

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-1
April 22, 2014
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

Interim City Manager, Carmen Olazabal

City Attorney, Craig E. Leen

City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman

Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Director, Economic Sustainability Cindy Birdsill

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-1: [Start: 11:29:25 a.m.]

Policy discussion on parking garages on Andalusia and phasing of streetscape project.
Commissioner Pat Keon

Mayor Cason: Moving onto Item F-1, Commissioner Keon, this is yours. Do you think we can do this in a half-an-hour?

Commissioner Keon: I think so. Yes.

Mayor Cason: Because at 12 o'clock if we haven't finished we'll take a recess, go do the...

Commissioner Keon: I think it's only to give direction to staff from the Commission as we may see fit, so.

Mayor Cason: I think we don't have a quorum, I don't think we have a quorum so don't go away, don't go away.

Commissioner Keon: I had seen the RFP on the parking garages and this has been a little bit of an issue that I've had since sitting on this dais -- is that when you get an item about an RFP going out or an RFQ or whatever going out? - but we never see the item, so I don't know the details what we are asking for a proposal for. It also deals with a policy discussion as to this is not just an administrative issue, it is a policy, and the policy is how do we deal with our City assets? - how we deal with our property? - that one garage -- both of those garages are on City land, and I don't know, I think it was...before I was elected that somebody made a decision somewhere in that you were going to sell or whatever the property on the garage that's across from Publix for development and that was how the other garage would pay for the other garage.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Can I answer that since you...I will tell you there was never the intention in this Commission to sell that piece of land. Now selling and long term leasing are two different things. A long term lease would allow a developer to develop an apartment building there, a hotel there, maybe not a condominium, but from my standpoint as sitting up as a City Commissioner I never sold a piece of land of the City because my philosophy has always been that the City is going to be here in 5 years from now, 50 years from now, and 500 years from now and that we should hold on to as many pieces of land as possible, so I will assure you that I don't think the intention was ever to sell the piece of land.

Commissioner Keon: Well, what is communicated in the RFP on the garage? - it's preliminary, it hasn't been released yet, but it is ready to be released. So that's what I'm asking you. Before the City prepares an RFP to go out it needs to be -- the specs for an RFP need to be crystal clear, so that the intent of the City is clearly communicated before you get a request, before you start taking in proposals, because if it's not then you are dealing with proposals that are not in line with the policies set by the City; and I think that is the issue where this Commission is the policymaking body for the City and so you have to clearly communicate what the intention is. Now, I know in the whole discussion on the streetscape and everything else, I have heard from different people that we need to make a decision as to whether it is essential, before we get the RFP's goes out, whether it is essential that there be parking behind the 300 Block of the Mile, on Andalusia, that can access that Mile. I'm not shopping for a developer, I'm not a -- I have no expertise in the world of retail, but I would tell you in most places it seems that for things to work there is parking convenient to where you are going to go. I mean, Dadeland didn't put all its parking at one end of the Mall and then build a Mall. It surrounded it by parking, so that people going to a particular area could access it without having to go through the whole thing. So in that RFP there is no provision for parking, for public parking, I don't think. Is there any provision for public parking in the 300 Block? - is it Garage 4? - what's the number of the garage?

Interim City Manager Olazabal: Garage 4.

Commissioner Keon: Four (4) is the one by Publix. I mean I didn't see a meeting, I read the RFP with you yesterday, I didn't see that provision in that RFP that whatever it is, one, I didn't see where it was more a long term lease as opposed to a sale, but that it was – and it included public parking that had to be made available and how many spots and how many whatever for access to the Mile.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: Absolutely. There is a draft that doesn't mean that we can't make changes to it. Obviously we want to make sure you all are on the same page and we are going forward with an RFP that represents what we want, so that we get proposals that are “apples to apples” and represent what we want to receive. What I'll do is Cindy can kind of walk you through what the current proposal contemplates that doesn't mean it's set in stone, that doesn't mean that we can't changes from the direction that we receive today, that it is where we are and that we can make the changes and adapt to the desires of the Commission, so we'll do that. Right now you're right, it doesn't spell out the Garage 4, which is the one near the Publix that it is required to have public parking on the first floor or whatever it is that you want. I don't think it prohibits from having a proposal coming and suggesting that, but if that's something that you want and its essential then we need to specify on the RFP so that we are getting proposals that represent what it is that we want, so we can decide on.

