

## COMPLIMENTS OF JOAN L. BAILEY &amp; ASSOCIATES

CITY OF CORAL GABLES (305) 358-2829

1 CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
 2 PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING  
 3 VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT  
 4 CORAL GABLES CITY HALL  
 405 BILTMORE WAY, COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
 CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA  
 WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2008, 6:00 P.M.

5 Board Members Present:  
 6 Tom Korge, Chairman  
 Eibi Aizenstat, Vice-Chairman  
 Robert Behar  
 Jack Coe  
 Jeffrey Flanagan  
 Javier Salman  
 10 City Staff:  
 11 Eric Riel, Jr., Planning Director  
 Walter Carlson, Assistant Planning Director  
 Scot Bolyard, Planner  
 Elizabeth Hernandez, City Attorney  
 13 Carlos Mindreau, City Architect  
 Joe King, Zoning Technician, Lead  
 Dulce Conde, Zoning Technician  
 Jill Menendez, Administrative Assistant  
 Kevin Kinney, Parking  
 16 Also Participating:  
 17 Mari Molina  
 Burton Hersh  
 Laura Russo, Esq.  
 Jose Gelabert-Navia  
 Victor Damian, Esq.  
 Richard Garcia  
 Roxcy Bolton  
 Elizabeth Stone  
 Lisa Maroon  
 Zeke Guilford, Esq.  
 Kimball Woodbury  
 Shirley Ornstein  
 Robert Roark  
 Wayne Block  
 Yvonne Harrison  
 25 Mario Garcia-Serra, Esq.

1 THEREBON: 2008-11-12:17  
 2 The following proceedings were had:  
 3 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Start the meeting.  
 4 Would you call the roll, please?  
 5 MS. MENENDEZ: Eibi Aizenstat?  
 6 MR. AIZENSTAT: Here.  
 7 MS. MENENDEZ: Robert Behar?  
 8 MR. BEHAR: Here.  
 9 MS. MENENDEZ: Jack Coe?  
 10 MR. COE: Here.  
 11 MS. MENENDEZ: Jeffrey Flanagan.  
 12 MR. FLANAGAN: Here.  
 13 MS. MENENDEZ: Pat Keon?  
 14 Javier Salman?  
 15 Javier Salman.  
 16 MR. SALMAN: Here  
 17 MS. MENENDEZ: Tom Korge?  
 18 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Here.  
 19 First item on the agenda is approval of the  
 20 Minutes of the Meeting of October 8th, 2008.  
 21 MR. BEHAR: Motion to approve.  
 22 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Moved, any second?  
 23 MR. COE: Second.  
 24 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Second. Any discussion,  
 25 corrections, additions?

3  
 1 Hearing none, we will take the roll.  
 2 MS. MENENDEZ: Robert Behar.  
 3 MR. BEHAR: Yes.  
 4 MS. MENENDEZ: Jack Coe.  
 5 MR. COE: Yes.  
 6 MS. MENENDEZ: Jeff Flanagan.  
 7 MR. FLANAGAN: Yes.  
 8 MS. MENENDEZ: Eibi Aizenstat.  
 9 MR. AIZENSTAT: Abstain, I was not here.  
 10 MS. MENENDEZ: Tom Korge.  
 11 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Yes.  
 12 Are we going to swear in the witnesses  
 13 first or should we do that before each  
 14 presentation?  
 15 There is only one presentation, that  
 16 requires the swearing of witnesses, right, the  
 17 first one?  
 18 MR. RIEL: However you would like to do  
 19 it.  
 20 MR. COE: Swear them now.  
 21 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Well, first, we have a  
 22 Streetscape presentation.  
 23 How long is this going to last?  
 24 MR. RIEL: About ten, fifteen minutes.  
 25 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Ten, 15 minutes

