

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH  
Office of the City Manager  
Letter to Commission No. 022-2004



To: Mayor David Dermer and  
Members of the City Commission

Date: January 23, 2004

From: Jorge M. Gonzalez  
City Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jorge".

Subject: **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED BASIS OF DESIGN REPORT FOR PHASE II OF THE SOUTH POINTE NEIGHBORHOOD RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AT THE JOINT FINANCE AND CITYWIDE PROJECTS AND NEIGHBORHOODS COMMITTEE MEETING OF JANUARY 28, 2004.**

This Letter to Commission is an update of the Referral to a joint meeting of the Finance and Citywide Projects Committee and the Neighborhoods Committee regarding the Basis of Design Report (BODR) for Phase II of the South Pointe Neighborhood Right-of-Way (ROW) Improvement Project. This item was referred by the City Commission at the September 10, 2003 Commission meeting. The item included a requirement for the meeting to be scheduled for an evening time, and to be held in a location in the South Pointe area.

This meeting has been scheduled for **Wednesday, January 28, 2004 at 5:30PM at South Pointe Elementary**, located at **1050 4th Street, Miami Beach, FL**. **A copy of the Draft BODR will be delivered to you along with the agenda for this meeting.**

Below is an update to the project since the September 10, 2003 Commission Meeting.

Through the City's ongoing Planned Progress Capital Improvement Program, staff and consultants are moving forward with the planning and design of Phase II of the South Pointe Neighborhood ROW Improvement Project. The project area is bounded by Washington Avenue on the east, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street on the south, 5<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, and Alton Road on the west. The project includes comprehensive stormwater, water, and streetscape improvements. The City has followed its standard planning procedure for the project which includes the identification of needed improvements and the consideration of various alternatives which meet those needs. As part of the process, two Community Design Workshop (CDW) meetings were held on March 4, 2003 and May 1, 2003 and general consensus among the participating residents was obtained. A draft BODR was then developed and circulated for review. A component of the BODR review was the presentation of the proposed improvements to the Historic Preservation Board (HPB) and the Design Review Board (DRB) for the areas that fall within their jurisdictions.

For most of the City's Neighborhood ROW Improvement Projects, the next step in the process is a review of the BODR by the GO Bond Oversight Committee prior to review and approval by the Commission. Doing so meets the GO Bond Fund spending oversight

requirements and provides another advertised public forum for discussion of the planned improvements. In the case of the South Pointe neighborhood, funding is provided by the South Pointe RDA rather than GO Bond funds, so it is not appropriate to bring the item to the GO Bond Oversight Committee. In order to provide a level of review and public participation for this project that is equivalent to that of the GO Bond funded projects, the BODR has been referred to a joint meeting of the Neighborhood and Finance and Citywide Projects Committees for presentation and discussion. As with the G.O. Bond Projects, the BODR, if approved by the joint committee, will be presented to the full Commission for approval at the next Commission meeting.

The Joint Committee Meeting will provide an opportunity for a discussion of all proposed project elements, and particularly the proposed streetscape and parking treatments for Jefferson Avenue from 5<sup>th</sup> Street to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. The HPB has provided initial direction in response to the presentation of the BODR as a discussion item. The HPB direction is substantially different from that preferred by the Community as determined through the Community consensus process. The HPB direction raises concerns with regard to proposed parking orientations on Jefferson Avenue, i.e., angled parking vs. parallel vs. median parking; and also raises the policy issue of whether the City should reclaim existing encroachments. HPB had recommended reclamation of encroachments during Phase I of the South Pointe project. At that time, when the City attempted to follow the same course of action, a storm of controversy and criticism was generated and the design was revised during the construction phase to make the encroachment reclamation unnecessary. A portion of this discussion is addressed in the attached letter from me to Mr. Mitch Novick, Historic Preservation Board Chair. I have also attached a memo from me to Commissioner Steinberg which specifically discussed the Jefferson Avenue parking alternatives.

Also noteworthy is the fact that Wolfberg Alvarez, the City's consultant for Phase II of the South Pointe Neighborhood ROW Improvement Project, has advised the City that their sub-consultant, Duany Plater Zyberk (DPZ) has voluntarily removed themselves from this project. Many of the concepts proposed by DPZ were chosen by the community and are present in the BODR. As you may know, DPZ was also the consultant that prepared a Master Plan for the South Pointe Redevelopment Area many years ago. Please be assured that the DPZ Master Plan remains the guiding planning document for the area.

