah, we'll check.

5 MR. REVUELTA: In the Zoning Code, what is
 6 the -- and I apologize for not being familiar
 7 with it, what is the maximum encroachment in
 8 the Zoning Code for any kind of encroachment of
 9 balconies or overhangs or architectural
 10 features or any other classification?

11 MR. TRIAS: The maximum -- I think that
 12 what happens is that they tend to be within the
 13 property and there's a nine-inch encroachment
 14 that is allowed without any specific
 15 encroachment request; however, the applicants
 16 sometimes do request an encroachment agreement
 17 with the City, in some specific cases, and it
 18 has to do with design.

19 MR. REVUELTA: Okay. Thank you very much.

20 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: In my recollection, just
 21 to try to best inform you, I believe, and I
 22 haven't looked at it lately, but I think, in
 23 the MX regulations, if it's Zoned MX, I believe
 24 three feet you can encroach with the balconies.
 25 MR. REVUELTA: Sometimes it's a percentage

1 in other municipalities or a set number. Like
 2 the City of Miami is three feet.
 3 MR. TRIAS: Yeah.
 4 MR. REVUELTA: So I don't know -- whenever
 5 you get a chance, if I can get --
 6 MR. TRIAS: Sure.
 7 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: One point to make, also,
 8 what we're encroaching is not in the setback,
 9 but in the step back.
 10 MR. TRIAS: No. No. Yeah, that's right,
 11 it's within their property. They're not
 12 encroaching into the right-of-way.
 13 MR. REVUELTA: No, no, it's clear. There's
 14 an encroachment in the setback and normally --
 15 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: The step back.
 16 MR. REVUELTA: The step back?
 17 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct, step back.
 18 MR. TRIAS: Right. Right. Right. So that
 19 is why, if they do think that that's the best
 20 design, I would not have an objection to it.
 21 It's just that it's part of the PAD exceptions.
 22 MR. REVUELTA: And this is towards the
 23 street, right?
 24 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct.
 25 MR. REVUELTA: This is not through the side

1 property with a certain law and regulation and
 2 then for them to come here and say, well, you
 3 know, we don't agree, you can't do this. And
 4 you've listened to the neighbors. I mean, they
 5 have some very concerning valid points, but if
 6 the City spent so much time and years in
 7 analyzing the PAD, the RIR, the density and the
 8 intensity of development in this area, and
 9 people were advised, they were communicated
 10 that these meetings were taking place, it's
 11 hard -- it's difficult to listen to complaints
 12 of the neighbors and say, well, you know, you
 13 have a Single-Family home next to a property
 14 that's going to be now this size, it's -- I
 15 understand their plight, but the fact of the
 16 matter is that there are some Zoning laws and
 17 regulations, there have been studies that have
 18 been done over the years, there has been
 19 announcements -- public announcements for
 20 people to come to these meetings and address
 21 their concerns and oppose it, and I think, when
 22 it gets to this point, as counsel pointed out
 23 or the applicant, we basically have to take
 24 what we have to work with, which are the laws
 25 that are established, and have to make our

1 or the back?
 2 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct.
 3 MR. TRIAS: Correct. Right.
 4 MR. REVUELTA: And the assemblage that this
 5 property has, does it meet the City requirement
 6 for assemblage?
 7 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct.
 8 MR. REVUELTA: I mean, it's not exceeding
 9 any requirement?
 10 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: The minimum for the RIR
 11 is 20,000 square feet and the minimum for a PAD
 12 is an acre, and this one is 1.45 acres.
 13 MR. REVUELTA: Does the City have a
 14 maximum, like the City of Miami does, of
 15 assemblage, to try to control bulk and
 16 development?
 17 MR. TRIAS: No. No, sir. No.
 18 MR. REVUELTA: All right. Well, that's
 19 another discussion for another time, because
 20 obviously you've listened to the neighbors. As
 21 you were pointing out, we have to basically
 22 analyze the facts. We cannot make up our own
 23 laws. We can't do that. We have to follow the
 24 established laws in the Zoning Code. It's very
 25 difficult to tell somebody that buys a piece of

1 decision based on that, not on just some
 2 emotional or arbitrary mode.
 3 That's all I have to say.
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 5 Venny.
 6 MR. TORRE: I don't have any questions
 7 for --
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Can you lower your
 9 mike, please?
 10 MR. TORRE: Yes.
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 12 MR. TORRE: I don't have questions for
 13 Mr. Garcia-Serra, but I do have two questions.
 14 Two folks that spoke, I just wanted to get the
 15 information. The gentleman I believe was from
 16 Miami Beach, that spoke very specifically about
 17 the things that have happened. I wanted to see
 18 what his credentials and connection to the
 19 project were, if you don't mind, and also the
 20 gentleman from I believe it was Winter Park,
 21 that spoke very eloquently, as well, I'd like
 22 to see if those two would tell us the
 23 connection to the project, because they spoke
 24 very thoroughly and I just wanted to hear those
 25 credentials and connection to the project,

1 please.

2 MR. VEITIA: My name is Daniel Veitia. I

3 sat on the Planning Board for the City of Miami

4 Beach for eight years, focused on the North

5 Beach area, and it went through a similar

6 planning process for two decades. We recently

7 went through an FAR increase, we went through a

8 call to do a Master Plan for North Beach, and

9 this area itself warrants a lot of the same

10 similarities of trying to balance the needs of

11 the community and also improve the housing

12 stock. So it's a little bit more of a serious

13 matter.

14 I'm not hired by this project team, but I

15 am familiar with the family and I am very

16 interested in what's going on in North Ponce.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. TORRE: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. And the

20 other gentleman.

21 MR. TORRE: I believe he was from Winter

22 Park.

23 MR. PELLI: My name is Dan Pelli, and I am

24 the best friend of Frank Janeczek and Scott

25 Treanor, who live next to this project. I'm an

1 So that's what our plan is.

2 MR. TORRE: I didn't mean to give you the

3 floor. Thank you. I appreciate it.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

5 MR. PELLI: Thank you.

6 MR. TRIAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I

7 could clarify the comments. There's only one

8 Staff report, which is the one you have right

9 now. He may be referring to an earlier draft

10 of an earlier project that was submitted with

11 the BOA, and that was a process that we used to

12 do in the past. That is not the Staff report

13 for you. And that does not represent the

14 recommendation. I do not understand why he

15 continues to make that point.

16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Venny?

17 MR. TORRE: No, I don't have no further

18 comments. Are we going to close the --

19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I'd like to ask a

20 couple of questions, if I may.

21 MR. TORRE: Oh, you? Yeah. I'm done.

22 MR. REVUELTA: After you're finished, if

23 you don't mind --

24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Why don't you go?

25 MR. REVUELTA: In terms -- if the project

1 attorney. I have some expertise in this

2 matter. I drove all of the way from Winter

3 Park, which is a five-hour drive, just to be

4 here tonight.

5 Based on my familiarity, this Board is

6 ignoring the record. As I mentioned, there

7 seems to be a lot of irregularities here, to be

8 frank, and the Staff reports are inherently

9 inconsistent. You've got to take a look at --

10 MR. TORRE: I wanted to hear that. We have

11 a time allotment for getting through this

12 meeting, so I apologize, but if you're going to

13 say, what you already said, if you could just

14 close the conversation, thank you.

15 MR. PELLI: If you're going to ignore the

16 Staff's own reports, and if you don't look into

17 why there were changes, by definition that is

18 arbitrary and capricious. That is a basis for

19 filing a lawsuit, to have the courts review

20 this, and that's our intention right now,

21 because you cannot have a Staff report saying

22 one thing in 2021, and then doing an about face

23 in 2022, without explaining it. We looked at

24 these two Staff reports. It is utterly

25 disingenuous, incomplete and dishonest.

1 and the property comes to the City multiple

2 times, is -- what this gentleman is saying is

3 that this Board basically has to pay attention

4 to every single one of those reports that came

5 before? I've never heard that before.

6 MR. TRIAS: No, sir. All you have to do is

7 take the information that is given to you in

8 this meeting and make a determination. The

9 project went seven times to the Board of

10 Architects. Why? Because the Board of

11 Architects was not satisfied with the design.

12 The design changed substantially, not only in

13 terms of the architectural design, but also in

14 the terms of the number of units and other

15 things, through a period of maybe a year at

16 least --

17 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: More now.

18 MR. TRIAS: -- more than a year. So that's

19 what happened. So now you have to consider the

20 current proposal. The current proposal is

21 before you. It's very clearly explained by the

22 applicant, and it was analyzed by the Staff

23 report that was provided to you.

24 MR. REVUELTA: And it was a different

25 proposal than what the original draft that was

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1 made?

2 MR. TRIAS: Yes, sir.

3 MR. REVUELTA: I have a great problem when

4 people make the allegations that, you know,

5 we're corrupt and we're dishonest, that we're

6 ignoring stuff, when I believe we should have

7 enough legal counsel here to basically

8 discredit those statements that are being made

9 on the record, in my opinion.

10 Alex, you're an attorney. We have a City

11 Counsel.

12 MR. BUCELO: I agree with you.

13 MR. REVUELTA: I don't understand that.

14 I'm an architect. I'm just a dumb architect,

15 but when I hear things like that -- and, of

16 course, you know, I'm an architect, I have the

17 right to practice in the City of Coral Gables,

18 and if I bring something here, I just need to

19 recuse myself and that's perfectly legal. If I

20 want to be called corrupt for doing that, I

21 also take exception to that.

22 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman, I think you

23 should take everybody's input and listen to it

24 and then make a decision based on that, plus

25 the professional input from Staff and the

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1 assume that the renderings and so forth

2 progressed to what they are today through the

3 comments that the Board of Architects makes?

4 MR. TRIAS: Yes, and the issue again is

5 that there's a distinction between a rendering

6 and an elevation and a floor plan and a Site

7 Plan.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Understood.

9 MR. TRIAS: And both are always provided

10 and both change depending on the changes that

11 are proposed by the applicant. This project

12 has a long history, and at the beginning, it

13 was more ambitious, in terms of numbers of

14 units and so on, than it is today. So that's

15 what happened, and hopefully, at this point,

16 you're able to look at that and make a

17 decision.

18 MR. REVUELTA: If I may add, it is my

19 understanding that the Zoning review is based

20 on plans and elevations and sections --

21 MR. TRIAS: Yes, sir.

22 MR. REVUELTA: Zoning reviews, to my

23 understanding, are never based on a rendering.

24 MR. TRIAS: That's right.

25 MR. REVUELTA: I just want to make sure

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1 explanation by the applicant.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Understood.

3 Ramon, a couple of questions. Just a

4 couple of questions.

5 There has been mention of many renderings

6 that have come before many Boards of this

7 project, whether it was one rendering and then

8 the next one and the next one. Can you explain

9 to us a little bit about the process or how we

10 got here with the renderings and --

11 MR. TRIAS: Sure. And I think that the

12 renderings, which I understand to be the

13 prospective drawings that are shown, may be not

14 as clear as some of the -- at least to me, as

15 the elevation or the floor plan drawings, which

16 are more accurate, from the point of view of an

17 architect and a planner. So both drawings have

18 been provided, and I think it's up to the

19 people reviewing those drawings to choose which

20 one explains the project better.