4  
 1 presentation for Streetscape, so let's do that  
 2 first, and then we can swear in the witnesses.  
 3 MR. RIEL: The only reason not to swear  
 4 them in is because somebody might come in  
 5 later.  
 6 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Right, and let me remind  
 7 everybody, anybody who wants to testify on Item  
 8 Number 6, regarding the plan, a Mixed-Use Site  
 9 Plan Review and Vacation of Public Alleyway, you  
 10 need to sign up over here.  
 11 Hello.  
 12 MS. MOLINA: Good evening. Are you guys  
 13 ready for us?  
 14 Good evening, everyone. My name is Mari  
 15 Molina.  
 16 I am the executive director of the Business  
 17 Improvement District of Coral Gables.  
 18 As you know, the BID represents all the  
 19 merchants and property owners of the central  
 20 core of the business district, and we are here,  
 21 this evening, to do a brief presentation after  
 22 about nine months' worth of work.  
 23 I am going to explain the process shortly.  
 24 And I want to introduce Burton Hersh, who  
 25 is the chairman of our Streetscape Advisory

1 Committee, but you all should have this piece,  
2 hopefully we got this to you.

3 Anyone here in the audience who wants one,  
4 I left some up here at the desk with Jill.

5 Basically, if you look at the front page  
6 here, and look at the names, we were facilitated  
7 by Dr. Chuck Bohl, over at the U.M. School of  
8 Architecture.

9 On the team was Burton, our chairperson.

10 We had Jaime Correa, David Plummer on the  
11 transportation and engineering front. We had  
12 Matt Bukolt, Glenn Pratt, John Fullerton, Jorge  
13 Hernandez.

14 And then we had some retail folks, Kerry  
15 Newman, with Koniver Stern and two of our own  
16 members who served on the committee.

17 Basically, the group looked at kind of the  
18 global best practices of what would make our  
19 City and our downtown the best that it could  
20 possibly be.

21 We did not look at what had been done in  
22 the past, in terms of all the different  
23 scenarios. At one point there were three  
24 alternatives.

25 Basically, we looked at global best

1 practices and started from scratch.

2 With that, I would like to turn it over to  
3 Burton, so he can go over the design  
4 recommendations.

5 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Thank you. Let me just  
6 note, for the record, that Javier Salman has  
7 arrived.

8 MR. HERSH: Thank you very much. This --  
9 the BID through its Streetscape Committee, after  
10 studying, as Mari Molina mentioned, the  
11 different aspects, did come up with a design for  
12 its vision of Miracle Mile, and also Giralda,  
13 and we looked at lots of precedents, like this  
14 being Aix en Provence in France.

15 I'm just going to go through this very  
16 quickly.

17 But we looked at a lot of very successful  
18 streets, and we also went through numerous  
19 designs, alternate designs, in order to come up  
20 with our final recommendations.

21 We looked at the street sections, for  
22 example.

23 And one of the things that we noticed, for  
24 example, on Miracle Mile, currently 80 percent  
25 of Miracle Mile is dedicated to vehicular

1 transportation and 20 percent for pedestrian.

2 So we are talking -- one of the things we  
3 tried to do is get closer to a 50-50 ratio for  
4 the street, and this is actually the current  
5 right-of-way, which is actually 75-25.

6 Actually this is Giralda, excuse me.  
7 Giralda is 75-25 and 80-20 for Miracle Mile.

8 And we looked at the street section of what  
9 we need to handle people walking back and forth.

10 We looked at various street furniture,  
11 treatments, again, some of the things that have  
12 been successful in other places.

13 I am going to kind of go through this  
14 quickly.

15 One of the things that we did want to  
16 accommodate, we wanted to try to get kiosks and  
17 some uses more on the right-of-way that we  
18 thought would help animate the street.

19 And because, in the end, what we see of  
20 Miracle Mile is a place where people want to  
21 come down and walk, a destination.

22 And, in order to do that, we thought having  
23 outside dining areas on the street, some  
24 examples like this in other cities, something --  
25 you know, maybe something not quite a hard

1 structure, but a soft structure with fans,  
2 color, again, to animate the street and these  
3 are just some.

