

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item C – Mayor’s Comments**  
**March 28, 2023**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**  
**Vice Mayor Michael Mena**  
**Commissioner Rhonda Anderson**  
**Commissioner James Cason**  
**Commissioner Kirk Menendez**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez**  
**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**  
**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**  
**Assistant Director, Public Works, Deena Bell**  
**Assistant IT Director, Nelson Gonzalez**  
**Parking Director, Kevin Kinney**  
**Public Works Director, Hermes Diaz**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Suzanne Suarez-Mendizabal**  
**Miles Maronto**  
**Maria Cruz**

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Agenda Item C- [11:20 a.m.]  
Mayor’s Comments

Mayor Lago: Moving onto Mayor’s Comments. I’m going to address the first item. C-1 – update regarding landscaping in Kings Bay. I put this on the agenda because we’ve been dealing with this for some time, and I’ve had multiple visits with our friends in Kings Bay and sometimes due to the location of Kings Bay, they kind of have mentioned to me on multiple occasions that they feel kind of excluded, and I want to make sure that that’s not the case, which I know it’s not, but I can understand their feelings. So, I wanted to have a little quick conversation, not too long, about the landscaping and see what we can do to spruce it up a little bit.

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Ms. Bell: Good morning, Mayor and Commissioners, Deena Bell, Assistant Director of Public Works.

Mayor Lago: May I say one thing first, sorry for interrupting.

Ms. Bell: Absolutely.

Mayor Lago: I want to congratulate you. The flowering plants look incredible. It looks beautiful. The landscaping in downtown has never looked better. Your team is working so hard on that, and I get so many compliments on it. I know that we're moving forward on doing the other areas, along with Merrick Park. I just wanted to compliment you. You're doing a great job. Thank you for that.

Ms. Bell: Thank you very much. We're trying to add color to beautify downtown.

Mayor Lago: I know that Commissioner Anderson was a big push, a big proponent of that, but it just looks really nice.

Ms. Bell: Cheerful.

Mayor Lago: Cheerful. Looks great.

Ms. Bell: Okay. City Clerk, I have a presentation. This will be just a quick presentation to show you, to give you a visual of the neighborhood we're talking about. This is Kings Bay aerial photo. We're at S.W. 144<sup>th</sup> Street and 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the neighborhood is to the east of that. To the north is United States Department of Agricultural site, and part of that right-of-way is in the jurisdiction of Palmetto Bay and part of the right-of-way is City of Coral Gables. Here are some photos, as you're entering the neighborhood from 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue heading east on 144<sup>th</sup> Street. The guardhouse which you're looking at here, approximately 420 feet of that area of the right-of-way is in the Kings Bay Guardhouse Taxing District jurisdiction, okay. So, heading east, you'll see the character, you'll see a chain link fence on the north side of the street, which is adjacent to the USDA site. You'll see a mixture of live Oak trees, Royal Palms. You'll see rocky out-cropping in the swale, because it is luetic limestone is exposed in a lot of the areas. This is the division line between the USD site on the left and the Deering Bay Golf Course on the right. So, this shows you where Coral Gables right-of-way starts. Moving further east, this is the Coral Gables right-of-way portion, which is about 15 feet wide. You can see their views to the Deering Bay Golf Course. This is at the eastern end of the intersection of S.W. 144<sup>th</sup> Street and Permit Drive, by the marina which the city maintains, our department maintains, the landscaping. To the last slide. This just gives you a survey which shows the whole neighborhood. At the north side you'll see the Guardhouse Taxing District, measures about 420 feet of right-of-way; Palmetto Bay is 1495 feet of right-of-way, and Coral Gables is 1170 feet of right-of-way. So, here landing on this last slide, down at the bottom left is our legend. We've done a real quick budget which will show you what new landscaping of this whole right-of-way could potentially cost. Total number would be between

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300 and \$400,000 to add a nice buffer of native plants to beautify and conceal the chain link fencing and add like environmental quality to the neighborhood. Of course, some kind of agreement would have to be made between Palmetto Bay in order to landscape the part that Coral Gables actually has jurisdiction over is 3,000, the total linear footage of the right-of-way is 3,000 feet more or less, so 60 percent of that is actually not Coral Gables jurisdiction at the moment. That's why we're talking about it.

Mayor Lago: So, it's a big portion that's not in the jurisdiction of Coral Gables. How can we work with our neighbor to beautify that area, to bring it up to a certain standard, and also to take into consideration kind of the lay of the land, the pine rock land and that kind of stuff that makes it a little bit difficult, but is there anything that we can do, any type of shrub?

