

# City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
[www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com)



## Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 30, 2020

8:30 AM

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

## School Community Relations Committee

*Chairperson Ariel Fernandez*  
*Vice Chairperson Sam Joseph*  
*Board Member Erin Anding*  
*Board Member Winnie Chang*  
*Board Member Sandy Dimitris*  
*Board Member Carmen Manrara Cartaya*  
*Board Member Cecilia D. Slesnick*  
*Board Member Mary Snow*  
*Board Member Sharon Watson*

In accordance with City of Coral Gables Code Section 2-30, Chapter 286.011 Florida Statutes, Governor DeSantis' Executive Order 20-69, as extended by Executive Orders 20-112, 20-123, 20139 and 150, 20-179, 20-193, 20-246, the School Community Relations Committee will be holding its Meeting on Friday, October 16, 2020 VIRTUALLY, commencing 8:30 a.m., wherein all interested persons may be heard via the Zoom platform used by the City for live remote comments.

Members of the public may join the meeting via Zoom at (<https://zoom.us/j/91704745794>). In addition, a dedicated phone line will be available so that any individual who does not wish (or is unable) to use Zoom may listen to and participate in the meeting by dialing: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 918 7698 5231.

To speak on an Agenda Item, please "Raise your Hand" or send a message to one of the meeting hosts using the Zoom Platform. If you joined the meeting via telephone you can "Raise your Hand" by pressing \*9.

## CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 8:35 a.m.

## ROLL/QUORUM CALL

**Present:** 9 - Chairperson Fernandez, Vice Chairperson Joseph, Board Member Anding, Board Member Chang, Board Member Dimitris, Board Member Manrara Cartaya, Board Member Slesnick, Board Member Snow and Board Member Watson

**Attachments:** [List of Attendees.docx](#)

### A. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

School Community Relations Committee Meeting of October 16, 2020.

**Attachments:** [Cover Memo.docx](#)  
[Published SCRC Oct. 16 Minutes.pdf](#)

This Matter was approved with amendments.

### B. PUBLIC HEARING

- Estelle Lockhart: expressed appreciation of advocacy efforts on behalf of Carver Elementary school item. She would like to know if there can be follow-up to the item and asks that this agenda item is requested to go on the school board agenda for MDCPS.
- Wendy Long: Thanked Ariel for support on the WAWA item; Restates disapproval of the project.
- Joshua Goodman: Thanked Ariel for support on the WAWA item. Would like to get the agenda item on the MDCPS agenda; Believes the schoolboard has a right to protest the building of a WAWA.
- School Board Member Maria Tere Rojas: Disappointed in lack of notification in regard to Carver's principals. Believes notification should have been sent to the superintendent as well. Encourages members to sign up for public comment on the MDCPS board meeting.
- Franzella Guido Chacon: Believes that the zoning law is the problem. Believes that gas station seems to be an industrial land use and not a commercial use.

**C. ONGOING BUSINESS**

**C-1 Discussion on Wawa Development Project by Carver Elementary & Middle School  
(Facilitated by Ariel Fernandez, Chair)**

**Attachments:** [CAO 2020-003 Bahamian Village Site Plan.pdf](#)  
[Signed Resolution 2015-303.pdf](#)

**Attachments:** [C00-3264 - Bahamian Village LLC and Debra Sinkle Kolshy - 11 21 2 Mailing List.jpeg](#)  
[Verbatim Transcripts - CCMtg May 24 2016 - Agenda Item I-2 - Status up](#)

- Chair Fernandez updates SCRC members on the City's Commission Meeting saying that the Commission called the project a 'done deal'. He believes that the Mayor saying that 'the parents' concerns were laughable' was extremely concerning and inappropriate.
- Vice Chair Joseph: States that from the commission meeting he gathered that the committee should be getting a notification on developments affecting Coral Gables schools. He says that he is very disappointed in government actions and highly encourages voting.
- Chair Fernandez states that the SCRC's second resolution did pass in City Commission. Says he is disappointed that the City Manager and other members of the Commission were against passing the resolution.
- Chair Fernandez asks Naomi if the commission expects for staff and the committee to come back to them with a detailed resolution for notifications. Naomi states that resolution 2-3 did pass- says that they are not expecting it to come back to the Commission. Committee will receive notification when notification is otherwise required by the zoning code to be sent to the school board and the school site. She will be drafting the final resolution. Says that she does not want to create any false expectations- for example, they will not receive notification for any and every building project.
- School Board Member Mari Tere Rojas asks SCRC members to send her their emails so that she can forward any notification from the City.
- Chair Fernandez opens this item up for discussion:
- Committee Member Manrara-Cartaya says that she believes this situation is helpful for learning purposes.
- Vice Chair Joseph says that this will be effective in the future in terms of neighborhood communication.
- Jamie Torrens says that the most serious concern is the absence of communication with the school board. Says that this is not the first time this happens and believes there should be a clearly defined responsibility for the developer or the city to provide notification. Says that notification should be sent to the superintendent of schools- suite 912; school board members should also receive a copy.
- Iraida Mendez-Cartaya says that she communicated with the City the moment she was made aware. Believes a process needs to be created.
- Discussion of the WAWA entrances are discussed between committee members.
- Chair Fernandez brings up the original plans for the site location.
- Naomi brings up that the original project required notification and that this project did not require notification because of the settlement agreement which is why the notification. States that she believes that the area was not re-zoned.
- Franzella Guido Chacon says that she believes that since gas pumps are not deemed industrial, it creates a loophole which allows it to be deemed commercial. Naomi points out that it is most common for gas stations to be deemed commercial for their ubiquitous nature and common need.
- Estelle Lockhart asks if there is any way to test the air the children will be breathing.
- Chair Fernandez states that the City Manager was asked to attend this meeting and did not.
- Estelle Lockhart briefly mentions the history of the historical designation of the area.

