

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item F-2**  
**September 25, 2025**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**  
**Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson**  
**Commissioner Melissa Castro**  
**Commissioner Ariel Fernandez**  
**Commissioner Richard D. Lara**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez**  
**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**  
**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**  
**Asset Manager, Page Perez**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Brenda Moe, Executive Director/Programming Director, Art Cinema**

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Agenda Item F-2 [Start: 11:50 a.m.]

Update regarding the Art Cinema Expansion timeline  
(Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: Moving on to F2, update regarding the art cinema expansion timeline, an item that I put on the agenda that we've been working on for probably the last six or seven years. I'd like to invite our friends from the cinema to please come up. Oh, you would like for...All right. Madam Director, good morning.

Asset Manager Perez: Mr. Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners, good morning. I'm Page Perez, Asset Manager. The art cinema has applied for their building permit and is currently working with the City's Development Services Department on corrections. We're waiting on a current bank statement and commitment letter from their board. They do have a board meeting scheduled for October the 8th. Additionally, there is an environmental inspection that took place today at the current Patio and Things space.

*City Commission Meeting*  
*September 25, 2025*

Mayor Lago: So today they were checking for asbestos, correct? That building was built, what, maybe 15, 20 years ago? 20?

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, about 15, 20 years, something like that. But as you know, DERM requires it.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, I don't foresee it having asbestos. But again, I understand it's a DERM requirement. I'm looking forward to moving forward.

Asset Manager Perez: And I did hear that it did go smoothly this morning.

Mayor Lago: Good, good. So, I'm looking forward to moving forward. And I want to be very clear about this, okay? This is going to cost the city money. But it's not only about money. Because I foresee the expansion of cinema as being something incredibly positive for the community on a cultural front. Just like we're going to lose a great tenant, I think the expansion of cinema is going to make up and not surpass that loss. In parking revenue and also the money that people will spend in the community. At the restaurants, at Books and Books, shopping, enjoying themselves, parking on the street, parking in the parking garage, hopefully, if there's space. But this is an important part of our community. And I'm a big supporter of the cinema. I love the work that's being performed at the cinema. And they really hit all the high notes. When we're celebrating, for example, Black History Month, they have a great movie on black history. Or when we're talking about something like Bastille Day, they'll have something in regard to France. Or when they talk about sustainability, they do great things about the environment. They do a lot of work with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, with private schools. So, I'm proud. I'm proud to have worked with this with Marlin for a long time. It's time. The money's in place, which is my understanding. The commitments are there. I want to see us move forward. I need to be, through the Manager, updated, and the Commission, to make sure there's any roadblocks, if there are any issues. Let's say sometimes, you know, sometimes we forget things, they forget things. Just keep us in the loop. If there are things that are owed, you know, I know we waited two months to be able to access the site, which is okay, it's fine. We got it done today. It was not their fault. It was not our fault. Just the tenant. It was a coordination issue. But we're moving forward. I'd like to see this, you know, move forward as quickly as possible. I think it's a great benefit to the community.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Through the Mayor?

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Just a comment. I think it's; we've been waiting a long time for this. But for some of the folks, because I know we have to be, you know, very wise with the monies that we spend. Just to remind folks, for every dollar we invest into the cultural arts, it yields us seven times the benefit in the business community, for the restaurants, the businesses, the hotels, et cetera, that come and patronize our city. So, I think this is an excellent opportunity going forward. Thank you.

*City Commission Meeting  
September 25, 2025*

Commissioner Lara: Through the Mayor?

Mayor Lago: Mr. Commissioner?

Commissioner Lara: So, I'm not going to echo, because it is obvious and it's self-evident, what the Mayor and the Vice Mayor have been saying about on the economic side, for sure. It's a no-brainer. You know, expanding the art cinema yields demonstrable, tangible economic benefits for everyone in the city. But I will echo and add what's already been said, that from the cultural side of things, and from the sense of community, right? I recently went to see Downton Abbey at the art cinema. There wasn't a spare seat in the house. We need the expansion, okay? I was sitting in the back. They were kind enough to bring a chair for my wife and me to enjoy the movie. It was particularly special because so many residents came in period piece, you know, to try and share a communal experience. So, from the benefits of the driver of the engine to provide, you know, the dollars that the downtown area needs, to elevating the cultural experience that we're so proud to have in the city. There's so much more we need to do. And for the sense of community, because when you go to watch a movie there with your fellow residents, you know, it elevates the experience, and it helps bring you closer to the people that call Coral Gables home. So, I'm a big supporter of it. And I really applaud my fellow colleagues for putting so much support behind this. And there's nothing better than a dollar invested that has a great ROI. And the ROI comes in many different ways. So, thank you. Thank you. And thanks to Marlin sitting out there in the audience for all that you do. We really appreciate you, Marlin.