Ms. Bell: Sure. Sure. I was just thinking, this would be a perfect example of where we could use natives that survive the coastal conditions, you know. I can further develop a landscape plan later on that goes into specific species, but we're talking sea grapes, button woods, gumbo limbos, clusias, coastal region.

Commissioner Cason: The Department of Agriculture... isn't that part of that land, Department of Agriculture land, do we need their permission?

Ms. Bell: My understanding is the Town of Palmetto Bay's right-of-way, so I think...

Vice Mayor Mena: But USDA owns the adjacent property, but we're talking about the right-of-way.

Ms. Bell: To the north. To the north.

City Manager Iglesias: After looking at the plat further and doing a deeper dive in the plat, there is a Palmetto Bay, it's Palmetto Bay.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think the only real issue here is the cost associated particularly with portions that are not our city's public right-of-way, right, its Palmetto Bay public right-of-way, and so, I agree with the Mayor that we need to find a way to work with them, but I wouldn't discard the possibility of trying to engage, maybe one of our Congress people here locally in the federal government, has the contact. Maybe the USDA would be willing to participate somehow and help defer some of the costs, you never know. I know it's Palmetto Bay's right-of-way, but it's worth engaging with them and seeing maybe if they are willing to beautify the public right-of-way right outside their property a little bit; and again, just try to get as many people on board as possible. I saw from your picture, some of that is Deering Bay, right on the golf course portion there, right.

Ms. Bell: The top right portion of the slide where its colored green, that's the area that fronts the Deering Bay Golf Course.

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Vice Mayor Mena: Got it. That's our portion.

Ms. Bell: That's our portion.

Vice Mayor Mena: Got it.

Mayor Lago: Can we do something. Commissioner, you wanted to say something, right, Anderson.

Commissioner Anderson: I've biked along that route a number of times and look at that fence and say, can we do something more, not in the way of shrubbery but some shade trees along that sidewalk would make it a walkable environment. So, I think it would be greatly beneficial, but maybe the USDA would not be so adverse to planting a little closer to their fence and that way that's federally protected. There are some gumbo trees that put a tag on them for removal, right on the other side of Ludlum, across the intersection there. Those are potential trees too that could be relocated there or within the part that has the gumbo that's a little bit under the weather within Kings Bay. So just some ideas.

Vice Mayor Mena: You might also want to engage with the club itself. Obviously, we're talking about the portion that's in the public right-of-way and trying to cover that fence which is the prime. If they had some mature landscaping on their side of the fence would also help with the sort of overall feel of that stretch. So again, the more people you sort of might be able to get engaged the better, easier it might be to defer some of the cost so that it's not as significant of an undertaking and we can get it all done. Again, they might tell you to...but it's worth trying, you know. You never know if they'd be willing to do some stuff on their side. You get the USDA to get involved, you get Palmetto Bay and then us, and then between the four of us we kind of have something that works.

Mayor Lago: Can we do something, because I know we have a long agenda here. Can we schedule a meeting next week also with maybe one representative from Kings Bay. We've met with them last week here, but can we meet with them and then try to get a representative from Palmetto Bay, try to get a representative, like the Vice Mayor said from the neighboring USDA property just to have a conversation through the Manager's office, obviously. Just have a conversation, see how we can work collaboratively together, again, we have to budget for these things, to be honest with you, I don't want to pay for the other city's landscaping. I want them to come in and let's try to do this together because I think the residents in this neighborhood deserve it, especially at least in the entrance part where you saw the sidewalk, where you could really see the chain link fence, which is old. It's an old chain link fence and the neighborhood deserves a little bit of attention on that front. Can we work, Deena, through the Manager's office with Miles, or whoever he designates or maybe Miles wants to join us and then we can try to get somebody from USDA, just a fact-finding mission, just have a conversation. We can do it in my office.

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Vice Mayor Mena: Who's the Congress person, Salazar? – is it Maria Elvira Salazar? It is right, yes.

Mayor Lago: She's very available.

Vice Mayor Mena: Maybe somebody in her office or district office here locally will be able to join and they might have, you know.

Mayor Lago: You can also speak to the Senator.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes, that would be great. My point is just getting her office involved, get somebody from Deering Bay, get somebody from Palmetto Bay and let's see what we can do.

Mayor Lago: Just come up and then you can fill a card after. Thank you for joining us.