4 Another problem that we saw with the  
5 Streetscape, our final recommendation was to go  
6 to parallel parking.

7 One of the things that happens with  
8 parallel parking is that it puts a greater  
9 burden, because there's just less spaces. We  
10 are going to lose about 80 to 90 spaces and you  
11 have situations like this, these blank  
12 connections between parking and the street, and,  
13 you know, these connections could be enhanced  
14 and that, we believe, would help to mitigate the  
15 loss of parking.

16 For Giralda Avenue, which is Restaurant  
17 Row, and this is just the 100 block, the BID has  
18 recommended a shared Streetscape.

19 This is currently Giralda, and as you can  
20 see, it is mostly street. It is difficult for  
21 just two people to walk by. This is a planned  
22 view of it. It is currently 25 pedestrian and  
23 75 percent for vehicular traffic.

24 Our recommendation is a shared street  
25 system.

9

1 A shared street, according to the best  
2 practice for shared streets, is a street that  
3 has actually no elevated curb.  
4 So, instead of having an elevated curb, you  
5 would just see a material line. Everything is  
6 at the same level.  
7 And what we would do is we would use bowers  
8 to mark where cars would be, and at certain  
9 times we could cut off the street and just --  
10 and make it something that can be used for an  
11 event, or you can have just normal parking, and  
12 you would mark it with bowers and things and  
13 outside dining areas.  
14 This is a rendering of what we believe it  
15 could look like.  
16 On Miracle Mile, the solution that the BID  
17 picked, was to go to parallel parking, to widen  
18 approximately twelve feet each side additional  
19 space, to give approximately 20 to 22 feet,  
20 which could be used for the public, and would  
21 end up being something like a 60-40 ratio.  
22 These were just some sketches.  
23 One of the things that you will notice is  
24 that we are going to need some help from  
25 Planning, because there are some zoning issues

10

1 that currently would not be allowed to be done.  
2 We would also like to have some uses that  
3 could be, like we could have at night, like  
4 maybe music venues for more adult, maybe later  
5 night types of activities, which we believe,  
6 would support the Mile as a destination, a place  
7 where people would want to come and take a walk  
8 and spend some money.  
9 These are some of our -- we hope that we  
10 can get some type of reaction from the Board  
11 conceptually in support of what we want to do.  
12 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Thank you. Is there any  
13 action we need to take, at this time?  
14 MR. RIEL: No, Mr. Chair. The BID is just  
15 looking for any comments, suggestions.  
16 There's no formal recommendation required.  
17 They just want to come to the Planning  
18 Board prior to going to the Commission and  
19 presenting the plan.  
20 MR. HERSH: Well, actually, we would like,  
21 maybe, something, a feeling of the Board. Do  
22 you think we are going in the proper direction?  
23 We understand we are not here for anything  
24 official, but --  
25 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Is there a motion to

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1 support the presentation?  
2 MR. BEHAR: I make a motion to support it.  
3 I would like to have some comments.  
4 If we need to open up for us, I make a  
5 motion to support the presentation.  
6 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Okay. Is there a second  
7 and then we can have a discussion?  
8 MR. AIZENSTAT: I would second that.  
9 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Second.  
10 We have a motion and a second.  
11 And go ahead with comments and discussion.  
12 MR. COE: Mr. Chairman, if I may, with  
13 reference to the Giralda one, I have no problem  
14 with, but I am most concerned about Miracle  
15 Mile.  
16 Taking away parking spaces, I think, is a  
17 recipe for disaster, when you also include that  
18 with parallel parking.  
19 Most people in Florida do not know how to  
20 parallel park, and that is pretty obvious.  
21 And what you are going to have, is, you  
22 know, we lost a lane when they put the median  
23 in, and what you are going to have, which you  
24 have now, is two lanes in each direction and the  
25 inner lane, before you get to the parking

