



COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager 

DATE: December 10, 2008

SUBJECT: **REPORT OF THE NEIGHBORHOODS/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2008.**

A meeting of the Neighborhoods/Community Affairs Committee was held on Monday, November 24, 2008 in the City Manager's Large Conference Room, 4th Floor, City Hall. Commissioners in attendance: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower, Vice-Mayor Jonah Wolfson, Commissioners Ed Tobin, Jerry Libbin, and Deede Weithorn. City staff in attendance: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager; Robert C. Middaugh, Assistant City Manager; Jose Smith, City Attorney; Raul Aguila, Deputy City Attorney; Debora Turner, First Assistant City Attorney; Fred Beckmann, Public Works Department Director; Max Sklar, Cultural Affairs and Tourism Development Director; Kevin Crowder, Economic Development Division Director; Dennis Leyva, Redevelopment Specialist; Dolores Mejia, Special Projects Coordinator; John Heffernan, Anne Swanson, Ben Torter and A. C. Weinstein of the Mayor and Commissioner's Office; and Randi MacBride, Code Compliance Division.

THE MEETING WAS OPENED AT 2:48 PM.

1. CONSIDERATION OF A PUBLIC ART PROJECT BY THE ARTIST WENDY WISCHER TO BE COMMISSIONED FOR PLACEMENT IN THE THIRD STREET AND WASHINGTON AVENUE PLAZA, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE ART IN PUBLIC PLACES COMMITTEE.

Max Sklar, Cultural Affairs and Tourism Development Director reviewed the history of an art project at this location dating back to 1999.

Peter McKnight spoke.

Mayor Bower asked if these controls will stay after the booster pump station is built in South Pointe. Mr. Beckmann stated that he will check and advise.

- Thomas Kashin spoke.
- Ruth Remington spoke.
- Clotilde Luce spoke.
- Joseph Assaf spoke.
- Frank Del Vecchio spoke.

A discussion ensued on where else these funds could be spent.

Commissioner Wolfson stated that he thinks that in these economic times, the city should save the \$30,000 and plant something around it to make it look better.

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Commissioner Libbin made a motion to not do this project, Commissioner Wolfson seconded.

Herb Frank spoke regarding the pump station on Belle Isle. The committee directed Mr. Frank to discuss with Mr. Sklar his concerns and Mr. Sklar will refer him to the appropriate people to address his concerns whether it involves an artistic solution or a landscaping solution.

Mayor Bower expressed her desire to finally get the lifeguard stands project funded and moving along.

ACTION: The committee unanimously moved to not proceed with this project and asked Mr. Sklar to report back at the December meeting of the Neighborhoods/Community Affairs Committee on the AiPP program, the fund, the projects, and the AiPP process.

2. DISCUSSION OF IMPLEMENTING A NORTH BEACH LOCAL BUS ROUTE.

Fred Beckmann, Public Works Director provided an update to initiatives from the Coastal Communities Transit Study. The study recommended two shuttles, one each in the North-Beach and Middle-Beach areas. In meetings with Miami-Dade Transit (MDT), in October and November 2008, MDT is thinking of having one circulator by combining the North-Beach and Middle-Beach routes however the wait time is a concern. There is a sub-committee of the Miami Beach Transportation and Parking Committee (TPC) that is looking at this. The determination as to how this is to happen must be done by March 2009. Mr. Beckmann stated that his position with MDT is to have a maximum 15 minute wait time. MDT would like to eliminate the R and K bus routes. By eliminating the R and K routes they should be able to get enough funding for these circulators.

Daniel Veita spoke.

Clotilde Luce spoke.

Gabrielle Redfern spoke.

Mr. Beckmann advised that the intention is to implement the circulators by June 2009 which means that the city must have a plan to present to the city commission for approval by January 2009 and then by March 2009 MDT will begin the process to implement by June. He added that he will take the committee's sentiment that they desire two separate circulators to serve Middle and North Beach to MDT which may impact the ability to have both in place by June.

Mayor Matti Bower suggested a fourth route that will circulate all the way from the North Beach to South Beach so that our residents can move freely throughout Miami Beach.

ACTION: The committee moved to have Mr. Beckmann return to the Neighborhoods/Community Affairs Committee in January 2009 with an interim report before going to commission in February and to the extent possible report on the impact of the removal of the R and K routes to the residents and users of these routes. The committee expressed their sentiment to implement, the North-Beach circulator, if nothing else by June 2009.

3. REPORT REGARDING THE INTERSECTION RELATED TO THE BIKE PATH AT 16TH STREET AND ALTON ROAD.

Mr. Beckmann explained the current status of 16th Street at Alton Road and the issues that have arisen since the addition of the bike lane and the removal of the left turn pocket lane on 16th Street.

Commissioner Libbin made a motion to remove the five parking spaces on the west-bound lanes next to McDonald's. There was no second.

Gabrielle Redfern spoke.
Tony Weaver spoke.

Commissioner Wolfson stated he does not believe removing the parking spaces is the right thing to do for the purpose of trying to get people to ride a bicycle as there is a shortage of parking in this city.

Commissioner Libbin reminded that many garages are being built in the city and these five spaces will be made up by spaces in garages.

Commissioner Libbin made a motion to remove the five parking spaces, move the bike lane to the curb, and have two lanes with one lane going straight or right and one lane as a dedicated left. Commissioner Tobin seconded. Commissioner Wolfson voted against.

ACTION: The committee moved to remove the five parking spaces, move the bike lane to the curb, and have two lanes with one lane going straight or right and one lane as a dedicated left.

4. DISCUSSION REGARDING FREE PUBLIC PARKING FOR ELECTRIC CARS.

Commissioner Tobin asked Mr. Middaugh for the status of the city's comprehensive green and sustainability plan. Mr. Middaugh explained that the city does not have such a plan.

Commissioner Tobin stated that he would like the Green Committee to work on a comprehensive green and sustainability plan for the city. He asked for a vote of sentiment for the Green Committee to work towards a comprehensive green and sustainability plan.

ACTION: The committee unanimously moved to table this item and expressed their sentiment to have the Green committee work towards a comprehensive city-wide green and sustainability program to include marketing and education.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:37PM.

JMG/HMF/rfm



MIAMI BEACH

NEIGHBORHOODS/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

November 24, 2008

SIGN-IN SHEET

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

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