

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-1
August 25, 2020
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 Jorge Fors

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

Assistant City Manager, Ed Santamaria

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-1 [10:13 a.m.]

Update regarding process for sale of Municipal Parking Lot 24 (Doctor's Hospital Lot) located on the northwest corner of University Drive and Pisano Avenue.

(Sponsored by Vice Mayor Lago)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. Now we go to F-1, City Commission items. Vice Mayor Lago, your items.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yeah. I will request that ACM Santamaria give us a briefing on the City Manager.

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Agenda Item F-1 - Update regarding process for sale of Municipal Parking Lot 24 (Doctor's Hospital Lot) located on the northwest corner of University Drive and Pisano Avenue.

City Manager Iglesias: Vice Mayor, currently, Doctor's Hospital's consultants are working with Public Works to finish the T plat issue. We're also working on the change of use to special use. In addition to that, we're setting up a special meeting with the property owners that are directly affected across the canal and adjacent to the property in which (INAUDIBLE) and I will present. We're currently -- for that presentation, we're currently waiting for the plans to be preliminarily approved by Public Works and by Zoning, so we have the right amount of landscaping, a wall to attenuate noise and light. We're also proposing a covenant that it will remain a surface lot. There will be no construction, no work -- construction on it. After that initial outreach -- and Mr. Trias will do his normal 1,500 feet -- and then we bring it to -- for -- to the City Commission -- to P&Z and to the City Commission to move forward. So, we are currently working on all those issues right now to make this happen.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you, and I appreciate that update. I did a public records request because there was some back and forth about once the sale occurs, where the allocation of the funds was going to go. And we went all the way back to August of 2018, and at that point, I was not in favor of the sale. But one of the things that made me become in favor of the sale was the items that we discussed about how the money would be allocated. And I don't know the exact amount, but that's not really important right now. We discussed that 50 percent of the sale proceeds would go into the Parks Trust to continue to acquire open space, which I think is important. As we're selling a City asset, we want to continue to acquire City assets, which makes our balance sheet even stronger. And the second point was that we were going to restore the Art in Public Places monies that was used from the Agave project, which was used for the Public Safety Building. We talked about potentially using the sale -- proceeds from the sale of the general's home, but that money went to the Fink studio, which I think were well allocated, and I think you have some great news about that later, in regards to who hopefully will potentially takeover of the Fink studio. So, I wanted to -- you know, if you'd like, Miriam can send you over the public records requests in regard to the multiple times -- I think it was like four or five times that we really discussed the allocation. And I request that my colleagues consider that we -- like we've discussed in the past,

that \$1.5 million go towards Art in Public Places to make the art whole from the plaza resolution of 2019-167; and that the other \$1.5 million -- if it is a \$3 million sale -- go into the Parks Trust for acquiring public -- pieces of property for public use. I'm willing to make a motion on that if we need just something to solidify. I know that one of my colleagues had a desire to potentially use these funds for City Hall. I did some research on the budget. We currently have 2020 -- some significant money already allocated, not only in the budget, but also in cash in regard to needed improvements. So, I think that this money is best served, as we discussed, for the designation of those two items. And I'm willing to make that motion today, if anybody's interested in the further discussion or would just like to memorialize that.

Commissioner Keon: I was the one who had asked that the money -- that we look at using some of that money for the renovation of City Hall. Because although I think the total cost for the renovation of City Hall is around -- Peter, can you help me with that? What do you...

City Manager Iglesias: Eight to ten million dollars, Commissioner.

Commissioner Keon: Eight to ten million dollars, yeah. And I think what we have is I think there's a couple million dollars that have already been...

Vice Mayor Lago: Two point seven five million.

Commissioner Keon: Right, but...

Vice Mayor Lago: Two point seven five million.

Commissioner Keon: Right, but we have out -- a couple of -- two or three years budget wise, there...

Vice Mayor Lago: 2020 to 2023.

