

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-6
May 14, 2019
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena**

City Staff

**City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Landscape Director, Brook Dannemiller**

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Items G-6 [11:52:13 a.m.]

An update regarding the tree beautification on Bird Road from Ponce de Leon Blvd. to Red Road
(Sponsored by Vice Mayor Lago)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Next is the beautification on Bird Road from Ponce.

Vice Mayor Lago: There was a mistake there and it was my error. What we are talking about here is 57th Avenue between Ponce and Bird Road.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Oh, 57th Avenue.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes, 57th Avenue. It was my error. I know they are preparing some comments for Bird Road also, maybe you want to address the Commission and tell them a little about what's going on in regard to 57th Avenue and how close we are finally to beautifying this area, which is much needed.

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Landscape Director Dannemiller: Yes. So, the grass swale area on the east side of Red Road from U.S.-1 up to, that's actually north of Bird Road, it goes to through Coral Way. We have a permit from FDOT to plant solitary palms. It has to be only four inches in diameter, so it really limits what we were able to plant there, because it has to be a frangible species. We have a permit, procurement – we received bids, it's still the cone of silence, so that should be awarded sometime soon, and we have a contract vessel with SFM, our landscaping contractor to be able to install them. So, we should be able to give you a rough schedule when those will be installed in the next 30 days or so. We'll know when we can schedule that.

Vice Mayor Lago: Two simple quick points. Number one, can you please provide a simple memo or an e-mail to this Commission talking about what trees offer that frangibility as per FDOT standards. Send that our way so we can see.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: It's only two, solitary and...

Vice Mayor Lago: I was only aware of one, OK, you are doubling my options, that's pretty good. I'll take that any day of the week; and second, give me a true-blue schedule. Not asking you to... provide a schedule, I'm just saying, give me an idea of when we'll finally deliver that, and I'll tell you why. Because you have all these residents that are just really, really excited about doing something on the swale there. Just provide me this, worse case scenario three months down the line we can actually get started on this.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: OK. And then on Bird Road, the median, we lost a lot of ficus..., a historic street. Those were the trees that were planted by Frank Button, the landscape architect. They are not commercially available, so we have to propagate them ourselves, so we are...in our nursery at Public Works and you'll eventually have trees, but they are going to be tiny.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Where – which street...?

Landscape Director Dannemiller: The median on Bird Road.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: When I travelled around the City with former Commissioner Quesada and discussed precisely that issue...can we have bigger trees, and those trees have grown.

Vice Mayor Lago: They grow. So, I just wanted to put it out there, because there are a lot of residents that keep asking me and I think this is just good news for that whole area. By the way, I live in that area, so I'm excited.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: So, we'll give you that schedule once the procurement is finalized and we can get the installation schedule from SFM.

Vice Mayor Lago: Send me that e-mail, send it to the Commission, if you can, with the two options of the trees, so we can get an idea of what it is.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: OK.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: Thanks.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can I suggest something. My pet peeve, the palm trees on U.S.-1. They have taken down half of them – there are many there still and its beautiful when they are there, but can we see that FDOT puts some of them back whether we help them, or we force them, or we sue them to do that.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: Yes. The median – when they reinstall the median that will be planted with Royal Palms once again.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Well it seems as if they finished everything and they had not...

Landscape Director Dannemiller: That project, I think there is an item down here, Oh, that's the corridor study, but that project, I think is over a year-long project.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can you report to us next time?

Landscape Director Dannemiller: Yes. We can just do an e-mail, if you want to, an update on the schedule. We can ask for that from the project manager.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'll very much appreciate it, because half of it, I think from Grand Avenue east there is nothing there.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: That would be the last thing installed at the end of the project, so its going to be like that for a while. The permits do have Royal Palms.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: OK. Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: It appears that they cleared for them in the swale on that east side of the highway. There's a bunch of royal palms, is that where they came from?

Landscape Director Dannemiller: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: They moved them over there.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: Yes, they had to relocate the ones out of median in order to do the work, so they went on the east side of U.S.-1 and then also along Mariel Court, along Biltmore Golf Course. There's an overgrown area there.

Commissioner Keon: I noticed the ones on the highway.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: That's where they all went. All the ones that were in good health stayed within the City, and then when they finish the project the median will be replanted with the Royal Palms. So, the ones that were healthy enough stayed in the City. There are a lot that are in poor condition.

Commissioner Keon: Have you talked to Merrick Park about replacing that one next to Merrick Park.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: I'll follow-up with that to see where they are.

Commissioner Keon: Royal Palm with no leaves on top.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: We'll follow-up with them again on that one.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Maybe it's a sculpture.

Commissioner Keon: Wrap it in lights or something (laughter).

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: OK.

[End: 11:57:32 a.m.]