

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA)/
PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING
VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT
HYBRID FORMAT
WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 2021, COMMENCING AT 6:06 P.M.

Board Members Present at Commission Chamber:

Eibi Aizenstat, Chairman
Robert Behar
Luis Revuelta
Wayne "Chip" Withers
Venny Torre
Rene Murai (present via Zoom platform)
Maria Velez (present via Zoom platform)

City Staff and Consultants:

Ramon Trias, Planning Director
Devin Cejas, Deputy Development Services
Director/Zoning Official
Jill Menendez, Administrative Assistant, Board Secretary
Jennifer Garcia, City Planner
Ana Restrepo, Principal Planner
Arceli Redila, Principal Planner
Craig Coller, Special Counsel (via Zoom platform)
Peter Iglesias, City Manager
Marcos De La Rosa, Fire Chief
Imelys Sansores, Agenda Coordinator

Also Participating Via Zoom Platform:

Eduardo Vivas
Sue Kawalerski

1 THEREUPON:

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I'd like to call the
3 meeting to order.

4 Good evening. This Board is comprised of
5 seven members. Four Members of the Board shall
6 constitute a quorum and the affirmative vote of
7 four members shall be necessary for the
8 adoption of any motion. If only four Members
9 of the Board are present, an applicant may
10 request and be entitled to a continuance to the
11 next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

12 If a matter is continued due to a lack of
13 quorum, the Chairperson or Secretary of the
14 Board may set a Special Meeting to consider
15 such matter. In the event that four votes are
16 not obtained, an applicant may request a
17 continuance or allow the application to proceed
18 to the City Commission without a
19 recommendation.

20 Tonight's meeting is hybrid in format,
21 where only Board Members and City Staff are
22 physically present in the Commission Chambers
23 at Coral Gables City Hall. Applicants and
24 members of the public will be participating via
25 Zoom.

1 Lobbyist Registration and Disclosure. Any
2 person who acts as a lobbyist pursuant to City
3 of Coral Gables Ordinance Number 2006-11 must
4 register with the City Clerk prior to engaging
5 in lobbying activities or presentations before
6 City Staff, Boards, Committees and/or City
7 Commission. A copy of the Ordinance is
8 available in the Office of the City Clerk.
9 Failure to register and provide proof of
10 registration shall prohibit your ability to
11 present to the Board.

12 As Chair, I now officially call the City of
13 Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Board Hybrid
14 Virtual meeting of May 12th, 2021 to order.
15 Due to COVID-19, Zoom platform is being used,
16 along with a dedicated phone line. The time is
17 6:06.

18 Jill will now call the roll. When your
19 name is called, for the Board Members
20 participating via Zoom, there are two of them,
21 please make sure your microphone is on and
22 acknowledge your presence.

23 Jill.

24 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

25 MR. BEHAR: Here.

1 THE SECRETARY: Rene Murai?

2 MR. MURAI: Here.

3 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?

4 MR. REVUELTA: Here.

5 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?

6 MR. TORRE: Here.

7 THE SECRETARY: Maria Velez?

8 MS. VELEZ: Here.

9 THE SECRETARY: Chip Withers?

10 MR. WITHERS: Here.

11 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Here.

13 Please be advised that this Board is a
14 quasi-judicial board, which requires Board
15 Members to disclose all ex parte communications
16 and site visits. An ex parte communication is
17 defined as any contact, communication,
18 conversation, correspondence, memorandum or
19 other written or verbal communication that
20 takes place outside a public hearing between a
21 member of the public and a member of a
22 quasi-judicial board regarding matters to be
23 heard by the Board.

24 If anyone made any contact with a Board
25 Member regarding an issue before the Board, the

Page 5

1 Board Member must state on the record the
 2 existence of an ex parte communication and the
 3 party who originated the communication. Also,
 4 if a Board Member conducted a site visit
 5 specifically related to the case before the
 6 Board, the Board Member must also disclose such
 7 visit. In either case, the Board Member must
 8 state on the record whether the ex parte
 9 communication and/or site visit will affect the
 10 Board Member's ability to impartially consider
 11 the evidence to be presented regarding the
 12 matter. The Board Member should also state
 13 that his or her decision will be based on
 14 substantial competent evidence and testimony
 15 presented on the record today.

16 Does any member of the Board have such a
 17 communication and/or site visit to disclose at
 18 the time?

19 MR. BEHAR: No.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: None?
 21 MR. MURAI: No.
 22 MR. WITHERS: No.
 23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Swearing in. The
 24 swearing in process will be different than
 25 normal today. With the exception of attorneys,

Page 7

1 Has everybody had a chance to review those
 2 items?

3 MR. BEHAR: Yes. Motion to approve.
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a motion.
 5 MR. TORRE: Second.
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a second. Any
 7 discussion? No?
 8 Having heard none, Jill, please call the
 9 roll.

10 THE SECRETARY: Rene Murai?
 11 MR. MURAI: Yes.
 12 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 13 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.
 14 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 15 MR. TORRE: Yes.
 16 THE SECRETARY: Maria Velez?
 17 MS. VELEZ: Yes.
 18 THE SECRETARY: Chip Withers?
 19 MR. WITHERS: Yes.
 20 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 21 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 22 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.
 24 The procedure for tonight's meeting will be
 25 as follows: First, the identification of

Page 6

1 when we take up a quasi-judicial item, each
 2 member of the public will be sworn in before
 3 they speak. Also, I ask that each speaker
 4 first state their full name and address, for
 5 the record, prior to speaking.

6 We will be using the Zoom platform. I will
 7 ask any person wishing to speak or testify on
 8 tonight's agenda item, to please open your chat
 9 and send a direct message to Jill Menendez,
 10 stating that you would like to speak before the
 11 Board, and include your full name. Jill will
 12 call you when it's your turn. Depending on the
 13 number of speakers, I'd ask you to be concise,
 14 in the interest of time.

15 We will also be using the phone platform.
 16 After Zoom platform speakers participants are
 17 done, I will ask phone participants to comment
 18 on tonight's agenda item. I'd also ask you to
 19 be concise, for the interest of time. Phone
 20 participants can be reached by *9.
 21 I will also ask -- the Clerk will be asked
 22 to read each e-comment or e-mail into the
 23 record.
 24 The first item we have tonight is the
 25 approval of the minutes of March 2nd, 2021.

Page 8

1 agenda item by Mr. Coller, then the
 2 presentation by City Staff, then we will go
 3 ahead and open it to public comment, first for
 4 Zoom platform, then the phone line platform,
 5 and any e-comments will be read into the
 6 record.

7 Afterwards, I will go ahead and close for
 8 public comment, and open it for Board
 9 discussion, at which time, if it's appropriate,
 10 a motion, and a second motion, and then a vote,
 11 if any.