Ms. Mendizabal: The issue with that whole fence on that side is not only the fence, the barbed wire fence, it's the barbed wire on the top, you know. The people – we all live there, and we go every single day, and we feel like we're adjacent to a prison, you know. It's a very bad kind of look and just like a buffer and something that, you know, makes us feel like we're like the other gated properties in the Gables you know.

Vice Mayor Mena: How is that not subject to Palmetto Bay's code. We can't just put barbed wire on our fence. We've got to figure that part out, because obviously they are travelling under a certain set of rules that are not what everybody else travels under, I'm assuming because it's the federal government that owns the property. So again, I think that's a good way to kind of approach, again, her office. I don't know if you're going to get somebody from the USDA, you could try, but I think if you get somebody from her district office to say, hey guys, I understand you're the federal government and you have your own sort of rules, you have barbed wire on your fence, but our residents shouldn't have to be looking at what looks like basically a fence from a jail really. So, maybe we're not going to convince them to remove that, but if you put like really mature landscaping at least really block it from sight, so that it's not something that they have to live with.

Ms. Mendizabal: Apparently, they had put some kind of vine to cover it and that vine died.

Vice Mayor Mena: Not a good solution.

Ms. Mendizabal: So, we have the remnants of the dead vines hanging in certain areas. It's just not appealing.

Vice Mayor Mena: Of course. We understand.

Mayor Lago: Like the Vice Mayor said, we've got to get together in a room everybody. We've got to work collaboratively to see how we can fine them; we are going to have to budget for this. It's

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going to be a multi-jurisdictional effort. You want to say something. Will you do me a favor, will you fill out a card, a speaker card.

Mr. Miles Maronto: Just to address a few of the issues. We've been engaged with the USDA, we've been engaged with the Village of Palmetto Bay, that is not an issue. They are great neighbors; we've worked with them on a number of things. Give you a quick sample: City of Coral Gables, along with Kings Bay, moved that 1500 linear feet of chain link barbwire prison-like fence, as it's been described, ten feet into the right-of-way, so we could have an exit lane coming out of Kings Bay, right along the parkway, because we had to create three lanes for the guardhouse. So, we've already done that. We have a wonderful history with them; and then on top of that, Gables constructed a sidewalk in the parkway, okay, in that right-of-way, which is Palmetto Bay, that's been long existed. The USDA had that fence forever, we've talked to them about that, it's not within their budget, they would never replace it, it is what it is. So, we want to beautify and landscape Coral Gables parkway coming in. Another example under the NRP program, under the Neighborhood Renaissance Program, the city, former Mayor Cason, you remember, we planted the oak trees in the parkway there, that's also one of the existing areas that we're already talking about. So, what we're talking about is just coming up with a solution that you know it's a Coral Gables entranceway and ultimately, the 3,000 linear feet that Deena refers to, we probably should have spoken before, I apologize, I was with Hermes, and explaining that it's only the first 1,500 feet coming in. So, it's really half of that, because the residents want to maintain the golf course east of it, on the eastern portion of the parkway on Miller Drive. So that cuts that virtually in half right there. So, we're talking about something a little bit different. Recently, before Brook had left and Bob Boberman, they put the cat combs in at the end of Mitchell Drive Parkway, linear running along the golf course on Permit Drive, and that wasn't a huge budget thing, because that was put in without us even really having much input at all. Where is really the eyesore that the residents have always cried for is, make this welcome to Coral Gables, the parkway. But we have great friends in Palmetto Bay. I work closely with Mayor Cunningham regularly; we've worked on zoning issues and a variety of things. They have no interest in that little, so much so that we moved it with their permission before, literally the fence. So, I think this can move forward right away. This goes back to meeting with, remember Alberto Delgado, right, Director of Public Works, back in those days, and we had a plan, okay, how we going to make this entranceway, this main thoroughfare parkway into Coral Gables, more Coral Gables-like. And City Manager since, and it's always been put on the backburner, we've had many meetings in City Hall. In fact, Brook had drawn up a plan, it was eight or ten times less the amount that's represented here. We just want to get started, get it done and move forward. That's all we're interested in.

Vice Mayor Mena: Thanks for the information. Actually, sounds like they are really focused on the non-Gables part technically, but I hear you loud and clear, which is obviously, if they want to keep the vistas of the golf course, then you're kind of cutting the amount and the cost in half

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roughly, so that makes it easier to hopefully get done. Either way, I think it would be good to bring in all the parties, maybe you just focus on that part, which is the western part, right.

Mr. Maronto: Yes, the western.

Vice Mayor Mena: And see what they are willing to do.

Mayor Lago: So, let's schedule for, not this week, but the following, if possible, through the Manager's office, okay.

