



City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
October 27, 2015

ITEM TITLE:

Discussion Item. Discussion on North Ponce Planning Action Steps.

DEPARTMENT HEAD RECOMMENDATION:

Discussion. This is the first step in Commission review of proposed Action Steps to implement the North Ponce Community Visioning Workshop. Staff is seeking direction on proposed planning efforts and Zoning Code text amendments, to be presented for consideration at a future Commission Workshop.

BRIEF HISTORY:

The City of Coral Gables has a long history of planning efforts for the North Ponce area, stretching back many decades. In 2014, planning efforts for the area were renewed to address the growth of the area and recognition of the unique and historic characteristics of the area, and the value of its close proximity to downtown Coral Gables. A timeline of Commission discussion and planning efforts over the past twelve (12) months is provided below.

Timeline of recent North Ponce Planning Efforts:

- **October 28, 2014:** Commission Discussion directing staff to study past planning efforts in North Ponce and develop a planning strategy
- **January 13, 2015:** City Commission Meeting: Discussion on North Ponce Study and related planning issues
- **June 12 – 13, 2015:** North Ponce Community Visioning Workshop
- **July 2015:** North Ponce Community Visioning Report – first draft completed
- **August 25, 2015:** City Commission Meeting: Discussion on North Ponce Community Visioning Workshop
- **October 2015:** North Ponce Community Visioning Website completed
- **October 27, 2015:** City Commission Meeting: Workshop on North Ponce Planning Action Steps

The North Ponce Community Visioning Workshop, held on June 12 and 13, 2015, was hosted at the Coral Gables Museum by the City of Coral Gables together with a facilitator team. Over 50 people participated in the two-day event, which included presentations about urban planning, sustainability, and public health, a trolley tour and walking tour of the North Ponce area, and hands-on table groups where participants worked together to fill out written surveys, complete visual preference surveys, and draw

their ideas on maps of the study area.

As a result of the public input received at the workshop, City staff and consultant Chuck Bohl developed policy recommendations and action steps for implementation. These include short-term and long-range action steps, many of which were presented to the Commission for discussion on August 25, 2015. These recommended action steps are included as the conclusion of the North Ponce Community Visioning Workshop, provided as Exhibit A. Some of these action steps are currently being implemented or have a timeline to begin. A list of the proposed action steps and their status is provided below.

Short Term Action Steps

1. Historic Preservation

- Verify accuracy of maps. Create an interactive map for public information, as a 90th anniversary project.
 - **Exhibit B: Draft map developed as a collaborative effort between Planning and Historic Resources Staff.**
- Prepare marketing documents for Transfer of Development Rights.
 - **Draft brochure is being developed as a collaborative effort between Planning and Historic Resources Staff.**

2. Public Space, Streets and Pedestrian-Friendly Design

- Arrange a design studio for Ponce de Leon Park and its vicinity with Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk.
 - **Exhibit C: University of Miami School of Architectural Fall 2015 Studio to develop concepts for Ponce de Leon Park.**
- Identify possible future locations for four neighborhood parks, to be included in the City Capital Improvement Program.
 - **Exhibit D: Draft map of potential future neighborhood parks; requires public input as part of Parks Master Plan.**
- Identify possible future locations for four neighborhood parking lots, to be included in the City Capital Improvement Program.
 - **Exhibit E: Draft map of potential future neighborhood parking lots; requires public input.**

3. East Ponce Boulevard Quadrant

- Identify two neighborhood streets for enhanced sidewalks and landscaping, to be included in the City Capital Improvement program.
 - **Planning Staff has identified East Ponce de Leon Boulevard and Mendoza Avenue as potential candidates; requires public input.**

4. Alhambra Circle Corridor/Quadrant

- Review proposed changes of land use or zoning based on input from workshop. Proposed

land uses for North Ponce project located within the Central Business District should not exceed Commercial Mid-Rise Intensity.