21 I haven't seen anything that is dishonest

22 about any of their representations.

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: But, for example,

24 throughout all of the phases that it has gone

25 before the Board of Architects, I have to

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1 that all of the legal minds here agree with

2 that. That's my understanding, again, as an

3 architect.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: There was talk about

5 rainwater and containing rainwater within the

6 property. It's my understanding that recently

7 the City of Coral Gables has even determined

8 that all plans that are coming before it are

9 going to DERM, which is something new, for the

10 rainwater and retention; is that correct?

11 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct. A building

12 permit will not be issued in this City until

13 DERM has reviewed and done their environmental

14 review, according to stormwater management.

15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So now, this specific

16 project, will be going to DERM, as would a

17 Single-Family home that's being done?

18 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Most Definitely.

19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. So there's

20 another set of professionals that will be

21 looking at that.

22 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: For sure.

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. As far as the

24 talk about the Mediterranean bonus and the

25 Mediterranean style, the way I look at it,

1 that is up to the Board of Architects. In this
 2 Board here, I think we have two architects that
 3 sit on the Board, Robert Behar and Luis, but
 4 the determination for Mediterranean bonuses, as
 5 it stands now, is given by the Board of
 6 Architects. That's not under our domain. Is
 7 that correct or am I incorrect on that?
 8 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: I would agree with you.
 9 The Code designates the Board of Architects as
 10 the body that approves or disapproves
 11 Mediterranean design and they've approved it in
 12 this case.
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Now, there is talk
 14 about changing the Mediterranean, and so, for
 15 instance, even in our agenda for today, for
 16 later, but as it stands now, it is up to the
 17 Board of Architects to make that determination
 18 and as such, this -- if it's gone six or seven
 19 times to the Board of Architects, can I say
 20 you've gone there two years, three years?
 21 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: I believe the first
 22 approval of the Board of Architects was in --
 23 it's in the report -- I believe it was January
 24 of '19, actually.
 25 MR. TRIAS: And Mr. Chairman, let me

1 itself --
 2 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: -- are encroaching?
 4 Okay. And is there a way to figure out how to
 5 add more visitor parking to this project?
 6 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: I think the question is,
 7 how do we designate visitor parking. Right
 8 now, there's no requirement in the Code to
 9 designate visitor parking, and we are
 10 proffering, if this Board agrees with it, to
 11 designate visitor parking on the ground floor,
 12 in an area -- I'm not sure if we can still show
 13 this on the screen, but -- there we go.
 14 Okay. Let me see here if the mouse is
 15 working. Okay. The cursor isn't cooperating,
 16 but on the far right side of the parking, the
 17 parking area is in white up there on the
 18 screen, there is an area where there is
 19 disabled parking, as well as regular parking
 20 spaces, in close proximity to the lobby. We
 21 could designate a certain number of those
 22 visitor parking, you know. It's hard to figure
 23 out what exactly is the right number, ten,
 24 perhaps, so that there is a designated area
 25 there.

1 clarify that in this Infill Regulations,
 2 Mediterranean doesn't give you any extra
 3 height.
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct.
 5 MR. TRIAS: Okay. This is a requirement to
 6 be able to max the 100 feet. So it's a little
 7 bit different than the usual.
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Understood.
 9 For me, as far as the stoops and the
 10 entrance from the street, aesthetically, for
 11 me, I like that, because it gives you a
 12 hometown feel and it makes it look more as it
 13 would relate, on the ground level, to other
 14 streets, and I think, in certain areas, the
 15 City has promoted that row housing and so
 16 forth, haven't they?
 17 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: I believe so.
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. As far as the
 19 balconies within the setback -- or the step
 20 back, I apologize, did we get a determination
 21 on the number of how much we are or are not --
 22 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Balconies and terraces
 23 is five feet, that they are encroaching into
 24 the step back.
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: The balconies

1 There will, of course, be other parking
 2 areas within the parking garage that are open
 3 to visitors, but these were specifically
 4 designated for just visitors.
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And how would that be
 6 monitored?
 7 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Well, there's going to
 8 be a management company on the property, so
 9 they will enforce that.
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: They will enforce
 11 that.
 12 MR. REVUELTA: But they will be labeled?
 13 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Excuse me?
 14 MR. REVUELTA: They will be labelled
 15 visitor?
 16 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Yes.
 17 MR. REVUELTA: Do you have a loading area
 18 inside the building?
 19 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Yes, there is a loading
 20 area. It's on the left area part of this
 21 screen. There we go. It's the light shade of
 22 gray right off the entrance, the opening on the
 23 right.
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And the trash, you
 25 are --

1 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Also, the trash --
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: You're maintaining
 3 inside the trash --
 4 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: -- goes within the first
 5 floor completely, picks up the trash and then
 6 comes back out.
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And that's obviously
 8 air-conditioned, as is required?
 9 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Right.
 10 MR. REVUELTA: And screened?
 11 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Correct.
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any other comments?
 13 Anybody would like to make a motion?
 14 MR. TORRE: I think we're supposed to
 15 have -- I thought we were doing comments within
 16 ourselves not through -- because I haven't made
 17 any comments. I thought we were going to close
 18 the public hearing and then just have our
 19 comments. I apologize.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: That's fine. No
 21 problem.
 22 Thank you, Mario.
 23 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Thank you.
 24 MR. COLLER: Mr. Chairman, one very minor
 25 thing. With regard to the Historic

1 projects are significant and worthy of a lot of
 2 discussion, to use them to hopefully better
 3 what happens in the City, so I think, from my
 4 standpoint, what I say and what I see and hear
 5 is to improve what's better for the future. I
 6 think this is a stepping stone towards that,
 7 because I think we learned a lot about what's
 8 right and wrong.
 9 This RIR, which is Residential Infill
 10 Regulation, I wasn't really too involved or
 11 knew too much about it, but it does give
 12 certain rights that are doubling the density.
 13 So I'll say that first. I want to say a couple
 14 of things first, but one of the most important
 15 things is that this is a recommending body and
 16 I heard somebody -- and I always say this to
 17 people, because I want to make sure they
 18 understand, we're not voting for a project or
 19 approving a project, we're recommending to the
 20 Commission what we feel should be an up or down
 21 vote. We're recommending to the Commission.
 22 Whether it's a split vote or a majority vote,
 23 it's a recommendation from this body.
 24 You know, and we speak sometimes from our
 25 own experience. The fact that some of us are

1 Preservation designation of those two
 2 properties that were mentioned by the Historic
 3 Preservation Officer, I have been advised by
 4 the City Attorney's Office that the 2005
 5 determination, which was the determination by
 6 the Board itself, did not have an expiration
 7 date and would only be subject to if there was
 8 a material change. I think the applicant has,
 9 in an abundance of caution, sought renewals, as
 10 well. So two different ways that they
 11 preserved their non-historic designation for
 12 those properties, if I accurately explained it.
 13 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: I'm in agreement. The
 14 Board made its decision. No circumstance have
 15 changed. At the same time, we've consistently
 16 always renewed what are called the Historic
 17 Determination Letters, so that today we have
 18 valid Historic Determination Letters for each
 19 property, which determined that none of them
 20 are historically significant.
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Let's go
 22 ahead and close it and open it up to comment.
 23 Venny, I'm going to let you --
 24 MR. TORRE: Hold on. I always like to take
 25 these opportunities to -- I mean, these

1 architects or developers doesn't mean we have
 2 any interest in anything we're doing. I think,
 3 if you were to have any type of Board that
 4 deals with dentistry or psychology, they would
 5 have psychologists and dentists on that Board
 6 to make those recommendations. That's why
 7 there's architects and developers. So I don't
 8 think -- to have anything to suggest that we're
 9 going to have anything involved of that nature,
 10 I think is not proper.
 11 I want to say something that happened to
 12 me, and I think that's how it starts. I mean,
 13 there was a gentleman, who was a dear friend,
 14 and I was visiting a building a few days ago,
 15 and I bumped into him on the way out, late in
 16 the evening, and I hadn't seen him in a couple
 17 of years, a dear friend, an attorney that I
 18 respect.
 19 And we started talking briefly about just
 20 our lives and so forth, and then he said, "Oh,
 21 I think you're on a Board," and he spoke to me
 22 about my endeavors here in the City, and then
 23 he really went at this, what about this
 24 development, there's overdevelopment in the
 25 City, and you could see notably he was

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1 aggravated, and I, you know spoke to him and he
 2 was, there's too much development, this is
 3 overboard, we have to stop this, and we had
 4 that discussion.
 5 And I said, "Tony, there's a lot of
 6 development. The economy is doing real well
 7 and people take the opportunity to develop
 8 during these period."
 9 "I understand, but we have to bring it down."
 10 I said, "There's nothing to be done, if
 11 you're building by rights, and these people, a
 12 lot of them are building by rights, and there's
 13 nothing we can do to stop these projects."
 14 "No, you have to. There has to be something."
 15 I said, "You know, the Bert Harris Act is
 16 brought up here all of the time, because we
 17 cannot take people's rights away and some of
 18 these things are done by rights."
 19 And we talked a lot about by rights, and,
 20 you know, and a lot of the citizens talk about,
 21 you must do things by right. So for us, in
 22 talking about what we have to vote on, a lot of
 23 it is done by right. In the City, and when you
 24 say, "By rights," it's a little tricky, because
 25 it's so subjective. The approvals are

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1 incentivizing this. This gentleman in the blue
 2 shirt back there said it, when you provide that
 3 incentive, that's what happens. Whether you
 4 like it or not, it's what's happening. This is
 5 an incentive program, about 20,000 feet, go
 6 beyond, and you get all of these rights.
 7 So I think this project probably falls
 8 under all of the regulations that are written
 9 in black and white in our Code, a hundred feet
 10 allowed on the RIR. What's the subjectivity?
 11 Incompatible. Today it's incompatible, I
 12 agree. It's big. But tomorrow, the next
 13 building, and the next building, and the next
 14 building are built, it's no longer
 15 incompatible. It just another building in this
 16 neighborhood.
 17 So I think that's the difficult part here.
 18 The Board of Architects has a role. To suggest
 19 that they would judge compatibility -- I've
 20 heard it say before, they should judge
 21 compatibility? That's very subjective.
 22 Compatibility, again, the Code underneath says
 23 you can do this. It's incompatible today to
 24 across the street, but not until that property
 25 is built, and so an example in case, if you go