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1 spaces, will now be perpetually stalled with  
2 cars, trying to figure out how to parallel  
3 park.  
4 That is problem number one.  
5 MR. HERSH: May I respond?  
6 MR. COE: Problem number two --  
7 Okay, if you want.  
8 MR. HERSH: You know, we -- I appreciate  
9 what you are saying, and it is certainly true.  
10 To mitigate that, what we have done is the  
11 parallel parking that we're anticipating is an  
12 elongated parallel parking, and someone can  
13 just, actually you don't have to back into, you  
14 go to it frontwise.  
15 And, in addition to that, and to the type  
16 of parking that we have being much simpler, the  
17 angled parking is extremely dangerous,  
18 particularly when backing out.  
19 If you're trying to back out of an angled  
20 spot and you have someone to your right, you are  
21 completely blind.  
22 Not only do we believe that the parallel  
23 parking spaces are somewhat easier to -- not  
24 quite as easy as the angled space, but not  
25 something that you have to back into, but far

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1 more safer in terms of backing out.  
 2 MR. COE: But, the other point I have is  
 3 the loss of parking spaces.  
 4 MR. HERSH: Right.  
 5 MR. COE: I suppose the trade off is people  
 6 are going to go into these garages, and they are  
 7 going to park in the garage.  
 8 MR. HERSH: Yes.  
 9 MR. COE: That is your intent, right?  
 10 MR. HERSH: Well, if -- that is the intent,  
 11 and there are several things that they are doing  
 12 to help that along.  
 13 One of them is maybe adjusting the time  
 14 that you can spend at a space on Miracle Mile.  
 15 The other thing to mitigate that is to have  
 16 connections that are truly friendly and easy to  
 17 use.  
 18 MR. COE: What are you going to do, then,  
 19 to enhance security in the parking garages?  
 20 Every woman I know who lives in Coral  
 21 Gables refuses to use any of the parking  
 22 garages, because they feel that their safety is  
 23 in peril.  
 24 MR. HERSH: You know, one of the great  
 25 things about Miracle Mile is it has a central

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1 valet system.  
 2 You can park your car at Tarpon Enc and you  
 3 can pick it up at the other end of Miracle Mile,  
 4 and it is really a great service.  
 5 People that have that fear, they can use  
 6 it.  
 7 MR. COE: So, your answer is they can valet  
 8 park at \$10 or \$20 --  
 9 MR. BEHAR: No, no, it's not --  
 10 MR. HERSH: No, it is not \$20.  
 11 But, in addition to that, I think that we  
 12 have to work at, you know, trying to fix it.  
 13 That is a good point.  
 14 MR. COE: Okay.  
 15 MR. BEHAR: Burton, I want to commend you  
 16 guys for taking on this study. I am very  
 17 pleased to see this.  
 18 About ten years ago, I had the option or  
 19 the pleasure of working with Einstein Bagels and  
 20 Starbucks, and I went to the City and we were  
 21 trying to get outdoor seating, and at that time  
 22 it was completely denied.  
 23 We -- I had to go back to my client and  
 24 tell them I had to carve 625 square feet of  
 25 space to create outdoor seating.

15

1 Today, the exact corner is one of the most  
 2 used outdoor space in the whole Mile, so I am  
 3 very pleased.  
 4 This past Saturday night I was -- at 10:45  
 5 I came over to both Houston's -- and it was  
 6 closed. They did not want to serve, it was  
 7 already 10:45.  
 8 And I went across to Morton's, and they  
 9 also were closed.  
 10 We are losing a lot of clientele that are  
 11 heading over to Mary Brickell Village.  
 12 MR. HERSH: Yes.  
 13 MR. BEHAR: And I think we are making a big  
 14 mistake by not letting those restaurants go a  
 15 little bit longer, have the possibility to stay  
 16 open.  
 17 I do agree with you that we are in a  
 18 climate, that for the most part of the year we  
 19 have a very nice outdoor, especially in the  
 20 evening, sitting area.  
 21 And the best way, in the Champs-Elysses in  
 22 Paris, and in all the cities throughout the  
 23 world, the best examples where you have those  
 24 situations where you promote to have outdoor  
 25 seating. I am very encouraged, and I would

