

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-2 and H-3 are related
March 25, 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

Parking Director, Kevin Kinney

Fire Chief Mark Stolzenberg

Public Speaker(s)

Scott Tao, AECOM

Agenda Item H-2 and H-3 are related [10:33:58 a.m.]

H-2 – A Resolution directing the City Manager to proceed with the development of the design criteria package for a new trolley facility and renovations and expansion to the existing Fire Station 2, located at 525 South Dixie Highway, Coral Gables.

H-3 – A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a one year lease agreement containing an optional one year extension with School Board of Miami-Dade County for use of its Bus Maintenance Facility, located at 7001 S.W. 4th Street as a City operated Trolley Maintenance Facility.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: H-2 and H-3 are related, Madam City Manager.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And I'm going to ask our Director of Public Works to come forward. This is a very important and time sensitive matter. There have been numerous community meetings to get input from the nearby residents and I'd like Glenn to present the item.

Mr. Kephart: Thank you again Mayor, Commissioners, City Manager. What you have before you today is a resolution directing the City Manager to proceed with the development of the design criteria package for a new trolley facility and renovations and expansion to the existing Fire Station 2, located at 525 South Dixie Highway. A brief history – If you remember last summer in August the Commission entered into a settlement agreement with Astor Trolley and that settlement agreement required us to vacate within about a year the existing trolley maintenance and storage facility, and we had numerous discussions with the Commission about that. In September the Commission directed staff to proceed with the design and development to evaluate the feasibility of the site that we are proposing to you today, and also to proceed with evaluations of a temporary solution, which is the next item, which will be a lease agreement so that we can continue to maintain our trolleys effectively no seamless service while we build a new facility. On October 14th we presented to you a funding plan for this project and then on December 9th we had our first public meeting. This was a required Title VI – this was a required meeting that we needed to have as a result of Title VI, although I would say it is a meeting that we would have had regardless of Title VI or not. Initially, we sent out notices to residents within a half mile radius got official letters, inviting them to the meeting, that was more than 1,400 residents, who are about 20 people approximately who came to that initial meeting; and I'll tell you the initial response was they had a lot of concerns about putting the trolley site on that facility and we talked about those concerns at the meeting. They were concerned about traffic, they were concerned about aesthetics, they were concerned about noise. As we continued through the meeting that went for some time, we started to talk about what it could look like, because at that meeting we basically showed block drawings, it was a massing diagram of how the site would layout, and we concluded with consensus of the group that we needed to look at more detail. We needed to see what it really could look like and how the site would lay out, what the buildings would look like, what the landscaping would be, and we had consensus that we should proceed with that work and then come back to the community with a second public meeting so they could understand the project better. So we did that, we held a second public meeting; we sent notices out to the same half mile radius again. It was a little less well attended, but the reception of the group was, I would say mostly favorable. They did like the looks of the buildings that we are going to show you today, and understood a little bit better how the site could lay out and I would say that the overall consensus of this was an OK site. In issues there were a couple people who spoke to me afterwards who don't think we should have the trolley facility anywhere within the City of Coral Gables, and one gentleman who was concerned about traffic, the relationship to the traffic was a couple issues. One is, there is more than a million

people a year riding the trolleys, so that is having a net positive effect on traffic citywide and we would hope that those numbers could go up each year. The second is, the trolley would use existing driveways, as you'll see in the presentation that we are going to do in just a minute, but that would access Ponce. Early in the morning before peak hour and they come in later in the evening after peak hour, so there isn't any real effect on the traffic congestion of that issue. Then to the issue of noise, we've asked our consultants to consider that during the design so that any noisy operations could be done inside so that it didn't have an impact, but its also important to, I think remember the context of this site that it is bordered by U.S.-1 on one side and the Metrorail on the other side, so I don't think for the most part hear the noise. We also wanted to show you some renderings that from the neighborhoods. We took a shot from Riviera heading north, as you are looking across on U.S.-1, and you basically can't even see the trolley facility. You can see the remodeled Fire Station that we hope to make look more attractive, and the Fire Station project would include complete interior renovations, including a kitchen, new gymnasium, new ceilings, new floors, improve some functionality issues. We have some issues currently with the trucks, as I think you are aware have to park on angles and stuff, in existing garages, and that's being addressed and improved. So that's pretty much what the project is. I would like to have our consultants, Scott Tao and Eddie Aluarado from AECOM, go through a presentation of what it could look like. And I do need to mention that we've done some design concept drawings, but this was built, if you approve it, _____ process, which means Board of Architects, and the renderings that we are showing you are suggestions of what it could look like. Its not necessarily a recommendation. As far as our recommendation, our recommendation is that this site does work, it's a good place for the trolley, and we've also made a recommendation as to whether the trolley building should be one-story or two-stories, and we think that there is value added and now is the right time to put a two-story in there and as far as the aesthetics go, it looks pretty good. When the neighborhood, at the last meeting, we asked them, do you have a preference for one-story or two-story, they said no, they did not.