12 Mr. Coller, would you like to read the
 13 first item into the record?
 14 MR. COLLER: Mr. Chairman, just as a
 15 housekeeping measure, because this is a
 16 legislative item, because it's an amendment to
 17 the Comprehensive Plan, it is not
 18 quasi-judicial, and, therefore, we do not have
 19 to swear in witnesses tonight.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 21 MR. COLLER: So I will read in Item E-1, an
 22 Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral
 23 Gables, Florida amending the Future Land Use
 24 Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive
 25 Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14,

1 "Process", Section 14-213, and Comprehensive
 2 Plan amendment procedures, changing the land
 3 use designation for property legally described
 4 as Lots 6 and 19, and the west 25 feet of Lots
 5 7 and 18, Block 219, Riviera Section Number 14,
 6 Coral Gables, Florida, from
 7 Religious/Institutional to Public Buildings and
 8 Grounds; providing for a repealer provision,
 9 severability clause, and providing for an
 10 effective date.
 11 Item E-1, public hearing.
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 13 What I'd like to ask, if we may a second,
 14 the City Clerk is online and he'd like to make
 15 a comment to the Board, if possible, if we can
 16 hold one second, Mr. Trias, on your
 17 presentation.
 18 Jill.
 19 THE SECRETARY: She's on. Imelys.
 20 MS. SANORES: Hi, thank you.
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Hi, how are you?
 22 MS. SANORES: Good and yourself?
 23 My name is Imelys. I'm on behalf -- I work
 24 in the City's Clerk Office. It was just a
 25 friendly reminder to the Board Members that you

1 will soon be receiving your financial
 2 disclosure forms. So those of you who have
 3 been on the Board prior know that this is an
 4 annual requirement. So when you get them, to
 5 just please fill them out. You can send them
 6 back directly to the State, you can send them
 7 to us in City Hall or e-mail it back to us and
 8 you will be in compliance.
 9 And, then, should you have any questions,
 10 feel free to reach out to me at the Clerk's
 11 Office. Jill, if you have any questions, I'm
 12 sure could provide you with my contact
 13 information, and that's it.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you very much.
 15 Thank you for the information.
 16 MS. SANORES: Thank you for your time.
 17 Have a good night.
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 19 Mr. Trias.
 20 MR. TRIAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
 21 Today, we have only one item in the
 22 meeting, and that item is the change of Land
 23 Use for a fire house on Sunset Drive. The
 24 change of Land Use is the first step in a
 25 lengthy process. I want to make that very

1 clear. The only thing we're here to discuss is
 2 that that location is appropriate for a fire
 3 house. The actual design, the details of that,
 4 I'm going to show some images, but those are
 5 very preliminary, and they will have to be
 6 refined through time, and we, the Board, the
 7 Staff and the public will have multiple times
 8 to provide additional input.
 9 May I have the PowerPoint, please?
 10 Fire House Number 4, that's a rendering --
 11 a conceptual rendering of the building and
 12 gives you an idea of the size, three stories
 13 and so on. Again, don't look at the details of
 14 the architecture.
 15 The location is right -- it's a parking lot
 16 right now on Sunset Drive, an existing parking
 17 lot, right next to a very nice green area and
 18 just south of San Ignacio Avenue, which is a
 19 residential neighborhood, as you well know.
 20 The way this looks today is, there's a lot
 21 of vegetation around and so on and so forth.
 22 It's a very good location, but the important
 23 thing is that it fronts Sunset Drive, which
 24 provides good access, direct access, to many
 25 areas that are not served very well by the

1 City.
 2 Today, also, we have, in addition to the
 3 Planning Staff, we have our City Manager, who
 4 may want to say a few ideas about the vision of
 5 this project. We also have our Fire Chief, who
 6 may want to answer any questions you may have,
 7 from the operations and the logic behind this
 8 location, but that is the location.
 9 Now, when you look at the current Land Use
 10 and the Zoning, you will see that the Land Use
 11 is Religious/Institution. So it's not the
 12 proper Land Use and that's why we're changing
 13 that. The Zoning, on the other hand, Special
 14 Use, that will remain, because in Special Use,
 15 it's possible to have this fire house. So the
 16 only change is the Zoning -- the Land Use,
 17 change of Land Use.
 18 The change of Land Use will go from
 19 Religious/Institutional to Public Buildings and
 20 Grounds, and it's interesting, because the idea
 21 of the public building and ground actually has
 22 to do with the way that the project is
 23 designed, because, as you can see in this very
 24 preliminary Site Plan, all of the area that
 25 fronts San Ignacio is going to be green, is

Page 13

1 going to be a small park, to create a buffer
 2 from all of the activities. There's not going
 3 to be any gate or any door or anything linking
 4 that area to the station.
 5 Then, the station is located facing Sunset,
 6 and there's some parking in the back, but the
 7 access to the fire trucks will come from
 8 Sunset. And, again, the Fire Chief is here, if
 9 you have any questions. The traffic and
 10 operations have been researched and studied
 11 extensively, and this is a design that meets
 12 the requirements of the Fire Department.
 13 At this point, we're looking at 45 feet,
 14 which is what you can do, a little bit less
 15 than 45 feet, is the maximum height, which
 16 gives you three stories, and approximately a
 17 building that could be a little bit larger than
 18 some of the buildings right next to it, but
 19 within a reasonable context and a reasonable a
 20 proportion.
 21 In terms of the review time line, we had a
 22 virtual neighborhood meeting on April 28th, in
 23 which we actually had nine members of the
 24 public, and maybe some of them are here
 25 tonight, through Zoom, and there's a summary of

Page 15

1 good to be here with you all here tonight.
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Welcome.
 3 MR. IGLESIAS: I normally don't get too
 4 involved in this, but this is a fire house, and
 5 it's our fourth. It's our fourth facility. We
 6 have one, the new Public Safety Building, that
 7 we built on Salzedo. We remodeled -- actually,
 8 we almost reconstructed completely the fire
 9 house on Riviera and US-1. We have one, a
 10 third one, that's down Old Cutler, almost to
 11 57th Avenue, and this one provides, as the Fire
 12 Chief is going to explain, it really provides
 13 an additional access point for response time.
 14 It's very important for response time.
 15 And this project, we received a 1.5 million
 16 dollar funding from the State to buy the
 17 property, so we were able to -- we almost lost
 18 it. We came within a month of finding this
 19 piece of property. It's been very difficult,
 20 because we needed it in a certain area. I know
 21 that there was an area that was right near Old
 22 Cutler, by the circle, which was too close to
 23 residential -- to all of the residential
 24 properties there and it did not work.
 25 I believe that this property is in the

Page 14

1 the comments in the Staff Report. The Board of
 2 Architects has to be scheduled yet. Again, the
 3 design is not ready for that. We're doing
 4 Planning and Zoning for Land Use only today,
 5 and then eventually this will go to the City
 6 Commission.
 7 Letters to the property owners were sent
 8 within 1,500 feet advising them of the change
 9 of Land Use, of today's meeting and also the
 10 neighborhood meeting, and that's the area that
 11 was noticed, as you can see, the areas north of
 12 Sunset, because, as you know, south of Sunset
 13 is not part of the City of Coral Gables.
 14 There were two letters to property owners
 15 that were sent -- or, actually, one letter that
 16 notified them of the two meetings, and then we
 17 had the posting of the property. We had
 18 website posting and newspaper advertisement.
 19 Staff has reviewed the application and we
 20 have determined that it's consistent with the
 21 Comprehensive Plan's goals, objectives and
 22 policies, and we recommend approval.
 23 And if the City Manager wants to say a few
 24 words --
 25 MR. IGLESIAS: Thank you very much. It's

Page 16

1 right location. The Fire Chief has been very
 2 diligent in finding -- and our asset manager,
 3 in finding this piece of property, and he's
 4 done simulations already. He did simulations
 5 for use of this property prior to COVID, which
 6 is very important, and during school, and he
 7 feels very, very confident that this will
 8 enhance our response time.
 9 And if we do annex the area just south,
 10 which I believe that really -- that eventually
 11 we will, because it just fits into the Gables,
 12 I think it's good for them, it's good for us,
 13 and the more people -- the more people that
 14 move in, I think those younger people would
 15 want to be part of the Gables, and so it helps
 16 us in our response time. Simulations that the
 17 Fire Chief did prior to buying the property
 18 actually verify that, and what we're trying to
 19 do here is not -- this is not a -- we call it a
 20 fire house, because it's not really a fire
 21 station. It's got two vehicles. It will be
 22 manned by approximately eight firefighters on a
 23 constant basis, of course, and we believe that
 24 the location is -- we've been looking for a
 25 place for years, for years, to put that fourth

