

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item E-3
September 8, 2020
Virtual Meeting
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
Assistant Planning and Zoning Director, Ramon Trias

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item E-3 [9:48 a.m.]

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida granting approval of proposed amendments to the text and Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan, pursuant to expedited state review procedures (S.163.3184, Florida Statutes) and Zoning Code Article 3, Division 15 (proposed reorganization ordinance: Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-213), “Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments;” to clarify density and height in certain land use classifications in the Future Land Use Map to the “Design & Innovation District;” and adjust the boundary of such district, providing for a repealer provision, providing for a severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (08-12-20 PZB recommended approval, Vote 7-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: E-3 now.

City Attorney Ramos: E-3 is an Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida granting approval of proposed amendments to the text and Future Land Use Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan, pursuant to expedited state review procedures (S.163.3184, Florida Statutes) and Zoning Code Article 3, Division 15 (proposed reorganization ordinance: Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-213), “Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments;” to clarify density and height in certain land use classifications in the Future Land Use Map to the

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“Design & Innovation District;” and adjust the boundary of such district, providing for a repealer provision, providing for a severability clause, and providing for an effective date.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, Ramos Trias will present item E-3.

Assistant Director Trias: Thank you. May I have the PowerPoint please. Mayor, as you explained, this area of the industrial district has really changed in the last few decades, and what we are proposing here is one more step in that vision that you have so clearly explained. So, next please. The area, the industrial district where we saw the project that you just approved, and many other projects has become a mixed-use district and next please. And as it becomes mixed-use, I think that there’s a need to target and clarify the goals of the city in terms of the activity that should take place on the ground level – next. The future land use and the zoning map, as a result of the overall update that you’re working on will be presented to you in the near future, may change slightly the zoning and so on, we have some ideas, but in the meantime, staff has recommended two changes, I think will be very, very helpful to implement that vision. One is a map amendment that changes the name of the district to design and innovation and this has been the recommendation of Economic Development staff and the city management and many members of the community, design and innovation instead of industrial district. And then some text amendments that creates some policies that deal with economic development and branding for that new name of the district, and also a correct some minor inconsistencies that we’ve had with the Zoning Code. None of the changes in terms of development rights are different than what’s allowed currently in the zoning code, 120 feet, and also the unlimited density in the area, is simply a way to make sure that we are consistent and that we have the same regulations on the Zoning Code and the Comprehensive Plan. So, staff and Planning and Zoning recommend approval and hopefully this will give you the opportunity to develop this idea further in the future by creating the framework within the compound.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you Mr. Trias. Any comments from members of the City Commission?

Commissioner Keon: Yes. I’d like to know what’s the innovation portion. I know I had spoken with Peter and staff about it becoming a design district a year or so ago. What are you looking for when you are labeling it as innovation? What’s the message with that?

Assistant Director Trias: In the policy language, we included financial services, bio-medical, pharmaceutical activities and technological development. So, it’s an opportunity to create more economic development focus to the development that goes on. That was upon the recommendation of the Economic Development staff and they may be able to come and further if you’d like.

Commissioner Keon: Okay. I don’t have a clue about that one. I’d also asked at the time, particularly as a design district, because there are many stores and shops and things there now that certainly are design oriented, that its an opportunity to also – there is a lot of use of Uber and ride shares in that area, Lift and whatever else. You have parking spaces that are dedicated to taxi cabs. I know along the LeJeune Road side, by Neiman Marcus, you have some dedicated taxi spaces,

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maybe along by Nordstrom also. Can we combine taxi and ride share or do they have to be separate?

Assistant Director Trias: I think the Parking Director manages that process. I do not know the answer, but he may know the answer to that.

Commissioner Keon: Okay. Could you look into that before this comes back? Does this come back a second time?

Assistant Director Trias: Yes. Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Okay. Before it comes back, there should be, if we are going to have a design district with those sorts of things where people don't have to go and park, we should allow for some spaces for ride share opportunities, as well as taxi cabs. If you can combine them as taxi ride share spaces, that's fine, if not, figure out how we can do that, if you are going to do that in that type of area.

Assistant Director Trias: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner, I think the idea of this is to really combine design and technology together. We are right in the transit zone. We have a trolley that pre-Covid had ridership of 1.25 million people right within two blocks of LeJeune Road, and so, we can look at the changes on that map which were quite incredible from the old Public Works Department that was there to Merrick Park, to the changes that have occurred so far. So, the idea is to look at the design and technology in this area and look at the fact that it is in the transit zone that we do have Uber and we do have a free trolley going by every nine minutes.

Commissioner Keon: Okay. Its more the parking that I'd like you to be able to add to that area, is the ride share parking, so they have the ability to wait in that area, not be just circling the streets waiting for someone to call them. Thank you.

City Manager Iglesias: We will take a look at that Commissioner. Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Any other comments. Alright. Do I hear a motion?

Vice Mayor Lago: So moved.

Commissioner Keon: Second.

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

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Commissioner Mena: Yes
Commissioner Fors: Yes
Commissioner Keon: Yes
Vice Mayor Lago: Yes
Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes
(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much everybody.