



The Mayor’s Blue Ribbon 41st Street Committee (“Committee”) is created pursuant to the Mayor’s authority to establish Mayor’s boards or committees under Section 2-27 (b) (2) of the City Code. The purpose of the Committee is to study and make recommendations as to how to improve the experience for residents and visitors on 41st Street, which is one of the major gateways to Miami Beach.

Mayor’s Blue Ribbon 41st Street Committee

4:00 p.m. Thursday, July 22, 2021

MINUTES

Committee Members

- Seth Gadinsky, Chair (P)
- Robin Jacobs, Vice Chair (P)
- Jerri Hertzberg Bassuk (A)
- Betty Behar (P)
- Michael Burnstine (A)
- Yechiel Ciment (P)
- Bonnie Crabtree (P)
- Marcella Novela (P)
- Eric Hankin (P)
- Jeremy Watchel (P)

P = Present; A = Absent

Additional Members in attendance

- Alon Alexander
- Alicia Casanova
- DeAnne Connolly-Graham
- Christina Cuervo
- Anamarie Ferreira de Melo
- Michael Goldberg
- Andrew Guasch
- Jim Morrison
- Allison N
- Mike Siegel
- Eda Velero Figueira
- Holly Wallack
- Robert’s iPhone

City Staff in attendance

- Commissioner Steven Meiner
- Commissioner John Aleman
- Amadeus Huff, Aide to Commissioner Meiner
- Rickelle Williams, Economic Development Director
- Amber Tarrac, Economic Development Assistant Director
- Jenny Hernandez, Economic Development Office Associate
- Colette Satchell, Senior Capital Projects Coordinator
- Herman Fung, Capital Projects Coordinator
- Adrian Morales, Property Management Director
- Lily Alvarez, Property Management Administrative Services Manager
- Vanessa Vazquez, Neighborhood Affairs Coordinator
- Kevin Pulido, Neighborhood Affairs Manager
- Rodney Knowles, Greenspace Division Director
- Jose R. Gonzalez, Transportation Director
- William Rivera-Paz, Transportation Traffic Engineer

Seth Gadinsky, Chair, opened the meeting at 4:02 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

1. June Minutes

Motion: Bonnie Crabtree made a motion to approve the minutes from June's meeting, seconded by Yechiel Ciment. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Approval of Biannual Report

Motion: Yechiel Ciment made a motion to approve the biannual report, seconded by Bonnie Crabtree. The report was approved unanimously.

3. City Update

Capital Improvement Projects RFQ for the 41st Street streetscape plan

- Colette mentioned the City received proposals and has scheduled the evaluation of proposals for August 11. The RFQ for Construction Manager At-Risk responses are due August 9.
 - An Evaluation Committee has been convened, which includes two 41st Street Committee members.
 - The next step is to take the selections from the A&E services to the September Commission meeting.

Fountain at Henry Liebman Square (corner of Pine Tree Dr. and 41st Street)

- Adrian informed that, due to the pandemic, there had been a delay on the fountain restoration. Construction is expected to begin by the end of this year and will take approximately 3-6 months to complete.
 - He advised the scope of this project is limited to the fountain and not the entire plaza. The project consists of deconstructing and rebuilding the exact same fountain but with new infrastructure.
 - Rodney stated there is a buttonwood tree that is growing more wide than high. He informed his team did some trimming, which has allowed the tree to open up.
- Commissioner Meiner informed he put this item of repurposing and/or beautifying the Henry Liebman Square on the July 28 Commission agenda to refer this to the upcoming Neighborhoods Committee meeting on September 1.
- Seth asked the Committee for suggestions on improving the area.
 - Yechiel suggested putting benches or some type of fencing to protect it from traffic. Bonnie advised that the benches may not be desirable.
 - Yechiel proposed having a water activation for kids. Adrian advised this activation would require the installation of bathrooms.
 - Betty suggested inquiring about having an art installation donated. Marcella advised that as part of the Art in Public Places (AiPP) Committee, any donations of art would need to be reviewed by the AiPP Board first.
 - Adrian proposed the Committee could look at the architect on the 28th Street Obelisk to have something similar in this location.
 - Eric asked the Committee to keep in mind the space can be used for food markets and asked how much is being spent on refurbishment. Adrian informed - \$75,000.
- Eric suggested postponing the fountain to review if this is the best use of the money.
 - Adrian advised that his team had done an inspection of all the monuments and it was time to refurbish this one as it was already leaning. He also informed the fountain is not historic so it can be changed to something different.
 - Eric offered he could give the plaza redesign to his students as a project.

