

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-7
December 7, 2021
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

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-7 [Start: 3:10 p.m.]

Discussion regarding outdoor dining
(Sponsored by Commissioner Anderson and Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: G-7.

Commissioner Anderson: G-7 – I just wanted to touch upon this now. I reached out to the Chamber, asked them for their input, as far as the outdoor dining. They were very excited about having it extended and made the respectful suggestion that we extend it through the end of May, to be able to capture Mother’s Day. I walked along Andalusia and it would shock you guys to see that I did that but saw a wonderful experience going on with outdoor dining there, as well as along the Mile. A good percentage of the people that were dining were outside as opposed to inside, and I think we should foster that going forward to help out our businesses.

Mayor Lago: Yes. Listen, when we implemented this legislation last year, or this year, excuse me, was it last year or this year? – last year.

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Commissioner Fors: Last year, I think.

Commissioner Anderson: Going by too quick.

Mayor Lago: Yes, the year's gone very quickly. It's been a hit. One of the things that when I sponsored the legislation and I know that the Vice Mayor or Commissioner Fors has some concerns, which I've been working on, was the issue of the restaurants that are not using the dining, and I have already removed two at the request of other people in the neighborhood, saying listen, they are not maintaining the trees, they are not maintaining the outdoor area. Let's make sure we pick this up and go back to our parking spaces, and that's worked out well. So, if you see any restaurants that are not using their outdoor dining, and those spaces could be returned back to the community as regular parking spaces. Please, let's have a conversation with those restaurants and say, obviously, you don't need the outdoor dining, we are ready to move forward. Obviously, that's also going to be dealt with when we start implementing the downtown clean-up, which is going to be something.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I agree with Commissioner Anderson. I'd like to extend it to June 1st and capture the cooler months; and then in the process those who are not maintaining it, we will remove that.

Mayor Lago: Not a problem. And also, by the way, those that are using it, make sure they maintain it, that the trees are watered, the barricades are clean. Again, Zucca and Fiola are exceptions, because what they have put out there are like mini structures that are beautiful. Zucca looks like an Italian villa in Italy somewhere, you know, its beautiful. But ask some of the restaurants when you drive by, when Code Enforcement drives by, listen, if the trees are not green, time to replant the trees or get rid of your outdoor dining experience if you are not using it, because again, we are a reflection of what we are allowing to be used in the downtown. So, let's keep up the City Beautiful mantra.

City Manager Iglesias: We will do that Mayor.

City Attorney Ramos: So, we'll bring an item back in January to make that happen.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay. Thank you.