Page 17

1 facility, to really even out the City.
 2 The Chief, during the construction of Fire
 3 Station Number 2, had to move out of there and
 4 use the corner property, where the church is,
 5 by the University of Miami, at the very west
 6 portion of Ponce, and he found that that
 7 location helped as far as our response time in
 8 that part of the City.
 9 So this, really, augments our Fire
 10 Department with this fourth station that we've
 11 been -- I believe we've been looking -- we've
 12 been talking -- I've been a resident for a long
 13 time, and we've been talking about this issue
 14 for many years now. So it's actually almost
 15 here. And we were able to receive, as I said,
 16 1.5 million dollars from the State. We are
 17 providing a fire house park in the back, to --
 18 as part of our State grant, and I think it was
 19 certainly something that will help buffer the
 20 fire station from the residents. So that fire
 21 house park, we want to have it in the theme of
 22 a fire house park, as far as the kids are
 23 concerned.
 24 So I look forward to finally -- and I know
 25 that the Chief does, that we finally got

Page 19

1 MR. TRIAS: Yes, sir, and that's why we
 2 call it a fire house.
 3 MR. BEHAR: Okay. Okay. Thank you.
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Chief --
 5 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: Good afternoon, Members
 6 of the Board. Marcos De La Rosa, Fire Chief
 7 for the City of Coral Gables.
 8 I think the Manager surmised what is our
 9 intent and our goal with this piece of
 10 property. As he mentioned before, and as you
 11 were discussing, sir, a few minutes ago, this
 12 is intended to be a very small footprint, a
 13 fire house, with limited fire equipment in it.
 14 It is not to be a large facility or a training
 15 facility or anything that's going to have to
 16 operate large capacity vehicles.
 17 The main objective here is that currently
 18 there is a service gap between our Fire Station
 19 2 on Riviera and Fire Station 3, which is on
 20 Old Cutler and Red Road. If you're familiar
 21 with that area, you know that that is an area
 22 that is normally challenged by access. Most of
 23 the calls in that area respond from Fire
 24 Station 2, which is on US-1 and Riviera. That
 25 means that we have limited access, either Red

Page 18

1 another facility that will help our response
 2 time, which is critical. If you have a heart
 3 attack, you have anything happen -- we've had
 4 some people that didn't fare very well because
 5 of our response time, and this allows us to
 6 respond and work around traffic.
 7 So I appreciate being here tonight and
 8 thank you very much.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, Mr.
 10 Manager.
 11 MR. BEHAR: If I may, I have a question for
 12 Mr. Trias, just because I don't see it here,
 13 but you have -- the building is going to be
 14 located toward Sunset, away from the
 15 residential. It looks like you have half the
 16 property or more, which is the buffer that
 17 you're setting back from the residential; is
 18 that correct?
 19 MR. TRIAS: Yeah. That's correct, yes.
 20 MR. BEHAR: And it's a small building, I
 21 mean, a small footprint at the end of the day?
 22 MR. TRIAS: That is correct.
 23 MR. BEHAR: Because two bays is like very
 24 little, right? Am I understanding this
 25 correctly?

Page 20

1 Road or LeJeune, to access Old Cutler.
 2 Oftentimes our units traverse either Granada or
 3 Riviera to get down, circumvent the heavy
 4 traffic, which means that our units are
 5 traveling through predominantly residential
 6 areas and very narrow streets.
 7 This location offers us not only a
 8 strategic location south of the Gables
 9 waterway, if you look at it right now, our
 10 concentration of resources are all north of
 11 that, so it puts a unit south of the Gables
 12 waterway. It allows us to traverse Sunset,
 13 east and west, to access major thoroughfares to
 14 the area such as Cocoplum, eastern communities
 15 and also to the west.
 16 Other details that I can give you, as the
 17 Manager alluded to earlier, we did run
 18 simulations on Sunset Drive during various
 19 times of the day. So what we noticed or the
 20 uniqueness that Sunset Drive offers us, as
 21 opposed to, as I mentioned before, Riviera or
 22 Granada, as an example, even Old Cutler, it's a
 23 road that has wide swales. It allows vehicular
 24 traffic to merge out of our ways when we're
 25 traveling. There's only one traffic controlled

Page 21

1 intersection between Old Cutler and Red Road.
 2 We looked at school traffic. Most of the
 3 traffic that's related to the school stacks
 4 very effectively within the confines of the
 5 campus or the swale itself. So we're actually
 6 able to navigate well during hours of
 7 traffic -- of school, rather. And, again, as I
 8 mentioned earlier and I stressed, this avoids
 9 or allows us to keep most of the concentration
 10 of our travel to emergencies on major
 11 thoroughfares and avoiding the small, narrow
 12 residential streets.
 13 So, all in all, this location offers us a
 14 strategic location, south of the Gables
 15 waterway, it allows us east and west access,
 16 and enhanced access to our communities that are
 17 in that Central District. So, with the
 18 location of that fire station, we will have a
 19 fire house or a fire facility within a
 20 three-mile radius of any location in the City.
 21 Where, in contrast, right now, there's a
 22 five-mile gap between Fire Station 2 and Fire
 23 Station 3.
 24 Thank you.
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, Chief.

Page 23

1 small footprint, with a maximum of seven
 2 firefighters on duty at any time.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, Chief.
 4 MR. WITHERS: Will you be offering any
 5 cross service agreements with Dade County for
 6 the High Pines area through this station?
 7 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: So, the fire departments
 8 always have a Mutual Aid Agreement --
 9 MR. WITHERS: Mutual Aid, that's right.
 10 I'm sorry.
 11 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: -- that's been in effect
 12 since the 1950s. So any emergency in that
 13 area, if Miami-Dade County deems that we're
 14 best suited to handle it at any time of the
 15 day, we would do that, not only if we had that
 16 fire station, but we would do that currently
 17 with our resources today, and that occurs
 18 throughout Miami-Dade County at all times.
 19 MR. IGLESIAS: But to answer that question,
 20 we don't expect to have routine calls there.
 21 That's -- Dade County is going to handle it.
 22 When there is something that -- we do have a
 23 Mutual Aid Agreement and, when there is
 24 something that they need our help, just like we
 25 might need their help, we will, but we don't

Page 22

1 MR. TORRE: The use here is obviously for
 2 different vehicles. Is fire rescue, meaning
 3 emergency vehicles, part of this, not just
 4 fire? What's the combination of --
 5 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: Yes. So, as the Manager
 6 alluded, this will be designed for two
 7 apparatuses to run out of this station, a
 8 rescue truck and a fire engine. When we first
 9 open the station, we're going to place a
 10 paramedic fire engine there. The reason being
 11 that it is a resource that we currently have,
 12 so we're not going to grow the Department
 13 immediately that the station opens, and they
 14 have all of the same equipment that a paramedic
 15 or a rescue truck carries. So a fire engine
 16 allows us to address a multitude of
 17 emergencies, whether it's a fire, traffic
 18 accident or medical emergency.
 19 It won't be designed beyond that. Some of
 20 the concerns that we've heard in the past from
 21 the community is, oh, are you going to put
 22 large fire trucks -- a large ladder truck there
 23 or if that's going to become a training
 24 facility. That's not the case. We'd like to
 25 stress the fact that this is a fire house, very

