



MIAMI BEACH

City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: October 14, 2009

SUBJECT: **REPORT OF THE NEIGHBORHOODS/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2009.**

A meeting of the Neighborhoods/Community Affairs Committee was held on Tuesday, September 15, 2009 at 2:30pm in the City Manager's Large Conference Room, 4th Floor, City Hall. **Commissioners in attendance:** Jerry Libbin, Edward L. Tobin, and Jonah Wolfson. **City staff in attendance:** Hilda M. Fernandez, Assistant City Manager; Jose Smith, City Attorney; Greg Tindle, Code Compliance Director; Max Sklar, Cultural Affairs and Tourism Development Director; Michael Alvarez, Public Works Department Assistant Director; Barbara Hawayek, Community Resource and Outreach Manager; and Randi MacBride, Office Associate IV.

THE MEETING OPENED AT 2:43 PM.

OLD BUSINESS

1. DISCUSSION TO PLACE THE WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL ON A ROTATING SCHEDULE.

Max Sklar, Cultural Affairs and Tourism Development Director, explained that moving the event to different locations was discussed and that everyone, including the neighborhood, agreed that the best location was to keep it on Ocean Drive on the north side of 10th Street, where it currently is. The businesses and the Ocean Drive Association also prefer to keep it where it has been. He added that an attempt to reduce the load-in and out schedule was reviewed and has been reduced over the last two years; the area east of the dune it is down to about 21 days. Mr. Sklar also noted that the days include the actual days of the event itself.

Hilda M. Fernandez, Assistant City Manager, added that another concern had been the public's beach access and beachgoers having to go around a very large footprint. Signage was added to direct people to the nearest access point and the event is broken up to allow some access through the middle as long as is possible. Mr. Sklar added that the event staff will try to reduce the total number of days of use, and that they may have to anyway because of scheduling with the Super Bowl. There was a discussion regarding the many events that are scheduled for the season and their coordination.

Mr. Sklar explained that as part of the public benefits provided by the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, they agreed to replace dune fencing north of 10th Street (value up to \$10,000); offer reduced pricing and early ticket purchases for residents; and provide cooking classes with Miami Beach schools.

Commissioner Libbin asked for staff to look at the condition of the fencing as well as the growth of the sea oats and other plants on the dunes that seem to be overgrowing. **Agenda Item** CGC

Date 10-14-09

Commissioner Tobin asked what the City does to market itself with all these events scheduled to take place. Ms. Fernandez explained what had been done in years previously that were highly effective, and that there are already plans to meet and finalize some advertising activities this year relating to the special events coming to the City.

Commissioner Tobin made a motion to have a discussion placed on the agenda for the City Commission to give the Commission an idea of what is being done to market the destination during the Super Bowl, Pro Bowl, Art Basel, Boat Show and other events during the season. Commissioner Wolfson added that he would like to see how the City's money that is given to the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau is being spent for the City. Ms. Fernandez stated that information will be provided since the City approves the use of the \$950,000 that the City provides. Commissioner Wolfson seconded.

Commissioner Tobin asked what the Administration's recommendation is regarding the Wine and Food Festival. Mr. Sklar stated that the recommendation is to keep its location where it has been and to make an effort, if possible to try to reduce the number of days of impact on the neighborhood. Commissioner Libbin added that his sense is that no one is present that had raised their concerns with him originally because they feel that the City has taken a serious look at their concerns and the determination that the current location is actually the best location.

ACTION: The committee moved to have a discussion placed on the agenda for the City Commission to give the Commission an idea of what is being done to market the destination during the Super Bowl, Pro Bowl, Art Basel, Boat Show and other events during the season including information on how the City's money that is given to the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau is being spent for the City.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING HOW THE CITY CAN ADDRESS THE GROWING ISSUE OF AGGRESSIVE RACCOONS AND OTHER RODENTS.

Hilda M. Fernandez, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the information supplied in response to the previous requests of the committee as included in the memo attached in the agenda. Commissioner Wolfson stated that he understood that certain Building Department funds could be used for lot clearance. Ms. Fernandez responded that the funds can be used to secure the house, something related to the building.

Commissioner Wolfson explained that the intent is to be ready to mobilize and react when residents are giving consistent complaints of seeing raccoons and/or rats in the daytime near, in or around abandoned, foreclosed homes to have rats exterminated or raccoons trapped.

Ms. Fernandez clarified that when the problem is associated with an abandoned home, the City can ask the owner to secure it and if they do not, the City can have it done, charge the homeowner and lien the property. On the other hand, if there is a problem in the general neighborhood, not associated with a specific property and the City handles the issue then that will be an expense for which the City will not be reimbursed.

Commissioner Libbin asked if any authority needs to be given by the committee to hire any of the companies located. Ms. Fernandez stated that the amount that would be spent would not require the committee's approval. Ms. Fernandez added that as requested, staff is working on a reporting mechanism for the City's website as well as a public education campaign to include an upcoming issue of MB Magazine along with a public service announcement providing people with the information as to what they can do to reduce the population of rats and rodents in their neighborhood.

ACTION: The committee made no motion.

3. REPORT UPDATING THE STATUS OF THE EFFORTS MADE BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO ENCOURAGE FDOT TO RESTRIPE THE LANES IN THE MID BEACH AREA ALONG ALTON ROAD.

Commissioner Libbin shared a photo of a recent accident that occurred on Alton Road along with the continued concerns of the residents in the area regarding speeding and the ability to get in or out of their cars when parked on Alton Road.

Michael Alvarez, Public Works Department Assistant Director, explained that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is still saying that there is no engineering justification to reduce the dimensions of the travel lanes. At this time the lanes are at the minimum standard. Mr. Alvarez stated that he will be meeting with Chris Travella of FDOT next week on site to discuss. Commissioner Libbin asked Mr. Alvarez to contact Mr. Tom Rockwell, President of the Homeowners Association, to attend the meeting.

Mr. Alvarez explained that the installation of the hard-wired speed signs has gone through the permitting phase and will begin on October 1, 2009 and should be completed by the end of the month of October. Commissioner Libbin asked that Mr. Alvarez provide that information to Mr. Rockwell when he contacts him regarding the FDOT meeting.

Commissioner Tobin asked for FDOT to provide their response in writing as to why they do not want to do what is requested. Commissioner Wolfson shared some of the complaints he has received from residents that have hit the bulb-outs and asked for some reflectors to be placed on them. Mr. Alvarez stated that he will share that with FDOT when they meet next week. Commissioner Tobin also asked for a written report on the pros and cons of removing the bulb-outs. Commissioner Libbin asked for data from police reporting on the number of accidents related to the bulb-outs. Commissioner Tobin asked for the information requested be brought to a future meeting of the Neighborhoods/Community Affairs Committee and Mr. Alvarez stated that he would invite FDOT to attend.

ACTION: The committee moved for FDOT to be invited to attend a future meeting of the Neighborhoods/Community Affairs Committee when staff is to provide the following information:

- Response from FDOT regarding the possibility of moving the yellow line at the median and re-striping the lanes to allow the lanes to shift and result in wider parking lanes
- Pros and Cons of removing the bulb-outs
- Data on the number of accidents on Alton Road that involve the bulb-outs.
- Possibility of installing reflectors on the bulb-outs

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 3:25 PM.

Note: The next meeting of the Neighborhoods/Community Affairs Committee is scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2009 at 2:30pm in the City Manager's Large Conference Room, 4th Floor of City Hall.

JMG/MS/mm

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