



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 *J. Sanchez for*

DATE: May 14, 2008

SUBJECT: **REPORT OF THE NEIGHBORHOODS/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2008.**

A meeting of the Neighborhoods/Community Affairs Committee was held on Wednesday, April 30, 2008 at 2:30 pm in the Commission Chambers, 3rd Floor, City Hall. Commissioners in attendance: Ed Tobin, Jonah Wolfson, Jerry Libbin, Deede Weithorn, and Saul Gross. City staff in attendance: Hilda M. Fernandez, Assistant City Manager; Robert Middaugh, Assistant City Manager; Jose Smith, City Attorney; Raul Aguila, Deputy City Attorney; Max Sklar, Cultural Affairs and Tourism Development Director; Saul Frances, Parking Department Director; Fred Beckmann, Public Works Department Director; Fernando Vazquez, City Engineer; Joyce Meyers, Principal Planner; Lynn Bernstein, Community Resource Coordinator; Dolores Mejia, Special Project Administrator; John Heffernan, A. C. Weinstein, Anthony Broad, Marlene Taylor and Anne Swanson of the Mayor and Commissioner's Office; and Randi MacBride, Neighborhood Services Department.

1. FDOT PRESENTATION OF CONSTRUCTION ALTERNATIVES FOR ALTON ROAD IMPROVEMENTS AND FDOT'S REQUEST FOR THE COMMITTEE'S ENDORSEMENT OF ONE OF THE ALTERNATIVES BEING CONSIDERED AS THE LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.

Fred Beckmann, Public Works Department Director, explained that the committee directed FDOT to meet with the Alliance for Reliable Transport (ART) to look at the possibility of incorporating bike paths into the Alton Road improvement project, which will take place from Fifth Street to Michigan Avenue. FDOT met with ART, looked at the construction alternatives available, and they have incorporated what they call construction alternative 1-A, which they will present to the committee. Additionally, FDOT is going to present all of the alternatives before they go to the City Commission on May 14, 2008, and they are seeking the committee's input and ask the committee to select a locally preferred alternative.

Commissioner Tobin explained that it was the majority consensus of the committee members and other commissioners that were in attendance at the last presentation by FDOT that the desire was to have bike lanes without jeopardizing the safety of the bicyclists, so the committee asked FDOT to go back and see if they could provide a reasonable way of accomplishing what we wanted while working within their parameters. FDOT was happy to do it.

Agenda Item CGD
Date 5-14-08

Commissioner Gross asked about the bike master plan that was created with a lot of time and effort. Mr. Beckmann answered that the bike master plan calls for bike paths on West Avenue. Commissioner Gross added that he thought the idea of the bike master plan was to have a plan and implement according to that plan. Mr. Beckmann answered that this has been requested by several groups including ART and the Flamingo Park Neighborhood Association.

Mr. Adebayo Coker, the project manager for FDOT, and his design team presented and explained the Alton Road PD&E Study, including the four different alternatives.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the differences between the alternatives with regard to landscaping, bike lanes, pedestrian/bike shared lanes, crosswalk signaling, parking and removal of parking.

Commissioner Libbin expressed his concern for the safety of bicyclists in a bike lane between traffic and parked cars.

Commissioner Tobin asked staff for a report on the status and the locations planned for countdown traffic signals for pedestrians, including what is being done, a timeframe for the project and who staff is dealing with. Fernando Vazquez, City Engineer agreed to provide that information.

The following members of the public spoke:

- Jack Johnson, co-chair of the Flamingo Park Neighborhood Association
- Arthur Markus, member of the Lincoln West Neighborhood Association
- Mark Needle, member of the ART steering committee
- Monica Acevedo, resident
- Gabrielle Redfern, resident
- Diane De Stefano of Gogo Fresh Food Café
- Evelyn Hunter of Miami Beach Community Health Center
- Jim Kaizer of Kaizer's Clinic
- Hakan Aksu of Hakan Turkish Grill
- David Kelsey of South Beach Hotel and Restaurant Association

Saul Frances, Parking Department Director addressed Commissioner Tobin's concerns regarding the idea of removing parking spaces, given that there will be multiple parking garages opening on and around the Alton Road area. He stated that although there are several garages coming in the future, it should be noted that they are private parking with the exception of the Fifth and Alton which has the public parking component. He added that the Walker study identified that 75% of the spaces are private parking spaces. He stated that although these garages anchor the corridor, if the city removes on-street parking it would leave businesses in the middle area approximately 3-4 blocks from parking facilities.

Further discussion ensued regarding the removal of one or both parking lanes on Alton Road and the placement of bus shelters.

Commissioner Wolfson stated that there is a very strong resident perspective that we do not give up parking anywhere in the city and that really compels him.

Commissioner Libbin stated that he believes that alternative 1-A, with some modification, is the best choice as it will eliminate the fewest parking spaces, it gives the safest route for the bicyclists, it meets the businesses needs, and the needs and the desires of the residents in the immediate area. Commissioner Gross stated that he is in favor of alternative 1 because he prefers not to have a dedicated bike path.

Commissioner Libbin added that he would like to consider a reduction in the speed limit on Alton Road.

Mr. Coker stated that we should be looking at having bicyclists and pedestrians on the same sidewalk and be sure they have sufficient room to both function. Option number 1 is FDOT's preference and he believes that option can be refined to even add another foot to the sidewalk so the width becomes fourteen feet. There would not be a bicycle lane; it would be a shared use path.