- **In progress – staff currently reviewing a Planning and Zoning Board application for sufficiency: application request includes change of land use to Commercial High-Rise Intensity.**
- Require enhanced pedestrian features, such as arcades, paseos and enhanced sidewalks, through the site plan review process.
 - **In progress – staff currently reviewing a Planning and Zoning Board application for sufficiency: application includes ground – level pedestrian features.**

5. Large Scale Development on Major Commercial Corridors

- Propose shared parking, including remote residential parking in the evening.
 - **Exhibit F: Shared Parking Zoning Code Text Amendment, presented to Planning and Zoning Board on October 14, 2015, item continued to refine the legislation further.**
- Revise parking requirements for small restaurants and delis located at the ground floor of mixed-used buildings.
 - **Exhibit G: Mixed Use Zoning Code Text Amendment, approved by the Planning and Zoning Board on October 14, 2015; next step will be City Commission 1st Reading.**
- Eliminate parking requirements for existing and new buildings under 1.45 FAR.
 - **Exhibit H: Potential Small Buildings Parking Waiver Zoning Code Text Amendment, to be submitted for Planning and Zoning Board consideration at a future date.**

6. Public Outreach

- Host public Commission Workshop (for example, at the Coral Gables Museum) to continue the discussion of the future of the North Ponce area with the community.
 - **To be scheduled for January 2016 to present implementation items, including Capital Improvements projects and Zoning Code Text Amendments, for Commission feedback.**
- Establish periodic meetings with the community.
 - **Meetings will begin with the January 2016 North Ponce Commission Workshop, to be followed with a community meeting in March or April 2016.**
- Send meeting invitations and questionnaires to all residents and property owners within the study area boundary.
 - **Public outreach for community meetings will include emails, website updates, Coral Gables TV outreach, Miami Herald Neighbors Ad, as well as a courtesy mailing to all property owners within the study area a minimum of 10 days**

prior to the meeting.

- Create a North Ponce study webpage with an online survey for community members to provide feedback.
 - **Exhibit I: North Ponce Community Visioning Workshop 2015 Website; created in October 2015 to keep the public involved in the ongoing planning process.**
- Create an email listserve of community members interested in North Ponce and send area-specific email updates.
 - **Participant emails gathered from June 12-13, 2015 Workshop will be used as the start of a North Ponce Planning updates email list.**

Long Range Action Steps

1. Historic Preservation

- Promote historic preservation of existing small apartment buildings as an affordable housing strategy.
 - **In progress – a kick-off meeting regarding workforce housing for teachers was held on October 20, 2015.**

2. Public Space, Streets and Pedestrian-Friendly Design

- Develop neighborhood park and landscape master plan.
 - **In progress – RFQ in process for Citywide Parks Master Plan.**

3. East Ponce Boulevard Quadrant

- Study design of neighborhood streets, with an emphasis on reducing pavement, enhancing tree cover and widening sidewalks.
 - **In progress – Comprehensive Multi-Modal Transportation Plan is in the process of defining a scope of work and budget for the selected consultant to address these issues Citywide.**

4. Large Scale Development on Major Commercial Corridors: Ponce Mixed-Use Overlay


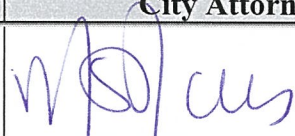

- **Note: staff has reevaluated the best approach to zoning code updates for the North Ponce area and has determined that the community vision expressed in the June 2015 Workshop can be achieved through selective Zoning Code text amendments, rather than through a special North Ponce Mixed-Use Overlay District. Many of these Zoning Code text amendments are in progress, including a Shared Parking and a Mixed-Use Zoning Code text amendment. In addition, staff has determined that the Douglas Section Site Specifics, found in Appendix A of the Zoning Code, require amendments in order to achieve the development outcomes envisioned by the community.**

5. Public Outreach

- Continue periodic meetings with the community.
 - **Meetings will begin with the January 2016 North Ponce Commission Workshop, to be followed with a community meeting in March or April 2016.**
- Regular updates of a North Ponce study webpage with an online survey for community members to provide feedback.
 - **The North Ponce study webpage has been updated with this cover memo and exhibits and will be continuously updated as new planning documents are available.**
- Email listserve of community members interested in North Ponce with area-specific email updates.
 - **Participant email list in progress; website will be updated to include a link to be added to planning email listserve.**

The North Ponce Community Visioning Workshop Report, with the complete analysis and recommendations, prepared by consultant Chuck Bohl and staff, is attached.

APPROVED BY:

Asst. Department Director	City Attorney	City Manager
		

EXHIBIT(S):

- A. North Ponce Community Visioning Workshop Report – DRAFT 09.24.15
- B. Map of Designated and Potentially Eligible Historic Properties
- C. Ponce de Leon Park Architectural Studio Concepts
- D. Map of potential future open space
- E. Map of potential future neighborhood parking lots.
- F. Proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment for shared parking.
- G. Proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment for parking in mixed-use buildings.
- H. Proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment for parking exemption for small buildings.
- I. North Ponce Study Website – Sample Page