Page 24

1 intend to make normal calls as far -- from that
 2 station.
 3 MR. WITHERS: Well, I was just thinking, if
 4 you really want to try to annex that area, that
 5 the best folks to send in there as emissaries
 6 are your fire guys and girls. It's great PR to
 7 send them down there.
 8 MR. IGLESIAS: Well, I hope Dade County is
 9 not listening right now, because our response
 10 time is a heck of a lot better than they are,
 11 and so that's something that we're going to be
 12 selling, and the fact that we told them there
 13 was going to be a fire station somewhere in
 14 that area. They did not believe us, and I
 15 think they'll believe us now.
 16 MR. WITHERS: Yeah.
 17 MR. IGLESIAS: But our response time speaks
 18 for itself.
 19 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: So it is important for
 20 me to stress, though, that although that's a
 21 discussion the Manager may have, this -- the
 22 need for this location is irrespective of
 23 whether there's any discussion moving forward
 24 with annexation. We need it, as a geographical
 25 location, for our service jurisdiction,

1 regardless of what the residents of High Pines
 2 choose to do in the future.
 3 MR. IGLESIAS: Right. It's an area that
 4 we've been looking for a long time for a fire
 5 house of this kind and it's been very difficult
 6 to find, but we were able to.
 7 MR. BEHAR: As a resident of the Gables for
 8 the last 30 years, this is fantastic. This is
 9 going to facilitate, you know, more for the
 10 community. I think this is a great evolution.
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct.
 12 MR. IGLESIAS: And we were able to get help
 13 from the State, which makes it even better.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Thank you, sir.
 15 MR. IGLESIAS: Thank you.
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 17 What I like to do is open it up for public
 18 comment.
 19 Yes, Luis.
 20 MR. REVUELTA: I would like to ask Ramon a
 21 couple of questions, please.
 22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, please.
 23 MR. REVUELTA: The maximum height in that
 24 area, Ramon, is the building meeting the
 25 maximum height?

1 MR. IGLESIAS: It's 30 feet.
 2 MR. REVUELTA: 30 feet?
 3 MR. IGLESIAS: 30 by 75. It's in the rear.
 4 It's a buffer zone and it's something that we
 5 worked out with the State, that we would have a
 6 fire house park there, as part of this
 7 facility.
 8 MR. REVUELTA: Thank you.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: What I'd like to do is
 10 remind everybody that we're here strictly for
 11 the change of Land Use, not for the design, not
 12 for anything else. So basically what we're
 13 here for is to change it from
 14 Religious/Institutional to Public Buildings and
 15 Grounds.
 16 At this time, I'd like to go ahead and open
 17 it up for the Zoom platform. Jill, how many
 18 speakers do we have?
 19 THE SECRETARY: Only one.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Only one? Could you
 21 call the individual.
 22 THE SECRETARY: Eduardo Vivas.
 23 Mr. Vivas, can you unmute yourself?
 24 MR. VIVAS: Can you hear me?
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Mr. Vivas, are you

1 MR. COLLER: Yes. It's 45 feet, and it's a
 2 little bit less than that.
 3 MR. REVUELTA: It's 45 feet. And on either
 4 side, it has, what, a school and a church or
 5 both are schools?
 6 MR. TRIAS: The Cocoplum Women's Club and
 7 then a church on the other side.
 8 MR. REVUELTA: Were there any objections
 9 from the neighbors across San Ignacio?
 10 MR. TRIAS: Well, there were questions more
 11 than objection, questions about the traffic
 12 operations, which the Chief has explained
 13 pretty well, and also some aesthetic
 14 recommendations or preferences that some of the
 15 neighbors expressed.
 16 MR. REVUELTA: So nobody has any objections
 17 other than --
 18 MR. TRIAS: Well, let's wait for the
 19 public --
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Let me open it up.
 21 What I'd like to do right now --
 22 MR. REVUELTA: Oh, I'm sorry, one last
 23 question, then. What is the depth of the park?
 24 MR. TRIAS: I don't know exactly. Do you
 25 know the --

1 there?
 2 MR. VIVAS: Good evening. Can you hear me?
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could you please state
 4 your full name and address, for the record?
 5 MR. VIVAS: Eduardo Vivas, 1335 San Ignacio
 6 Avenue.
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: City, please?
 8 MR. VIVAS: Coral Gables.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Go ahead,
 10 please.
 11 MR. VIVAS: There is a lot of echo, for
 12 some reason, but I'll do my best here.
 13 So I had sent some commentaries to
 14 Mr. Trias about some concerns that I have
 15 mostly having to do with the design, traffic
 16 impact and such, and he was very diligent in
 17 responding to those.
 18 I should say that I am across the street,
 19 by half of the lot, from the fire station,
 20 directly across from it. So every day that I
 21 go out, I'm going to see the fire station.
 22 And I had some questions that needed to be
 23 addressed by the Fire Department, though I did
 24 not get a response prior to the hearing, so if
 25 you all would indulge me, it's like four

Page 29

1 questions that I have, and if they don't have
 2 the answer right now, I would appreciate a
 3 follow-up for that, and they're mostly for my
 4 own edification.
 5 One of the question is, how many alarm
 6 responses are anticipated, on the average,
 7 whether they be per week, per month or per year
 8 coming out of this fire station?
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: What I'll ask you is
 10 to direct it to the Board and we'll go ahead
 11 and write down your questions and process them
 12 accordingly. Could you repeat your first one
 13 again, please?
 14 MR. VIVAS: Yes. I've already forwarded
 15 the questions to Ms. Menendez via Word
 16 document. The question was, how many fire
 17 alarm responses are anticipated on the average
 18 per week -- per month or per week coming out of
 19 the fire station?
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. And your next
 21 question?
 22 MR. VIVAS: What are the anticipated
 23 decibels at the fire station property line
 24 anticipated or limited to?
 25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And the next question?

Page 31

1 neighborhood hearing, is that 45 feet is a very
 2 high threshold for residents to be looking at.
 3 I don't think that the other buildings are that
 4 high. The one to the west of the property is
 5 the Cocoplum Women's Club, which already has an
 6 impact in the neighborhood, for having parties
 7 there on the weekends, and we have had parking
 8 issues, et cetera, and the other one is the
 9 Presbyterian Church, which, you know, is as
 10 high as a house. So a 45-foot high building is
 11 going to be very prominent for -- at least for
 12 me and for my family, and so that's a huge
 13 concern that I have.
 14 And the other one is the park. Is the
 15 park -- is it going to be a parking facility
 16 for the firemen or is it a green space park?
 17 What's the intended use of that buffer park?
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 19 MR. IGLESIAS: To answer on the height
 20 issue, it's not that it's a three-story
 21 building. It's that we need a higher height
 22 initially to get our trucks into the first
 23 floor, and then you have a living space above.
 24 So there is a Mezzanine, but that's not because
 25 the Mezzanine fits, but it's the fact that we

Page 30

1 MR. VIVAS: Will the fire station respond
 2 to emergency and non-emergency calls?
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And your final
 4 question?
 5 MR. VIVAS: I'm sorry, there's two more
 6 here. I wanted to understand the procedure for
 7 the wake up calls in case of emergencies? Is
 8 it an exterior alarm that is sounded off or is
 9 it an interior alarm with controlled sounds?
 10 We don't want to be woken up every time that
 11 there's an alarm for the fire crew to be raised
 12 from bed.
 13 And the last one was, what is the procedure
 14 for the Fire Department, when the trucks exit
 15 onto Sunset? Do they exit with the alarms
 16 going on from the get-go or do they leave the
 17 neighborhood? Is there traffic control
 18 coordination with the fire trucks, so that they
 19 minimize the fire truck alarm sounds until it's
 20 absolutely necessary?
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 22 MR. VIVAS: It's rather lengthy.
 23 The other concern that I have, that I just
 24 learned, and I'm sorry I wasn't able to make it
 25 to the previous -- the public -- the

