

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-6
August 25, 2020
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

Assistant City Manager, Ed Santamaria

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item H-6 [11:48 a.m.]

A Resolution amending the approved recommendation provided in Resolution No. 2018-222, in order to authorize the City Manager to relocate the Economic Development Department (“Department”) to the H. George Fink Studio (“Fink Studio”), located at 2506 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, Coral Gables, FL 33134, upon completion of the City’s historic restoration of the building.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Item H-6.

City Attorney Ramos: H-6 is a resolution amending the approved recommendation provided in Resolution No. 2018-222, in order to authorize the City Manager to relocate the Economic Development Department to the H. George Fink Studio, located at 2506 Ponce de Leon Boulevard.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And the reason for this is that CCE, the Centro Cultural Español, when the bids came in, the cost of doing the inside part was something like four times what they -- what was calculated initially because of the historic nature of the project and they just don't have the money to do it. The other people that participated in the selection process, University of Miami, Miami-Dade, FIU, the Dante Alighieri Society, for their own reasons, would not be able to bid because, you know, one, there was not enough space. The other one, the cost, and now that this cost is even more, University of Miami, the Dante Alighieri, the same thing. So, I -- Peter and I came with the idea of our Economic Development Department using this splendid structure for their headquarters and our having receptions there for prospective consulates, companies and cultural institutions that may want to come to Coral Gables meeting there as opposed to -- having their meetings there as opposed to having a -- whatever it is former in a standard commercial building. I think it is a very good project, and I would like to speak for it, in spite of the fact that I was the one who suggested the CCE.

City Manager Iglesias: Thank you, Mayor. I would like to -- for Solanch to show the picture of what -- of the computer-generated drawing of the space. This is what we're looking at at the central space of the Fink Studio. The offices for Economic Development would be towards either side. This is the actual building and then there were additions to either side of it. So, it's a beautiful space that can be used for dignitaries, presentations, meeting -- corporate meetings, et cetera. And we feel that -- not only that, but we're also just saving on rent for Economic Development from where they're at now. So, I do think that that can be a very outstanding meeting -- one of the -- this is also a look as you walk into the -- to that space. So -- and of course, you have the incredible entry area, or lobby area, which is original, and we don't have many of those areas. So, it can truly be an outstanding building. It stays as a City building, accessible to the public at all times, and certainly, we feel it's -- Mayor, you and I have discussed the issues concerning the CCE. It didn't

work out; however, I think we have a very, very good second option in Economic Development for this building.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And we can also make it available to cultural institutions for their lectures, exhibits, whatever. I think it's a win-win situation. And when I was Mayor the last time, we had lectures, conferences, luncheons sometimes with the consulates or with our multinationals, explaining why, you know, changes in Latin American and our European laws, et cetera, to all the others. And we had been lacking a venue to promote things like this and this would give us a great venue to expand on our merits and what Coral Gables offers. Comments or thoughts or motion for discussion?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Commissioner Mena Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Motion.

Commissioner Mena: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll, Billy?

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)