

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-7
April 12, 2022
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Assistant City Attorney, Gus Ceballos

Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias

Senior Sustainability Analyst, Matt Anderson

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-7 [Start: 12:30 p.m.]

Discussion regarding potential amendments to Ordinance 2019-19 relating to Electric Vehicle Charging requirements. (Sponsored by Mayor Lago) (Sponsored by Commissioner Anderson)

Mayor Lago: Moving onto G-7. We are taking lunch in five minutes, if everyone's fine with that. G-7, discussion regarding potential amendments to Ordinance 2019-19 relating to electric vehicle charging requirements, sponsored by myself and Commissioner Anderson. Team, how are you?

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Good afternoon Mr. Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Commissioners, Assistant City Attorney Gus Ceballos. If you recall, back in 2019, we amended this particular code section and we created basically three requirements. So, whenever you have a multi-family building or a commercial building, anything that requires more than 20 parking spaces, two percent of those parking spaces have to be with an electrical charging station. Ready to go – you pull up,

City Commission Meeting

April 12, 2022

*Agenda Item G-7 – Discussion regarding potential amendments to Ordinance 2019-19
Relating to electric vehicle charging requirements*

[Date]

1

you can start charging. Three percent of the remaining balance has to be EV ready. What does that mean?

Vice Mayor Mena: Five total.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: So as of right now, yes, five total. So, two percent charging, three percent EV ready, which basically means the piping is already there, the conduit is already there, the plug could be there. All you need to do is install the charging station and you are ready to go. That's five percent. And then 15 percent needs to be EV capable. What does that mean? The penetration and the slabs are done, the piping is run.

Mayor Lago: The sleeve.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Yes, basically the sleeves are done, and the breaker space is available in the electrical room. You just have to eventually run the line and set it up.

Mayor Lago: So, let's go over this. I wrote this piece of legislation.

Vice Mayor Mena: I remember. I remember. Yes.

Mayor Lago: I have benefited from an electric car and I'm benefiting from it right now when everybody else is paying for gas, it's a great time to own an electric car, along with solar on my house, like Commissioner Anderson does. This is a no-brainer. But as you can see, when we wrote this piece of legislation in 2019, almost three years ago, the proliferation of electric cars and the amount of electric cars that are being rolled out from all different brands now is a priority. The...is a little bit concerning because I know that we don't have the infrastructure across the United States to be able to address this issue, but hopefully this demand will fuel, for example, what we're doing today. I want to see us push the requirements and I'll tell you why. My point is, I want to see us push and make these requirements a little bit more lofty. I want to see more EV ready. I want to see more sleeving, and I want to move on from the 15 percent, and I'll tell you why. Because I've recently gone to charge my car in locations, and guess what, all the charging stations are full. Yes. I go to Aragon to charge my car, sometimes when I'm having a lunch meeting in downtown, and guess what, in the Aragon parking garage they are all full, which is good, it's a good thing. That wasn't the case two or three years ago, remember when we talked about this. So, developers need to understand that they need to provide the necessary amenities for the clients that they are seeking to live in their buildings. And I want to make sure that we can expand on sleeving, we can expand on EV ready, so that if somebody says, I do want to install a charging station, okay, they are ready to go. You don't have to cut through slabs, you don't have to do core drilling or any of that mess. You have everything in place, you just run the conduit.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, we have two percent that is there, three percent ready and fifteen percent EV capable, so that's 20 percent.

Mayor Lago: I'd like to see the capable jump up to more.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: So Mayor, the county is actually doing better now than us.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Ten is the threshold, so if you have more than ten spaces you need to provide twenty percent.

Vice Mayor Mena: Twenty percent of what?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Twenty percent electric vehicles, yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: We have three different categories.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: EV ready, EV capable, right. So, you're saying the county is twenty percent what? – has to have charging stations installed?

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: Yes – and that's for buildings from this year onwards. In the past they had less.

Mayor Lago: So, this is what I'd like to see, anybody can join me in sponsoring if they'd like.

Commissioner Anderson: I will.

Mayor Lago: I'd like to in the next Commission meeting, at a minimum match that, and I'd like to see that presented at the next Commission meeting, with the backup of what other municipalities are doing, not only in Miami-Dade County, but throughout the country.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: This is a county ordinance, so we have that.

Mayor Lago: So, I'd like to work on that with the City Attorney, Matt Anderson, and anyone else through the Manager's office, and any of my colleagues that would like to co-sponsor this. I think at a minimum we should be doing what the county is doing in regard to sustainability. This is no cost to anybody, except for the developer, and they have to provide this, because when I go to charge my car and my car is running out, and I'm doing the sustainable thing, correct, you are asking me to do the sustainable thing, can't put gas anywhere, but if we're not going to put a super charging station here in Coral Gables, like we tried with Tesla and Merrick Park and we are not going to get the cooperation that we need, we need to make sure that I can charge my car, and

City Commission Meeting

when I go to charge my car on Aragon and there are no spaces available, that's a problem. Everybody is buying a Tesla.