Mr. Maronto: Wonderful. And if I can while I'm here, just want to take just a moment and share, you have no idea, Vice Mayor Mena, how appreciated, respected, and loved you are by your constituents. I can tell you that universally people have a great appreciation for your leadership, your wisdom, and your ability to listen to residents, leading based on listening and non in government knows better, and that will forever be appreciated, always be grateful. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Mena: Thank you. Appreciate that. Thank you very much.

Mayor Lago: Thank you Deena, great work. I look forward to the meeting.

[Note for the Record: The Mayor took another item out of turn before resuming Mayor's Comments]

Mayor Lago: Moving onto C-4. Thank you. Final item before we go have lunch. C-4 is my item, I put it on here for discussion. Its update on EV charging infrastructure, electronic billboards and interactive kiosks. So, I'd like to hear from staff, where do we stand. What's the next step moving forward. How are we going to address the issue of electric charging stations in the downtown and what we're doing to implement fast charging stations. You want to address that after the break.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, Commissioners, our ACM is handling that. We're looking at all the alternatives with Tesla and so forth. We are analyzing all that, including IKE, and we will be providing a recommendation in the second meeting in May.

Mayor Lago: Okay. If that's the case, Mr. ACM, if that's the case perfectly fine.

[The Mayor resumed the C items]

Mayor Lago: Moving onto item C-2. Try to cover these Mayor's Comments quickly as possible, so we can be done for the day. C-2 is an update from staff regarding security camera installations in North Gables. I was at Rotary Park this past Saturday meeting with some residents. We really got to step up at Rotary Park. I had a nice conversation with the Manager, the landscaping there is just horrible, horrible, in bad shape, maintenance. Some of the gates – some of the things that I found there in regard to garbage, we've really got to step up in regard to that park. I think that's

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one of the parks that we need to install a camera on. I'd like to understand where we are in regard to the parks now; security camera installation, what are we doing in North Gables, how are we?

Mr. Gonzalez: Good afternoon, everyone, Nelson Gonzalez, Assistant IT Director.

Mayor Lago: Thank you for being here.

Mr. Gonzalez: I prepared a small presentation, very small, only a few slides, just to give you an update on the project. Basically, we have done three blocks out of the nine blocks that were assigned to us. The blocks were big, based on the amount of cases that have been reported for Code Enforcement violations regarding illegal dumping. So, we did the 200 Block of Zamora has 18 cases, the 200 Block of Phoenetia that has 16 cases, and the zero Block of Antilla that has 15 cases in a one-year period. These are the cameras that we picked, they are very small, so it's not very intrusive, they are hybrid so they do solar, and they can also be backed up with 110 power. Some areas we don't really get that much solar, so we are assessing where we are going to need to go hybrid.

Mayor Lago: They are working 24 hours a day, right.

Mr. Gonzalez: Yes, they are. They record motion, but these areas are very high traffic. There's a lot of vehicles going through and a lot of foot traffic as well. So, in some cases we are going to need that 110 power. So far, they've been working well. We've had to swap a couple of batteries, but we may have to move some of them around. This is how they look, the views themselves. Omega pixel camera, they have night vision. We picked the city street lights, so the light can help us identify a person at night. Seems to be working well, but we haven't caught any incidents.

Mayor Lago: The cameras are there, so now people are starting to realize the cameras are there.

Mr. Gonzalez: In our experience, they are a very good deterrent; people see the cameras and they don't do these things.

Mayor Lago: And we put up signs saying there are cameras there now?

Mr. Gonzalez: I'm sorry?

Mayor Lago: Have we put up signs?

Mr. Gonzalez: No, we have not put-up signs.

Mayor Lago: We should, we should put them on the posts.

Mr. Gonzalez: Okay.



Mayor Lago: Notifying people that that area is under surveillance for illegal dumping and if we catch them, you'll be fined.

Mr. Gonzalez: They've been out there since the 21<sup>st</sup>, they were installed before that, but they've been fully functional, and they are reporting back to the Community Intelligence Center; staff at the Community Intelligence Center was trained on how to access them and identify them. Like I said, we haven't had any incidents. That's what we have done for now. You said that you want Rotary Park.

Mayor Lago: We passed legislation, from my understanding, we passed it a few meetings ago saying that we wanted to have cameras in every single park. I think it was a resolution or something, I don't remember. If we didn't, I'd like to bring it to the next Commission meeting.

City Attorney Suarez: I'd have to double-check, Mayor, whether it was an actual resolution.