16

1 support, even the reduction of the parking, to  
 2 be able to have more space to sit.  
 3 I think that we are moving in the right  
 4 direction.  
 5 Again, I commend you guys, and I will  
 6 support this process.  
 7 MR. HERSH: Thank you so much.  
 8 MR. AIZENSTAT: Did you go ahead and take a  
 9 look at Las Olas Boulevard, at the way they do  
 10 their parking? Because it seems very similar  
 11 to what you want to go ahead and do.  
 12 MR. HERSH: We did look at Las Olas, and  
 13 actually, there was one slide --  
 14 MS. MOLINA: We had some slides.  
 15 MR. HERSH: We have some -- I rushed  
 16 through it because I was so conscious about  
 17 taking the Board's time.  
 18 And if you look, actually we can give you  
 19 -- we will present a copy for the Board of our  
 20 presentation.  
 21 We did look at Las Olas -- we did look at  
 22 Ft. Lauderdale. We looked at South Miami, and  
 23 actually, we had a fantastic photograph of  
 24 before and after of South Miami, which was just  
 25 breathtaking, in the difference.

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1 Presumably that can be done without great  
2 difficulty.

3 The other observation I would make is that  
4 you might want to consider the possibility of  
5 using pavers on Miracle Mile as well.

6 I know you would still have the curb,  
7 because you don't want people walking into  
8 Miracle Mile.

9 But, the pavers or cobblestones, something  
10 to that effect, though they are a little more  
11 costly, would slow down the traffic some more,  
12 which would make it more conducive to  
13 pedestrians as well.

14 MR. HERSH: Actually, we have a couple of  
15 things that we want to do to slow traffic down a  
16 little bit.

17 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Yeah. Great plan. I like  
18 it. A big improvement.

19 MR. HERSH: Thank you so much.

20 MR. SALMAN: Burt, I want to commend you  
21 and the BID for a very well thought out concept.

22 It takes into account a lot of the issues  
23 that are going to be critical to getting it  
24 passed, one of which is that reduction in  
25 parking.

I think that the solution lies, as you brought out, in the connection of the street back into the parking in a way that is user friendly, well lit, and I think the increase in activity of people using that will help mitigate, also, some of the concerns people have about having to park in a lonely parking garage if everyone is using it.

The use of the valet, and I think that -- saw your presentation on line, the creation of certain valet stations throughout the design really will address a lot of those issues. So, I commend you, and I am 100 percent behind you.

MR. HERSH: Thank you so much.

MR. FLANAGAN: I think it's a great plan. I was concerned about the parallel parking, just with the amount of traffic that uses Miracle Mile.

I know the parallel parking on Sunset Drive in South Miami really slows the traffic down during rush hour.

If you spend any time there you will see what a log jam is created, but when I hear you say you are going to do elongated spaces, that will make it much easier to get in and out of.

1 hopefully that will help a little bit.  
2 MR. HERSH: Thank you. And I do hear the  
3 comments on the parallel parking and reduction,  
4 and there are some things, additional things,  
5 that we can do to present, not just to this  
6 Board, but to help with those concerns.  
7 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Well, did you look at the  
8 alternative of no parking on Miracle Mile?  
9 MR. HERSH: We did, but we were afraid to  
0 walk outside after that.  
1 CHAIRMAN KORGE: Because, you know, there  
2 is absolutely no parking on Miracle Mile,  
3 actually, in the long run, it might work much  
4 better.  
5 MR. SALMAN: I beg to differ. In the  
6 developing of a Streetscape, you want to have  
7 the activities of the cars moving and parking,  
8 and also that those cars park create a sense of  
9 security for the people walking.  
0 If they are walking next to moving traffic,  
1 that becomes a little bit more daunting on the  
2 street that has the kind of traffic flow that  
3 Miracle Mile has.  
4 On Giralta, it's a lot less intense,  
5 especially if you go through the expense of

21

1       treating the surface of the street with  
 2       cobblestones and creating a whole lot of  
 3       barriers, it's going to be very unfriendly for  
 4       cars. But it is in a section that you could  
 5       easily fill with people, whereas that is not the  
 6       case necessarily with Miracle Mile.