Page 32

1 have to get vehicles in that require a higher
 2 space, and, then, of course, the living areas
 3 are above.
 4 We tried to make it as compact as possible,
 5 to get it away from the north and into more of
 6 the Sunset area, and we've put the park in the
 7 back -- the park in the back to further buffer
 8 it. So we have the park, parking, and then the
 9 fire house. And the problem that we have to
 10 make it lower is the fact that we have those
 11 big pieces of equipment that have to be able to
 12 fit in at the bottom, and so that's what that
 13 height is.
 14 I will let the Fire Chief answer some of
 15 those other questions; however, remember Fire
 16 Station 1 is right in the middle of Downtown,
 17 Fire Station 2 has residential right behind it,
 18 and one thing that they're very, very good at
 19 is working around those residential areas, and
 20 I never get complaints about that. I don't
 21 recall the last time I received any complaint
 22 concerning that, but we've tried to minimize
 23 the impact of that fire house by making it as
 24 compact as possible, putting it as close as
 25 possible to Sunset and using the minimum height

1 required, but we need to get the equipment in.
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, sir. Thank you.
 3 MR. IGLESIAS: Chief, I'll let you answer
 4 the other questions.
 5 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: So, with regards to the
 6 inquiry with noise, I'll address the noise
 7 first, as the Manager just stated, we always
 8 intend to be good neighbors and not disrupt a
 9 neighborhood, wherever our facilities are
 10 located. Fire Station 3 is a perfect example.
 11 It resides in an area that's all residential,
 12 but -- so our sirens and our horns, we use
 13 them, as needed, to navigate traffic. So if we
 14 don't need them, we're not going to use them.
 15 We're not going to be blasting our sirens or
 16 our horns at three o'clock in the morning when
 17 there's no traffic on Sunset or anywhere else
 18 that we're navigating to.
 19 The alerting system in our station is
 20 completely contained within the building. The
 21 same will be used in this place. It would be
 22 somewhat a little louder than your normal
 23 doorbell, for instance, when it alerts inside
 24 the station, because we have speakers
 25 throughout the station to lower the decibels

1 gentleman's concerns. I'm not sure if there's
 2 anything --
 3 MR. IGLESIAS: One thing, we also plan to
 4 use landscape buffer in that park in the rear,
 5 in that fire house park. There will be a
 6 theme. The theme will be the -- fire house for
 7 the kids, but we plan on using a landscape
 8 buffer to try to buffer as much as possible
 9 from the neighborhood to the north.
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 11 Jill, our next speaker?
 12 THE SECRETARY: Sue Kawalerski.
 13 MR. BEHAR: How many speakers do we have?
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Ms. Kawalerski, could
 15 you please unmute your microphone?
 16 THE SECRETARY: She is unmuted.
 17 MS. KAWALERSKI: Hello?
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, we hear you now.
 19 MS. KAWALERSKI: Yes.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Go ahead, please. If
 21 you could please state your full name and
 22 address for the record.
 23 MS. KAWALERSKI: Yes, and I've been trying
 24 to unmute, so it was not a technical on my end.
 25 My name is Sue Kawalerski. I live at 6830

1 not only for our neighbors, but our
 2 firefighters, as well. So I equate it to a
 3 little bit louder than your normal household
 4 doorbell, for instance.
 5 The park in the back is going to be a
 6 linear park, very similar to the neighborhood
 7 parks that the City has recently put in service
 8 within the neighborhoods. It's not for the
 9 firefighters. We'd envisioned a fire theme
 10 park, meaning if there was going to be -- if in
 11 eventuality it has any activities for children,
 12 it will correspond with the fire station by
 13 being more fire themed.
 14 With regards to alarms or responses for the
 15 area, I would have to research that to get an
 16 accurate number; however, without being able to
 17 give you any facts, it's whatever the numbers
 18 are there now. As I stated earlier, any calls
 19 for service in that area or to the communities
 20 to the east of this location, we would have to
 21 come south and traverse neighborhoods to get
 22 there. So this, definitely, actually
 23 concentrates the traffic on Sunset and away
 24 from our neighbors.
 25 I believe I answered most of the

1 Gratian Street, right down the corner from this
 2 location.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And the city, please?
 4 MS. KAWALERSKI: Coral Gables, Florida.
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.
 6 MS. KAWALERSKI: Yes. I have three
 7 questions. I live down the street from this
 8 proposed fire house. I think it is a good
 9 location, but I have three questions.
 10 Will this location be servicing the nursing
 11 home around the corner? That's Question Number
 12 1.
 13 Question Number 2, Sunset Drive gets backed
 14 up during the morning and the evening with
 15 school traffic coming and going. Are the fire
 16 engines, the trucks, the vehicles, will they
 17 have to back in, and, therefore, cause even
 18 further disruption of traffic and congestion,
 19 because they have to back in? And if that is
 20 the case, two questions, why aren't you using
 21 the rear of the fire house for re-entry of the
 22 vehicles, and, Number 2, if you're only going
 23 to use the front for entry and re-entry by
 24 backing in, what is the traffic mitigation
 25 device that you are going to be using to stop

1 traffic and/or separate the traffic from the
 2 emergency vehicle?
 3 The traffic there is backed up far beyond
 4 that location almost to Sunset Elementary. So
 5 how do you plan on getting in and out, is my
 6 question, and why aren't you using the rear for
 7 re-entry instead of continuing to stop traffic?
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.
 9 MR. IGLESIAS: When we looked at the Site
 10 Plan, these vehicles are very large, they have
 11 a lot of radius. So we would have to eliminate
 12 the park in the back, which is something that
 13 we agreed to do as far as for the State. It's
 14 also buffering that north neighborhood.
 15 So what we're doing is, we're creating a
 16 larger apron on the Sunset side, so that the
 17 engine can hide in there and back up, and so
 18 that's why we are creating a larger entry
 19 there, and that's been checked with auto turn
 20 and so forth, so that works. So we would have
 21 to come in and turn. The property is only 75
 22 feet wide. This is a fire house. This is not
 23 a fire station. And so we want to make sure
 24 that we create that park, as we agreed to with
 25 the State, and we also want to do it in the

1 back, so we buffer the houses in the north.
 2 We're working on that, and the fire station
 3 has not been designed. We are looking at maybe
 4 some -- at maybe a signalization there that's
 5 similar to what's happening in many areas when
 6 there's an actuation traffic stop. So that's
 7 part of what we're looking at now.
 8 We did that also in the Public Safety
 9 Building in Alcazar. When the fire alarm --
 10 when they have an activation, the Salzedo turns
 11 green, Ponce turns red, Alcazar is cut off, and
 12 the Fire Department can either go east or west,
 13 and so -- but it's a small lot. This is a fire
 14 house, so it's quite normal, and we have a
 15 number of these all over town from all kinds of
 16 departments, all different departments, where
 17 you actually back in.
 18 So we've looked at that, and we're trying
 19 to minimize the impact on Sunset for us having
 20 to back in.
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 22 MR. TORRE: I have a question.
 23 MR. IGLESIAS: Yes.
 24 MR. TORRE: Does the back of the building
 25 connect to the parking lot with another open

1 bay or is that closed? Is there a way to get
 2 to --
 3 MR. IGLESIAS: There's an open bay in the
 4 back, but that's more for ventilation, when in
 5 use.
 6 MR. TORRE: Primarily not to come in --
 7 MR. IGLESIAS: If there is an absolute
 8 emergency, that they can go -- they can go
 9 through --
 10 MR. TORRE: They can go through.
 11 MR. IGLESIAS: That's an absolute
 12 emergency. We don't expect to do that. We
 13 expect to work off of Sunset and stay away from
 14 the residential --
 15 MR. TORRE: But it can connect if --
 16 MR. IGLESIAS: There is a gate there, but
 17 that's only for extreme emergencies.
 18 MR. TORRE: Okay.
 19 MR. IGLESIAS: That's all. In case they
 20 can't get out, something happens, who knows,
 21 you know. This facility, we are going to
 22 harden it and make it a facility that will be
 23 available after hurricane events, and we're
 24 going to harden it, we're going to provide a
 25 generator, so just in the extreme case that we