Commissioner Keon: Right -- no, out a couple of years, there is a \$7 million unfunded item in the budget in that line for the renovation of City Hall that we don't have a funding source for. And so, I don't know that, you know, potentially, we may be able to get grants to do it. We may be able, you know, to -- I don't know what other windfall is going to come our way, but the renovation of City Hall is an exceedingly expensive project, and I think if there are funds that are -- have not been allocated, I really think that we should consider using them or holding them for that. Now if we get a grant and whatever else, then we don't need -- you know, we don't need them, and we can reallocate them. But I think just because the money is coming in, I would like it held in -- on some ledger as to not be allocated just to the general fund, and I think we have been allocating -- was it, \$350,000 a year for...

Vice Mayor Lago: Five hundred thousand.

Commissioner Keon: A year for parks and whatever. So, we already have, you know, an ample amount and I'd like to look at -- you know, before we continue to add more money to it. I know that it started with a very -- a plan that the Parks Department put forward with having a neighborhood park within a 15-minute walk of every home. And I -- yeah, I'd like us to maybe take a look at that so we can see, you know, how many more parks and how many more parcels do we need to be able to accomplish that goal because that was the goal. So, I don't really know where we are with that, and I'd like that information before I just allocate a lot of money into a park trust. I do think there are some parks that need some updating and need some work on them, so if you want to allocate some money to -- I know Phillips Park is -- needs work. So I can understand if we want to allocate some money to upgrading that particular park. But I really don't think we should dismiss the renovation of City Hall. That -- you know, that -- this is an exceedingly important historic building in our City that desperately needs to be renovated. The windows, doors and everything are in terrible shape. City Hall needs to be renovated.

Vice Mayor Lago: So, in regard to...

Commissioner Keon: And I don't -- (INAUDIBLE) going to come -- that seven million that we have, you know -- Peter, do we have a funding source for that (INAUDIBLE)...

City Manager Iglesias: No, we don't, Commissioner Keon. What we're proposing, our construction schedule that we're proposing would be to start Fink this year; of course, start 427 towards the end of the year; start Garage 7 in '21. In '22, we are -- and have an RFQ, which is already out, for the mobility hub, where Garage 1 is at. So, prior to Garage 1 at the beginning of '22, at that point, we would go out for a bond issue for Garage 1, and we would like to include City Hall in that bond issue because we really truly don't have -- we're doing a tremendous amount of catchup work as far as infrastructure is concerned.

Commissioner Keon: Yeah, (INAUDIBLE). Yes.

City Manager Iglesias: And so, when we go out for that -- so what I've got -- what I would like to do is when we go out for that bond issue for...

Commissioner Keon: Garage 1.

City Manager Iglesias: Garage 1, which will be our mobility hub, they'd include in that -- in those monies enough additional funds, which will be about \$10 million for City Hall so that we would restore City Hall in '22 and do the mobility hub in actual '22.

Vice Mayor Lago: So -- because you have -- when you look at your capital improvements plan for City -- obviously, for the City, City Hall has an allocation of between 2020 and 2023 of \$10.4 million. Currently, we have \$2.75 million allocated for immediate improvements. We had discussed that the most important need right now is obviously the replacement of the roof, which is going to seal the building and limit the amount of water intrusion that's a concern right now. And I know that you're moving expeditiously in regard to that.

City Manager Iglesias: (INAUDIBLE), Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You all are making, you know, very, very, very valid, important points about preservation and saving of our City properties as well as parks. But can we take a vote on F-1, and then we can continue the discussion?

City Attorney Ramos: I don't think we need a vote, sir. It's just an update that the Vice Mayor requested.

Vice Mayor Lago: No.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Vice Mayor Lago: And what I did request was I'm more than willing to take a vote on the allocation of the funds from the future sale, if we can do that, to allocate it 50 percent to a...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can I make a suggestion to you?

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That is a very important subject, and if you put it on the agenda for the next meeting, I would love to discuss it at length, you know, so we are prepared. Is it okay?

Vice Mayor Lago: If my colleagues think that's the most appropriate way, you know, to move forward, I don't have a problem putting it on the next agenda.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, thank you.