Mayor Cason: And also for the record, for how long have we been storing trolleys there at any rate?

Mr. Kephart: How long?- we've been storing them for a while. Kevin, do you know how long?

Mr. Kinney: Its been just over a year that we've had at least three trolleys stored on the Fire Station.

Mayor Cason: Have we ever had a complaint?

Mr. Kinney: None that have come through to my office.

Mayor Cason: That's what I thought.

Commissioner Lago: Are you using the proposed route in reference to what Glenn was talking about for the in and the out, the ingress and egress of the trolley station, are we currently using that same route or are we travelling through U.S.-1 now?

Mr. Kinney: We never touch U.S.-1 or Riviera, we go straight through Ponce.

Commissioner Lago: Underneath the Metrorail. So basically we've been using the same proposed means of ingress and egress for the facility.

Mr. Kinney: Yes – that's where the fueling station is.

Commissioner Lago: And we haven't received any complaints, there hasn't been any issues in regards to access to the trolleys, any issues, correct?

Mr. Kinney: No.

Commissioner Lago: So basically over the last year its kind of been like a test run, except for the fact that the trolleys have been exposed to the elements, which is not in the best interest of the trolleys.

Mr. Kinney: I mean it is only three, but there has been no difficulties at all.

Commissioner Lago: OK. Thank you.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, may I add something? Both H-2 and H-3 are related to the trolley, the settlement from last summer. They essentially are the final step in ensuring that there is a trolley building both temporarily and permanently for the trolleys because the City is not going into, remember the Coconut Grove facility, and so there is not much discretion here, and I said that at the public meetings too, and I would like to commend staff because they were very, I felt, having gone to both meetings that they listened very closely to the public participation and comments and did their best to make accommodations based on that, but ultimately these two facilities both the permanent and the temporary one have satisfied the Title VI equity analysis, which is the equity analysis we must do under Title VI for trolley facilities based on the FTA's statements in this regard, so those have been completed and both are acceptable facilities and so this is ready to be voted on.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Thank you Mr. City Attorney.

Mr. Kephart: Scott Tao if you want to go through the...

Scott Tao: Yes. Good morning Scott Tao with AECOM, I'm a senior designer with AECOM. So what you see on the screen is actually like what Glenn mentioned, its preliminary, conceptual, we still have to go through the design review process with the Architectural Board and this was just one of the few options that we presented to the community so they could have an idea how this campus would look like. As you can see that area on the screen, you would have that's the view from U.S.-1, and that would be a view that you would have if you were standing on the roof of the building across. So we decided to give you that view so you can see how that campus would look like. You see the existing Fire Station on the left; the addition to the Fire Station right next to it and then the trolley maintenance facility to the right. We picked this style because its one of the styles that we presented. It's a traditional style, its more in terms with Coral Gables architectural style. We feel like this would be accepted by the Board of Architects as well, so this is one of the ideas we've had.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: How long would it take to build something like that?- how long would it take you to build it?

Scott Tao: I would say about 10 to 12 months.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: 10 to 12 months – OK. Keep on going.

Scott Tao: So this solution looks into using a material that could be used in drop canvass. Again, it's just a solution identifying maybe a brick material; this brick could be used throughout the buildings. The brick is a material that can be used in contemporary buildings, traditional buildings, so you can see it really ties in the whole campus with one look and it uses the existing building in the new style and they all blend altogether. So this is a look at the Fire Station facility – you can see the existing Fire Station. Again, this scheme chooses to plaid the building in brick and we may look at options with other materials, but this is one option that we looked at.

Commissioner Lago: Can I ask you a quick question in reference to the exterior of the building?

Scott Tao: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: I along with Commissioner Keon and the City Manager attended the second public meeting where you kind of gave out – you explained these renderings and what the future may look like, and you also gave several different options. I never got to hear what the

final results were, was it predominantly, was it an overwhelming request to do this type of exterior motif?- or was it kind of close in nature?

