

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-2
January 26, 2016
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada
Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Executive Director of the B.I.D., Marina Foglia
Assistant Public Works Director, Jessica Keller

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-2 [3:15:06 p.m.]

Discussion of potential ordinance allowing the riding of bicycles upon sidewalks on Miracle Mile by repealing section 74-3 of the City Code. (Sponsored by Commissioner Lago).

Mayor Cason: Finally, let's move to F-2.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you Mayor. F-2 is just a simple discussion point and I think maybe the verbiage when, it's my fault, it may have not been properly articulated in reference to sidewalks, riding bicycles on the sidewalks of Miracle Mile. What I wanted to really take advantage of, because I knew that we were going to be discussing today moving forward through the second phase of the two parking garages, I wanted to make sure that today we took the necessary measures and that's why I mentioned before to inform the five applicants in reference to what we want to see from Andalusia in reference to sidewalks, in reference to pedestrian and

bike-friendly streets, in reference to bicycle storage. Anything that you feel could be important that should be included and incorporated into those two parking garages.

Mayor Cason: And we have another aspect that we approved before which was the capital budget has, is it Aragon where we have \$800,000?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Yes.

Mayor Cason: It includes lights...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Lighting and bike amenities.

Commissioner Lago: Because as we have it right now, we have a little bit of an issue, and I spoke to several individuals in the biking community and they told me, look, the major issue that we are having is, how do you get east-west in reference to bikes for families?- and if we are not going to have biking directly on the Mile. We need to make it as easy as possible for families who are going to ride bikes to the Mile to events, for example, the Farmers Market, for example, I think we had two or three events this weekend in downtown. We want to make sure that if we are going to do all this work right now and invest so much money on Andalusia, I want to make sure that now is the time to make the request, because if you don't make the request now later we are going to say, we left that out and we should have made it a requirement, not just a wish list.

Mayor Cason: Madam Manager, the Agave Project has a whole bunch of bicycle related, showers, and parking, and one of ten....

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Absolutely.

Mayor Cason: So that's taken care of for that.

Commissioner Lago: But we don't have it here and I don't know if maybe staff wants to discuss in reference to anything that we have bicycle related.

Commissioner Slesnick: Electric car hook-ups.

Commissioner Lago: Yes, all these kinds of things. That has to do more with the LEED component that I think should be status quo, it has to be a standard all throughout the City, but I really want to make sure because the timeframe that our Development Director mentioned before is two to three months; two to three months is here next week.

Mayor Cason: But I think in all our discussions all these meetings about Miracle Mile and about the streetscape, we've always said we wanted to accommodate the bicycles on parallel streets on Aragon and Andalusia, in each of the crossroads we even had a design I think on the bicycle racks, kind of bicycle racks, so it seems to me that we've accomplished that and when we move forward on the capital project, certainly there is another opportunity for the bicycle community to tell us what they want done on Aragon, for example, where we are putting the money. But the idea of riding bikes on sidewalks, I don't know if you wanted to speak, Marina, we already had tremendous number of people that have come complaining about the six companies that are out there, sort of delivering things, whipping down on the sidewalks on bikes it's dangerous as it is. You get complaints?

Vice Mayor Quesada: I don't think we have the width right now.

Mayor Cason: And also we have a law that says you can't do it; and not only bikes, but we've got these new hoover board things, plus you have the roller blades, which you are not supposed to use those or the skateboards and yet you see them going in and out, up and down.

Commissioner Lago: You know we have that existing parallel parking adjacent to the parking garages. I'm not talking about in front of Chocolate Fashion; I'm talking about across the street right in front of the parking garage. What about if we got rid of some of the parking on that side and basically did an extended sidewalk, extend on the sidewalk and maybe have a dedicated...it doesn't have to be concrete, but it can be a striped path, but I'm thinking about, again, if you are going to build two beautiful parking garages there, maybe we can get rid of that those parking spaces and extend the sidewalk and make it even more pedestrian-friendly, make it even more bike-friendly.

Commissioner Slesnick: Do cities around Dade County allow bicycles on sidewalks like Miami Beach?

Commissioner Lago: To be honest with you, I haven't done my homework on that, that's why I wanted to kind of like flush it out and talk about it.