Mayor Lago: I don't remember, it's been a long meeting, but I'd like to bring it to the next Commission, please, help me draft legislation that would require a camera, especially after what I saw in Rotary Park, I need a camera there immediately.

Commissioner Anderson: That's an excellent idea.

Mayor Lago: Yes, please. And a camera in every single park, that way – I know it's tough, but we have to do it, got to do it. I know it's going to cost some money.

Mr. Gonzalez: Yes, it's all doable. We'll get it done.

Mayor Lago: But it's something that will be a deterrent. I don't want to put on the record everything I saw this weekend, but I want to make sure the residents are with me, it will bring a sense of relief and I think that we need to really start stepping up on this.

Mr. Gonzalez: Yes, we'll do that one next.

Mayor Lago: This is a great job, by the way, I want to commend your team for doing a really good job and we are going to expand it to nine sites, right.

Mr. Gonzalez: Yes, that's the plan, we have nine blocks. We've done three out of nine.

Mayor Lago: I will be driving there this weekend, those sites, so please send me an e-mail where those cameras are located, I want to see the neighborhood around them.

Mr. Gonzalez: Will do.

Mayor Lago: Thank you sir.

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Mr. Gonzalez: Any other questions?

Mayor Lago: No, I don't. Thank you. I look forward to seeing the other nine cameras up.

Mr. Gonzalez: Thank you. We'll keep working on it.

Mayor Lago: Item C-3, I'm going to defer to the next Commission meeting. I know everybody is tired – C-5, Mr. Kinney. Something I have been looking forward to for years, show me the goods.

Mr. Kinney: So, just a little bit of history. Probably four or five years ago, the Commission approved a master planning process for wayfinding and signage throughout the city. It was supposed to review branding and a lot of different things. Of course, then shortly after that the pandemic hit, and that million-dollar capital project was kind of put on hold. Along the way we have done several ad hoc improvements, one of them is we started replacing all of the old white and blue residential zones with the standard old off-the-shelf signs with more decorative signs and decorative posts. One project we just finished is what Matt is showing you, we have just completed a short two weeks ago, all of the trolley stops have been upgraded with the new signage, that was just over 300 parking spaces, 300 signs that were replaced and then the project that is currently ongoing is all of the city facilities. The first of these should be installed, but this is the refurbished sign. The quality signs that we installed in all of our facilities about 20 years ago, but obviously, after 20 years they were faded.

Mayor Lago: Taking them down and painting them again.

Parking Director Kinney: Yes. The first ones are all downtown and those should be showing up on the street soon, but we still have this CIP project to do wayfinding and branding throughout the city, and actually city staff has met on that, and that's being run out of the CIP office in Public Works and one of the issues that's come up is the downtown street sign, and in fact, I think now would be the right time and Hermes can speak to that and where we're going.

Public Works Director Diaz: So currently, and subject to obviously the direction of the Commission, we normally would have a number of the signs that are damaged, so we are in the process of repairing them, but long term, I think, can we put the picture back, long term, I think that's been the standard in the city, we want to keep it that way, and the idea is to over time uniform them, so that's what they will ultimately look like. Those were actually installed on Ponce and Navarre, and there's quite a few that are like that, and then the plan is to start making them look consistent. You know there's no consistency in the font, there's no consistency in the size of the texting.

Mayor Lago: Some of them, Mr. Diaz, are probably 30-40 years old.

Public Works Director Diaz: And some of them have gotten hit as well, so absolutely. So, the idea is to eventually start going through them and that will be, I think, the ultimate look.

Mayor Lago: When?

Public Works Director Diaz: We have about 300 of them, approximately, if the idea is to change them all, that could take probably over a year.

Mayor Lago: When do we start?

Public Works Director Diaz: Well, we can start immediately.

Mayor Lago: Look at the ones on the street that are wrapped around the street poles.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Mayor Lago: The connection points are rusted.

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

Mayor Lago: It doesn't look for city standards. I need to understand when are we starting to do this? When is the Manager moving forward on this?

Public Works Director Diaz: If the desire is to, we can start right away.

Mayor Lago: Let me ask you a question. What do you need from us? Do you need a resolution to move forward?

Public Works Director Diaz: No. Not at the time.

Mayor Lago: I'll do this. Mr. Vice Mayor, I'll make a motion to start moving forward with the guidance of the Manager, replacing all the signs in the downtown that are missing, damaged, and look outdated, after 40-50 years of not being replaced.

Commissioner Anderson: I'll second it, but I have a question. For the streets in the downtown area, about LeJeune Road, you certainly go from that type of signage down to the little cement.