Scott Tao: No – correct – this was the overall preferred scheme that everyone...

Commissioner Lago: I think you gave two or three options.

Scott Tao: Three options.

Commissioner Lago: They were all beautiful.

Scott Tao: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: I just wanted to find out because since you did give three options sometimes the vote is rather split.

Scott Tao: Again, throughout the process which they were going to have to meet with the Architectural Design Board and they may have some options for us to consider as well, but this was unanimous.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Commissioner Lago, I'd also say that this is, although its not historically designated, there is a significance here, so we would be working with the Historical Resources Department and fine-tuning what is the exact material, but its this kind of treatment that they really wanted to talk to you about today.

Scott Tao: It starts giving that old Fire Station look as well, which is nice. It's a very industrial looking campus right now, we think that by doing this very traditional style it puts it back more to a residential-friendly style and it makes it more acceptable as well. So that would be the trolley maintenance facility. As you can see it has the same style, the same language as the addition to the Fire Station, that would be a two-story building about 17,000 square feet – a little bit less than 9,000 square feet on each floor. We are proposing a fence throughout the property and the fence would also have a lot of landscape. We don't show that in this landscape here, because then it would actually deter from looking at the design that would be some sort of a fence to secure the campus. That's a look, a view from looking south and you can see the first building on the right, that's the trolley maintenance facility and then you can see the Fire Station down on the road. But you can see the...when things start blending and it looks a lot more residential-friendly. This is a view of how – you see it now from Riviera Drive on the corner of Riviera and U.S.-1, that would be somewhat of what you would see after we finish the project, a

lot of landscape. You barely see the trolley maintenance facility in the background, all you can see is basically the refurbished Fire Station.

Commissioner Lago: I think you'd also be doing besides concealing the trolley facility, I think you'd also see the Metrorail.

Scott Tao: Correct.

Commissioner Lago: Which would be an added bonus.

Commissioner Keon: Its important to know too in your elevations where it looks almost maybe like the buildings are bridged, but its not, it's the Metrorail in the back...

Scott Tao: Right. Yes, that's correct.

Commissioner Keon: Point that out. It looks almost like the buildings are bridged where its really the Metrorail, so you need to make sure that.

Scott Tao: So we want to also show this elevation is from the back from Ponce. You haven't seen much because you have the Metrorail and there is already a lush landscape scenario right now, but we would also try to give some architectural treatments to the façade and not forget about the...

Mayor Cason: There is only the underline when it gets going, we'll have a lot of landscaping as well.

Scott Tao: Absolutely.

Commissioner Keon: I was just thinking, that is a good point though, is that as the underline progresses you don't want our building to turn a blank wall to the underline, you really maybe can use that to even enhance the underline. I don't know whether use glass or something, but I would think for families and people being able to go by and see what's happening in a Fire Station of a Fire House is pretty exciting. Every child in the world loves firemen and fire houses, even adults do, I mean everybody loves to go to a Fire Station, but it would really be nice if we could in your final set of design you could just have maybe a discussion with Meg Daly or something about the treatment of the backside and how it meets the Underline.

Mr. Kephart: We have been – I mean the relationship to this project to the Underline is very important to consider and we understand that and certainly will be working to make sure that the two projects complement each other.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Scott Tao: And that's just the final view, a bird's eye view of how the campus look and sometimes you may think that the campus is going to be too crowded, but that image tells us the story that there is plenty of space, plenty of parking space that we are going to be providing as well.

Mr. Kephart: And Scott, if I could add to we haven't touched on the project that you see on the bottom of the screen includes actually a trolley wash, which is very important to keep them nice and then on the other side it includes a canopy for the Fire Station vehicle parking where they have the issue of the Metrorail damaging the car, so both of those elements are included in the programming.

Commissioner Keon: And in doing this when we do these buildings, we will do all of what needs to be done to the Fire Station at that – all of the upgrades and the cleaning?

Scott Tao: That's correct.

Mr. Kephart: Yes.

Commissioner Keon:...the truck pit and all those things, so its going to service for at least 20 years out. What do you look at for the life expectancy of a building you build like this now?- is it 25 year life expectancy?

Mr. Kephart: Well certainly a building needs to include some renovations, but I always like to consider anything we build within the City as a 50-year life.

Commissioner Keon: A 50-year life.