- Bonnie and Yechiel agreed to continue the project as it is so close to being started and projects tend to take a long time in order to start.
- Seth stated he believed we should not delay this process as well.
- Adrian informed he will provide the plans for the fountain.

Artisanal Market

- Amber informed that the current RFP has been extended until July 30th. Amber will provide an update at the September meeting.

Traffic Lights and Stop Signs

- Jose informed there needs to be a certain number of cars, delays, pedestrians, and accidents in order to implement any new traffic lights.
- Yechiel brought to Jose's attention that there are some traffic lights on 40th Street while other intersections on 40th Street have 4 way stops and questioned the reasoning between the difference of the two.
 - Jose informed that he has asked the County on the signals on 40th Street and the County did not have record of those signals.
 - He explained that usually changes start with a 2-way stop sign, it then progresses to a 4-way stop sign, and after, a traffic signal is installed. The County did advise that in order to remove a traffic light, they will have to do a traffic study. They tend to not like to go through this process as the traffic light must have been installed for a reason in the first place.
- Seth asked if there was a way to make a flashing red light at a certain time of day.
 - Jose mentioned there are not flashing signals on Miami Beach due to the large number of pedestrians. It is a liability for pedestrians and puts them at risk.
- Robin stated that on 41st and Garden Avenue you can't see the color of the light.
 - William advised that it has been reported to the County to fix.
- Commissioner Meiner informed that they will open Indian Creek Drive between 39th to 41st Street to allow more flow of traffic as the construction is still further south.

4. Committee Discussion

4000 Chase lot

- Seth mentioned the owner of the Roosevelt Theatre property is interested in acquiring the lot behind the property. He would like to knock the building down to do a mixed-use project with commercial and residential. Seth informed it has been determined that in order for the lot to go into the private domain it needs to be a referendum. There will have to be support at the Commission level; Commissioner Meiner has taken time to study this independently and with the Committee.
 - Seth stated that based on the strong public feedback they received on the 4000 Alton project, they didn't want to go down the same path to find that the public was not in favor. He reminded the Committee that they were in favor of the 4000 Alton project, but the greater community was not onboard.
- Seth asked the Homeowners Association (HOA) members in attendance if stakeholders would like to see the surface lot, which sits on the water, activated in a way to bring some commercial on the back side, some additional parking, and some residential of the predominantly workforce housing variety?
 - Alicia Casanova from Mid-Beach Neighborhood Association stated she would take this item to their Executive Board and come back on their thoughts.

- Marcella has put together a proposal of how the site could be activated and will email her proposal to Amber to distribute.
- Alon Alexander stated he is from the Garden District Association and the empty lot allows for bad activity such as a recent jet ski rental operation.

5. Chairman Update

- Seth reminded the Committee he's been speaking about a potential grocery store for the lot behind Roasters and Toasters. He stated Michael Arkin who is a zoning guru and resident of the neighborhood came up with a way the pharmacy could work there. They ran the proposal by Tom Mooney, the City's Planning Director and reported that Tom said it could work. Seth then brought the idea to a possible grocery store to let them know we can go back to thinking about it as a grocery store with a pharmacy, which changed their conversation positively. Seth stated it will still take another 3-4 months to have something more concrete and the enthusiasm is back up again.

6. Public Comment

Alton Bay Project

- Alon Alexander asked if the Alton Bay Project by MAS Capital would still be a boutique condo.
 - Christina Cuervo explained that they went through extensive re-entitlement to have the upscale boutique condo, however, the neighbors did not embrace the proposal. Christina informed they had to respond to the way the community reacted and they will be maintaining the zoning but having 176 units.
 - Andrew Guasch gave a brief presentation to show the zone shots of the lot. It is designed to have 2 levels of parking including 254 parking spots and the units will range between studios to 3 bedrooms. Andrew also stated they will install a crosswalk and a lane to turn left into the condo.
 - Andrew informed the DRB hearing will be August 3rd.
 - Seth reminded that due to the limited height of the revised project, the signage that had been discussed previously may no longer work there.

Lighting Demonstration

- DeAnne Connolly-Graham mentioned Jim had to leave early but they would like to show the light presentation at next month's meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

Next meeting date: September 23, 2021