Should you wish to review the BODR in greater detail, or if you have any questions, staff and I would be pleased to meet with you individually prior to the joint Committee Meeting on Wednesday, January 28, 2004.

Attachments

C: Robert C. Middaugh, Assistant City Manager  
Tim Hemstreet, CIP Office Director

JMG/RGM/TH

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CITY OF MIAMI BEACH  
Office of the City Manager  
Interoffice Memorandum



To: Commissioner Richard Steinberg

Date: September 8, 2003

From: Jorge M. Gonzalez  
City Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jorge".

Subject: Jefferson Avenue Parking and Design Issues

The following information is provided in response to the issues raised in the e-mail from Randall Robinson, forwarded to my office on July 16, 2003.

Please note that during the planning effort for Phase II of the South Pointe Right of Way (ROW) Improvement Project, CIP staff and consultants developed a number of different parking schemes for each block within the project. These schemes took into account the various existing ROW widths and were presented and discussed with residents at two Community Design Workshop (CDW) meetings held on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003 and May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003.

As illustrated in the attached pages from the presentation made at the second CDW, three alternative parking schemes were developed for Jefferson Avenue: (D1) parallel parking on both sides of the street; (D2) angle parking on one side of the street and parallel on the other; and (D3) angle parking in a median with parallel parking on one side of the street. During the CDW meetings, all three alternatives were presented; attendees were advised that Option D3 would require approval from the City's Fire Department, since medians affect the Fire Department's ability to properly stage life safety equipment, and that such approval might be difficult to obtain. The consensus of the residents in attendance was to implement Option D2, which did not present inherent concerns about emergency vehicle staging, yet addressed the need for additional parking in the area.

Having achieved consensus with residents, CIP staff presented the three options along with the balance of the project concept plan as a discussion item to the Historic Preservation Board (HPB) on July 8, 2003. Board members expressed varying reactions to the concept plan with general support being evident except on two issues: parking along Jefferson Avenue and utilization of the outermost two feet of right of way on each side of all of the streets within the project area. Board member Randall Robinson requested that the median angle parking option be explored further with the Fire Department, and that the City reconsider reclamation of the 2-ft strip of right of way for incorporation in the project.

CIP staff had previously met with the Fire Department to discuss median proposals for the Lake Pancoast and North Shore neighborhoods. During those discussions, the Fire Department had clearly indicated their position that they would only approve of new medians where mid-block "breaks" of approximately 40-ft in length are included. These "breaks" were deemed necessary because Fire Department ladder trucks require 18-ft clear pavement widths to deploy their stabilizer arms. This need is usually met by utilizing the combined travel lanes of a two-lane street, a space that is typically 20 to 26-feet wide. However, the construction of a new median on a two-lane street narrows available travel lane space to approximately 11 feet, which is insufficient for Fire Department vehicle deployment.

Subsequently, in response to Mr. Robinson's request, CIP staff again met with Fire Department representatives to discuss the Jefferson Avenue median parking concept, as well as the pedestrian median proposed for Drexel Avenue in the Flamingo/Lummus Neighborhood Project. The Fire Department stated that they would only support the Jefferson Avenue median parking if it included breaks like the ones specified for the Lake Pancoast and North Shore designs. However, the project design consultant estimates that the inclusion of these breaks in the Jefferson Avenue design would drastically reduce the number of spaces to below the number created by implementing the recommended curbside angled parking. Hence, the Administration continues to recommend curbside angle parking (Option D2) for the Jefferson Avenue corridor.

For the pedestrian median proposed on Drexel Avenue, the Fire Department agreed to accept the proposed continuous median contingent upon the tree planting scheme being altered to create a number of breaks with adjacent dedicated bump outs to allow for the staging of ladder truck outriggers. The application of this approach to the Jefferson Avenue corridor would have the same effect of creating a mid-block break since it would be the median parking spaces that would be removed rather than the trees.

For pedestrians, the median parking treatment creates a safety issue by having them exit their parked vehicle and cross the street in the middle of the block. This can be partially resolved by including a walkway in the median that would lead them to the crosswalk at the nearest intersection. However, the inclusion of a sidewalk of adequate width to meet this need would limit or prevent the installation of trees and landscaping in the median. The City would not support Mr. Randall's suggestion that the affected streets be reclassified as parking lots to address this issue as such action would have other negative consequences.