Mr. Kephart: Now that doesn't mean that it doesn't have a full renovation in 20 years, it certainly likely would, but we should be looking long term and some people even look longer term than that.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: OK. Are there any other questions?

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: No.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Go ahead.

Commissioner Quesada: Its actually for the Fire Chief. I'm assuming, I know the answer already, but just to be clear, because it hasn't been said, you guys are OK with all of this with your operations that you guys have there? I know that you guys have a – there is a building there that you guys use for training at other times, you have to lay out your lines, with 90 feet worth of lines, you have to check them.

Fire Chief Stolzenberg: The current project incorporates a new training facility, training tower associated to the additional fire area that's being built.

Commissioner Quesada: OK, but as far as the ingress and egress for the trucks, you are OK?

Fire Chief Stolzenberg: Yes, we talked about – egress entrance from the back from the front possibly and out to the street and our routes to Ponce and to Riviera and to the highway remain the same.

Commissioner Quesada: I'm trying to think of the worse case scenario, you know as the trolley coming in that's parking, they got a flat tire right in there, its not going to prevent one of our trucks to go out.

Fire Chief Stolzenberg: No. We have alternate routes out of it.

Commissioner Quesada: I assume that you guys have had those conversations, I just want to make sure as well.

Fire Chief Stolzenberg: We work with the teams. It's a joint project.

Commissioner Quesada: OK. Thanks so much.

Commissioner Keon: Chief, It addresses all of the living conditions within the Fire Station?

Fire Chief Stolzenberg: It mentioned the design factor, that's one of the things we discussed. Originally it was a renovation to the existing station, but now with the addition we might be able to redesign the station to better fit our needs based on the new structure as well.

Commissioner Keon: OK. I mean the living conditions and things in the Fire Station were not...

Fire Chief Stolzenberg: The new design will definitely take care of all those issues.

Commissioner Keon: OK. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Thank you very much. Ms. City Manager we need a resolution on that, right?

Commissioner Keon: Can I ask one last question? We have Alternate 1, Alternate 2, Alternate 3, whatever in this packet, and I'm assuming that this additional sheet that was given to us is Alternate 2 and that's the one you are recommending?

Scott Tao: That was the proposed meeting based on our community meetings, yes.

Commissioner Keon: OK. So we can take out 1 and 3?

Mr. Kephart: Yes. We included 1 and 3 because that's what we showed the public, and the important thing of the recommendation is that the two-story version is what we are recommending architectural style, as we said, will go through a process and it may change and certainly before we would move forward the final design would come back to this Commission for review, I would imagine, so you can understand before we enter into a construction contract.

Commissioner Keon: OK – and its in response to community input.

Scott Tao: Yes.

Mr. Kephart: Correct.

Commissioner Keon: OK. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Thank you very much.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And yes sir, we do need a resolution.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: OK. We are going to need a resolution directing City Manager to proceed with the development of the design criteria package for the new trolley facility and renovations

and expansion to the existing Fire Station 2, located at 525 South Dixie Highway, Coral Gables.
Do I have a motion?

Mayor Cason: I'll make the motion.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Motion by Mayor Cason.

Commissioner Lago: I'll second the motion.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Second by Commissioner Lago. Mr. City Clerk.

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: OK. H-3 – Madam City Manager.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And this is a companion item related to where we house on a temporary basis the trolleys while the trolley facility is being constructed and I believe the best person to answer that would be Kevin Kinney, our Parking Director.

Mr. Kinney: We evaluated three, seriously evaluated three locations. We did a Title VI analysis on the two finalists and both were acceptable under Title VI. After reviewing the terms and the facilities staff's recommendation is to go with the school district facility, which is on S.W. 4th, 7000 S.W. 4th (Street). It does provide us the opportunity to essentially keep the same operations. We would house the mechanics and the trolleys at the school district facility and we would house administrative staff and the dispatchers within the City.

Commissioner Quesada: So, I'm looking at it on a map, so I guess the trolleys would travel – I guess they would come down Flagler.

Mr. Kinney: We would actually probably use S.W. 8th.

Commissioner Quesada: S.W. 8th –

Mr. Kinney: Actually we would probably wind up using both because we usually start in the morning, one trolley at Flagler and one trolley at the Metrorail station, so we would use both.

Commissioner Quesada: Got it. So the Flagler trolley, obviously we jump on Flagler and run east, right by that Publix and Ponce.

Mr. Kinney: Yes – right on the north side of Publix.