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1 subjective. The Board of Architects is
 2 subjective. Compatibility is subjective. And
 3 a lot of these things, there's no perfect
 4 answer for us to say, it's black or it's white.
 5 It's basically a judgment call, from our
 6 perspective. So it's very difficult.
 7 So I think the way I see myself here is,
 8 I'm not here to call winners and losers. I'm
 9 here to call balls and strikes, and sometimes
 10 balls and strikes are just black and white, but
 11 what matters, what's truthful and what's
 12 happening.
 13 So the issue of these buildings coming on
 14 the North Ponce or North Gables 500 feet long
 15 is a fact of life, and it's because of the
 16 regulations. The MF2, under RIR, allows a
 17 building to go this big, this long, and I don't
 18 agree with it, I don't like it. Nobody cares.
 19 This is incompatible; it's incompatible until
 20 five or six of these buildings are built and
 21 then the seventh one is compatible. It's not
 22 compatible today, but it would be compatible
 23 after six or seven of these buildings keeps
 24 coming and coming, and they're coming because
 25 the Zoning that we provide is sort of

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1 down Bird Road, between Le Jeune and Ponce,
 2 four buildings are stacked from block to block,
 3 that weren't there before, and now there's this
 4 huge domino effect, canyon effect. That's the
 5 way that was built when this came up.
 6 This Zoning, this area, will provide for
 7 that type of development, if not something is
 8 done to change the incentives. The incentives
 9 right now are that way. But this project,
 10 probably, as much as we hate it, we don't like
 11 it, it's too big, I agree with most of that
 12 sentiment, but the black and white says a
 13 hundred feet is allowed, you know, a hundred
 14 units per acre are allowed. Where can I say
 15 this is not permitted? I find very difficult
 16 reasons to say this can't happen, except the
 17 subjectivity of the compatibility, it's too
 18 big, bring it back, make more steps.
 19 I think that the Code, you know, says that,
 20 but that's so, you know, subjective. So this
 21 is a difficult process, at least it is for me,
 22 but, again, I'm here to call balls and strikes,
 23 and sometimes these things have to happen for
 24 the corrections to happen. I hope this is a
 25 correction discussion.

1 As a matter of the Mediterranean
 2 discussion, it's a very big discussion. I
 3 think it's overplayed, because what's happened
 4 here is, every incentive is tied to the
 5 Mediterranean discussion, and everybody uses
 6 the Mediterranean and then we get into this,
 7 what's good Mediterranean, what's bad
 8 Mediterranean, does it have an arch, does it
 9 not have an arch, what is it going to look
 10 like, and we get into these long discussions
 11 about what's good and bad in the architecture.

12 I would say that I know a building or two
 13 that are not Mediterranean, they look nice,
 14 they're very attractive, they're approved and
 15 everybody likes them, and they're not
 16 necessarily Mediterranean. So to say that
 17 Mediterranean is the answer, I would say maybe
 18 good architecture is the answer.

19 So, I mean, there's a lot to be unpacked
 20 here. I feel a sentiment, and I know what my
 21 friend said is true. A lot of people feel that
 22 there's a lot of stuff going on. This is one
 23 of them, that is tough to get through, because
 24 of the change it makes in that community, in
 25 that neighborhood, but I don't know where to

1 need to start looking at setting some limits in
 2 assemblage, length of buildings, providing
 3 visitor parking, which happens -- in a lot of
 4 municipalities is a requirement, and basically
 5 looking, as Venny was saying, how much density
 6 do you allow as a reward for doing certain
 7 things, and maybe that got out of hand, too.

8 So, at this point, I guess I'm saying
 9 something and I'm asking a question at the same
 10 time.

11 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman, if I could.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.

13 MR. TRIAS: Let me make a brief comment.
 14 Mr. Revuelta, thank you very much. Your
 15 comments are very valid. We went through three
 16 years worth of looking at the Zoning Code, that
 17 was finished about a year ago, as you well
 18 know, and we talked about those very same
 19 things. We talked about the fact that the
 20 Zoning Code encouraged the assemblage of land,
 21 et cetera, et cetera, and we made some changes,
 22 right. We were able to work with the Planning
 23 and Zoning Board and with the Commission and
 24 some things were changed and some things were
 25 not changed. I mean, that was the nature of

1 say this is not permitted by the Code. That's
 2 it.

3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

4 MR. TORRE: You're welcome.

5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Luis.

6 MR. REVUELTA: I am willing to make a
 7 motion to approve it, but the question that I
 8 have is, can we make some comments to the City
 9 Commission, because I think what the neighbors
 10 are saying and what Venny was saying is that, I
 11 am surprised that the City doesn't have either
 12 a maximum length or a requirement to break the
 13 length of a building. The City of Miami does,
 14 and other municipalities do; that there is not
 15 a certain control of the maximum amount of
 16 assemblage, it all starts with the fact that if
 17 there's no maximum allowed for a developer to
 18 assemble properties, they have an incentive to
 19 assemble, assemble, assemble, assemble, that I
 20 think it's at the crux of the problem. For the
 21 City to recognize that, that as much as we want
 22 to incentivize development and more intensity
 23 in certain areas, it can get out of control.

24 So I would like to make a recommendation,
 25 as part of my motion, that the City Commission

1 the process, and we spent three years working
 2 with a world class consultant, working with all
 3 of you, trying to make the Code better, and I
 4 think there's always a chance to do it again,
 5 and there's always a chance to improve things,
 6 but I think we got a work product that the City
 7 Commission would approve, and even then, the
 8 controversies have continued, for the past
 9 year, and as you know, people feel very
 10 strongly about all of these issues.

11 So it's a process. I think we're getting
 12 closer to a better outcome, and any idea --
 13 your job is to make recommendations. That's
 14 exactly what you should do. And I would like
 15 to encourage you to do it. Thank you.

16 MR. REVUELTA: Thank you very much for
 17 making that clear. And by the way, this is not
 18 a reflection on you or the Planning Department.

19 MR. TRIAS: No.

20 MR. REVUELTA: This is a comment --

21 MR. TRIAS: This is quite a challenge, and
 22 what happens is -- but what I'm saying is, it's
 23 easy for me to make recommendations, but you
 24 have to agree with them and the Commission has
 25 to agree with them. So that is the challenge

1 in the process. And as you know, it is a
 2 process, and it's ongoing, since 1930, since
 3 the first Zoning Code of the City.
 4 MR. REVUELTA: Very good.
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Before you make a
 6 motion, I'd like to -- Alex, any comments?
 7 MR. BUCELO: No comments.
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Just one thing I'd
 9 like to ask, if I may, Mario. Everybody is
 10 talking about the length of the building. The
 11 amount of times that you've gone before the
 12 Board of Architects, has the Board of
 13 Architects asked you to do anything or the
 14 architect to do anything?
 15 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: You know, at one point
 16 in time, the issue did come up, and in
 17 response, what the project architect did is, he
 18 actually spent the time, dedicated the
 19 resources, to do a two-tower plan, and when the
 20 Board reviewed -- the Board of Architects
 21 reviewed that two-tower plan, which was two
 22 towers, but still had one parking pedestal,
 23 their conclusion was that it really wasn't
 24 addressing the issue of length or how it
 25 addresses the street, and that the one tower

1 my fellow members here agree, is that they
 2 should look into that for the future, for
 3 future projects. As Venny was saying, you
 4 know, we've got to learn from these things and
 5 we've got to --
 6 MR. COLLER: So I'm clear, it's you want
 7 them to look at the side -- the length of the
 8 building?
 9 MR. REVUELTA: Not on this project.
 10 MR. COLLER: No, but you're saying, for
 11 future projects, you would like them to look at
 12 the length --
 13 MR. REVUELTA: On future projects. For
 14 this project, the train left the station.
 15 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman --
 16 MR. COLLER: So I'd like some
 17 clarifications on the conditions.
 18 MR. TRIAS: Sir, I don't think those are
 19 related to the project. I think it's best to
 20 have two motions --
 21 MR. COLLER: Okay. We can do it as two.
 22 MR. TRIAS: -- one for the project and one
 23 for the future.
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: That's what I was
 25 saying, because I think it's -- if not, there's

1 plan was better.
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Thank you.
 3 Luis, you wanted to make a motion?
 4 MR. REVUELTA: Yeah. I'll make a motion to
 5 approve, but with the recommendations to the
 6 City Commission that somehow, some way, the
 7 assemblage of lots, length of buildings,
 8 visitor parking and density under the --
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: That's a
 10 recommendation, separate than the motion.
 11 MR. REVUELTA: Is it? It cannot go
 12 together, right? I'm asking.
 13 MR. COLLER: You can make it as part of the
 14 motion what you want to tell the Board is part
 15 of your approval. So if you can move -- your
 16 recommendation can be approved with your
 17 following comments to be submitted to the
 18 Board.
 19 MR. REVUELTA: So my motion is to approve,
 20 and it's a message to the Commission that they
 21 should look into this for future projects, not
 22 to basically alter this project. It wouldn't
 23 be fair to the project. But for future
 24 reference and for future projects, what I'd
 25 like to send as a message to the Commission, if

1 going to be a confusion.
 2 MR. TORRE: The stoops in the balconies --
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I was going to go
 4 there. There are two Staff recommendations
 5 which the applicant does not favor. Those are
 6 the stoops and the balconies, as Venny
 7 mentioned.
 8 MR. TRIAS: And that's fine. I think that
 9 can be approved as part of the PAD, and I do
 10 not object to that.
 11 MR. COLLER: I just want to make it clear,
 12 because in the recommendation, it was part of
 13 your determination. Have you now decided that
 14 you're fine with it?
 15 MR. TRIAS: After listening to the input, I
 16 think it's fine.
 17 MR. COLLER: Okay. Great.
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.
 19 MR. REVUELTA: So my motion is to approve
 20 and approve it with the two requests that the
 21 applicant is making.
 22 MR. BUCELO: I'll second.
 23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Does that make sense,
 24 Mario?
 25 MR. COLLER: And that's with all of the

1 other conditions of the Department?
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: With all other
 3 conditions except those two --
 4 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Those two which are now
 5 being dropped, regarding the stoops and the
 6 balconies.
 7 MR. COLLER: Okay. We actually have two
 8 items.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct. But we have
 10 a second. Any discussion?
 11 THE SECRETARY: I'm sorry, who made the
 12 second?
 13 MR. BUCELO: I did.
 14 THE SECRETARY: Alex.
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Alex. Call the roll,
 16 please.
 17 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 18 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.
 19 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 20 MR. TORRE: Yes.
 21 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?
 22 MR. BUCELO: Yes.
 23 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Based on the facts
 25 presented to me, yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 2 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.
 3 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.
 5 Let's go ahead and take a --
 6 MR. COLLER: You wanted to have a separate
 7 item with regard to this --
 8 MR. TORRE: Recommendation.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I'm sorry, the
 10 recommendations. Yes.
 11 MR. REVUELTA: If I need to repeat it, I
 12 will, but I make a motion to recommend to the
 13 City Commission to look at the maximum
 14 assemblage, length of buildings, designating
 15 visitor parking and looking at the density
 16 under the PAD bonus, which is something --
 17 Venny, if you want to make that motion --
 18 MR. TORRE: You're fine.
 19 MR. REVUELTA: Okay. So that's my motion.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Your motion. Venny,
 21 would you like to second?
 22 MR. TORRE: I'll second it.
 23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Venny second. Any
 24 discussion? Call the roll, please.
 25 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?

