

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item J-5
January 22, 2019
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena
Commissioner Frank Quesada

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Historic Preservation Officer, Dona Spain

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item J-5 [12:45:32 p.m.]

CIFO Donation Update

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: J-5.

Preservation Officer Spain: This is an update on the donation of the sculpture from the CIFO Gallery. If you remember, the Arts Advisory Panel was recommending to accept it, with a condition that it be indoors. The initial recommendation from the Cultural Development Board was not to accept it, but we spoke with them again and they agreed with the Arts Advisory Panel that said if you were going to accept it, it should be indoors. We sent a conservator out to the gallery. She met with them and examined the piece; and you have in your packet a memo, and I'll just like to read what she said. The piece is made of many large tubes that are simply resting on one another. These absolutely need to be bolted together for safety. They were previously, which we agree with. Sergio with CIFO said, the piece does not need to be configured in exactly the same positions, so the artist can make the site specific configuration. The artist claims that this piece is made from materials that can sustain an exterior location, but I have doubts about this. I will get details about exact materials from the artist, which she has not done, she hasn't

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1

been able to speak with him. I saw several areas of vulnerability, including a surface that will collect dirt, dust, and debris. Each tube was cut in half for shipping and glued back together, which means those seams are a weak spot. Sharp edges and interior surfaces, possibly fragile construction overall. I need more information on the artist on this. I think placing a sculpture on a raised platform in an interior location with each tube bolted down is a good plan. And so we would agree with that. The issue is, we don't have an interior place. The thought behind the piece is really compelling. It's about the country of Colombia being based on an economy that is destroying the land, and so its vacuous. Vacuum the mountains are really void. So that's what we have. So, it's before you as to whether or not to accept it. I'm not sure that we can store it while we look for an interior place. We do have buildings coming up that are going to be built that quite possibly can have an indoor spot.

Commissioner Quesada: The Coral Gables Museum has no interest?

Preservation Officer Spain: Its huge.

Vice Mayor Lago: How big is it?

Commissioner Quesada: Does it fit in there?

Preservation Officer Spain: At the smaller courtyard it would take up the entire space. And again, that's an exterior.

Vice Mayor Lago: The entire courtyard?

Preservation Officer Spain: The inner courtyard that they have.

Vice Mayor Lago: OK. OK.

Commissioner Keon: We don't have the space for it.

Preservation Officer Spain: I don't think we have the space for it in the indoors.

City Attorney Ramos: The last resolution was to accept contingent on finding a location.

Preservation Officer Spain: That's right. So, based on both boards plus the conservator's recommendation that it be indoors, we really don't have the space for it.

Vice Mayor Lago: I don't have any issues at all accepting the work, finding a place for it. My biggest concern is that I don't want to be held responsible if it falls apart or succumbs to the

elements. We know how things here in Miami work – put up a fence and in a year its oxidized. And I want to make sure that, not saying this would happen, because I think this is more fiberglass, correct?- than anything else. I don't have an issue accepting; I just want to make sure we find a place for it.

Commissioner Keon: But we would have to store it.

Commissioner Mena: Didn't Old Cutler Bay talked about doing something with it?

Commissioner Keon: No.

Preservation Officer Spain: They initially wanted it, but they've since taken that back. They do not want it now.

Commissioner Keon: I don't think that we would have to incur the cost of storing it and finding a place to store it for some period of time.

Preservation Officer Spain: If we want to accept that we can store it. We have locations that would be able to store it.

Commissioner Quesada: Alright. So, then if you don't think there is going to be an issue with it destroying it in any kind of way or damaging it, then what's the harm?

Commissioner Keon: I think we should thank them and let them make the offer to someone who could accept it, we don't have the conditions for accepting it.

Preservation Officer Spain: Or we can put it outside and...

Commissioner Keon: Not accepting the responsibility for it.

Preservation Officer Spain: The gallery thinks that it can do outside.

Commissioner Quesada: Oh, OK. Well if that's the gallery's recommendation to put it outside then we find a location, then absolutely, right?

Vice Mayor Lago: I don't have a problem with it. I think its fine.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I will entertain a motion that we accept it.

Commissioner Quesada: So moved.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second?

Vice Mayor Lago: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll please?

City Attorney Ramos: Not contingent on finding a location, we are just accepting? The last motion was...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can we store it if we can't find a place?

Commissioner Quesada: By next meeting Dona is going to tell us 20 different places where we can put this. (Laughter)

Preservation Officer Spain: Listen, I've driven around this City trying to find a place for it.

City Attorney Ramos: You had directed Dona to come back with locations. Do you want to direct her to come back next meeting or do you want a new motion that just accepts it?

Commissioner Quesada: I asked you to look at locations...there's nothing?

Preservation Officer Spain: You did. The biggest issue is that everybody seems to think it's supposed to be indoors and we do not have a place indoors.

Commissioner Quesada: The gallery tells us we can put it outdoors at their direction we put it outdoors.

Commissioner Keon: The conservator is telling you that they can't.

Preservation Officer Spain: The gallery it was indoors.

Commissioner Keon: The gallery said it should be indoors.

Vice Mayor Lago: What does the artist say is what I think is the most important?

Preservation Officer Spain: Well you know, we are waiting to hear from the artist, so hopefully by next time we all have spoken with him.

Commissioner Quesada: Then retract that motion. I say we don't accept the donation at this point. Wait for the artist – if the artist tells us its outdoors, we take it and then we put it somewhere outdoors.

Preservation Officer Spain: When we can find a place for it.

City Attorney Ramos: So we'll put it back on next meeting.

Vice Mayor Lago: Ask about a maintenance plan.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes. I would hate to turn away art that we like. Just let us know, keep us posted.

Preservation Officer Spain: Alright.

Commissioner Quesada: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Anything else?

[End: 12:51:33 p.m.]