Commissioner Quesada: And then just jump into the route right there.

Commissioner Lago: From my understanding they start at 6:30 in the morning.

Mr. Kinney: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: So its not really a congestion issue, its more of a travel time issue?

Mr. Kinney: Yes. It adds a little bit of time to our headways. We actually leave the facility about half-an-hour before the school buses leave, so we worked that out with the School District.

Commissioner Quesada: That's a good point. Do we change trolleys throughout the day?- if a trolley starts at 6:30 a.m. that trolley is running until 10 o'clock at night?

Mr. Kinney: We are still kind of in the middle of the operational, working out all the details, but we will likely have two or three trolleys housed in the City so there is quick change out if we need it, but typically the drivers change, but the trolleys stay the same unless there is a mechanical issue.

Commissioner Quesada: And how often is there a mechanical issue?- not often?

Mr. Kinney: A few times a week. We'll work that out with Steve and they'll have to have a truck that's loaded with whatever they need to fix on route.

Commissioner Quesada: OK.

Commissioner Lago: Are you foreseeing a significant cost increase in regards to having the trolleys housed in this location?- more gas?

Mr. Kinney: Because of the additional headway, additional time for the trolley drivers, we are looking at about \$100,000 a year.

Mayor Cason: This should be for a year – year-and-a-half?

Mr. Kinney: We are doing an initial one year term, we are hopeful that that will get us really close, but if we need it, the School District is amenable to us adding an extension.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Mr. Kinney we don't get you up here very often, but can you just tell us about the ridership, how the ridership is going on the trolley now?

Mr. Kinney: Ridership right now, this year I expect to get about one and a quarter million. We are at a point where we are running six trolleys at 12 minute headways. We are at the point where there is enough ridership. We are hopefully in the next year going to look at seven trolleys at peak hours because we are essentially hitting our capacity at peak hours.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Very good.

Mayor Cason: How many cars do we estimate don't park in the Gables...of the trolley?

Mr. Kinney: The study from, I'm going to say 2009, from the University of Miami was based on almost a million passengers and their estimate was 750 cars a day that do not come downtown because the trolley operates and now we are at 25 percent increase. So if you did the math we are probably at about 900 cars.

Mayor Cason: Great. It's incredible.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Very, very good – very good. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Keon: What is our timeframe on, our timeline on this?- if we pass this resolution now today, you have to go to the Board of Architects, I assume?- what's the process now?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I think he is checking with Glenn and Ernesto are talking about it, but we are moving quickly, we are under a very serious timeframe so now that you have passed the resolution they will develop the plans in order to take it to Board of Architects. But Glenn we'll begin in the next, less than two months, correct?- moving forward?

Commissioner Lago: Glenn let me ask you just a quick question just going off what the Manager said and Commission Keon requested. Are we going to go to a RFQ, RFP for the architect?- or are we going to go and go through AECOM, I'm wondering because I'm not privy to whether

they were doing pre-con services, pre-development services, and now we are going to continue to do the actual design documents, is that what we are going to do?

Mr. Kephart: Our intent is and part of the resolution to move forward with AECOM as the design criteria package. We are proposing this is a design-built project, which means its about four more months to finalize the design and then enter into a design-build contract with a design-build firm and as Scott has said its 10 to 12 months of construction. So realistically we are looking at, if I had to say, probably about a year-and-a-half out before we actually occupy the building.

Mayor Cason: When do we have to vacate the current trolley station?

Mr. Kephart: A certain time period after they pull the permits, they started to do that, its close, we don't have a definitive date, but I think we are looking at the next two-three months.

Mayor Cason: So that's the urgency on this resolution.

Unknown Speaker: [Inaudible – off mic]

Commissioner Lago: Probably about two or three months.

Commissioner Keon: So we are looking at then the fall of 2016, is that what we are looking at?

Mr. Kephart: Yes, that is.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: OK. We need a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a one-year lease agreement containing an option of one year extension with the School Board of Miami-Dade County for use of their bus facility, maintenance facility, located at 7001 S.W. 4th Street, as a City operated trolley maintenance facility. Do I have a motion?

Mayor Cason: I'll make the motion.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Motion by Mayor Cason.

Commissioner Quesada: Second.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Second by Commissioner Quesada. Mr. City Clerk.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes
Commissioner Keon: Yes
Commissioner Lago: Yes
Mayor Cason: Yes
Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes
(Vote: 5-0)

[End: 11:03:20 a.m.]