Commissioner Anderson: Since 2016, when I got my plug-in hybrid, I was the only one in the area with any vehicle like that, I was an outlier. Within a one block radius, I've got ten now. So, whatever policy we put in, I'd also like a forward-looking policy. You build a rental building, all those spaces are taken, you have to do X number of percent when those spaces are taken. So, you've got occupants in those apartments, you've got to have a forward-going policy, if we are going to be actually tackling this problem in the future in attracting the renters that we want to have come to the city.

Vice Mayor Mena: I guess the only place that I see, sort of a difference is, one thing to me is spaces available to the public. So, if you have a mixed-use building and there is parking for retail, requiring a certain percentage of electric, I think as a city government it makes sense for us to mandate a certain percentage. I think we need to be careful when you get into then private parking for private condo buildings, because to me, at some point you have to let the market dictate that.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: This is a very good report that explains all the issues and has different statistics in South Florida that was prepared by the Regional Compact, which is the group that deals with climate issues, and the county has the best or the highest requirements and Coral Gables is mentioned in the report also, so there is a variety of...to look at and we can provide that.

Vice Mayor Mena: Because the point of what we did previously was in the private developments even, at least twenty percent overall, we have twenty percent, its either current, ready, or capable. So, the infrastructure is already there which was the entire point. Have the infrastructure there, and then they can adjust to their market. Oh, we have more people with electric cars, we are capable already, we just put it in. That was the whole point. That's what I'm trying to understand here, because it seems like we are already at twenty percent in that respect. I want to be clear, that I'm talking now private buildings versus what he's talking about in the sense of, you go into Aragon, or you go into a mixed-use building.

Mayor Lago: It's a two-step discussion. Two different parts to this. And by the way, just so you know, I had lunch the other day with the President of Amerant Bank, and they are making a big presents here in the city. They took offices at 220 Alhambra, very nice offices, and we were catching up a little bit about issues that are forthcoming. He is very interested in sustainability, name is Jerry Plush, he's new. He actually lives in the city, and he says that he wanted to take the four parking spaces on Alhambra in front of his bank, and he says he would install charging stations for free and that those could be open to anybody, you know, first come first serve. You want to charge your car; you can charge your car there. He has charging stations in his building, but obviously, its deep in the building, you have to go into the parking garage to use them. He says,

City Commission Meeting

I'm willing to offer this amenity to residents. Again, it's a marketing opportunity also for Amerant Bank and that's something that I'm going to be presenting to the Commission in the near future. That's something that I would like to see, and we talked about it on Miracle Mile when Miracle Mile was done about putting charging stations in Miracle Mile back then, it never happened. And I think its important that we consider that in the public realm. Mr. Trias.

Planning and Zoning Director Trias: We can provide all the background information for you next time and I think you'll be able to make a decision based on the data.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Basically, I just pulled up the county. So, the county is very similar to ours. Its not twenty percent charging stations. Its twenty percent EV ready. So, the difference between ours and theirs is, ours is two percent charging stations, three percent EV ready, and then fifteen percent capable. So, they have more EV ready than we do, but they have no minimum EV charging station requirement as of today.

Mayor Lago: But the step forward and being ready is a big step.

Vice Mayor Mena: What's the cost distinction, I don't know if you know this right now, but maybe when you come back, to help us understand like what kind of cost are we talking about. I just don't want to impose cost gratuitously on people. I think this is important. I think they should have the infrastructure and then they should respond to their market, as free actors in this market. If it's a minimum cost, then.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: I would defer to the City Manager.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, the biggest issue in retrofitting buildings is getting through the structure.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Manager Iglesias: Its huge. You have to X-ray; you have to do all kinds of things. So, if we look at the sleeving...

Vice Mayor Mena: But you already did that with the capable, didn't you?

City Manager Iglesias: With the capable, so that would be a sleeving.

Vice Mayor Mena: The difference between capable where we are already at 20 percent, and ready, what's the difference and what's the cost associated with that?

City Manager Iglesias: Capable would be having the opportunity to get through the structure, so you have to conduit pipe, get conductors and so forth.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Basically, it would be the cost of the wire, to run the wire through the pipe that's already there and basically whatever plug you put at the end and the breaker.