1 MR. COLLER: So, on E-8, are we going to
 2 have the same -- Ramon, is the conditions also
 3 applicable to E-8 on the stoops and the
 4 balconies and should also be included?
 5 MR. TRIAS: They're no longer relevant. If
 6 you want to make a motion --
 7 MR. COLLER: I don't want to make a motion.
 8 I don't have the authority to do so.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: He can't make a
 10 motion.
 11 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman --
 12 MR. REVUELTA: I'll make a motion to
 13 include the conditions of Staff, except the two
 14 conditions that the applicant is requesting.
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 16 MR. COLLER: Okay. So that's on Item E-8.
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: E-8.
 18 MR. BUCELO: I'll second.
 19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have -- also, Alex
 20 second. Any discussion? No?
 21 Call the roll, please.
 22 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 23 MR. TORRE: Yes.
 24 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?
 25 MR. BUCELO: Yes.

1 MR. BUCELO: Yes.
 2 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 3 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.
 4 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 5 MR. TORRE: Yes.
 6 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes. Let's go ahead
 8 and take --
 9 MR. GARCIA-SERRA: Just saying thank you.
 10 Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Members of
 11 the Board. Have a good night.
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Let's take
 13 a five-minute break. Can we get Robert to come
 14 back in to the meeting before nine o'clock?
 15 (Short recess taken.)
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Robert is unable to
 17 come back, so we have a quorum, and we're going
 18 to continue, but we have to extend the meeting
 19 before nine o'clock.
 20 Is there a motion to extend the meeting?
 21 MR. TORRE: I'll take a motion.
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Venny. And for how
 23 long?
 24 MR. TORRE: 30 minutes.
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: To 9:30?

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1 MR. TORRE: Right.

2 MR. BUCELO: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a second.

4 Let's take a roll. All in favor say, aye.

5 (All Board Members voted aye.)

6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.

7 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman, do you want to do

8 Alexan?

9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Let's read the

10 items -- Mr. Coller, would you read the items

11 into the record, please? That would be --

12 MR. COLLER: E-9 and E-10?

13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, sir.

14 MR. COLLER: Okay. E-9, an Ordinance of

15 the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida

16 granting approval of a Planned Area Development

17 pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process,"

18 Section 14-206, "General Procedures for Planned

19 Area Development" for a mixed-use project

20 referred to as "Alexan Crafts" on property

21 legally described as lots 5 thru 27, Block 28,

22 Coral Gables Crafts Section, Catalonia Avenue

23 301, 309, 317, 323, 325, 333, 341 Malaga

24 Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida; including

25 required conditions, providing for a repealer

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1 Development, PAD, and also Conditional Use

2 review for Mixed-Use, similar in process to the

3 previous example. The property, as you can

4 see, is most of the block that is by Salzedo,

5 Catalonia and Malaga, not all of the way to Le

6 Jeune. It doesn't go all of the way to Le

7 Jeune.

8 So there's what we have, in terms of the

9 existing condition. Mostly it's Single-Family;

10 however this went through a very extensive

11 discussion during the Zoning Code update and

12 this area was Rezoned to Mixed-Use, which

13 allows for the project as proposed.

14 The current Land Use and Zoning are

15 Commercial Low Rise intensity and Mixed-Use 1,

16 which are consistent with the general vicinity

17 of the area. Now, the first request, the PAD,

18 just as before, it has some minimal

19 requirements, in terms of area and dimension

20 and so on, the one acre, as we know.

21 The significant issue here and the one that

22 matters is that there's a maximum height of 77

23 feet and also six stories in the Zoning Code.

24 Because of the PAD, they're requesting to do

25 seven stories, since there are six, which is

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1 provision, severability clause and providing

2 for an effective date.

3 Item E-10, a Resolution of the City

4 Commission of Coral Gables, Florida granting

5 approval for Conditional Use Mixed-Use Site

6 Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Section 2-200

7 "Mixed Use Districts" for a mixed-use project

8 referred to as "Alexan Crafts" on property

9 legally described as lots 5 thru 27, Block 26

10 (sic), Coral Gables Crafts Section, Catalonia

11 Avenue 301, 309, 317, 323, 325, 333, 341 Malaga

12 Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida; including

13 required conditions; providing for a repealer

14 provision, severability clause and providing

15 for an effective date.

16 Items E-9 and E-10, public hearing.

17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

18 MR. TRIAS: May I have the PowerPoint,

19 please?

20 Mr. Chairman, in addition, there were some

21 letters, there were some e-mails that were

22 provided, and most of them were favorable,

23 unlike the prior project. So that is part of

24 the record.

25 The project, again, has Planned Area

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1 allowed under the PAD rules, according to the

2 City Attorney interpretation, and it's also

3 something that is being reviewed right now as a

4 Comprehensive Plan amendment to make it

5 official and clear in the Comprehensive Plan.

6 So the architect will explain the design.

7 I won't go into great detail due to the time of

8 the night, but it does comply with the

9 requirements.

10 That is the conceptual rendering. What I

11 was showing before is a Site Plan. The Site

12 Plan is accurate, just to make it clear for the

13 public, that that is accurate, in terms of

14 dimension. The renderings are a little bit

15 less accurate, but they give you a sense of the

16 architectural quality of the project.

17 This project also went several times to the

18 Board of Architects. I believe it was three

19 times at least, maybe -- was it more than three

20 times; three times -- three times, and it was

21 very clearly debated and discussed.

22 Now, DRC reviewed this in May of 2021; the

23 Board of Architects three times, as I said.

24 Then the Neighborhood Meeting took place in

25 December, and then the Planning and Zoning

1 Board is today. Letters were sent to property
2 owners in a radius of 1,000 feet. This time,
3 they're all within the city limits. The public
4 notice, two times letters were sent to property
5 owners, three times the property was posted,
6 then the website posting happened three times,
7 and we had one newspaper advertisement for
8 today's meeting. Staff recommends approval
9 with conditions.

10 So I'll stop there.

11 MR. NAVARRO: Thank you, Mr. Chair, Board
12 Members. Jorge Navarro, with offices at 333
13 Southeast 2nd Avenue. Thank you for taking the
14 time to extend the meeting. I know you're all
15 here as volunteers and we appreciate everything
16 you do for the City.

17 We've had several neighbors that have been
18 patiently waiting this evening. In the
19 interest of time, I know you've had a long
20 agenda, we've appointed one or two class
21 representatives to speak on their behalf, but
22 we have about eight residents here in support.
23 My colleague, Devon Baker, is going to submit
24 44 petitions that we have, from the owners of
25 the Crafts Section, in support. It's very rare

1 this situation, because a PAD gives us the
2 design flexibility to do an additional story
3 within the allowable building height and to
4 open up the ground area, and what that's
5 allowed us to do is to provide greater
6 setbacks, provide larger sidewalks, and it's
7 allowed us to accommodate a 7,000 square foot
8 park, that, as part of that, we are going to be
9 relocating two of the specimen trees that are
10 on-site to that park, to create a really shaded
11 nice active area, with seating areas and with
12 world class art that we're excited to tell you,
13 we've been a working with an artist named
14 Vaughn Spann to bring some art work to that
15 park, which I think would be in line with
16 everything that the City's been working
17 towards.

18 I think your Planning Direction mentioned,
19 we're providing three times the amount of open
20 space that's required. It's been a project
21 that has been thoroughly reviewed, has gone
22 through an extensive review process, and you
23 can see we submitted it in May of 2021. We
24 actually completely re-design of the project
25 after the City adopted it's new Mediterranean

1 that you see an entire area come together to
2 support a Rezoning, but this is -- and just to
3 quickly give some background, and I know that
4 this item has been before you in the past, the
5 Rezoning of the Crafts Section, but this was an
6 area that really was unsuitable for
7 Single-Family, and the residents in this area
8 have dealt with issues of speeding cars, noise,
9 you know, disruptions from living right next to
10 the Central Business District, that as a
11 response, after a lengthy public hearing
12 process, this area was Rezoned to MX1. That's
13 what the Commission found was appropriate for
14 this area, as a transition into the Central
15 Business District.

16 We are the first project coming in, and I
17 think Mr. Torre said it best, right, this is
18 setting the development trend that is the
19 City's future vision for this area. I'll let
20 Albert walk you in detail through the Site
21 Plan, but we're proposing a 263-unit Mixed-Use
22 project. We're not doing retail on the ground
23 level. Instead we're doing 22 live-work units.
24 It's a 2.11 acre parcel and one of the things
25 that we've done is, we're asking for a PAD in

1 Bonus program, and this new Coral Gables
2 Mediterranean style. This project was
3 unanimously approved by the Board of
4 Architects, which we're very proud of, and
5 we're excited to present it to you, and we hope
6 we can count on your support here, as well. I
7 know we have a few neighbors on Zoom, as well,
8 that may want to speak.

9 Thank you very much. With that, I'll
10 introduce Albert Cordoves and we're here to
11 answer any questions.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

13 MR. CORDOVES: Can we please have the
14 PowerPoint presentation? Thank you.

15 Good evening, Mr. Chair, Members of the
16 Board. My name is Albert Cordoves, with Corwil
17 Architects. First and foremost, thank you for
18 being here today, and, you know, reviewing our
19 presentation, especially this late.

20 We are truly excited to be here today. As
21 Jorge mentioned, this has been a real team
22 effort to get this project to where it is
23 today. It's been a team effort from our
24 client, from all of our consultants, from City
25 Staff that's worked with us, and from the Board

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1 of Architects. We went three times, and I
 2 think we have, obviously, what we believe is a
 3 beautiful project, a very boutique project, one
 4 that we can truly be excited for many years to
 5 come.
 6 And, again, the goal was, essentially, when
 7 we had commissioned -- when we got commissioned
 8 for this project, it truly felt like a
 9 designer's dream, in terms of having almost a
 10 city block. So we wanted to really put out
 11 something different. Instead of the zero
 12 setbacks, we went into expanded setbacks, we
 13 went to larger pedestrian realm, because the
 14 goal was truly, how can we improve this
 15 pedestrian realm and take it to the next level.
 16 It's what we did and that's how we culminated
 17 it with a park, with the articulation of
 18 courtyards into the mass itself, to break it
 19 down further, with larger expanded sidewalks
 20 for better trees, better canopies, and we, as a
 21 result of that, instead of a ten or twenty
 22 percent open area, we're just under thirty
 23 percent.
 24 And obviously the other goal was to
 25 essentially provide, almost 90 percent of the

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1 So, all in all, we're extremely happy. In
 2 light of time, I'd like to leave it open for
 3 any questions that you might have, and hope for
 4 your support on this one. Thank you.
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 6 I'd like to go ahead and open it up for --
 7 MR. TORRE: I have a question --
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, go ahead, Mr.
 9 Torre.
 10 MR. TORRE: -- Mr. Chair. So I remember we
 11 saw this, and just from my memory, what was
 12 the -- we didn't reject it, did we just defer
 13 it for you to go back to the Board? I know you
 14 went back to the Board, right? So that was
 15 what was needed? Did we have anything that
 16 needed to be done or --
 17 MR. CORDOVES: No.
 18 MR. TORRE: -- was it just the
 19 architecture --
 20 MR. CORDOVES: It was only architecture, yeah.
 21 MR. TORRE: Right. That they were getting
 22 bonuses or you were getting bonuses for not
 23 having something Mediterranean, that was --
 24 MR. CORDOVES: The first time we introduced
 25 the project to the Board, it was designed in a

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1 ground floor is activated by the use of our
 2 live-work units and our amenity spaces. The
 3 parking itself, as we come up through the
 4 stories, you will see that it is totally
 5 internalized and it's been totally lined with
 6 active spaces throughout the entire building.
 7 The ground floor, again, if I may come back
 8 to it, we have provided one main paseo,
 9 vehicular and pedestrian paseo, where we took
 10 advantage of it in minimizing the curb cuts,
 11 again improving the pedestrian realm, and from
 12 that paseo, we actually have access to our
 13 loading, internalized loading, for our project
 14 and access to our internalized parking garage,
 15 as well.
 16 We also have a paseo on the west side,
 17 which, again, with more setbacks than the Code
 18 required, and as you come up, the last thing we
 19 did to really articulate the massing and keep
 20 it within the overall height is, we broke out
 21 the seventh floor and provided our pool deck
 22 level at that particular area. Centralized
 23 with the overall project, we count with
 24 approximately 15,000 square feet of amenity
 25 pool level area at that particular height.