In response to Mr. Robinson's concerns regarding reclamation of the full width of the existing right of way, the City has been able to achieve the design goals of the project without utilizing the additional 4 feet of right of way that is currently encroached on by a number of private fences, walls, landscaping, etc. In regard to the proposed median angle parking, the utilization of these 4 feet would add only 2 feet to each travel lane which still does not meet the Fire Department's ladder truck width requirements. In general, the CIP Office has been attempting in the right of way improvement program to use only that portion of the right of way that is required to meet the project's design goals. If the design goals can be met without using the full right of way, then the City can avoid the contentious and lengthy process of removing encroachments from the right of way. This general approach does not preclude the City from using the full right of way at a future time if so required.

CIP and consultant staff presented the above information in summary form to the HPB, again as a discussion item, at their meeting on August 12, 2003. The presentation included, at the request of Mr. Robinson, a median parallel parking option (Alternate D4, also attached) that had not been previously considered and is not recommended by the Project designers or the CIP Office for the same reasons identified above.

Despite the staff recommendation, the Board requested that this option be implemented on Jefferson Avenue, with the understanding that there would still be a forty 40 feet long break in the middle of each block and that the implementation of the scheme would likely require

the use of all 70 feet of right of way, necessitating the removal of a number of documented encroachments. All of the safety concerns discussed above remain to be addressed if this option is implemented. This option also yields significantly fewer spaces than the curbside angle parking option supported at the community meetings.

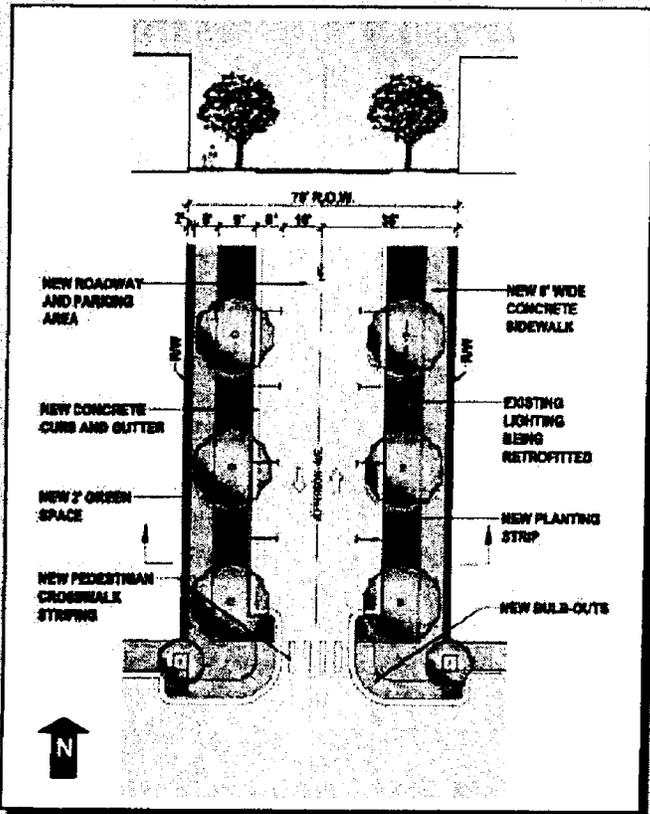
At this point in the process, since the item has only been presented to the HPB as a discussion item, the Board's request is a recommendation which the CIP Office will discuss further with the project team and with regulatory agencies such as Miami-Dade County and the City's Public Works Department to ensure that the HPB scenario does not create an unsafe condition for pedestrians or traffic. If it is determined that an unsafe condition exists, then staff will be unable to endorse the HPB recommendation.

As this is not a G.O. Bond project, the initial review of the Basis of Design Report (BODR) will not be presented to the G.O. Bond Oversight Committee. Staff will bring the BODR, however, to the Finance and Citywide Projects Committee for discussion prior to it's being taken up by the City Commission. There will be an item on the September 10<sup>th</sup> Commission Agenda requesting that a review of the South Pointe BODR and in particular the parking issues and proposals for Jefferson Avenue be referred to the next Finance and Citywide Projects Committee.

Please contact me if you require any further information on this issue.