Commissioner Keon: Absolutely. Before an RFP goes out the elements of the RFP should be so clearly stated that they reflect the policy set forth by this Commission. This particular draft does not do that, so before it goes out you need to, we need to see it. Also, I'm telling you going forward anytime there is an RFP on here that we approve the information from the RFP needs to be included on the agenda, so you know what you are voting on and not just, yes we are going to do that. The Request for Qualifications is one thing when you are looking for help or whatever, but when you are actually looking for a proposal either for goods, services or this we need to be aware of it, and we need to dictate the policy or set the policy that governs that RFP, it's not an administrative function.

Mayor Cason: Cindy.

Ms. Birdsill: Actually, those discussions have happened three times before the Commission. Previously we've had a lot of discussion about how to handle the RFP and what we were seeking to do. We have drafted it right now trying to obtain the most flexibility to get the most opportunities for developers to suggest what they want. In 1999 we went out with a RFP for garages and unfortunately it came back with – it didn't work financially for the developers, so we spent a lot of time trying to figure out how to make this work financially for the developers, we've met with a lot of developers. There is a great interest in using the Garage 4 site for

condominiums, as the Vice Mayor was saying that is a policy decision if we want to hold on to that as a ground lease that will preclude our ability, a developer's ability to do condominiums on that site. It had not been a clearly stated policy of this Commission that we had to have public parking on both sites, so the developers had told us that they could make it work better if all the public parking was on one site and they had private use on the other site. It was an operational issue for them to mix it, that being said, we have spoken with our outside consultants this week about having some ability to public park on the Garage 4 site and it should be economically feasible for developers as long as it's not a huge amount on that site. So we can certainly restructure how we are looking at the RFP, but really we have been trying to make it as flexible as possible so the developers could bring whatever they thought would work in the market, so that we would have, not be in the situation where we were before where we put a model out that was not financially feasible for any developer.

Commissioner Quesada: My concern is...

Commissioner Keon: You have to ensure that there is no conflict between what the developers want and what the policy of the City is.

Mayor Cason: You would come forth with 15 or 20 different proposals, right, from the developer for us to analyze.

Ms. Birdsill: Correct.

Mayor Cason: Some may say I can accommodate two floors, some may say not, it would be up to us to find at that stage.

Ms. Birdsill: Correct. Correct. We have not been given a definitive statement from this Commission so that we had to do any of these particular things...

Mayor Cason: We've had some people come and ask us about parking on that block, have we done any kind of analysis of the needs for parking?

Ms. Birdsill: Tim Haas did the parking study.

Commissioner Quesada: Tim Haas study from last year. But let me just jump in for a second. My biggest concern here is you haven't had a direction because I feel like the Commission has been left out of the loop on this, is my biggest concern about this. We had one conversation related to this. I specifically remember Vice Mayor Kerdyk and I'm addressing some of these points when

Commissioner Anderson and Cabrera were still on the dais. I don't think we've discussed this since Commissioners Lago and Keon have been on here. Did you guys discuss this?

Commissioner Keon: No.

Commissioner Quesada: I don't think we have so my biggest concern is we haven't been involved and I would like to see a draft of the RFP, I'd like to go through that.

Ms. Birdsill: I think that has been the intention all along that the draft would come to each Commissioner.

Commissioner Quesada: There is an article that comes out in the Herald that I read about and I don't know if it's true or I don't know what's not true, we haven't been involved in it. I don't like that process; it hasn't been a terribly public process. My thought always was -- is because the initial draft with the staff recommendation wasn't completed yet. I'm assuming that is still the reason why we haven't seen a draft or it hasn't been brought before us publicly.

Commissioner Lago: If I could just interject just one second and I apologize for interrupting you just to give you an idea that I'm on the same boat as Commissioner Quesada is. Immediately when I read that article my first move, as Craig can tell you and the Interim City Manager can tell you, I said I need an immediate appraisal of both pieces of property, immediately. That's what I requested and I wanted that disseminated to everybody on the dais because I need to know what these properties are worth. I defer to the Vice Mayor in regards to real estate matters, but if we find out that on the 300 Block that piece of property is worth \$30 million then why do a deal, why not just sell that property, if it was in the best interest of the residents and the City. We are looking for a freestanding parking garage on the 200 Block, then why would we do a deal when we get a \$20 million structure when we could just sell a piece of property for \$30 million and keep \$10 million for the City and who knows what we can do with that money that would benefit the City, that's even -- not saying that's in question, but let's at least get an appraisal before we even go out to RFQ.