1 cannot get out the front, but that would be
 2 highly unusual, and that's not the design of
 3 this station. This station is to work off of
 4 Sunset.
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.
 6 MR. IGLESIAS: Thank you.
 7 MS. KAWALERSKI: I have another --
 8 MR. WITHERS: Also the question about the
 9 nursing home, whether it was going to service
 10 the nursing home. I'm not quite sure what that
 11 means.
 12 MR. IGLESIAS: Chief, would you like to
 13 answer this? There's Riviera -- the Riviera --
 14 MR. WITHERS: I know -- yeah, it's the
 15 Riviera Nursing Home. Do we service it now?
 16 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: We service it now. Most
 17 of the calls that are there, since it's a rehab
 18 facility, require a rescue truck, as most of
 19 the time they're a transport to a hospital.
 20 So, initially, the advanced life support
 21 unit that's there will go to the nursing home,
 22 but provided that it's not a rescue, it will go
 23 to the extreme emergencies, and then a rescue
 24 will come from another district to provide the
 25 transport. Regular medical calls that the

Page 41

1 nursing home staff is telling us that this
 2 patient is not life threatening, but still
 3 require to go to the hospital, will be handled
 4 by a rescue truck from another station.
 5 So, the answer to her question is, it's a,
 6 yes, but partially. It's not a hundred
 7 percent.
 8 MR. IGLESIAS: I don't think you can ever
 9 say a hundred percent, no, but that's not the
 10 main use of this.
 11 MR. BEHAR: But it doesn't matter. You're
 12 serving it, one way or the other.
 13 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: Correct.
 14 MR. BEHAR: It's not like you're
 15 introducing something now that you're going to
 16 be introducing. It's there.
 17 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: Correct. A Coral Gables
 18 fire vehicle goes to that facility every day.
 19 MR. IGLESIAS: And they do it now.
 20 MR. BEHAR: And they do it now.
 21 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: And they use Sunset to
 22 get there, as well. So, in that respect, that
 23 is not going to change or provide a new aspect
 24 to any response to that area. Especially with
 25 the heavy construction in that area, the back

Page 43

1 County, City of Miami, many other cities. That
 2 does not mean that we do their services, we
 3 provide services for them. That is in case of
 4 an emergency, in case of a major event, that we
 5 help each other, but this will not be the norm.
 6 We will not be using this facility for Dade
 7 County. Dade County needs to take care of
 8 their issue, but if there is a problem, just
 9 like they help us, we will help them.
 10 Chief, do you --
 11 CHIEF DE LA ROSA: That's correct. I was
 12 going to say, the location of this fire house,
 13 as I mentioned earlier, is concentrated to
 14 provide and to address a service gap within our
 15 City for our residents. It has no
 16 determination on High Pines. High Pines is
 17 within the jurisdiction of Miami-Dade County.
 18 They are residents of Miami-Dade County.
 19 They've chosen to remain that way, and that
 20 fire service that provides there has the
 21 capabilities and the ability to provide that
 22 service.
 23 We will respond to them in a Mutual Aid
 24 capacity, as the Manager just described, as all
 25 fire departments in Miami-Dade County have been

Page 42

1 streets, as I mentioned before, Sunset, is used
 2 to traverse and access that facility.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, Chief.
 4 MS. KAWALERSKI: I have another question,
 5 please.
 6 MR. BEHAR: I think she has another
 7 question.
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Go ahead, please,
 9 ma'am.
 10 MS. KAWALERSKI: Well, that is the concern,
 11 because you have a neighbor that all of a
 12 sudden can service your facility, I would be
 13 relying a whole lot more on that neighbor than
 14 calling a vehicle from another district, which
 15 also means High Pines might be more reliant on
 16 this fire station being right next door, versus
 17 Miami Fire Department, which has a longer
 18 response time. Wouldn't that make sense, that
 19 both, the nursing home and High Pines would be
 20 more reliant and there would be that many more
 21 calls for use of our Fire Department?
 22 MR. IGLESIAS: No, I don't think so. Let
 23 me just say, Chief, concerning High Pines and
 24 I'll let you answer as far as Riviera.
 25 We have a Mutual Aid Agreement with Dade

Page 44

1 doing since 1953.
 2 Now, with regards to the concerns with
 3 Riviera, Riviera is not a new facility.
 4 Riviera has had a very strong relationship with
 5 the Coral Gables Fire Department since it
 6 opened. We've provided emergency medical
 7 services there since it opened, as we do with
 8 any building or any home within the City.
 9 So the location of a fire station doesn't
 10 create a bigger call volume for that facility.
 11 They're there, they've always been there and we
 12 address them and we'll continue to address them
 13 in the future. So, the location of the fire
 14 station or a fire house does not have a greater
 15 determinate or use factor for any location
 16 within the City.
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 18 Rene, I think you wanted to ask a question,
 19 if I'm not mistaken?
 20 MR. MURAI: Yeah.
 21 I've, obviously, traveled that area many,
 22 many, many, many times, but I don't recall
 23 seeing -- I mean, obviously there is -- an
 24 empty lot there, but the block immediately to
 25 the east, are there any residences there or

Page 45

1 just the school?

2 MR. IGLESIAS: The lot is not an empty lot.

3 It's currently a parking facility, a parking

4 lot.

5 MR. MURAI: Right, but, Ramon --

6 MR. IGLESIAS: So we're taking a lot and

7 one-half. The lots are 50 feet wide and we're

8 taking a lot and a half of the parking area.

9 So it's currently a parking facility.

10 MR. MURAI: Right. The block immediately

11 to the east, is that just taken up by the

12 school or are there residences there?

13 MR. IGLESIAS: Well, to the east is the

14 continuation of the parking facility, and,

15 then, if you continue east, after parking, then

16 you have the school and the church.

17 MR. MURAI: So, in the block between Sunset

18 and the end of that block, immediately to the

19 north, there are no residences?

20 MR. IGLESIAS: Immediately to the north?

21 No. No, that whole block -- that is parking.

22 From Sunset to the next street is all parking.

23 It's all currently parking.

24 MR. MURAI: What's the street to the north

25 of Sunset?

Page 47

1 west block between Sunset and San Ignacio,

2 adjacent -- all right. So the only residences

3 that border this fire house will be the ones in

4 San Ignacio to the north of the fire house?

5 MR. IGLESIAS: The ones that currently are

6 against this parking facility, you've got the

7 church, the parking and then the Cocoplum

8 Women's Club, and that all goes from Sunset to

9 San Ignacio. So we thought this was a good

10 area, because there are no residences there.

11 MR. MURAI: But on the north side of San

12 Ignacio, there are residences, right?

13 MR. IGLESIAS: On the north side, yes.

14 MR. MURAI: Of San Ignacio?

15 MR. IGLESIAS: Of San Ignacio, correct,

16 that buffer the church and the parking.

17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Rene, what I'd like to

18 do is ask Jill if there's any more from the

19 public, and at which time we can go ahead and

20 close it, if not, and then open it up for Board

21 discussion.

22 Jill, do we have any other members of the

23 public that would like to speak?

24 THE SECRETARY: No more speakers, but

25 Mr. Vivas just sent a message that he has one

Page 46

1 MR. IGLESIAS: What is it?

2 THE SECRETARY: San Ignacio.

3 MR. IGLESIAS: San Ignacio. San Ignacio.

4 MR. MURAI: San Ignacio. So between San

5 Ignacio and Sunset, on the east, there are no

6 residences?

7 MR. IGLESIAS: No, it's all parking. It's

8 all parking for the church.