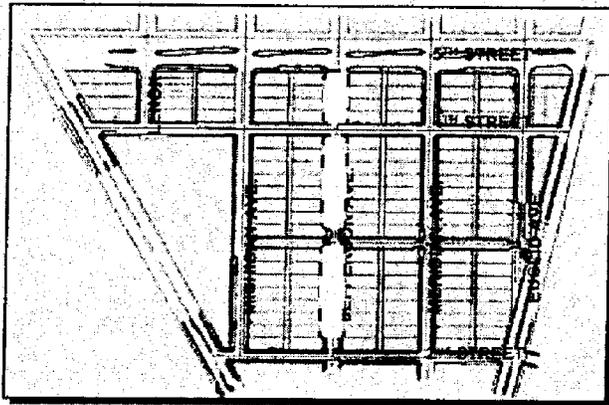
  
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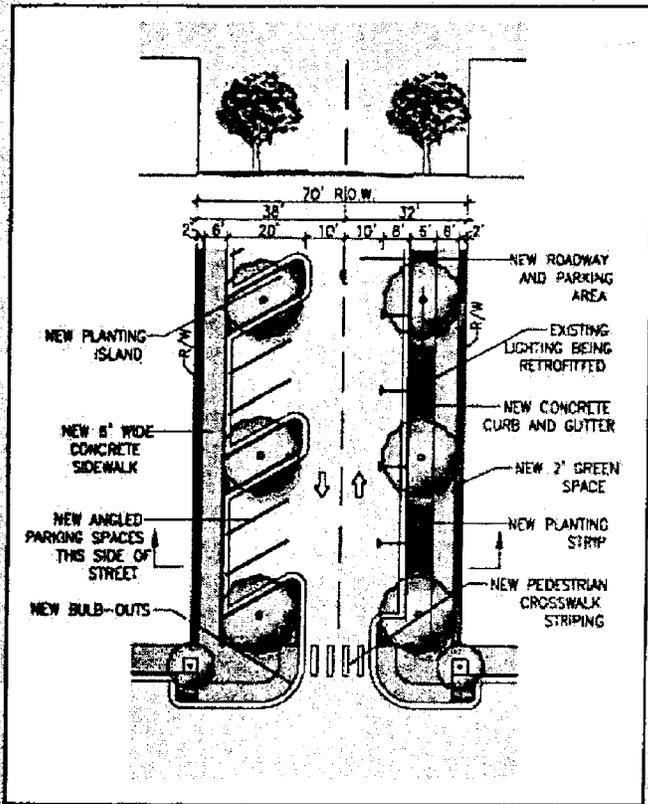
C: Mayor and City Commission  
Robert C. Middaugh, Assistant City Manager  
Tim Hemstreet, CIP Director