Commissioner Fernandez: I think the Art Cinema has an incredible board that is beyond dedicated, an incredible team. I had the opportunity to tour during their summer program. And to see so many young people who are interested in getting involved in the industry was incredible. And it's an industry that unfortunately has been dying out here in South Florida. I served for a period of time on the Miami-Dade County Film and Entertainment Board. And we were always trying to find new ways to attract the industry back because we have lost the film industry to the state of Georgia. But having places like the Art Cinema provides a venue for these young people to come and experience it firsthand, to see films that perhaps are iconic, but you can't find unless you're watching them on Netflix at home. And it's not the same experience. So, thank you for the work that you do. I think this is a great project. It's going to continue to expand in our city, on our city's cultural front, something that we have taken great pride in for many, many years. So, I'm happy to support this.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. So, let's move forward. Let's get excited, and let's support the cinema. How many members do you have now? Why don't you come up here? I know I asked you a question but come up here. Let's do it the right way.

*City Commission Meeting  
September 25, 2025*

Brenda Moe: Thank you, Page. I just want to acknowledge...

Mayor Lago: Your name?

Brenda Moe: Hi, I'm Brenda Moe, Executive Director, Programming Director at Coral Gables Art Cinema.

Mayor Lago: Your address?

Brenda Moe: 260 Aragon Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida.

Mayor Lago: Follow the rules for everybody.

Brenda Moe: Thank you. I just want to acknowledge Page. She has been a phenomenal Asset Manager, partner, and just the onboarding process that she's been going through, so I just want to acknowledge her, and thank you, City Manager, for everything that you've done for us.

Mayor Lago: How many members do we have now?

Brenda Moe: We're approaching 2,550, so we hit 2,500 this year, which is a significant milestone for us, having only 141 seats. It's really a testament to how committed this community is in our cultural landscape.

Mayor Lago: So, this is important to me. There was an article written the other day in the Herald, and I'm happy that it got some good exposure, because at the end of the day, we need to grow that membership base. I think it's incredibly important, especially with the work that you're doing. Now's the time. By the way, a great Christmas gift, a great Hanukkah gift.

Brenda Moe: Yeah, thank you for mentioning that.

Mayor Lago: Whatever you support, you give a membership. Give a membership to the museum. Give a membership to the cinema. There's a wonderful opportunity. It's a gift that keeps on giving.

Brenda Moe: Yeah, that's a great mention. Thank you for bringing it up. We love promoting membership and gift cards for the holidays.

Commissioner Fernandez: You bring up a pretty good suggestion, or something that came to mind from what you mentioned. Maybe there's a way to create a multi-tiered membership that includes maybe the Museum and Miracle Theater, so that folks can enjoy all three, and maybe it's a partnership that can be worked out with the three entities.

Brenda Moe: We offer – We have reciprocal membership benefits that we offer our local partner organizations. All you need to do is come to the cinema, say, I'm a member of the museum, and we'll give you member price tickets. Also, I want to mention, all city employees just need to

*City Commission Meeting  
September 25, 2025*

mention that they are employees of the city. This is fire, police, anybody in the city. Our ticket price for members is still only \$8, which is phenomenal. On Mondays, it's \$5, and you get free popcorn.

Mayor Lago: It doesn't even make sense. The whole point is that if you told me there was an organization in South Florida that had 2,500 members that contribute and are proud to contribute and growing, that's something that, again, I brought it up because it's always impressed me and how it continues to grow. That means that you're doing something right. That means that people see the value. They see the value of continuing to support this institution.

Brenda Moe: Well, it's your support over many years that has been wind in our sails, and I just want to say we're really incredibly grateful.

Mayor Lago: Let's expand. That's a good thing.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Brenda Moe: Thank you.