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1 more contemporary style, and the direction for
 2 the City and the Board, in order to approve the
 3 Mediterranean bonuses, was to go more in the
 4 traditional style. So we went back for the
 5 second time.
 6 MR. TRIAS: Sir, you may be thinking of
 7 when this was Rezoned, which was part of the
 8 Zoning Update. These properties were Rezoned
 9 and they came before you at that time. That
 10 was not part of the process.
 11 MR. TORRE: No. No. They were already
 12 Rezoned, so we discussed that this was already
 13 in the Zone, it was appropriate. I think you
 14 had to get seven floors, and then there was a
 15 discussion about Med Bonus or not Med Bonus,
 16 and that's when it went back to the
 17 Mediterranean design.
 18 MR. CORDOVES: Exactly.
 19 MR. TORRE: But I don't remember us having
 20 any issues with the project per se, more than
 21 that issue with the bonus --
 22 MR. CORDOVES: Correct. Correct. Yeah.
 23 And as soon as we re-designed the project in a
 24 more traditional style, we went back to the
 25 Board, and it was extremely well received. The

1 third time was just very minor comments that
 2 they had observed actually the first time they
 3 saw it redesigned, but thank you.
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 5 Let me go ahead and open it for public
 6 comment. Jill, how many speakers do we have on
 7 this?
 8 THE SECRETARY: Six, and one on Zoom.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And one on Zoom?
 10 THE SECRETARY: Yes.
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Would you call
 12 the first speaker, please?
 13 THE SECRETARY: Maria Blet. Maria.
 14 MS. BLET: Hi --
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you can come up to
 16 the microphone, please.
 17 MS. BLET: I was going to say, I'm Maria
 18 Blet, 323 Malaga, and I'm conceding my time to
 19 Maria Mendez (sic).
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: You have to speak into
 21 the microphone.
 22 MS. BLET: Oh, I apologize. Again, Maria
 23 Blet, 323 Malaga. I'm totally in support and I
 24 think this is really cool and modern and
 25 Mediterranean tractional and I totally support

1 street, are my trees, and actually the project
 2 saves all of the trees in the back of my yard.
 3 All of the oak trees will be relocated, so this
 4 will be guarded for the beauty of Coral Gables.
 5 And down the road, if you look at the
 6 drawings and renderings of this beautiful
 7 project, it's really coming back to the
 8 Mediterranean idea of Coral Gables, 'cause I
 9 think, in the last 25 years I am here, I've
 10 seen a couple of sins committed, and I think,
 11 right now, when you look at the Plaza complex
 12 in Ponce de Leon, and now this project, I think
 13 there's a -- it's coming back to the -- a
 14 little bit modern twist, which I think we all
 15 want, but back to the Mediterranean idea.
 16 So we're all in favor here, and I speak --
 17 actually, I'm one of the few speakers for all
 18 of the homeowners, and like I think it's very
 19 special that all of the homeowners on the whole
 20 block came together in support of a project
 21 like this. So I think you should take the
 22 advantage of this and move forward. And thank
 23 you very much, also, that you already saw this
 24 issue and you already were in support of
 25 upzoning it, you know, and that the

1 it.
 2 Thank you so much for your time.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 4 MS. BLET: And I'm conceding to Maria
 5 Mendez (sic).
 6 THE SECRETARY: Saul.
 7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We're good.
 8 THE SECRETARY: Stefan Seuss.
 9 MR. SEUSS: Yes. Good evening and thank
 10 you very much for your time. My name is
 11 Steffan Seuss -- sorry -- and I live at 340
 12 Catalonia Avenue for three and a half years.
 13 I've lived on and off between the Gables and
 14 Coconut Grove for 25 years, so I really know
 15 the development happening here around in our
 16 neighborhood, and -- very beautiful
 17 neighborhood, and I just wanted to emphasize
 18 again on this family neighborhood versus a more
 19 commercial neighborhood.
 20 I live here. I have two kids. When you
 21 walk on Catalonia Avenue west of Le Jeune, you
 22 see trees and families with the stroller and
 23 birds. And if you come to our side, there's
 24 nothing like that. The only trees, as a matter
 25 of fact, you'll see when you drive down the

1 Commissioners went through and upzoned it to a
 2 more commercial approach. Thank you very much
 3 for your time.
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 5 THE SECRETARY: Maria Menendez.
 6 MS. MENENDEZ: Good evening, Mr. Chair. I
 7 need a few minutes. I think my neighbor,
 8 Maria, was trying to relinquish some of her
 9 minutes to give to me, if you could please bear
 10 with me. I have a few things --
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And I do want to say,
 12 welcome back.
 13 MS. MENENDEZ: Thank you. Thank you so
 14 much, and thank you for your time. I know how
 15 hard it is, especially at this time, to be here
 16 and deliberating over these issues, so thank
 17 you for your work and for your volunteering.
 18 Good evening. For the record, my name is
 19 Maria Alberro Menendez. I live with my family
 20 at 322 Catalonia Avenue. We have lived there
 21 for over 28 years, and we support the proposed
 22 development.
 23 This area, our area, has changed immensely
 24 over the last seven years. To the east, the
 25 Plaza of Coral Gables, just one block away from

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1 our home, has changed the City's skyline
 2 forever. This project has eight, fourteen,
 3 seventeen-story buildings, with building
 4 heights of over 190 feet. It has more than two
 5 million square feet and over 2,200 parking
 6 garages (sic). Also to our east, less than a
 7 block away -- a block away from our home is
 8 another development, seventeen stories, 179
 9 feet high, an additional 260 parking spaces.
 10 To our north, a developer, the City, and
 11 Mercedes Benz, just two blocks from our home,
 12 entered into a three-way property swap
 13 agreement. The exchanged resulted in Mercedes
 14 Benz taking over the City's old police and fire
 15 station, bringing the dealership activities
 16 closer to our home, now a block away. The City
 17 took over the land that was owned by the
 18 developer for the new public safety building,
 19 north of Alhambra Plaza, and the developer took
 20 the land owned by Mercedes Benz, where it
 21 intends to build what has been advertised as
 22 sky homes. This development, this high-rise
 23 development, is less than 600 feet away from
 24 our neighborhood.
 25 Also to the north, just 200 feet from our

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1 impact in the surrounding roadway network." On
 2 Page 10 of the City Staff report, the facts
 3 about the proposed projects are provided in
 4 detail. In summary, the project's density, the
 5 City permits 125 units per acre and a maximum
 6 FAR of 3.5 for this area. The developer
 7 proposes 125 units per acre and an FAR of 3.39,
 8 below what the City permits.
 9 Building height, the City permits 77 feet.
 10 The developer proposes 77 feet. Parking, the
 11 City requires a minimum of 357 parking spaces.
 12 The developer proposes 364, more than what the
 13 City requires. Landscape open space, the City
 14 requires a minimum of twenty percent of the
 15 development. The developer proposes 28.32
 16 percent of the development, more than what the
 17 City requires.
 18 In regards to the developer's request for a
 19 seven-story building, the City Staff report, on
 20 Pages 7 through 9, states the following
 21 comments, "While the project is seven stories,
 22 only six stories is allowed, it is within the
 23 maximum allowable height of 77 feet. Such
 24 departure from the Zoning Code regulation
 25 allows the project to reduce the ground floor

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1 home, along Palermo Avenue, sits high-rise
 2 zoned parcels that, if assembled, can result in
 3 another 16-story 190 feet high structure.
 4 So, needless to say, my neighbors and I are
 5 located in a growing urban Commercial area.
 6 Our area, where the development is proposed, is
 7 an enclave. To the south, we're separated from
 8 other Residential neighborhoods by University
 9 Drive, a four-lane collector, with a protective
 10 Do Not Enter sign posted on Salzedo,
 11 prohibiting vehicles from entering the
 12 neighborhood.
 13 To the west, Le Jeune Road, a four lane
 14 highway -- four lane State highway, with a
 15 landscaped median, acts as a barrier protecting
 16 the neighborhoods to the west from our area.
 17 The City's Planning and Zoning Board Staff
 18 report outlines the key and facts and reasons
 19 for why this development should move forward
 20 and obtain your recommendation.
 21 A traffic impact study prepared by a
 22 traffic engineering firm has been reviewed and
 23 approved by the City's Engineer, concluding,
 24 and I quote, "The proposed development, Alexan
 25 Crafts, is not expected to have a negative

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1 building coverage and building massing, thereby
 2 creating additional opportunities for
 3 additional landscaped open space areas for the
 4 public benefit." The report further states
 5 that seven stories is allowed through a PAD
 6 process, pursuant to the City Attorney's
 7 opinion. The development is a PAD development.
 8 The Staff report also stated that the
 9 proposed Mixed-Use project is compatible and
 10 complies with the intent of the Zoning Code
 11 Mixed-Use and PAD requirements and performance
 12 standards. It serves -- and this is from the
 13 report, it serves as an orderly transition from
 14 the Central Business District to residential
 15 neighborhoods and the re-development of this
 16 property fulfills the objective of the City to
 17 attract Mixed-Uses with public open spaces in
 18 an urban environment.
 19 Finally, as it's been mentioned, this
 20 development has gone before the Board of
 21 Architects three times and the design has been
 22 redesigned twice, including all of the
 23 suggestions from the Board and the City. On
 24 December 9th, 2021, the Board of Architects
 25 granted the development the Mediterranean

