

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-1
January 13, 2015
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason

Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.

Commissioner Pat Keon

Commissioner Vince Lago

Commissioner Frank Quesada

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark

City Attorney, Craig E. Leen

City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman

Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Historic Preservation Officer, Dona Spain

Public Speaker(s)

Juan Carlos Menendez, Property Owner

Agenda Item G-1 [Start: 11:53:56 a.m.]

Presentation of excerpts from the Historic Preservation Board meeting of December 11, 2014, requesting the following action:

That the City Commission adopt a Resolution authorizing Ad Valorem tax relief for the property located at 2622 Country Club Prado, a local historic landmark legally described as Lots 11 thru 13, Block 14, Coral Gables Section "D", as recorded in Plat Book 25, at Page 74, of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The cost of improvements is estimated at \$400,000, which would correspond approximately to \$2,235.60 per year and \$22,356 over ten years. (Historic Preservation Board Vote: 7-0).

Mayor Cason: Alright. We'll move onto G-1, that's a presentation of excerpts from the Historic Preservation Board meeting of December 11, 2014, and for the Commission to adopt a

Resolution authorizing Ad Valorem tax relief for the property located at 2622 Country Club Prado.

Mrs. Spain: Thank you sir. For the record, Dona Spain, Historic Preservation Officer. I'd just like to say one comment about the Cotorro property. I think the first notice of violation was actually in 2009. It came to your attention when it went into foreclosure, but it was two years before that. It's really been an issue. OK. This property – This is the property owner, Juan Carlos Menendez, this is a property on Country Club Prado that was built in 1927 and it was owned for a very long time by one owner, and very often those properties although they fall into disrepair, they actually are fairly pristine. In fact, I think this had the original butler pantry. So I'd like to go through the slides briefly. This is the location on Country Club Prado, Sevilla Avenue. This is the way it looked in 1940. On the left, is the way it looked when Mr. Menendez bought this property, and after on the right. Again, another shot of that. Before on the left, after on the right. Another shot – all the windows were replaced. It's really a beautiful piece of property. It was cleaned up; the exterior pipes were removed. This is the garage in the rear of the property that was restored. Looking down unto the courtyard. Interiors are not part of ad valorem tax relief and they are not designated as historic, but we included those because it's such a nice example of restoration. The flooring was brought back. The wrought iron on the interiors; the light fixtures; there is a view of the fireplace afterwards it was restored; the stairwell, down to the really small details; the moldings; the bathrooms were kept, they were restored, which is really impressive I have to say; and that's the final shot. The Historic Preservation Board unanimously recommends that this ad valorem tax relief...

Mayor Cason: How long did the restoration take?

Mr. Menendez: Roughly ten months.

Mayor Cason: Great job.

Commissioner Keon: How did you find the process?- the permitting and everything else in going through this process as a resident? Be honest.

Mr. Menendez: Relatively easy because I had a lot of help and they worked with us a lot to be able to restore the home.

Commissioner Keon: OK – good.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: You've been through the process many times in various other buildings. A lot of times, people are concerned going through Historic Preservation, because they think its an

extra layer of beaurocracy. Did you see it as that?- or did you see it as quite the contrary, and they were able to help you?

Mr. Menendez: I see the opposite.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: So the people watching – all the people who come up to me and say, don't designate because it's going to be a problem as far as, you know fixing up a house or whatever, that is really the other side of the equation, because honestly and what I've seen is, that the Historic Preservation Department helps advocate your process in building permits and try to help you through that process, so it's a good thing.

Mr. Menendez: I had the same idea before I started the process.

Mrs. Spain: He did. I can testify to that. This was already designated when he purchased the property.

Mayor Cason: I think one of the important things is that realtors let people know when they are buying a home, if it is historic what they can or can't do, because I've seen the other side where people thought they could just knock it down.

Mrs. Spain: Yes.

Mayor Cason: So they need to know before they get into it.

Mrs. Spain: That's true.

Mayor Cason: There are opportunities there and then there are things you can't do.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: You did a great job, thank you very much, really its good to see you up here.

Mayor Cason: So we have a motion on G-1?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I'll move it.

Mayor Cason: Vice Mayor makes the motion.

Commissioner Lago: Second the motion.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Lago seconds.

City Clerk

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 4-0)

Commissioner Quesada: Absent

Mayor Cason: Congratulations.

Mrs. Spain: Thank you very much.

[End: 11:59:22 a.m.]