Public Works Director Diaz: The ones on LeJeune, I think that's the borderline between the commercial and the residential, so we were not planning on removing, or eliminating the floor concrete monuments. My understanding is its historical. That was not the idea.

Commissioner Anderson: I know. I'm just bringing it up, because for visibility of people entering the downtown district, would we want a consistent fabric all the way up to LeJeune Road, in the areas that we have this? Just a question. Think about it.

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Mayor Lago: Let's see what's staff's recommendation is.

City Manager Iglesias: I think this has been traditional in downtown, the monuments have been tradition in more the residential areas, it was our intent to keep that balance the same.

Commissioner Anderson: I understand, but that's not the residential. At that point you're already turning the corner for the business district, that's why I brought it up.

Commissioner Menendez: My question is, describe downtown, what is the area that's downtown?

Parking Director Kinney: Its actually every business district, so even when you go down south, if it's a business district it would have signs like the ones.

Commissioner Menendez: May I make a suggestion, that you do it in phases, that you do Central Business District first, Miracle Mile, Ponce and then branch out.

Mayor Lago: Do an amendment.

Commissioner Anderson: Very good amendment.

City Manager Iglesias: We intended to do Central Business District first and then branch out, that was our intent, that's what we have discussions on.

Commissioner Cason: The ones that are most damaged and the ones that are wrapped around the worst.

City Manager Iglesias: Those are the ones we're going to start with, those that are actually damaged, and then go onto start replacing them all, because replacing those signs is probably \$3-\$400,000. So, from that budget, we start in the downtown area, replace those that are damaged, and then go to that standard, which is that pole with the typical sign, and at that point store a number of those, so if anything gets damaged, we can replace them quickly.

Mayor Lago: For example, you want to look at something that looks horrible. Look at the circle at Merrick Park. Go and look at the circle at Merrick Park and you'll see the way those signs are on a little pole, slanted, sign is falling over, you can barely read the street sign.

Parking Director Kinney: That was the picture that was at the staff meeting when we did this. The one at San Lorenzo and Ponce is very sad.

Mayor Lago: I have a motion on the floor with a second.

Commissioner Menendez: As amended.

Mayor Lago: As amended.

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Commissioner Anderson: As amended and think about this as you're driving along LeJeune, looking to turn in, and the cars are blocking the little cement monument in the Central Business District, you can't see the cement monument at all, can't see any street signs at all. So, the next phase let's talk about changing those out. Okay, we're ready for voting.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor before we vote, we have a member of the public requesting to speak on the item.

Mayor Lago: Perfect.

City Clerk Urquia: Maria Cruz.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Cruz, thank you for joining us.

Ms. Cruz: Mrs. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road, Coral Gables, Florida. C-5 is where we are. I would like to see some sign-fixing in the residential areas, the white little name, I don't know what you call them, name signs on the ground. Some of them are in really bad shape, okay. They need to be repainted, redone, whatever it takes. I know that we want everybody to go downtown, but we also need to be taken care of, okay. So that's about signs, okay, and the traffic signs, I mean, some signs – you know that there is something written on them, but until you get right on top of it, you cannot see it, because the paint is almost gone, okay. So, there's plenty of signs to be taken care of, not just downtown. Okay.

Commissioner Cason: Mr. Manager, I understand that signs are being painted, right...

City Manager Iglesias: Yes.

Mayor Lago: And we're also...

City Manager Iglesias: We're maintaining them.

Ms. Cruz: That's okay, I'm waiting because I have something in the next one.

Mayor Lago: I'd like for her to finish her comments.

Ms. Cruz: No, no, I finished about this one – done.

Mayor Lago: The next item.

Ms. Cruz: The next item, I'm going to...

Commissioner Anderson: But we have these white monuments on cycle, time cycle, they come through and they change them.

Mayor Lago: Also, we are replacing all the stop signs, we are replacing everything in that contract with that entity that needs to replace signs.

City Manager Iglesias: Those are the 25 mile per hour speed signs. We bought them, and they will be installing them. Stop signs, Mayor, and those kinds of traffic control signs are Dade County. We are advising Dade County on it.

Mayor Lago: We have public comment, we have a motion, amended, anything else?

City Clerk Urquia: All in favor.

All: Aye.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. I'm looking forward to all these things coming up. Thank you so much. C-6, cut through traffic on San Sebastian. Mr. Diaz, what is the plan?