1 design architectural design.
 2 Thank you, Board, for your attention and
 3 your consideration of this project.
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 5 THE SECRETARY: Henry? No.
 6 Maria -- Maria Perera.
 7 MS. PERERA: I want to say, thank you to
 8 all of you for being here.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you would please
 10 state your name and address.
 11 MS. PERERA: My name is Maria Perera, 333
 12 Malaga, and I support the project, and I think
 13 it's great. I just wanted to say that. And
 14 thank you for the opportunity. And we need
 15 your approval, so hopefully you approve it.
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 17 THE SECRETARY: The next speaker is on Zoom
 18 and needs to be sworn in.
 19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Who's the next
 20 speaker? Will you call them, please?
 21 THE SECRETARY: Mayra Joli.
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Ms. Joli, can you
 23 raise your right hand, please, to be sworn in?
 24 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

1 afraid of hurting the project, because it will
 2 represent money that the developers would not
 3 be getting, but, then, at the end, what are we
 4 here for?
 5 We were how many, about 45 the last time I
 6 checked, participating; now maybe 16 or maybe
 7 less. What are we here for, just to beg so
 8 somebody, you know, allow a little bit of this
 9 Shangri-la to remain what it is? Residents, we
 10 cannot compete with the large amount of money
 11 that have been poured into our City Hall, for
 12 these Commissioners and this Mayor just to
 13 approve and Rezone, and, now, after six of
 14 these buildings are built, then the seventh
 15 building or eight, nine and ten, they're going
 16 to be just saying, well, we're protected,
 17 grandfathered by that first massive building.
 18 How many cranes you can see in the sky,
 19 when you go down to US-1? Coral Gables don't
 20 supposed to have sky rises. Bird Road -- you
 21 may as well just go back to Homestead and come
 22 back through US-1 in Coconut Grove somewhere
 23 just to go -- and go from one place to the
 24 other. We have a City Manager working against
 25 us, all of them, and the City -- the Coral

1 MS. JOLI: Mayra Joli, 700 Jeronimo Drive.
 2 Well, I guess all of the residents who have
 3 been in the dais, they have approved the
 4 project, I guess they have spoken. They are
 5 the ones that are going to be directly impacted
 6 by this project, if, in fact, they're going to
 7 continue residing there. Maybe it's a good
 8 investment for them to have this project there.
 9 The developers want to change the essence
 10 and the fabric of what is Coral Gables and want
 11 to change it into an apartment complex haven,
 12 and I guess, we, as residents, and the
 13 residents -- and speaks for the residents of
 14 Coral Gables, as well, the ones that really
 15 love what is Coral Gables and the preservation
 16 of what is exactly the vision of George
 17 Merrick, I can see that we lost. We have no
 18 way out of this.
 19 The Coral Gables City Attorney is against
 20 us, working on behalf of the developers. Our
 21 Mayor -- City of Coral Gables Mayor is working
 22 on behalf of the developers. The
 23 Commissioners, we have to fight them tooth and
 24 nail, just for them to listen to the concerns
 25 of the residents. I heard that everybody is

1 Gables City Hall is the same chicken with
 2 different feathers. We never win. Residents
 3 of Coral Gables, we lost this battle. Coral
 4 Gables is doomed to be destroyed. It's just
 5 the sad reality. We just have to live with it.
 6 Good-bye.
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Bye. Thank you.
 8 Next?
 9 THE SECRETARY: Jacqueline -- one second.
 10 MR. WEBEL: Do you hear me?
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, we do. Would you
 12 raise your right hand -- oh, actually, if you
 13 don't mind, before you speak, because we're
 14 going to be running out of time, is there a
 15 motion to extend the meeting a little bit
 16 longer?
 17 MR. TORRE: Let's give it ten more minutes.
 18 I'll make a motion.
 19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Can we say to at least
 20 9:45?
 21 MR. TORRE: Yeah.
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: 9:45. There's a
 23 motion.
 24 MR. BUCELO: Second.
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a second by

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1 Alex. Everybody in favor say aye.
 2 (All Board Members voted aye.)
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Anybody against? No.
 4 Go ahead, please. Can you put the
 5 gentleman back on? Thank you for raising your
 6 right hand.
 7 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir. If
 9 you could start by stating your name and
 10 address, please.
 11 MR. WEBEL: Good evening, Chair, Members of
 12 the Board, esteem neighborhood. My name is
 13 Julio Webel, 309 Malaga Avenue. I've been here
 14 for thirty years, and I have two perspective of
 15 what's happened in these thirty years and how
 16 this area has evolved, and that's the reason I
 17 support this project, because a change has
 18 brought onto the area a needed response.
 19 From -- what used to be a quiet
 20 neighborhood is no longer that, and so an
 21 urbanistic and architectural response has to be
 22 in place, and I consider the Alexan Crafts
 23 project the proper one, for two reasons. One,
 24 urbanistically, it transitions well from the
 25 edges of the lower structures, like the San

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1 architect --
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sir, we're talking
 3 about the project on E-9 and E-10.
 4 MR. PARDO: That's correct. And the other
 5 one was a PAD, and one of the things that he
 6 talked about was the length of PADs, length of
 7 buildings, which is, you know, one of the
 8 concerns that I have with this particular --
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: You have -- you're
 10 concerned about the length of this building; is
 11 that correct?
 12 MR. PARDO: Correct, but --
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Continue,
 14 please.
 15 MR. PARDO: -- they were able to break down
 16 some of the massing, you know, through the
 17 re-design, with the help and assistance of the
 18 Board of Architects.
 19 But at the same time, keep in mind that one
 20 of the biggest issues here is, these are 263
 21 units. This is the first of three blocks that
 22 were changed by the Former Commission, two of
 23 the Commissioners that sit on that Board now.
 24 The reason that that's important is, because
 25 when you take 263 times three, that's over 700

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1 Sebastian and smaller areas west of Le Jeune
 2 and University Drive, onto the larger buildings
 3 that rise Downtown. And, also, architecturally
 4 speaking, I believe the architect has
 5 successfully interpreted -- what other
 6 architects do, which is copy Mediterranean
 7 motif, this architect has interpreted the
 8 Mediterranean vocabulary into a more
 9 contemporary response.
 10 So, with that, I support this project, and
 11 thank you for your time.
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 13 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Pardo.
 14 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 16 MR. PARDO: Good evening, Mr. Chair, Board
 17 Members. Thank you so much for listening to
 18 the public. I want to be sincere, that the
 19 project looks different than what was
 20 originally presented, and that is the positive,
 21 I think. I do not minimize some of the
 22 observations that were made by some of the
 23 Board Members this evening on the other project
 24 that was looked at, the Madeira project.
 25 Luis Revuelta, a very distinguished

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1 units that are going to be built in that area,
 2 and the impact is going to be great. With all
 3 deference to Maria, that I've known for many
 4 years, she did quote the traffic report as
 5 having no negative impact on the adjacent
 6 roadway, well, the adjacent roadway, quite
 7 honestly, is Le Jeune Road, which is Level F,
 8 and you can't make it any worse than that.
 9 That's why it's basically negating a zero.
 10 The biggest problem I see is that Staff
 11 said, correctly, that the applicant is only
 12 allowed six stories in height, and that the
 13 seven stories is now being magically waived
 14 through, as an interpretation by the City
 15 Attorney, which now goes into kind -- right
 16 into legislature and to changing the Code. If
 17 they change the Code, so be it, but as far as
 18 this particular project, it's seven stories.
 19 So the justification for the stories was to
 20 add that park. Well, the park is approximately
 21 4,800 square feet, about sixty by eighty feet.
 22 If they would reduce a certain amount of units,
 23 they could double the size of the park. Right
 24 now, on the Seventh Floor, they have 42 units
 25 on the Seventh Floor, so they were actually

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1 able to get more units on the Seventh Floor,
 2 than keeping it six stories and not having the
 3 park, and that is something that Staff did not
 4 analyze or mention, and keep in mind that the
 5 Board of Architects is continuously told that
 6 they can't get into the, quote/unquote, Zoning
 7 matters.
 8 Well, if they can't get into the Zoning
 9 matters, I think this Board has the ability of
 10 doing that. Keep in mind that a PAD is
 11 something that goes through the Planning Board
 12 first, after the Board of Architects, and then
 13 to the Commission. The PAD is not automatic to
 14 the maximum amount of units. The Planning and
 15 Zoning Board has the ability to say, reduce the
 16 size of the project, so we can give you the
 17 additional units that you're getting. No one
 18 suffers that way.
 19 You could tell them, "Make the green area
 20 bigger, lose some units, if you have to,
 21 therefore we'll give you that seventh floor,"
 22 but they are not doing that, and it's up to the
 23 Planning Board to do that and make that
 24 suggestion, so ultimately the Commission will
 25 be able to address that.

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1 who has a PAD request, that is not automatic,
 2 to not the maximum height -- in height, but
 3 also floors. So they want something, and I
 4 think it's your job to be able to say, you
 5 know, Staff, we kind of disagree with some of
 6 the things that you've said, and really put
 7 that to them.
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 9 MR. PARDO: And I appreciate again your
 10 time, but I want to make sure that the Planning
 11 Board always understands that they have the
 12 ability to say, we'll approve it, subject to
 13 this. Thank you.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, Mr. Pardo.
 15 Anybody else, Jill?
 16 THE SECRETARY: No more speakers.
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: No more speakers. At
 18 this time, I'd like to go ahead and close the
 19 floor --
 20 MR. NAVARRO: Let me clarify one comment,
 21 Mr. Chair.
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: -- to speakers, and
 23 then I'll let you do your rebuttal. Go ahead,
 24 please. No, no, go ahead.
 25 MR. NAVARRO: So thank you very much. I'll

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1 The last thing I want to say is that, I
 2 understand that 42 neighbors are for this
 3 particular project. The neighbors are 42
 4 sellers. They're selling their properties so
 5 they can develop this project. And it's their
 6 right to do that, but it's a distortion of
 7 reality that everybody is really happy with
 8 this particular project, because once they're
 9 gone, there's going to be on those three blocks
 10 over 700 units that are going to be built in
 11 that area, which today may have about 50 homes,
 12 Single-Family homes, and that's all.
 13 I do thikn they have compelling reasons and
 14 I empathize with them, but the empathy should
 15 also go both ways, as far as the Planning Board
 16 and the Commission, in trying to reduce the
 17 height of -- or the Seventh Floor or make the
 18 park area, that would be needed for those 263
 19 units, make it at least twice as big. And just
 20 keep in mind, 4,500 square feet, the backyard
 21 of my Single-Family home has about the same
 22 amount of green space, only in the backyard,
 23 without counting the front yard.
 24 So it's important for the Planning Board to
 25 do a little horse trading with the applicant,

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1 keep my comments very brief. But I did want to
 2 clarify, because, you know, this has been
 3 a long process and we have been working with
 4 the neighbors, through the Rezoning process and
 5 through the Site Plan process, and we did take
 6 Mr. Pardo's comments and we did digest them and
 7 listened to them, because we do have a PAD, but
 8 this PAD normally requires twenty percent open
 9 space, we're providing thirty percent open
 10 space. Most projects would have gone right to
 11 the setback. We have a ten-foot setback and
 12 we've gone back an additional ten feet. That
 13 allows you to have very large sidewalks, and it
 14 gives you the ability to plant large shade.
 15 Additionally, having additional open space, it
 16 creates a real pedestrian environment, which
 17 this portion of the City historically has not
 18 had. They have very little trees and very
 19 small sidewalks.
 20 Even though we are asking for a seventh
 21 story, the maximum building height under MX1 is
 22 77 feet. Our building is 74 feet four inches,
 23 and the middle portion of the building, in
 24 working with your Planning Staff, we have
 25 carved out and reduced that down to 64 feet