Motion made to recommend to the City Commission that any future notifications to the School District be sent to the Superintendent's Office located at 1450 NE 2nd Ave, Suite 912, Miami, FL 33132 with copy to the School Board Member to insure that it is going to the correct office and to send them by certified mail to ensure arrival. Moved by Board Member Anding, seconded by Board Member Manrara Cartaya. Motion passed.

Board Member Manrara Cartaya motioned to amend resolution for notification to also be sent to the principal of the school or schools that are affected. Board Member Anding seconded, amendment to the motion passed.

**C-2 Teachers Awards (Facilitated by Sam Joseph, Vice Chair)**

Attachments: [Teachers Awards Report 2019.docx](#)

- Vice Chair Joseph mentions that last year was the premier for these teacher awards and that it was held in collaboration with the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce mentions that although the City paid for tables last year, there was still a teacher and her family standing the entire event. Solanch states that the City only purchased seats for the individual teachers and their principal, which is why additional guests were standing. In the future Vice Chair Joseph would like to expand scope of event to include administrators.
- List of teachers is provided by the school district and are nominated by their peers.
- Board Member Snow offers gift certificates to restaurants in Coral Gables as prizes to the winning teachers.
- Other options will be looked into for future 2021/2022 events.

Motion is moved by Vice Chair Joseph to participate in honoring teachers through the Teacher of the Year Awards this year in any way possible in participation with the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce. Seconded by Board Member Anding, motioned passed.

Motion for both the Teach of the Year and the Rookie Teacher of the Year to be recognized this year via a certificate instead of a plaque. Moved by Board Member Watson, seconded by Vice Chair Joseph. Motion passed.

Motion moved by Vice Chair Joseph to look at other options for the Teachers Awards in 2021/2022, seconded by Board Member Manrara Cartaya. Motion passed.

**C-3 Rules on Speakers (Facilitated by Carmen Manrara Cartaya, Committee Member)**

Motion to add a summary of the School Community Relation Committee's charter to the agenda under the Public Hearing portion of the agenda, along with a note saying that all public comments will be limited to two minutes and will be provided with a ten-second reminder upon closing of their time. Discussion items will be limited to 10 minutes. Time limits can be extended at the Chair's discretion. Moved by Board Member Manrara Cartaya, seconded by Board Member Watson. Motion passed.

**C-4 General Updates (Facilitated by Solanch Lopez, Secretary)**

- Next agenda there will be a vote for the position of chair as they are limited to a one year- term limit.
- December meeting cannot be held outdoors but there are two location options where boards can meet in a safely. Only a physical quorum is needed for the meeting to take place. Other members and the public would join virtually.

**D. NEW BUSINESS**

**D-1 School Community Relations Committee Newsletter (Facilitated by Ariel Fernandez, Chair)**

- Discussion is had on options to include information on schools in existing city publications.
- School Board Member Mari Tere Rojas mentions she has a monthly newsletter. Solanch mentions the possibility of linking to it on the city's newsletter and will discuss with the Communications Director.
- Solanch will connect the Communications Director with the School Board Member and Board Member Manrara Cartaya to discuss additional possibilities.

**E. OLD BUSINESS**

**E-1 SIP Committee Member Assignments Review (Facilitated by Ariel Fernandez, Chair)**

Attachments: [SIP Descriptions](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Joseph, seconded by Board Member Manrara Cartaya, that this matter be Deferred. The motion passed by the following vote.

**Yeas:** 9 - Vice Chairperson Joseph, Board Member Anding, Board Member Chang, Board Member Dimitris, Board Member Manrara Cartaya, Board Member Slesnick, Board Member Snow, Board Member Watson and Chairperson Fernandez

**E-2 Update on Summer Family Literacy Festival Planning Meeting (Facilitated by Sam Joseph, Vice Chair)**

Attachments: [SFLF Fact Sheet.docx](#)

**F. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

F-1 Next SCRC Meeting - Friday, Dec. 18, 2020

Questions/Comments: [scrc@coralgables.com](mailto:scrc@coralgables.com)

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

**NOTE**