Commissioner Quesada: Which goes to the fact that we need to discuss this matter, so thank you Commissioner Keon for putting it on the agenda today. As I was saying, the last conversation that we had related to this, I remember Commissioner Kerdyk and I, I believe if I recall correctly, this is more than a year and-a-half ago, two years ago, there was a discussion of where the parking should be at that time, there was a 3-2 vote in favor of creating an RFP for both parcels. I believe Vice Mayor Kerdyk and the Mayor would have so votes, you know I'm not even exactly sure, against it saying that only one property should go out rather than both parcels. I'm sorry if I'm misrepresenting that, it what I basically recall, but the point is that that was the last time that

we discussed it. So I just want to be – if you guys when you have that draft ready for us please bring to us so we can discuss it because I know there are many different opinions out there, and I have been approached by many different developers and at this time I tell them look, we haven't reviewed it yet so I don't know where we are at.

Commissioner Keon: There is a draft.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: There is a draft we are basically taking it to Procurement now and to Zoning to make sure that all the I's are dotted and the T's are crossed and once we do that...

Ms. Birdsill: And the City Attorney.

Commissioner Quesada: It will be brought before us.

Commission Keon: But that draft doesn't reflect the policy decisions of this Commission, that's why it needs to be discussed.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: If you guys would want to discuss some of the items that you want changed then we can discuss that now and with that direction...

Commissioner Keon: It needs to be placed with an item on the agenda so there is time to talk about it.

Mayor Cason: Let's do this; let's put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

Commissioner Keon: It needs to be placed on the agenda as an agenda item, and along with that is the issue of the facing of the streetscape project. I really would like kind of a full discussion on that streetscape project as to when we go out, when we have public meetings, I mean how you meet with the property owners to inform the property owners of the financing plans because they obviously are going to be affected by it. There needs to be a public process because we are not getting grants or manna from heaven to pay for it, it's coming out of our general revenues so there should be some public input to that whole process. There needs to be a decision as to whether the parking – do you do the garages first?- do you do the parking first?- then do you start?- and how does it go?- and in a very open and a very transparent process.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: Now is the right time to start talking about it, but Javier Saliman has been working a little bit on that and he's here, so if you want to talk about a little bit of the timing, how we will face construction?- how will we go about it?

Commissioner Keon: But I think it needs to be an agenda item, so we can speak to it and Javier now knows kind of what we are looking at or looking for that he could really, I would think respond and help us.

Mayor Cason: Alright, we'll put it on the next agenda.

Commissioner Lago: I'd like to request from Carmen, if possible, please if you can get us an update when we discuss this in regards to Fishkind and Associates where they stand in regards to the table, the breakdown.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: On the assessment...

Commissioner Lago: Yes, the assessment table.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: OK.

Commissioner Lago: Because I've been getting numerous phone calls in reference to when will we disseminate that information?

Commissioner Keon: And I think there is some coordination with the B.I.D. and coordination with the Chamber and everything going forward on this, and I'm going to assume that administratively is how that – you would decide how you would go through that process and how you would structure that process and come back and let us know so that the public knows also.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: OK. Any specific direction of things you want us to incorporate in the RFP before we present it to you?

Mayor Cason: Send it to us and we'll get back to you.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: OK.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Send it to us, let's discuss it on the dais then we can make a decision.

Commissioner Keon: Give us the draft, provide us with the draft and then let us discuss that.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: OK.

City Attorney Leen: The direction to the staff is to continue as they are proceeding with the RFP, prepare a final draft from staff's perspective and put it on the agenda for you to review and get feedback and then we will issue...

Commissioner Lago: And provide an update in regards to Fishkind and Associates.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: So it will be a discussion item on the next – OK.

Commissioner Quesada: And to be clear to not communicate that something is going to happen without this body voting on it or giving that direction. I'm upset with the way that article came out not based on anything that was discussed in front of this board. We didn't vote on anything, we did not give that approval for the information that came out at that time. I don't like the way that came out because again, it wasn't based on our input and it wasn't based on our vote.

[End: 11:46:20 a.m.]