Commissioner Slesnick: Are you thinking about having wider sidewalks on Andalusia when the parking garage to allow the bikes on the sidewalk?

Mayor Cason: Well, I wouldn't want to have it on the sidewalk. I would rather have a bike lane like you see elsewhere, because once you start mixing people walking not looking behind them, with kids, and the kids run over this way and this way, you've got a bicycle guy barreling down behind you, you don't know what's going to happen, it's dangerous and a tremendous liability

for the City. Put them on the street, have a lane dedicated to them, and the appropriate place is on Aragon or Andalusia to get downtown.

Vice Mayor Quesada: When it comes to that type of issue, I'd like staff to study it some more. I'm very much in favor of it, but I would definitely want Jessica Keller's opinion for vetting of it before we do anything, before we jump into anything.

Ms. Foglia: And I just wanted to comment on the Streetscape Steering Committee, there was ample discussion about this, and I know that Cooper-Robertson, the idea was to put the bike racks on the parallel streets, along Ponce and Salzedo and probably even joining through Salzedo having a dedicated bike lane that would join with the Underline. In addition to that, they had proposed in the discussion, I don't know where it ended up, but with the parking garages that the bikes would come in through, Andalusia and Aragon into the parking garage and the bike depots would be built for them to store.

Vice Mayor Quesada: We were very clear that we wanted that incorporated into the projects that we were voting on this morning.

Ms. Foglia: Exactly – and they would come in and there would be free parking for the bicyclists in the municipal parking garages.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I don't think we talked about free or paid, we just said it had to be protected cover, something innovative.

Ms. Foglia: Yes...those were the conversations that we had.

Commissioner Lago: Vice Mayor, what is your opinion of what I mentioned in regards to and obviously the rest of the Commission, but is your opinion in reference to extending the sidewalks?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Oh, I love it, but I just don't know if we have the width with that street, that street gets a lot of traffic, it's only going to get more traffic, vehicle traffic and it gets a lot of pedestrian traffic. I'm concerned about the parking, taking away parking off the street there. I don't think we can make that decision until we select the winner of the design project, because whatever they design could be incorporated into it. You don't know if they are going to propose a canter-levering over the sidewalk currently, so we can do more interplay there. I don't know. I think it would be premature if we voted on something without seeing the design.

Commissioner Lago: I'm not saying vote on it. I'm just saying when the teams, when the five entities that are involved that are going to come back to us in March, that they know that this could be a potential opportunity to incorporate this design or not incorporate.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Look, very easy. City Manager, if we can work – let all five applicants know that we want to see how their pedestrian plan, their entire mobility plan is going to be incorporated, is going to interplay with whatever projects they propose.

Commissioner Slesnick: Because right now you have a lot of entrances and exits along Andalusia for the parking garage.

Ms. Keller: I just wanted to let you know that Andalusia is part of the bicycle master plan, so a bicycle facility, I wouldn't necessarily recommend that it be part of the sidewalk, but it should be in the roadway as a designated bicycle lane. We have to take a closer look at it, maybe its narrowing some of the travel lanes. I don't know what the travel lanes are right now, but ten feet wide is adequate, I'm going to guess they are little bit wider than that right now; and I would say that I'm not sure that we need a lot of on-street parking directly next to a parking garage.

Commissioner Lago: That is my point, that's why I brought it up; and the second thing is, the second reason behind me bringing it up, because we are requesting 1,000 parking spaces, it is also a great time when you are building \$150 to \$200 million dollar project to incorporate this small cost into a developer's total project scale and then use those allocated funds that the Mayor was talking about before to really expand our bike community, maybe to other areas of the City that currently right now are neglected. So if we can concentrate on basically saying, Mr. Developer, Mr. Applicant, Mrs. Applicant, excuse me, we need you, we implore you to please consider the following. Like the Vice Mayor said, give us options for expanding the sidewalk, think about it, maybe we can have some significant savings that we can spend these monies on. I know Jessica and her team have gone out and been able to get federal grants, right?

Ms. Keller: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Federal grants – and we can maybe use this for other parts of the City that right now are not really bike-friendly.

Mayor Cason: Because we've done the "low hanging fruit" on the bike lanes, maybe some of the intersections would be a lot more complex that money could be used to really make the integration from the south like Cartagena Circle coming up those areas.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

[End: 3:25:12 p.m.]