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1 eight inches. So we have a much smaller
 2 volumetric massing than would be allowed, if
 3 this project did not have a PAD.
 4 Lastly, and this is what I wanted to give
 5 credit to Mr. Pardo about was, listening to his
 6 comments, we have almost doubled the size of
 7 the park. It's gone from 4,000 to almost 7,000
 8 square feet, but it's not just the park space
 9 that we're creating, we've actually committed
 10 to also build out that park, by relocating
 11 those trees, so now that park will have shade,
 12 which most of the new parks that have been
 13 developed don't have that capability. We have
 14 the capability of relocating on-site trees,
 15 creating a shade environment, and also
 16 re-developing that park, which is also an
 17 additional public benefit. We have less FAR,
 18 less density and less height than allowed, and
 19 we are in full support of the Staff conditions
 20 and ask for your approval here this evening.
 21 Our entire team is here to answer any
 22 questions.
 23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Venny.
 24 MR. TORRE: Yeah. I'd like to, you know,
 25 call out some positives, because I think,

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1 help.
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Alex.
 3 MR. BUCELO: I have no comments. But I
 4 think it's -- again, I got to become familiar
 5 with that area like a year or so back when I
 6 was running, and I'm glad to see all of the
 7 neighbors come together and support a project.
 8 So I'll leave it with that.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 10 MR. REVUELTA: The project is not
 11 requesting an increase in density?
 12 MR. TRIAS: No, sir. It's --
 13 MR. REVUELTA: It's just putting in an
 14 additional (inaudible) --
 15 MR. COLLER: Could you put your mike? Yeah.
 16 MR. TRIAS: The history, the Coral Gables
 17 Zoning Code, at different times has measured
 18 height and stories at different times, and in
 19 2004, they combined it, and in most of the
 20 designations, there's a maximum height and a
 21 number of stories. That is very relevant in
 22 the Med Bonus design, and it's a point that
 23 Mr. Pardo had brought up multiple times in this
 24 project.
 25 It was codified in the final update of the

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1 again, these things create trends and hopefully
 2 people listen and follow through with some
 3 positives.
 4 The sidewalk width issue is really a big
 5 deal and I think that's one of the things that
 6 Mr. Pardo spoke about, some things that could
 7 be done to offset the PAD and the density and
 8 so forth, but I think this extra width of the
 9 sidewalk here is a big deal. I'm a very big
 10 proponent of what happens on the ground floor
 11 and what people experience most is what's
 12 happening on the ground floor, and I think
 13 that's huge.
 14 And the other thing is, the carving out of
 15 these courtyards I think is very well thought
 16 out, and I think that's really another big plus
 17 to have unblocked -- remove the blockiness and
 18 create this sort of inside feeling, with more
 19 light to the tenants. That's also a good
 20 thing.
 21 Overall, I think, you know, the improvement
 22 is there, so I want to make those positives,
 23 you know.
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 25 MR. TRIAS: I'm just here if you need any

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1 Code that we did recently, 77 feet and six
 2 stories; however, the City Attorney
 3 interpretation said that in case there is a
 4 PAD, the number of stories could be different,
 5 as long as it was consistent with the maximum
 6 height.
 7 Now, there's an amendment to the Zoning
 8 Code that says that specifically, going through
 9 the process right now. So that is the policy
 10 of the Commission, also.
 11 MR. REVUELTA: Well, in my opinion, I think
 12 that to avoid this kind of debates and
 13 confusion, I still don't understand why it
 14 cannot be seven stories, 77 feet and call it a
 15 day. Is there any --
 16 MR. TRIAS: Because that is the nature of
 17 the Zoning Code of Coral Gables, confusion.
 18 MR. REVUELTA: Thank you, sir, for your
 19 clarity and sincerity on that.
 20 MR. TRIAS: Now, I could write a very
 21 simple Zoning Code, but that would not get
 22 approved by the City Commission.
 23 MR. TORRE: It gives us more work.
 24 MR. REVUELTA: I guess it allows us to be
 25 here until ten o'clock at night. That's a

1 great incentive.
 2 MR. TRIAS: But I thank everybody, and, in
 3 fact, you know, Mr. Pardo's discussions about
 4 Mediterranean architecture I think have
 5 influenced this project and made it much
 6 better, in terms of the architectural design.
 7 MR. REVUELTA: I see absolutely no problem
 8 with the request, and actually, at some point,
 9 I'd like to make a recommendation, a separate
 10 motion, of course, that the Code just basically
 11 get simplified; it's 77 feet, seven stories.
 12 Some developers are going to say, I want to do
 13 six, because I want to have higher ceilings, I
 14 want to have a bigger ground level. So at that
 15 point --
 16 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Revuelta, I spent three
 17 years trying to do that and I failed miserably.
 18 MR. REVUELTA: Well, I don't want to add to
 19 your misery, so I'll stay shut, but these are
 20 the kinds of things that, as an architect, does
 21 frustrate me. I will take this opportunity,
 22 again, to bring to the City Commission,
 23 hopefully, that, in this area, I see a major,
 24 major mistake, and I'm not blaming anybody in
 25 particular, with the Future Land Use Map.

1 you that there was plenty of discussion on
 2 that.
 3 MR. REVUELTA: Well, I don't know if the
 4 rest of my colleagues agree, but I would like
 5 to make a separate motion after this, that I
 6 would like the City to review this, because I
 7 think this can be a huge problem in the future
 8 for the City, in my opinion, and the neighbors.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Venny.
 10 MR. TORRE: In the interest of time, I'm
 11 going make a motion for approval.
 12 MR. REVUELTA: Second.
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: You want to make a
 14 motion for approval --
 15 MR. TRIAS: With conditions.
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: -- with the
 17 conditions?
 18 MR. TRIAS: Yeah, the standard conditions
 19 that we have.
 20 MR. TORRE: The standard conditions, which
 21 I'm completely aware of, and understand what
 22 they are, yes.
 23 MR. REVUELTA: Second.
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a second.
 25 THE SECRETARY: Sorry, we need two motions.

1 Lot 34 has, in the front, the high density
 2 classification, and, to me, University Drive is
 3 the line that basically separates this, meaning
 4 the high density district, which I am in
 5 agreement with, but we have a Single-Family
 6 Home District just south of San Sebastian and
 7 University Drive that needs to be protected,
 8 and I want to be able to -- every time that I
 9 can -- make a reminder to the City that this
 10 Lot 34, which is high density classification,
 11 which is, I think, MX3, needs to be, in my
 12 opinion, studied and actually changed to the
 13 same classification that the last two of Block
 14 34 has, which is a low density.
 15 I know this has got really nothing to do
 16 specifically with this application, but it's
 17 something that I want to take the opportunity,
 18 every time I can, to remind everybody that this
 19 is a problem, because this can set an ugly
 20 precedent to continue further south and further
 21 south.
 22 MR. TRIAS: Everything you see in that
 23 Zoning Code, everything in the Map, are
 24 deliberate decisions of the Commission.
 25 Nothing was done by chance. And I can assure

1 MR. COLLER: There are two items, so we'll
 2 do --
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We'll do one first.
 4 MR. TORRE: One is the PAD and one is the
 5 actual approval of the --
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Right.
 7 MR. TRIAS: PAD and Mixed-Use Site Plan.
 8 They're separate items.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So we're doing the E-9
 10 first.
 11 MR. TORRE: Which is PAD?
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct.
 13 MR. COLLER: Correct. We're doing E-9
 14 first and we can do a similar motion on E-10,
 15 with conditions.
 16 MR. TORRE: Okay. So this is a motion for
 17 E-9, PAD approval. Motion for approval with
 18 conditions as per staff.
 19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: With conditions. And
 20 you second it?
 21 MR. REVUELTA: I second it.
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any discussion? No?
 23 Call the roll, please.
 24 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 25 MR. TORRE: Yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 2 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.
 3 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?
 4 MR. BUCELO: Yes.
 5 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.
 7 What about E-10?
 8 MR. TORRE: I'm sorry. The next one is
 9 E-10, for the Site Plan approval, as presented
 10 by Staff -- as proposed by Staff, approve
 11 motion.
 12 MR. REVUELTA: Second.
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a second. Any
 14 discussion? No? Call the roll, please.
 15 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?
 16 MR. BUCELO: Yes.
 17 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 18 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.
 19 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 20 MR. TORRE: Yes.
 21 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes. And you wanted
 23 to make a --
 24 MR. REVUELTA: I would like to make a --
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: A recommendation.

1 MR. TRIAS: Mr. Chairman, I would request,
 2 at least E-1 and E-2.
 3 MR. TORRE: Which is E-1 and E-2?
 4 MR. TRIAS: Which is the Downtown height at
 5 205 feet. The reason I'm saying that is
 6 because the Commission was very clear on the
 7 direction they want to take. And to continue
 8 the process, because there's a Comp Plan
 9 amendment, we need a recommendation from you.
 10 MR. TORRE: Just to help out the
 11 Commission, I will make a motion for ten more
 12 minutes.
 13 MR. REVUELTA: Second.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: There's a motion for
 15 ten minutes. We have a second. Any
 16 discussion? No? All in favor.
 17 (All Board Members voted aye.)
 18 MR. TORRE: This is a recommendation going
 19 back to the Board -- to the Commission. We
 20 have a quorum of four. I'm going to be against
 21 this item.
 22 MR. TRIAS: You can vote against it.
 23 MR. COLLER: So let me read E-1 and E-2.
 24 E-1, an Ordinance of the City Commission
 25 granting approval of proposed amendments to the

1 MR. REVUELTA: -- recommendation to the
 2 City that they need to look into Block 34 and
 3 the high density designation, that its east
 4 most parcel facing Ponce de Leon needs to be
 5 carefully studied and hopefully changed to be
 6 in context with the rest of the block and to
 7 protect the south district of -- south of
 8 Santander.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Do we have a
 10 second?
 11 MR. TORRE: Second.
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Venny second. Any
 13 discussion? No? Call the roll, please, on
 14 that.
 15 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?
 16 MR. BUCELO: Yes.
 17 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 18 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.
 19 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 20 MR. TORRE: Yes.
 21 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.
 23 MR. COLLER: So I think we need a motion to
 24 defer -- are we going to hear any more items
 25 tonight?