9 MR. MURAI: Okay. And --

10 MR. IGLESIAS: There is currently asphalt.

11 MR. MURAI: Okay. And, then, to the west,

12 the same question, between Sunset and San

13 Ignacio, there are no residences?

14 MR. IGLESIAS: The Cocoplum Women's Club

15 and there's a large green area and then their

16 facility.

17 MR. MURAI: So there are no residences

18 there, either?

19 MR. IGLESIAS: No.

20 MR. MURAI: On either the east or west side

21 of that block?

22 MR. IGLESIAS: You've got a church on the

23 east and you've got a commercial facility on

24 the west.

25 MR. MURAI: I'm talking on the block -- the

Page 48

1 more question.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If it's quick, let's

3 go ahead and open it up to him a second for his

4 question.

5 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Vivas, can you --

6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Mr. Vivas, can you

7 unmute yourself, please?

8 MR. VIVAS: Yes. Thank you.

9 I just wanted to understand what the time

10 line for design and anticipated construction --

11 start-up and what the anticipated construction

12 time line is.

13 MR. IGLESIAS: Right now we're in the

14 design process. We are currently looking at

15 starting this project next year, towards the

16 second quarter of next year. We are currently

17 finishing up three projects this year, which is

18 Think Studio, the 427 Building, and we will be

19 probably bidding out Garage 7, which is right

20 adjacent to the Public Safety Building, this

21 month, and then we're slated to go with Garage

22 1 and Fire Station 4, and we're looking at

23 restoration of this building the following

24 year. So we're currently working on three

25 construction projects and potentially three

1 design projects to get them done.
 2 MR. BEHAR: So this, at the very best, will
 3 be a year from now.
 4 MR. IGLESIAS: About a year from now.
 5 MR. VIVAS: For starting up construction.
 6 And then how long do you anticipate
 7 construction to take?
 8 MR. IGLESIAS: Construction probably will
 9 be a year and a half, a year to a year and a
 10 half. We're going to try to get it done as
 11 quickly as possible. It's a relatively simple
 12 structure.
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Thank you,
 14 sir.
 15 MR. VIVAS: Thank you.
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Jill, in Zoom we have
 17 no more public? What about in the phone line
 18 platform, anybody?
 19 THE SECRETARY: No.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: No? Having none, I'd
 21 like to go ahead and close the public comment
 22 at this time and open it up for Board
 23 discussion.
 24 Luis, I'd like to ask you to start, if you
 25 don't mind, since you have to leave.

1 right?
 2 MR. IGLESIAS: County.
 3 MR. REVUELTA: County road.
 4 MR. IGLESIAS: County.
 5 MR. REVUELTA: All right. I think that if
 6 there's a traffic light that can go in and out,
 7 that also would mitigate the need to have to
 8 use sirens, you know, in the daytime, because
 9 if you put the red light, at least they can get
 10 out without having to blast the siren to be
 11 able to get everybody --
 12 MR. IGLESIAS: The current Fire Station 2,
 13 which is on US-1, and they do a fantastic job
 14 in not having to do that. So if we find out
 15 that we do need it, from a traffic engineering
 16 point of view, we will use it. We did need it
 17 at the Public Safety Building, at our current
 18 Public Safety Building, because of the
 19 constriction. However, we don't have that on
 20 US-1 and I do think that it's something that we
 21 will look at, but I think that that's going to
 22 be determined by some of the traffic
 23 engineering issues, whether we need that or
 24 not.
 25 MR. REVUELTA: Yeah, understood. And,

1 MR. REVUELTA: Thank you, sir.
 2 As a planning and recommendation board, it
 3 would be good for the neighbors, at some point,
 4 to understand what are the landscaping species
 5 and the landscaping plan, which, obviously, as
 6 I think Peter, the Manager, said, is going to
 7 be used for a buffer. So that is going to
 8 alleviate a lot of the impact, visual impact,
 9 that this building may have, although it's
 10 going to be behind a park, behind a parking
 11 lot, so I think -- and also landscaping can
 12 mitigate a little bit of noise. So that would
 13 be helpful as a recommendation or my suggestion
 14 for the City Commission, and that's it.
 15 Did I understand correctly that there's
 16 going to be a traffic light in front of the
 17 facility?
 18 MR. IGLESIAS: No. We're looking into that
 19 and it's going to be determined by the use. We
 20 do have one in the Public Safety Building.
 21 We're working on the traffic engineering
 22 portion of it, and this will be through the
 23 design process, to see if we need one there or
 24 not.
 25 MR. REVUELTA: Sunset is an FDOT road,

1 again, I'm not demanding or anything. I'm just
 2 suggesting it --
 3 MR. IGLESIAS: I'm just saying, it's
 4 something that we look at when we design when
 5 there's a fire station.
 6 MR. REVUELTA: Dixie Highway is a little
 7 bit of a different context, right, because it's
 8 not that close to the residential districts.
 9 So I was thinking that a traffic light might
 10 mitigate a little bit of the noise, but it's
 11 just a suggestion.
 12 MR. IGLESIAS: But they're very good at --
 13 all of our stations are near residential, 1, 2
 14 and 3 --
 15 MR. REVUELTA: That's true.
 16 MR. IGLESIAS: -- and you don't hear
 17 complaints. So we will work it similarly to
 18 make sure that we don't have complaints.
 19 MR. REVUELTA: Great. Thank you.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, Luis.
 21 Robert.
 22 MR. BEHAR: Thank you.
 23 As a resident, I want to thank the City,
 24 because this is not a luxury, this is a
 25 necessity, and I think that, as a resident, I'm

1 very pleased, very happy, to see something like
2 this.

3 From the planning perspective, I think
4 that, you know, this is a great location, as
5 the Chief and the Manager have stated. It will
6 serve the community. What I do like is that
7 the building is being put towards the front of
8 the property, away from the residential, and if
9 you look at your Zoning Map, it's almost a full
10 lot that you're leaving in the back. So I
11 think, between that park and the parking lot,
12 you know, I think it's a great buffer for the
13 residents.

14 I have absolutely no problem. And for the
15 record, I do like the architecture, the style
16 that is heading, it's going. I think it's very
17 good and I would love to see that come to us at
18 a later time.

19 I'm going to let the other Board Members
20 speak, and I am ready to make a motion for
21 this.

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Let's hear
23 from the other members.

24 Maria? You're on mute. If you can please
25 unmute yourself.

1 parking lot as it is right now. So the loss of
2 one of those parking lots, I guess it won't
3 have an adverse effect on parking in the area?

4 MR. IGLESIAS: No, I think the church feels
5 that the current parking that they're keeping
6 is sufficient.

7 MR. WITHERS: Yeah, and I think it's a
8 great addition. Congratulations.

9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
10 Venny?

11 MR. TORRE: Yeah. As a resident of that
12 area, I would feel much better knowing that
13 it's -- you know, whether you're in Gables
14 Estates or you're in Cocoplum or you're just
15 down the side streets, that's much better than
16 thinking I'm having you come over from US-1. I
17 mean, the traffic backs up on US-1 just like
18 anything else. This is, even though it backs
19 up a little bit here, much better to have this
20 in the area.

21 And, then, also, there's lots of green
22 space, so if there's traffic, they can move
23 over to those residential swales to get out of
24 the way.

25 I do have a question, just for my own

1 MS. VELEZ: All right. Thank you.
2 Following up on what Luis was saying about
3 the traffic, I know that there's a fire
4 station, City of Miami, just west of 57th
5 Avenue on Flagler, and they appear to have a
6 sign of traffic type calming there -- not
7 calming, but a traffic control, that can take
8 care of issues whenever they need to come out,
9 and I think that would probably mitigate with
10 the sounds and the sirens that some of the
11 neighbors are concerned with. Otherwise, I
12 think this is a great location and I think this
13 is a good project, and I'm on board.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. IGLESIAS: And let's remember it's not
16 a fire station, it's fire house. It's a much
17 smaller facility.