7       MR. HERSH: I think it adds a little  
 8       animation, and again, we have to work with  
 9       parking.

10       I think if we adjust some of the time that  
 11      you can stay at a meter, because what you want  
 12      to do is, you want to provide a way that people  
 13      can come, park, run into a store, pick up  
 14      something and leave. That is what those are  
 15      for. We can do things that, you know, adjusting  
 16      the time, I think that would help mitigate that  
 17      loss.

18       MS. MOLINA: I just want to add one more  
 19      thing, as a lay person, sitting through these  
 20      sessions with the design team, including David  
 21      Plummer, who looked at a lot of these questions  
 22      for us, I learned the fact that slowing traffic  
 23      is a good thing, not a bad thing.

24       If we look at Sunset Place, and I grew up  
 25      there, it went from diagonal to parallel.

22

1       And on the weekends, when I go there now,  
 2       when I actually go to do shopping, traffic slows  
 3       down to let the pedestrians through because you  
 4       feel, obviously, the pinch there in the street.

5       So one of the things we do from the  
 6       merchant's perspective in the commercial  
 7       district, we want to slow down traffic. We  
 8       don't want to be just a raceway thoroughfare for  
 9       cars coming through, you know, east-west.

10       So, when we talk about congestion being a  
 11      bad thing, it truly not necessarily is a bad  
 12      thing, especially for our retailers and our  
 13      pedestrians who feel comfortable crossing the  
 14      street.

15       MR. BEHAR: One more question, when do you  
 16      foresee implementing, you know, this becoming a  
 17      reality?

18       MR. HERSH: Next Tuesday, we are going --  
 19       MS. MOLINA: On Tuesday we go for the first  
 20      time publicly before the Commission to present  
 21      this.

22       We have been working with all the City  
 23      departments on this.

24       When we met with Public Works, basically  
 25      their estimate is the earliest we could start

23

1       any construction would be summer of 2011, given  
 2       all of the work that needs to be done in advance  
 3       of the project.

4       We would take great pains to make sure we  
 5       would mitigate any interruptions to business,  
 6       you know, do a plan, and Burton can speak more  
 7       to that, but that's basically the --

8       MR. HERSH: One of the things is, we have  
 9       available monies already that are dedicated for  
 10      this work. We have to start to spend that money  
 11      in order to keep it, so we can start the design  
 12      process now.

13       And, I think by going to the Commission,  
 14      that will set free the ability to start working  
 15      on some actual drawings.

16       MR. BEHAR: Is that State money or --

17       MR. HERSH: It's County, I believe.

18       MS. MOLINA: County. The County GOB bonds  
 19      that we have earmarked.

20       MR. HERSH: We would like to start getting  
 21      the design going.

22       CHAIRMAN KORGE: We have a motion on the  
 23      table, so would you call the roll, please?

24       The motion is recommendation in favor of  
 25      the proposal to Streetscape the two streets we

24

1       are talking about.

2       MS. MENENDEZ: Jack Coe?

3       MR. COE: Yes, subject to my previous  
 4       concerns. I will wait to see if you can handle  
 5       those.

6       MS. MENENDEZ: Jeff Flanagan?

7       MR. FLANAGAN: Yes.

8       MS. MENENDEZ: Javier Salman?

9       MR. SALMAN: Yes.

10       MS. MENENDEZ: Eibi Aizenstat?

11       MR. AIZENSTAT: Yes.

12       MS. MENENDEZ: Robert Behar?

13       MR. BEHAR: Yes.

14       MS. MENENDEZ: Tom Korge?

15       CHAIRMAN KORGE: Yes.

16       Thank you very much for the presentation.

17       The next item on our agenda is Application  
 18      Number 06-08-070-P. Mixed-Use Site Plan Review  
 19      and Vacation of Public Alleyway at LeJeune Road,  
 20      Greco and Granello Avenues.

21       Anybody who would like to testify in  
 22      connection with this, and has signed up to  
 23      testify, why don't we have them stand up now and  
 24      swear them in right now, if you would.

25       (Thereupon, the prospective witnesses were