

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com

Meeting Minutes

Parking Advisory Board

Chairperson Javier Betancourt

Vice Chair Gordon Sokoloff

Board Member Ada Holian

Board Member Vicky Rua

Board Member Carlos Xiques

Wednesday, June 23, 2021

8:00 AM

The Board meets the fourth Thursday of
the month.

Special Meeting with Public Participation Via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

The PAB began at 08:08 A.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Vice Chairperson Sokoloff, Board Member Holian, Board Member Rua, Board Member Xiques and Chairperson Betancourt

INTRODUCTIONS OF PARKING ADVISORY BOARD

- New Member Carlos Xique introduced himself.
- New Member Gordon Sokoloff introduced himself and discussed his qualifications and desire to be appointed as PAB Chair. Dr. Sokoloff shared his vision of expanding the PAB's purview; so that it is more of a proactive board which encourages joint action with other Boards.
- Incumbent Chair Javier Betancourt discussed his qualifications and desire to be re-appointed as Chair. Mr. Betancourt explained his current position with CITT and his previous position as Economic Development Director with City of Coral Gables. He assured members and attending public the City's best interest is his only concern.
- Parking Director Kinney reviewed the purpose of the PAB and its role in making recommendations to City Commission and Administration.
- The PAB discussed the need to appoint a board chair for the new term.
- On a Motion by Member Rua, Seconded by Member Holian, the PAB re-appointed Javier Betancourt as Chair and appointed Gordon Sokoloff as Vice Chair.

1 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mrs. Maria Cruz

- Comment #1: Parking Spaces on Malaga and LeJeune. Residents have commented to Mrs. Cruz there are a few on-street parking spaces on Malaga and LeJeune being removed. Parking Dir. Kinney is not aware of any parking spaces in the area removed and will verify.

- Comment #2: Parking Spaces leased to Commercial Lessee at 700 Biltmore Way David William Hotel. Mrs. Cruz referred to the six-month Pilot parking permit program approved at the March 25, 2021, PAB meeting to allow commercial Lessees at 700 Biltmore Way to pay for temporary parking permits (six-month pilot) for its employees to be used during business hours. Residents are concerned the spaces will be allocated for new commerce on the 600 and 700 blocks of Biltmore Way limiting parking for service staff of the buildings on these blocks.

Mrs. Sheryl Gold

- Comment #1: Mrs. Gold resides at 721 Biltmore Way. She found out about the 600-700 Biltmore pilot program when she read the minutes from the PAB meeting of March 25, 2021. She is concerned that these spaces which could be used for residents and service personnel are given up for commercial use. She requested for the PAB to reverse the approval of the program.
 - Chair Betancourt recommended this item be put back in the agenda for the July PAB meeting.
 - The Board requested that the Director to hold off on implementing the Biltmore Way Pilot Permit Parking program until the Board has had an opportunity to revisit the issue.
- Comment #2: Mrs. Gold requested the meter poles on 700 Biltmore Way be removed immediately as they represent a public health concern. She mentioned the request was submitted last year to then Vice-Mayor Lago who asked for the poles to be removed. A contract and purchase order are currently in place. The project includes the removal of meter poles on the 700 block of Biltmore Way, and weather permitting these should be removed by no later than July 9, 2021.
 - Chair Betancourt recommended this item be put on the July PAB meeting agenda to confirm the meter poles were removed and that a temporary solution for capping the meter poles be explored.

2 APPROVAL OF MAY 27, 2021 MINUTES

- On a Motion by Member Rua, Seconded by Vice Chair Sokoloff, the PAB approved the May 27, 2021, meeting minutes.

3 QUARTERLY REVIEW - PARKING SERVICES

- This item was deferred to the July PAB meeting.

4 GABRIEL PAZ (LAZ PARKING) - STAFF AMBASSADOR OF THE MONTH

- This item was deferred to the July PAB meeting.