Vice Mayor Mena: That's it.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: That's it.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay. So, I'm going to add a little bit, because I was on Planning and Zoning when we discussed this item, and my colleague Mr. Behar, at that time did not have an electric vehicle. His view has changed since then as to the amount of charging necessary. What I was pushing for at the time, was not necessarily a charging station, but at least have the plug there, because you can have your own cord. You can decide, if you purchase the car to even have one of those little mats that go on the ground, and it's not breaking the bank for the developer. I'd like to have the plug, but I can also get my own. So, if I'm the renter, I'm not going to wire your building. I'm never going to do that. I'll buy a gasoline vehicle before I do that. But if I have a place there...

Vice Mayor Mena: Or live somewhere else.

Commissioner Anderson: So, what would be the cost for sleeving the entire building when it is under construction?

City Manager Iglesias: That is something that we can look at where we can maybe say, sleeving additional twenty percent or something like this. Where the biggest issue that you have is putting that pipe through and those are really huge and complicated cost. So, if we could sleeve it then you should be getting the pipe through.

Mayor Lago: Like the Manager says, and Commissioner Anderson, if you sleeve then you don't have to come back and bring a demolition crew and demolish, and you'll have to bring a structural crew to fix the hole.

Vice Mayor Mena: To be clear, is what we're calling capable.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Correct.

Mayor Lago: So that's what we should extend. So, listen, what I'd like, just to move on, at the next Commission meeting, Mr. Clerk, I'd like for staff to present us with an ordinance that increases our capability and gives us a little bit more background into what other cities are doing, while minimizing, like what the Vice Mayor said, the cost. We don't want to be cost prohibitive. For example, we are passing legislation that I just proffered getting rid of the cost to install electric

vehicles in your house. We got rid of the cost associated with the installation of permit fees for solar. We want to be cost prohibitive, but if a developer has to penetrate a slab and has to do the structural work in relation to that type of EV installation, the costs are incredible.

City Manager Iglesias: Its beams, post tension members, all kinds of things.

Mayor Lago: They are a lot more expensive than when you can do them while you are doing the actual construction project.

City Manager Iglesias: Sleeving is not a huge expense.

Mayor Lago: So, its not that much of a burden.

Commissioner Anderson: Would it be cost prohibitive to sleeve the entire building, just sleeve it.

Mayor Lago: I want staff to tell me to see how we can do, and I'd like to bring it before the next Commission.

City Manager Iglesias: Which is what we're doing at the Mobility Hub, it will be completely sleeved.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: So that. And the only other thing I'd like to see in there is a forward-going policy. All your rental units have taken all the charging stations, put in X number of percent more or two more, or something more.

Vice Mayor Mena: I just need to understand the cost, because we're still in a space where, but you are now going from capable to ready. I agree with you. If its just the cost of the plug that's not a big deal at all.

Commissioner Anderson: No, it isn't.

Vice Mayor Mena: But now the sleeving of the entire building, what's the cost associated with that? – because again, let's not – what percentage of current cars are electric?

Mayor Lago: Its moving quickly.

Vice Mayor Mena: I know, but one percent?

Commissioner Anderson: Moving very quickly.

Mayor Lago: I have to find out. Can we get that information for next Commission meeting?

Vice Mayor Mena: We are already outpacing the pace, that's not gratuitously, do things that requires significant cost.

City Manager Iglesias: It can be a higher percentage than 15.

Vice Mayor Mena: The Mobility Hub is an outward facing public parking.

Mayor Lago: So, what are the numbers?

Sr. Sustainability Analyst Anderson: The numbers, they are going to increase in the U.S. from 48 in 2020 models of EV's up to over 100 by 2025, so we are seeing a significant increase.

Mayor Lago: In less than three years.

Vice Mayor Mena: But as a percentage of cars on the street.

Sr. Sustainability Analyst Anderson: But as a percentage of cars on the street, I can come back with that number.

Mayor Lago: Can you get me that information? And another thing I would like for you, through the Manager, the Manager's staff is, not only about the people who are renting or buying in these communities. I want to make sure that people who are visiting in the visitor spaces could have one space to charge a car. I go to places and there is no place you can charge your car. I'd like to know, okay, I'd like to charge my car, do you have a space. It can be a space that's used for visitors who have gas, combustion engine or visitors who have electric cars, it all depends on if its taken.

City Manager Iglesias: The Mobility Hub is a special building, but I think what we can do is look at the capable side and see how we can increase that on the private side to a reasonable level.

Mayor Lago: We'll do that at the next Commission meeting. Thank you very much.

Assistant City Attorney Ceballos: Just FYI, its roughly less than one percent currently, but at the current rate of cars being purchased, by 2050, 45 percent cars will be electric.

Mayor Lago: That's in 25 years.

Commissioner Anderson: That's significant.