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, Maria.

19 MR. IGLESIAS: So we're calling it a fire
20 house, because it's not really a fire station.

21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct. Thank you.
22 Chip?

23 MR. WITHERS: I think it's a great addition
24 to the neighborhood. The only question I have
25 is, it's seems to be a pretty underutilized

1 public understanding and knowledge and
2 education. Religious/Institution going to
3 Public Buildings, and I'm just wanting to know,
4 the 45 feet, because it's across from a
5 residential, that's how you've taken the 45?
6 Would it be --

7 MR. TRIAS: The Zoning, the Special Use
8 Zoning.

9 MR. TORRE: Special Use?

10 MR. TRIAS: Yeah.

11 MR. TORRE: Does Special Use have height
12 restrictions? I don't know what the height
13 is --

14 MR. TRIAS: It has FAR, it has all of
15 the --

16 MR. TORRE: It does have that?

17 MR. TRIAS: Yeah. Yeah.

18 MR. TORRE: And in this case, because it's
19 across from the residential, it would apply
20 like Residential Townhouses is 45 feet,
21 similar?

22 MR. TRIAS: That applies in some other
23 locations.

24 MR. TORRE: Another area. But you could
25 have public buildings that are much taller in

Page 57

1 other locations, I would imagine?
 2 MR. TRIAS: Yes.
 3 MR. IGLESIAS: We kept it as small as
 4 possible.
 5 MR. TORRE: No. No. Obviously it makes a
 6 lot of sense.
 7 So I'm in total favor, and I think this is
 8 a great asset to the community.
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 10 Rene, is there anything further that you'd
 11 like to say?
 12 MR. MURAI: Yes, I do, and it's addressed
 13 really to the City Manager, and just for the
 14 record, obviously the City looked at -- within
 15 the area that this fire house is going to be,
 16 areas to the west that are more within the
 17 Central Business District of South Miami, and,
 18 obviously, you did not find any properties that
 19 you could buy suitable for the fire house and
 20 that's why you had to really go further east
 21 than within the Central Business District; is
 22 that correct?
 23 MR. IGLESIAS: We looked everywhere. We
 24 came very close to losing the funding from the
 25 State. We had the asset manager -- our asset

Page 59

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.
 2 MR. MURAI: Thank you.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: A couple of comments,
 4 which I had. First, the 2,250 square foot park
 5 space -- this is just a question -- is that
 6 going to be a passive or an active park? Any
 7 idea on that?
 8 MR. IGLESIAS: We need to meet with the
 9 residents and we're going to try to work with
 10 them, and our Parks Department is very good and
 11 so is Mr. Trias, concerning outreach, and we
 12 want to make sure that we -- we intend to have
 13 a fire house theme on it, but we'll work with
 14 the residents to make sure that we have the
 15 proper landscaping and to make sure that
 16 they're happy with what we provide. That's
 17 what we would do when we develop park
 18 facilities. So we will have outreach, for
 19 sure.
 20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I think it's a great
 21 idea to provide the space in that neighborhood,
 22 which is actually lacking. So I think that's
 23 great, that you were able to incorporate it. I
 24 also like the fact that you are able to self
 25 contain the staff parking, so they don't have

Page 58

1 manager got very (unintelligible) and we were
 2 able to find this property, where we feel it's
 3 reasonable, because it's not in a residential
 4 area. I mean, Sunset -- as we've discussed,
 5 we've tried to put it in the front of the -- in
 6 the south side of the property, to front
 7 Sunset, and minimize anything towards the
 8 north.
 9 MR. MURAI: So there was no --
 10 MR. IGLESIAS: This is a parking facility.
 11 You do have cars parking there. So what we're
 12 doing is turning, really, a lot and a lot and a
 13 half of that parking area into the fire house.
 14 We've looked everywhere. We came very close to
 15 losing the funding, and we pulled it out in the
 16 last two minutes of the game.
 17 MR. MURAI: Okay. So, to the west, really,
 18 you could not find a suitable lot?
 19 MR. IGLESIAS: Not at all. We searched --
 20 we scoured the area, not only with our asset
 21 manager, but with various realtors, to try to
 22 find one, and we came close to not finding
 23 anything, but I do think that we're far enough
 24 west to really mitigate the issue, as far as
 25 the residential zoning.

Page 60

1 to look elsewhere or park on the road or so
 2 forth.
 3 The parking lot that shows on the plan,
 4 which remains open, that's going to be not part
 5 of the facility, correct?
 6 MR. IGLESIAS: That belongs to the church
 7 and stays with the church.
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct.
 9 And then my other question was, what type
 10 of equipment will you be putting there, but
 11 you've already answered that question.
 12 I echo the same sentiments from Robert. I
 13 actually think the design is nice for the fire
 14 house. Obviously, it will be up to the Board
 15 of Architects to review that, but what I want
 16 to do is, I really want to thank both, the Fire
 17 Chief, his staff, the Planning & Zoning Board,
 18 the City Manager and everybody who has
 19 diligently worked on this so hard to make sure
 20 we don't lose those funds, because that's a
 21 million and a half dollars that were being lost
 22 if we didn't do something, and, personally, not
 23 just only from the Board, but I'd like to say,
 24 thank you.
 25 MR. IGLESIAS: Thank you.

1 MR. BEHAR: And with that in mind, I'll
 2 make a recommendation for approval.
 3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a motion from
 4 Robert. Is there a second?
 5 MR. REVUELTA: Second.
 6 MR. MURAI: Second.
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Luis --
 8 MR. COLLER: Mr. Chairman --
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, sir.
 10 MR. COLLER: -- that would be approval, in
 11 accordance with the recommendations of the
 12 Department?
 13 MR. BEHAR: That's correct.
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, sir, Mr. Coller.
 15 We have a second from Luis. Any
 16 discussion? No?
 17 Jill, call the roll, please.
 18 THE SECRETARY: Luis Revuelta?
 19 MR. REVUELTA: Yes.
 20 THE SECRETARY: Venny Torre?
 21 MR. TORRE: Yes.
 22 THE SECRETARY: Maria Velez?
 23 MS. VELEZ: Yes.
 24 THE SECRETARY: Chip Withers?
 25 MR. WITHERS: Yes.

1 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?
 2 MR. BEHAR: Yes.
 3 THE SECRETARY: Rene Murai?
 4 MR. MURAI: Yes.
 5 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes. Thank you very
 7 much, sirs.
 8 MR. IGLESIAS: Mr. Chair, Board Members,
 9 thank you very much. Thank you.
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, Mr.
 11 Manager.
 12 MR. TRIAS: We don't have any further
 13 items.
 14 MR. BEHAR: Yes. I'll make a motion to
 15 adjourn.
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a motion to
 17 adjourn.
 18 MR. REVUELTA: Second.
 19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a second from
 20 Luis. Everybody in favor say, aye.
 21 (All Board Members voted aye.)
 22 (Thereupon, the meeting was concluded at 7:10
 23 p.m.)
 24
 25

1 CERTIFICATE
 2
 3 STATE OF FLORIDA:
 4 SS.
 5 COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE:
 6
 7
 8
 9 I, NIEVES SANCHEZ, Court Reporter, and a Notary
 10 Public for the State of Florida at Large, do hereby
 11 certify that I was authorized to and did
 12 stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and
 13 that the transcript is a true and complete record of my
 14 stenographic notes.
 15
 16 DATED this 22nd day of May, 2021.
 17
 18
 19 SIGNATURE ON FILE
 20 _____
 21 NIEVES SANCHEZ
 22
 23
 24
 25