5 ADA SPACES FOR PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

- Parking Director Kinney explained the Public Safety Building (PSB) Community Meeting Room will be used for public meetings. However, the Garage is not available for public parking. The PAB discussed allowing three (3) parking spaces on Salzedo St. to be converted to ADA parking spaces. The item will have to be approved by City Manager Peter Iglesias. Once approved, the project is to be designed by Public Works and reviewed by the City ADA Coordinator Raquel Elejarrieta. These ADA parking spaces will be converted back to regular spaces after the new Garage opens. The PAB unanimously approved the proposal.

6 DISCUSSION OF RFP FOR GARAGE OPERATIONS AND VALET

- The PAB discussed Centralized Valet contract (Reef Parking) that expires in November 2021. The garage attendant and porter contract will likewise be expiring in FY2022. The PAB discussed the possibility of combining the two contracts so that one vendor manages the garages and centralized valet.
- This item will be discussed with the PAB in future meetings as the Request for Proposal (RFP) is prepared.
- Vice Chair Sokoloff asked that staff explore options to provide residents a discount when using PaybyPhone. Chair Betancourt reminded the PAB they previously suggested a review of options for resident discounts when the parking rate increases were last discussed.
- The PAB discussed how a discount program might work and what controls would need to be in place.
- Chair Betancourt recommended this item be deferred to provide the PAB time to review this item.

7 GABLES STATION TRANSIT CONNECTOR

- The PAB reviewed and discussed Page 2 and 4 of the Parking Management Plan for Gables Station.
- There are approximately 977 spaces in the parking deck of which 40 spaces will be made available to the city as public parking.
- Gables Station “Transit Connector” route- Gables Station will pay for a two-year pilot of a connector service to University of Miami (UM) extension of bus service. The Gables Station “Transit Connector” route will connect the project with University of Miami, Coral Gables Trolley and Miami Dade Transit (Metrorail). The service will be available to all Coral Gables residents, trolley passengers, UM students, transit passengers or visitors to Gables Station free of charge.

8 PARKING AND MOBILITY MASTER PLAN

- There are currently no funds allocated in the FY22 budget to complete this project. Although the Master Plan remains a priority.
- This project is a priority for the Parking Department. Chair Betancourt reiterated the need to push forward with this request sooner rather than

later.

- Vice Chair Sokoloff recommended that PAB be advised about projects that are being proposed (new developments) when they come to the city for review.
- Vice Chair Sokoloff asked if sale of Lot 31 funds will be used for the Minorca garage. Parking Director Kinney confirmed that the sales proceeds would help fund the garage.
- The PAB endorses moving forward with the parking and mobility master plan and to allocate the funding necessary to initiative the plan in short order.

9 OPEN DISCUSSION

- Vice Chair Sokoloff mentioned he appreciates Mrs. Sheryl Gold's concerns. He currently resides and works near the 3400 block of Ponce de Leon. He said there are usually three blocks of empty space during the day. He does not understand why the city is giving twenty parking spaces to a business. He mentioned there are outside conversations that the Allen Morris Company would like to purchase the 3000 block of Ponce for additional commercial development. He would like to see the Parking Dept. become more transparent on issues that affect resident parking.
- Member Rua asked how the city could purchase more land in Coral Gables to convert to parking.
- On a Motion by Member Rua, Seconded by Vice Chair Sokoloff, the PAB unanimously voted to recommend that the City explore the purchase and development of the county courthouse property to potentially be developed into a mixed-use facility that would include a public parking facility. Chair Betancourt suggested we revisit this issue at our July meeting so that the item can be properly noticed as part of the agenda.
- At Dr. Sokoloff's suggestion, the Board asked staff to consider moving the PAB meeting to 5:00 or 5:30 PM on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Staff will discuss with City Clerk's office.
- There will be a special meeting in July to discuss all deferred items including Coconut Gove Dr. and Douglas Rd. "Grande Entrance".
- Mrs. Maria Cruz recommended to the PAB that before they bring any idea to City Commission, it be placed in the agenda and minutes to allow residents a chance to discuss at the meetings. Mrs. Cruz said residents need more control of what is happening in the city and was impressed and thankful to the PAB for allowing time for public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The PAB adjourned at 10:08 A.M.

NOTE