Public Works Director Diaz: Can you put the photo up, Billy. It looks like a driveway, but it isn't. It is the T-turnaround for the dead-end. The idea that we have is to shortcut four feet of that asphalt, and then extend a hedge roughly three-foot high, connect it all the way up to where the landscaping is at the end.

Mayor Lago: Perfect.

Public Works Director Diaz: And that's to prevent people from getting through.

Commissioner Menendez: [Inaudible]

Mayor Lago: This is the one that abuts the hospital.

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

Mayor Lago: I was in that neighborhood last week; I was walking in the neighborhood. They are saying that the people are taking down that guard gate.

Public Works Director Diaz: They recently damaged it.

Mayor Lago: They recently damaged it. They are going over the sidewalk with the car. We've been talking about this for probably about a year and-a-half, two years.

Public Works Director Diaz: And we actually done, we actually repaired all that gate, all the columns, everything was looking great, we put landscaping throughout, and then it's kind of like the water is following the hole.

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Mayor Lago: Can we just finish this up already and...

Public Works Director Diaz: Absolutely. The plan is to do the...and the digging and you have to remove about two feet of soil to make sure its planted, that should be done by next week; and then Deena's thing, we'll do the planting within a month or less.

City Manager Iglesias: Revision of that T-turnaround...[Inaudible]

Mayor Lago: Do me a favor. Please notify the residents in the neighborhood that this is happening already, because I met with them last week.

Public Works Director Diaz: Will do.

Mayor Lago: They are all very appreciative and they are kind of desperate for this to happen. Moving onto C-7, the final item on the Commission. Thank you, Hermes. I appreciate it.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, before you move on.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Maria Cruz wanted to speak on the previous item.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Cruz.

Ms. Cruz: Mrs. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. Some of the answers I heard already, but the neighbors would like to know number one, I should show you all the texts I got recently here. When is that gate that was broken by the guy that was speeding down the street or whatever, when is that going to be fixed; and the second one, when is this cut through this grass going to be finished? – and I think he already said they are working on it, but the gate I didn't hear a time.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, we don't have a time yet. I already sent them a picture of the temporary measures that were put in within, basically 24 hours of the request to me, and the pictures were shared with the residents.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Diaz.

Public Works Director Diaz: A contractor went out there already. I think they removed a piece that needed to be repaired. I have to touch base with my staff and ask them what the ETA is.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.

Ms. Cruz: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Moving onto item C-7. This is a simple one. I'd like to add another board to the list of our boards, if the Commission is interested. I've spoken to several HOA board members who  
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told me that they would like to be able to get together at the city facilities with maybe one city staff member, whoever the Manager designates, so that those HOA's can get together and have a conversation about maybe best practices, what are they doing, what are they seeing in their neighborhoods, what's happening on the waterway, and I think it's an opportunity, this was brought to me by Gonzalo Sanabria, and I was with him walking in Gables by the Sea, and a lot of the residents said look, we just want to be able to have an opportunity, we'll designate a person from every HOA to be a representative and they'll meet once a month or whenever the boards meet and they can have a conversation with Police, even though I know that the Chief consistently meets with all the HOA's constantly doing that, but they want to have just an opportunity to have their voice be heard before the Commission, obviously the minutes will come to us and they can talk about issues that are pertinent to their area, bounce things off from the HOA's, the Police Chief, Fire Chief and City Manager and City Attorney.

Commissioner Cason: Just a question. What's the definition of an HOA? What about a condo association.

Commissioner Menendez: That's what I was going to ask.

Commissioner Cason: I form a group of four houses and say, I'm the president of my neighborhood association. If you're not careful about this, people will say that they represent X group.

Mayor Lago: What I would like to do is, I'd like to take the list of HOA's that we have in the city that are reputable HOA's, you have Coco Plum, you have Journeys End, you have Gables by the Sea, Kings Bay, I know I'm leaving out a bunch, escapes my memory, it's been a long meeting, but just have those entities formalized and be part of a board where, again, all they're doing is just sharing information amongst themselves and having an opportunity to speak.

Vice Mayor Mena: Another way to skin it may be, just think about it, is to have you want to call it like a South Gables Board or something and just have us appoint someone from each neighborhood, kind of like we do, so you appoint somebody from Coco Plum, somebody from – and maybe you don't tie it to the HOA, because that runs into sort of challenges that he's describing.

Mayor Lago: The reason why I said the HOA, Vice Mayor, was because then they have a voice, they have a voice on that board, each of these organizations have a voice and they can say, what is the concern. If its 15-20 people in a board meeting, again, what does it hurt to just listening to them and they are able to interact with staff once a month for an hour, and I think it's an opportunity for the minutes are part of our meeting, unlike the BOA, it's not quasi-judicial, it's not a BOA, or Planning and Zoning.