1 text of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive
 2 Plan, pursuant to expedited state review
 3 procedures and Zoning Code Article 14,
 4 "Process," Section 14-213, "Comprehensive Plan
 5 Text and Map Amendments;" to provide that the
 6 maximum number of floors in the Comprehensive
 7 Plan shall not apply to any Planned Area
 8 Development (PAD) upon City Commission
 9 approval, and to allow an additional height
 10 bonus in return for limiting density for
 11 qualifying PADs within the Central Business
 12 District; providing for a severability clause,
 13 repealer provision, and providing for an
 14 effective date.
 15 Item E-2, an Ordinance of the City
 16 Commission providing for text amendments to the
 17 City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code,
 18 Article 2, "Zoning Districts" Section 2-500
 19 "Planned Area Development," to provide that
 20 upon City Commission approval, the maximum
 21 number of stories in any PAD shall not apply;
 22 and to create a "Height Bonus to PAD Minimum
 23 Development Standards in the Central Business
 24 District" providing additional height with a
 25 limit of density for qualifying properties upon

1 City Commission approval; providing for
 2 severability clause, repealer provision,
 3 codification, and providing for an effective
 4 date.
 5 Items E-1 and E-2, public hearing.
 6 MR. TRIAS: So, Mr. Chairman, your comments
 7 were forwarded to the Commission, and the
 8 Commission decided not to make changes from the
 9 original text.
 10 MR. REVUELTA: This was the item in
 11 which --
 12 MR. TRIAS: It was deferred, the last time
 13 it was before you.
 14 MR. REVUELTA: This is the item that was
 15 basically, for less density, you get additional
 16 height?
 17 MR. TRIAS: Yes, sir.
 18 MR. REVUELTA: Can you remind me, what was
 19 the trade-off? Sorry.
 20 MR. TRIAS: You could get 205 feet, instead
 21 of 190 feet, as long as you kept the building
 22 to 100 units per acre. As you know, Downtown,
 23 the Central Business District, has no limit on
 24 density. That was the policy of the
 25 Commission.

1 help this project or any other project.
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: That was the whole
 3 discussion we had.
 4 MR. TORRE: Right, that I think make sense,
 5 more than this item. This item, to me, is not
 6 the way I would handle it, and for that
 7 reason -- but, again, I'm much in favor of this
 8 project, and I'm not sure it will have that
 9 much effect on any other future projects. So I
 10 will just have that be my similar vote as
 11 before.
 12 MR. COLLER: Just so you're aware, because
 13 we only have four Members, if it's not a
 14 four-zero in favor or against, it goes as --
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Non-recommendation.
 16 MR. TORRE: Again, I don't think it matters
 17 to the Commission, at this point.
 18 MR. TRIAS: I believe that it doesn't
 19 matter. I mean, the reason that they have to
 20 take a vote is because there's a Comp Plan
 21 amendment and the Local Planning Agency needs
 22 to make --
 23 MR. COLLER: Make a recommendation. So I
 24 don't know what's going to happen, but okay.
 25 MR. TRIAS: I don't know --

1 MR. REVUELTA: So you're going from no
 2 limit to 100 units in exchange for 15 feet?
 3 MR. TRIAS: Yes. And some of you disagreed
 4 and that was explained to the Commission, but
 5 the Commission insisted on the same idea.
 6 So I would request a vote up or down.
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any comment?
 8 MR. TORRE: I'll put it on the record, and
 9 I'm sure that everybody will be, you know,
 10 voting whichever. I think the Commission
 11 correctly tried to help the project that
 12 involves this go forward. I'm for the project.
 13 I'm very much in favor of the project. I don't
 14 think there's anything wrong with the project,
 15 and I don't think this will hinder the project.
 16 I am not in favor of decreasing density in
 17 Downtown as a bonus. I think there's other
 18 ways to do that, that are better. So, for that
 19 reason, I will be voting, no, against this
 20 item.
 21 MR. REVUELTA: Your point, Venny, is that
 22 you're not in favor of decreasing density?
 23 MR. TORRE: I'm not in favor of an
 24 incentive to decrease density in the Downtown.
 25 I think there's other ways to incentivize or

1 MR. REVUELTA: But if three-one is a
 2 non-recommendation -- it's going to be
 3 three-one, at least, at best, at worst.
 4 MR. TRIAS: Whatever you want to do, you
 5 should do, and all I'm saying is, I believe, if
 6 you vote, that's all we need to do, and if I'm
 7 wrong, we'll figure it out soon enough.
 8 MR. REVUELTA: I make a motion to approve,
 9 with limiting the height at 200 feet and that's
 10 my motion.
 11 MR. BUCELO: I'll second it.
 12 MR. TORRE: Limiting the height at 200
 13 feet?
 14 MR. REVUELTA: At 205. I mean, 205 is the
 15 kind of thing that I read in Codes and say,
 16 "Who the hell came up with 205?" You know,
 17 it's like --
 18 MR. TRIAS: 205.5.
 19 MR. REVUELTA: Which is even better, right,
 20 205.55. I mean --
 21 MR. TORRE: I think we read the motion a
 22 little different, because I think it's not
 23 clear what you were saying.
 24 MR. TRIAS: Yeah, the issue is that this
 25 is a policy decision by the Commission. They

1 made it very clear that this is what the policy
 2 was and they're asking for your opinion.
 3 MR. TORRE: Yeah.
 4 MR. REVUELTA: Well, if Venny gave his, I'm
 5 giving mine. I'm putting it in a motion.
 6 MR. COLLER: The motion is, on a modified
 7 basis to 200 feet, is that your motion?
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Are you modifying it
 9 to 200 from 205.5?
 10 MR. REVUELTA: Yes -- no. Well, I'm
 11 modifying it from 205.5 to 200. That's my
 12 condition to the motion, 200.
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: You have a motion. Is
 14 there a second?
 15 THE SECRETARY: I'm sorry we need two
 16 motions.
 17 MR. COLLER: We have to go with a first.
 18 MR. TRIAS: There's no second to the
 19 motion at this point.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Then it dies.
 21 MR. REVUELTA: If there's no second, it
 22 dies.
 23 MR. BUCELO: I'll move to approve it as it
 24 stands.
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: As it stands at 205.5?

1 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.
 3 MR. COLLER: So it's a two-two tie.
 4 MR. REVUELTA: And for the record --
 5 MR. COLLER: You have an opportunity, by
 6 the way, to break that tie.
 7 MR. REVUELTA: -- my clarification is that
 8 I'm not opposed to the lowering of the density.
 9 I just don't believe in the 205. It should be
 10 200.
 11 MR. TRIAS: We understand. We understand.
 12 MR. COLLER: And so we need a motion on
 13 Item Number 2.
 14 MR. TORRE: Which is what exactly?
 15 MR. COLLER: E-2. E-2 is the actual Zoning
 16 Code --
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Did you read it into
 18 the record? Yes?
 19 MR. COLLER: Yea, I read it into the
 20 record. The Zoning Code has to implement what
 21 you do in the Comprehensive Plan. So the
 22 Zoning Code matches, I believe, correct me,
 23 Ramon --
 24 MR. TRIAS: It's the same thing, same
 25 information, yes, sir.

1 Is there a second to that?
 2 MR. COLLER: So this is going to be on E-1.
 3 MR. BUCELO: Correct.
 4 MR. TRIAS: The Comprehensive Plan Amendment.
 5 MR. COLLER: The Comprehensive Plan.
 6 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
 7 MR. TORRE: Just can I move the second and
 8 still negate it?
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sure.
 10 MR. BUCELO: I don't know now, to be honest
 11 with you.
 12 MR. TORRE: I'll second it.
 13 MR. REVUELTA: For purposes of voting.
 14 MR. TRIAS: For a purpose of a negative
 15 vote, yes.
 16 MR. TORRE: I'm helping this get through,
 17 yes.
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Any discussion?
 19 No? Call the roll, please.
 20 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?
 21 MR. BUCELO: Yes.
 22 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 23 MR. REVUELTA: No.
 24 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 25 MR. TORRE: No.

1 MR. COLLER: Right.
 2 MR. BUCELO: I'll move it.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Alex moved. Do we
 4 have a second?
 5 MR. TORRE: I'll move -- yeah, second.
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any discussion? No?
 7 Call the roll, please.
 8 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 9 MR. REVUELTA: I'm voting, no, on the
 10 principal of the 200. I don't have a problem
 11 with the density.
 12 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 13 MR. TORRE: No.
 14 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?
 15 MR. BUCELO: Yes.
 16 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.
 18 MR. COLLER: Two-two tie.
 19 MR. TORRE: Do you need another item, that
 20 we need to extend this?
 21 MR. TRIAS: No, Mr. Chairman, we're good.
 22 Mr. Torre, I think we can --
 23 MR. REVUELTA: Mr. Trias, if we need to
 24 spend two more minutes here if you have another
 25 item, for two more minutes, we'll be nice to

1 you.
 2 MR. TRIAS: Sure, whatever you'd like.
 3 MR. REVUELTA: I mean, there's no more
 4 items, right?
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We're going to
 6 defer --
 7 MR. TRIAS: I mean, we can deal with the
 8 Mediterranean. I think that one is really
 9 easy.
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: No.
 11 MR. TORRE: What?
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: No.
 13 MR. TORRE: You're on another planet.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I think at this time
 15 we need to defer. Is there a motion to --
 16 MR. REVUELTA: Defer it.
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: -- to I guess adjourn
 18 the meeting. How do we do that, adjourn?
 19 MR. COLLER: I guess it's a motion to defer
 20 the balance of the agenda to the next --
 21 MR. TRIAS: To a time certain next meeting.
 22 MR. COLLER: Yeah, time certain. I don't
 23 know. Are you going to readvertise it? We
 24 don't have to readvertise it if we --
 25 MR. TRIAS: We probably will re-advertise.

1 favor say aye.
 2 (All Board Members voted aye.)
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you very much.
 4 (Thereupon, the meeting was concluded at 9:50
 5 p.m.)
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1 MR. COLLER: What's the date of the next
 2 meeting?
 3 MR. TRIAS: Do we know the date of the next
 4 meeting? March 9.
 5 MR. COLLER: So the motion should be to
 6 defer the balance of the agenda to March 9th at
 7 6:00 p.m.
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So made. Is there --
 9 MR. BUCELO: Second.
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Everybody in
 11 agreement, yes?
 12 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.
 14 MR. COLLER: If all those could signify by
 15 saying aye.
 16 (All Board Members voted aye.)
 17 MR. COLLER: Any opposed?
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: No.
 19 MR. COLLER: Motion carries.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Is there a motion to
 21 adjourn the meeting?
 22 MR. COLLER: That's always in order.
 23 MR. TORRE: I'll make the motion.
 24 MR. BUCELO: I'll second.
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So moved. All in

1 CERTIFICATE
 2
 3 STATE OF FLORIDA:
 4 SS.
 5 COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE:
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 8
 9 I, NIEVES SANCHEZ, Court Reporter, and a Notary
 10 Public for the State of Florida at Large, do hereby
 11 certify that I was authorized to and did
 12 stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and
 13 that the transcript is a true and complete record of my
 14 stenographic notes.
 15
 16 DATED this 17th day of February, 2022.
 17
 18
 19 SIGNATURE ON FILE
 20 _____
 21 NIEVES SANCHEZ
 22
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