Commissioner Weithorn asked for striping and signage for bicycles to yield to pedestrians. Mr. Coker responded that FDOT would not be able to stripe but can place signage. Mr. Coker also confirmed for Commissioner Wolfson that if the one-foot is added, the landscaping can still be provided.

Commissioner Libbin made a motion to recommend alternative number one as the locally preferred alternative. Commissioner Wolfson seconded.

ACTION: The committee unanimously moved to send the item to the next meeting of the city commission with a recommendation for alternative number one as the locally preferred alternative. Commissioner Tobin asked to be provided an update as to where the city is with the bike lanes on the West Avenue and Commissioner Wolfson asked for an additional schematic reflecting the fourteen feet shared path.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF THE MIAMI BEACH CITY CODE, CREATING DIVISION 12.5 THEREOF, ENTITLED "AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE," SECTION 2-167.

Hilda M. Fernandez, Assistant City Manager, presented the item explaining that due to time constraints of this statutorily required committee, the item is being discussed at the committee level between first and second reading. She explained that the committee will be created with a sole purpose of reviewing the city's action plan every three years. There are other committees in the City that support other entitlement fund processes; however, this statutorily required committee requires eleven specific positions. Ms. Fernandez added that she has worked with the Legal Department to see if language could be added to the ordinance that would allow us to determine if there are already members of the Loan Review Committee and the Community Development Advisory Committee who meet any of the very specific criteria for these eleven positions and allow them to also be ex-officio members of this new committee. Ms. Fernandez distributed suggested draft language that would add a sentence to permit this.

ACTION: The committee moved to send the item back to the next meeting of the city commission for second reading and approved the formation of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee with the inclusion of the necessary language to allow members of the Loan Review Committee and the Community Development Advisory Committee that meet specific criteria to serve ex-officio as members.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE COMPOSITION OF THE MIAMI BEACH COMMUNITY RELATIONS BOARD AS PER CITY CODE SEC 2-190-14, WHICH STATES THAT THE COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD SHOULD BE REVIEWED EVERY TWO YEARS.

Hilda M. Fernandez, Assistant City Manager, explained that there is a process that requires review of the composition of the membership of the Community Relations Board (CRB). The CRB has met and submitted proposed changes to its membership.

Jeff Gibbs, a member of the CRB, explained the board's concern over quorum requirements.

Ms. Fernandez added that the proposal is to reduce the quorum requirement to six voting members.

Commissioner Libbin clarified that the proposal is to have a majority of the eleven voting members which would require six to reach quorum. He stated that he would be more comfortable with an odd number such as seven.

Mr. Gibbs explained the difficulty in achieving quorum in the past several months.

Commissioner Tobin suggested going with six voting members as the quorum and revisit the issue if it becomes necessary. He also asked staff to report to Commissioner Libbin and himself for the next six months as to how this committee is doing.

Commissioner Libbin made a motion to require six members for a quorum for the CRB. Vote was unanimous.

Ms. Fernandez stated she will have a report when the item appears at the commission meeting. Commissioner Tobin stated that the report does not need to be anything official and that he would just like to know what they have been working on and if they need any support or direction from the commission.

Commissioner Libbin added that his office recently requested and received from the administration a quarterly attendance update for commission appointees that are sitting on the various committees. He found it interesting that in the first quarter of this year already there are people that have missed three meetings which mean that one more absence they would be off the committee. He suggested the other commissioners review the report as there are a few people that are in that same situation.

ACTION: The committee unanimously moved to change the quorum requirement to six of the eleven voting members.

4. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE CONSIDERATION OF A SISTER CITY AFFILIATION WITH THE CITY OF BRAMPTON, ONTARIO, CANADA AS RECOMMENDED BY THE SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE.

Hilda M. Fernandez, Assistant City Manager, explained the recommendation from the city's Sister Cities Committee to form a sister city relationship with Brampton, Ontario, Canada. She added that there is also a recommendation to bring back to the next Neighborhoods/Community Affairs Committee meeting a discussion of the Sister Cities Program to review if additional measures or requirements should be added in considering in the future other sister city relationships.

Commissioner Tobin asked if there is any cost to the city, its citizens or taxpayers for the Sister Cities Program. Ms. Fernandez stated there is not unless there is a joint mission that is done or visit to the sister city for any purpose however on many occasions there is fund-raising that is done for that purpose. At this point there is no intention at this point to expend any funds relating to Brampton. She added that there is funding in our city-wide budget which is the total amount for the entire program which is \$15,000. Commissioner Tobin asked for a clarification of how the program works. His understanding was that the sister cities broke themselves up into committees, each with a chairperson and that chairperson would be sent by the city on a trip once each year to visit that sister city. Max Sklar, Cultural

Affairs and Tourism Development Director answered that generally that is accurate however he believes it is not to visit every sister city every year but one or two are visited each year.

Ray Breslin spoke on the background and benefits of forming this relationship with Brampton, Ontario, Canada.

Commissioner Libbin commented that this could be one of the city's better relationships as we already have the relationship with Brampton. Brampton has shown measures of goodwill. Commissioner Libbin made the motion to move the item to the commission. Commissioner Wolfson seconded.

ACTION: The committee unanimously moved the item to the city commission with a recommendation to form a sister city relationship with Brampton, Ontario, Canada.

JMG/HMF/rfm