Vice Mayor Mena: Maybe there's a way to otherwise particularize it to those neighborhoods so that you have sort of control about the scope of...

Commissioner Menendez: How legally can we do that?

City Attorney Suarez: So Mayor, one consideration is that if we create another board, all our boards of course are subject to the Sunshine Law, which means not only does it mean these meetings need to be noticed and open to the public, but then, the members of that board cannot speak to each other outside of the Sunshine about matters that may come before them, so they may not want that. Perhaps...

Mayor Lago: If they don't want, come to the meeting, they don't come to the meeting. I'm not going to force anybody.

City Attorney Suarez: But if they are board members, they would be subject to the Sunshine. It's not about coming to the meeting. So, I think perhaps there could be a different – I mean if they want that, we could certainly proceed, if that's the will of the Commission to create another board, but they would be subject to the Sunshine Law, so they cannot speak about matters that would come before that board outside of the Sunshine. If what they want is informational sessions, maybe that's something the Manager can schedule to have factual informational sessions on a regular basis.

Mayor Lago: That's not what they want. They want something a little bit more formal. Like the Vice Mayor said, you are part of any other board Sunshine applies. So, to me, we shouldn't be scared of the Sunshine. We have Sunshine meetings all the time. I think that if you come to a board meeting, you sit down, for example, Gables by the Sea, Kings Bay, you have a conversation, what are you dealing with. You can have a round table discussion about what they are facing in their community, and they can listen to what the city is offering. One of the things that they were very intrigued by, they want to understand how certain areas of the city have tied into our Public Safety Building with the cameras. Also having a conversation with Kings Bay in regard to their entrance and what we can do, and potentially what we offer, yes, it's expensive, it costs money, but again, it's another amenity that ups the level of public safety. So those are the things why I brought it up. We don't have to decide today. I just want to put it on your radar, have a conversation and we can talk about it at the next Commission.

Vice Mayor Mena: My point again, I think to address Commissioner Cason's concern. I think if you particularize it to the neighborhoods and say that the HOA of each of the following neighborhoods will appoint someone from the neighborhood as its whatever, appointee to whatever you call this board.

Commissioner Cason: You are going to have people representing an apartment house that may have 400 people to say, I want to be, we own our homes. So, it could be very large. You have to define it very carefully.

Vice Mayor Mena: The devil is in the details. I understand what the goal is...

Commissioner Menendez: I want to chime in. Sunshine – homeowners association sends one representative; they can go back to their homeowner’s association members, and they can talk freely. That representative outside of the meeting can’t talk about with another member of the board.

City Attorney Suarez: With another member of the board or send e-mails.

Commissioner Menendez: Gables by the Sea and Gables Estates, right.

City Attorney Suarez: Or send e-mails or text messages.

Commissioner Menendez: The purpose is for them to be able to talk group to group here and go back to their members freely to do it, so Sunshine won’t prevent them from talking to their own neighbors.

City Attorney Suarez: Correct.

Commissioner Menendez: I think it’s a wonderful idea for the main reason that our city, you think it’s a small city, but we cover a lot of land, a lot of space. We have South Gables, North Gables, and sometimes the further away you are from City Hall, the less you feel connected to what we’re doing here, and I think if this is a way to bring, make the residents from other parts of the city feel more engaged, I think that’s a great step in the right direction. So, I’m very supportive. I was contacted by a couple presidents of condo associations, but they would like that to happen as well if perhaps once we resolve and how to move forward with the homeowners association, I think maybe the next step is see what we could do with the presidents of condo associations, because we’ve had legislation here where we try to reach out to condo residents and it’s a challenging task, but if we engage them on the front end, whenever we need them to be made aware of things that we’re trying to accomplish, we already have that line of communication open. So, I can see two tracts and the first one, obviously, I’m supportive of the idea behind this. I think we need to engage and bring people together and it’s a step in the right direction.

Commissioner Anderson: I’m supportive of the board but in the meantime, perhaps we could fast forward it by getting them, allowing them to use, for instance, some of our facilities like we’ve done with other groups and let them have brainstorming sessions and they can get the ball moving exchanging ideas, and perhaps have the City Attorney also make sure that they all understand the

limitations that Sunshine Laws do put on their interactions if they want to meet in between scheduled meetings.

Mayor Lago: Let's think about it and we'll come back with something. You have any comments before we adjourn.