**Streetscapes**

○ Jefferson Avenue

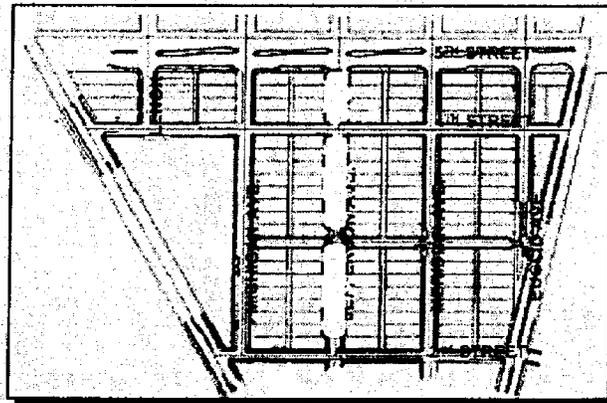




## Streetscapes

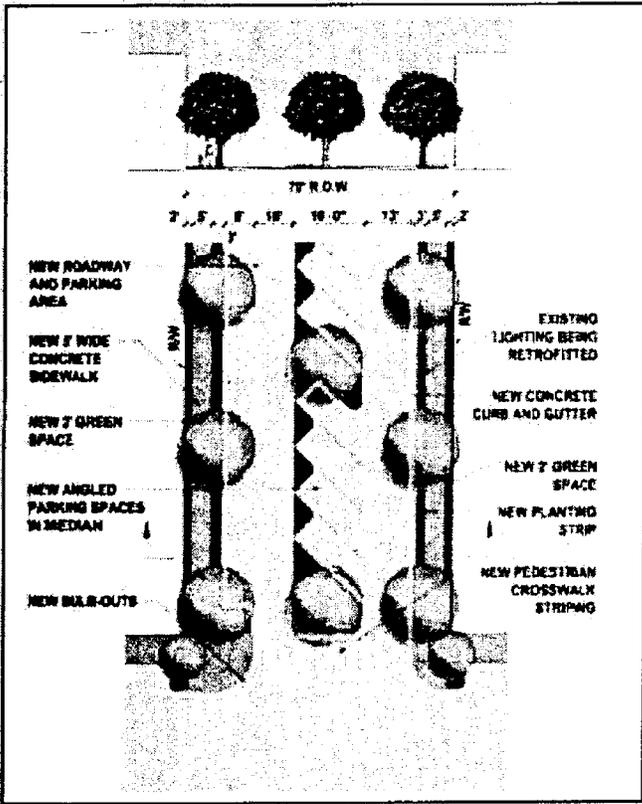
Jefferson Avenue  
Alternate 2

- Angled Parking Orientation to be Determined



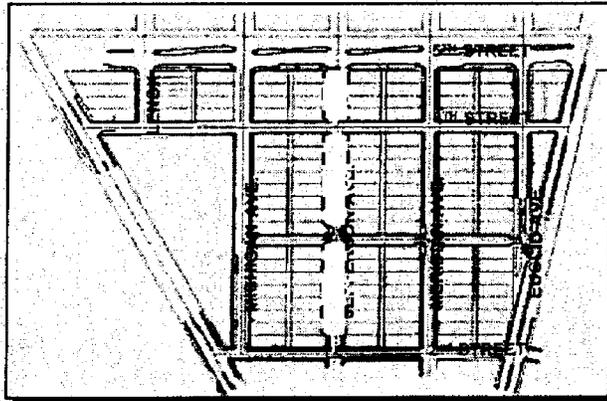
City of Miami Beach South Pointe  
Streetscape Improvements Phase II





## Streetscapes

- Jefferson Avenue Alternate 3
- Angled Parking Orientation to be Determined



# Streetscapes



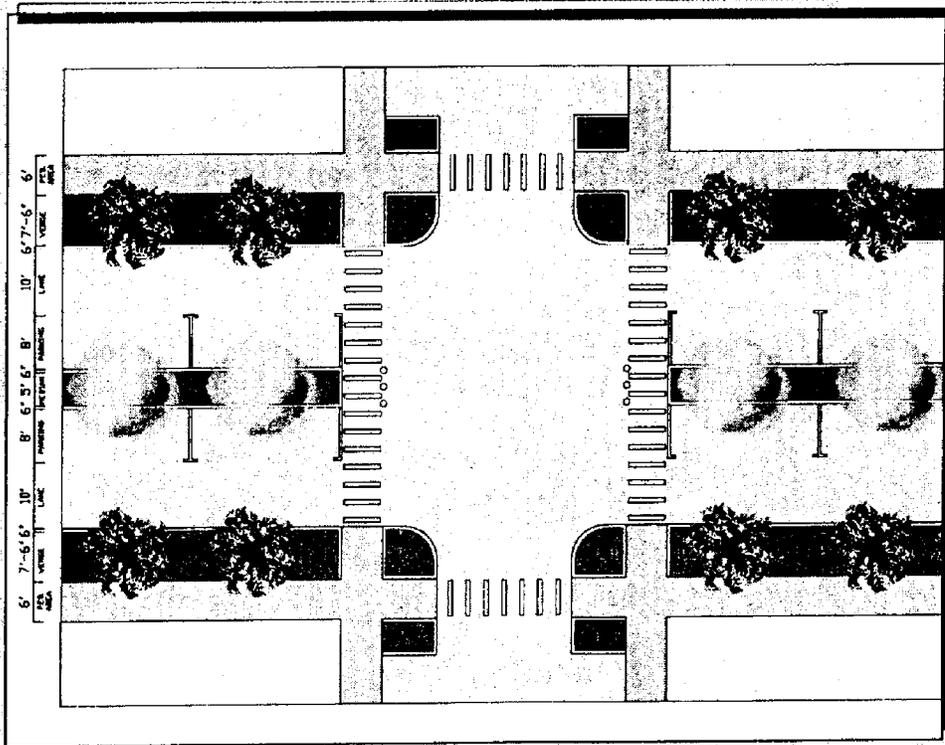
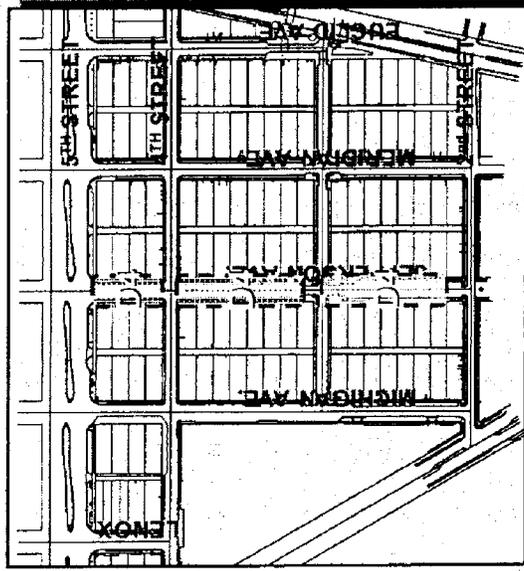
Jefferson Avenue  
Median  
Parallel Parking With  
Fire Department Cuts

## Alternate 4

### Key Issues:

- Typical 70'-0" ROW
- Potentially Agreeable to Fire Dept.

Number of Parking Spaces	
Jefferson Ave.	60
Phase II Project	341 + 5



# City of Miami Beach South Pointe Streetscape Improvements Phase II



South Pointe RDA Phase II  
Basis of Design Report Draft

# CITY OF MIAMI BEACH

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Office of the City Manager

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October 21, 2003

Mitch Novick, Chair  
City of Miami Beach Historic Preservation Board  
1700 Convention Center Drive  
Miami Beach, FL 33139

Dear Mr. Novick:

Thank you for your recent letter expressing concerns about the status of right-of-way encroachments in the Ocean Beach Historic District. This matter was discussed in detail during two Community Design Workshops (CDW) regarding proposed plans for Phase II of the South Pointe Neighborhood Right of Way Improvement Project. These plans, which have only been developed to the concept level, have been presented to the Historic Preservation Board (HPB) as discussion items. Input from the HPB and numerous other review entities will be analyzed and then incorporated as appropriate into actual construction plans which will be brought back to the HPB as an official item for approval at the appropriate stage in design.

It is my understanding that none of the encroachments referred to in your letter have been individually designated as being historic. Such designation would be an action taken by the Historic Preservation Board rather than the City Attorney's Office. There are a number of encroachments that are elements, such as walls and entrance features, of historically contributing buildings. However, these encroachments have not been individually designated as historic. A comprehensive list and description of the encroachments is being prepared by the Project design team.

In general, the direction taken for streetscape improvement projects throughout the City has been to remove encroachments, if necessary, to implement recommended and desired improvements. As was explained at the two presentations that have been made to the HPB, the general design concept for Phase II of the Project has been to focus planned improvements within the right of way currently used while implementing all desired improvements. This design approach developed as a result of the bitterly critical and extremely vocal public outcry opposing the Phase I design concept, which completely redesigned the streets utilizing the full right-of-way width, and thus, called for the removal of many existing encroachments.

As you may remember, at that time, there was extensive discussion by the community and the City Commission advising staff that this was an extremely inappropriate and insensitive approach that was damaging to the historic character and fabric of the neighborhood. The project design was subsequently modified during construction, which created a great deal

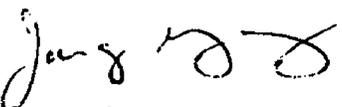
of disruption, to limit the improvements to the existing area of the right of way in use. This modified design was well received by the community and therefore was adopted as a starting point for planning Phase II of the project.

Staff has advised me that it appears the HPB's concern about full utilization of the right of way stems, in part, from a desire to implement a median parking design. This design has been analyzed and considered but has not been supported for a variety of reasons by a number of other entities whose input into the project design is very important. Various versions of the design have been considered, including those that would require use of the full right of way and others that could be implemented in the existing area of use. While the City would like to avoid the problems experienced in Phase I of the project with utilization of the full right of way, this is not the primary reason that the median design is not supported at this time. The main objections to the design stem instead from concerns about public safety, traffic flow, and emergency access. However, a final decision has not been made on this proposed concept. It will be discussed further at a joint meeting of the Neighborhood Committee and Finance and Citywide Projects Committee which will be held in November, and then subsequently by the City Commission. All of the Historic Preservation Board's concerns will be reported at these meetings and you and members of the Board are welcome to attend as well.

I can assure you that the City is making every effort to balance the complex needs addressed by the Project which include parking, safety, drainage, lighting, preservation and enhancement of neighborhood character, pedestrian and vehicular flow, street trees, and many others.

Should you have further concerns, or if I can provide additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Jorge Gonzalez  
City Manager

JMG/RCM/TH/ids

C: Robert C. Middaugh, Assistant City Manager  
Tim Hemstreet, Capital Improvement Projects Office Director

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CITY OF SOUTH POINTE  
OCT 23 2003  
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE