



City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, [www.miamibeachfl.gov](http://www.miamibeachfl.gov)

The Mayor's Blue Ribbon 41<sup>st</sup> 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 41<sup>st</sup> Street, which is one of the major gateways to Miami Beach.

**Mayor's Blue Ribbon 41st Street Committee**  
4:00 PM Thursday, February 25, 2021

**MINUTES**

**Committee Members in attendance:**

- Betty Behar
- Michael Burnstine
- Yechiel Ciment
- Bonnie Crabtree
- Seth Gadinsky, Seth
- Eric Hankin
- Robin Jacobs, Commissioner Seth
- Marcella Novella
- Jeremy Wachtel

**Elected Officials in attendance**

- Commissioner Vice Mayor Steven Meiner

**City Staff in attendance**

- Amadeus Huff, Aide to Vice Mayor Meiner
- David Martinez, Capital Improvements Projects Director
- Gedel Merzius, Economic Development Specialist
- Allison Novack, Community Information Manager
- Rickelle Williams, Economic Development Director

Chair of the Committee, Seth Gadinsky, opened the meeting at 4:10 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance of the meeting.

**Approval of December Minutes**

Seth Gadinsky discussed the minutes from the January 28, 2020 41<sup>st</sup> Street Committee meeting and asked committee members if they had any questions pertaining to the minutes. Committee members had no questions, and the minutes were approved.

**City Updates**

Gedel Merzius updated the committee on the Miami Beach Trolley service. He stated it was resumed after an 11-month hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Gedel explained the citywide

trolleys will operate at a reduced level of service with fewer hours and more frequent cleanings for the remainder of the year. Additionally, the trolleys will have enhanced cleaning procedures and social distancing including mandatory mask requirements. Gedel announced that CVS pharmacy along with the Navarro pharmacy have announced site locations within the City of Miami Beach that would be providing vaccinations. He explained that patients must register at CVS.com or call 1800-746-7287 for walk-in vaccinations and that the Navarro pharmacy in Miami Beach was located at 6331 71<sup>st</sup>. Gedel mentioned the Miami Beach website also had the information available on the city website.

Seth Gadinsky asked if an appointment needed to be made? Gedel explained the CVS app had to be downloaded and the number provided needed to be used if there were any questions.

Vice Mayor Meiner mentioned the Fire Department was also offering vaccinations for anyone 65 years or older. Seth Gadinsky questioned if CVS had an age limitation as well. Gedel replied the information is not stated only that locations would be offering vaccinations. Seth Gadinsky mentioned he and his wife had recently gotten vaccinated despite their age. He noted everyone should apply so when the time comes for all ages to receive vaccinations they would be prepared.

Gedel announced that City Staff have been trying to establish a virtual town-hall meeting for a conversation about a Business Improvement District (BID) . He thanked Bonnie Crabtree and Seth Gadinsky for the assistance in pushing the item through. Gedel mentioned the virtual meeting would be taking place on March 23<sup>rd</sup> from 4-6pm with executives from the Lincoln Road BID and Washington Avenue BID. Gedel stated they were inviting all business and property owners from the 41<sup>st</sup> Street corridor along with the residents in the Mid Beach area. He explained they would be able to ask any questions they have regarding a BID and that the executives would be giving pros and cons of a BID and any information regarding the BID. The BID conversation would be for informational purposes only. Gedel explained that the BID would be established through community stakeholders and property owners throughout the 41<sup>st</sup> Street corridor and it would not be established by the City itself.

Seth Gadinsky stated that the Committee would sunset into the BID. He asked Gedel if they needed to do anything to show support of the committee.

Gedel asked the Committee if they could establish a motion specifying clearly that the committee has asked to create an informational discussion about a BID.

Seth Gadinsky asked for clarification.

Gedel explained that the BID town hall meeting is being requested by the advisory committee and not City itself.

### **Motion**

**That there be an informational session on the positive and negative ramifications of a Business Improvement District (BID) at the suggestion of the 41<sup>st</sup> Street committee for all those who are interested.**

**Motion made by:** Yechiel Ciment

**Motion seconded by:** Bonnie Crabtree

**Motion passed:** 9 – 0

Seth Gadinsky asked how people would be notified. Gedel states they were in the process of sending out mailers along with information via emails. Robin offered to get the information to the Chamber as well. Seth Gadinsky stated that he would like to get the information out to as many people as possible to avoid anyone saying they did not receive notice.

Gedel gave an update on the restaurant expansion pilot program. Gedel stated that Tasty Beach Café has taken full advantage of the program and mentioned the restaurant looked great and had lots of foot traffic. Gedel stated he reached out to several businesses throughout the corridor and explained he was currently waiting on documentation from five (5) different restaurants and would continue to be in close correspondence with the representatives of those businesses.

Robin said she wanted to thank Gedel and Rickelle and the Economic Development team for making that happen. Robin mentioned 41<sup>st</sup> Street has been activated in such a big way and was very thankful.

Jeremy stated he also wanted to thank the Committee, Gedel, Rickelle Williams and Vice Mayor Meiner. Jeremy stated it had been a tremendous success and it looked aesthetically great. Jeremy stated that the area in general looked revitalized and safe. Jeremy mentioned he was disappointed other restaurants had not done it yet.

Bonnie Crabtree asked if it was only because of paperwork or lack of interests from the restaurants.

Gedel replied saying the restaurants all seemed interested when approached with the idea. He explained that the paperwork required was not rigorous and were standard procedure permit documents such as business tax receipts, certificates of insurance, etc. Gedel stated that possibly restaurant owners may just have difficulty prioritizing the time to submit the documents because of COVID.

Gedel added that the restaurant pilot program would run for 3 months. Gedel stated that Tasty Beach Café seating extension permit is set to conclude on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

Seth Gadinsky stated that based on the prior conversation the Committee had, the pilot program would initially be 90 days and if they wanted to continue past the 90 days there would be a fee. Seth stated he had no issue with extending the Tasty Beach Café program for another month and asked Gedel who would make that decision. Gedel replied that if the Committee would like an extension of a month a motion would be necessary.

Seth Gadinsky mentioned he did not want the public to think they were showing favoritism to any business. He said he would be ok with the extension with the intention of revisiting the conversation if more businesses happen to participate. Seth stated he did not want it to seem like they were playing favorites, Jeremy just happened to be on the committee as well as the only business owner who took advantage of the program while it was open to everyone.

Jeremy stated it would be more than reasonable to pay for the outside extension seating, if necessary. Seth Gadinsky stated they have done a good job of keeping personal and committee life separate and would like to keep it that way. He asked if everyone understood. Committees members agreed.

## **Motion**

**That the 41<sup>st</sup> Street Committee continues to financially cover the outdoor restaurant expansion of Tasty Beach Café for an additional month, with the caveat that if other restaurants participate in the program Tasty Beach Café will be charged for whatever fees they otherwise would have paid for.**

**Motion made by:** Yechiel Ciment

**Motion seconded by:** Betty Behar

**Motion passed:** 9 – 0

Jeremy asked how long he could continue with the program if he were to pay to keep extending Gedel explained it was a pilot program and it is something that was happening city wide which he foresees continuing for the remainder of the pandemic.

Rickelle clarified that the City Commission has been approving an extension of the citywide pilot program on a quarterly basis. Rickelle stated the program was currently until the end of March and it was likely the administration would recommend another 3-month extension and if they see fit, the commission will approve it and so on and so forth. Rickelle explained they do not know when the program will expire.

Marcella Novella asked if there were plans to make the project a permanent addition to the city. She explained that it was a very nice addition and made the city feel more alive. Marcella noted that the city has such nice weather, and it seems like outside seating is something they had been missing.

Rickelle stated there are several planning processes happening particularly in the Art Deco Cultural District and there was potential for recommendations to be made that could impact the viability of parklets and outdoor seating but no long-term approval had been determined for restaurant expansions.

Seth Gadinsky stated the Committee could make a recommendation to make the program permanent if this was something everyone wanted. Robin said she agreed, and she felt the program created energy and movement.

Seth Gadinsky asked if the Committee had any opinions about putting a motion together that the City should consider making the pilot program a permanent program for outdoor seating

Eric Hankin agreed it was great to see all the activity and the seating outside, he said they should be supportive of it. He added that he had a bit of an issue with the way some of them look and that there is no control in the city to make it something more organized and visually more appealing.

Seth Gadinsky said he thought it was a great idea. Eric Hankins mentioned this was something they had tried to do with parklets which turned out to be more expensive, but some type of uniformity would be helpful.

Eric stated he found it interesting that the ones on 41<sup>st</sup> street had the jersey curbs which was a sort of parking barriers as opposed to the ones on Washington which are built right up to the edge of the street with a small fence. He stated he did not understand how they got that done. He referred to when they had originally designed the parklets with the requirements of the city they had to be 4 feet smaller than the parking space with all sides in the parking space. He explained

that safety should be factored in as well because some of the seating had no consideration of the automobiles adjacent.

Seth Gadinsky stated the buffer was the bike lane. Gedel stated he had nothing further for City updates. Seth Gadinsky mentioned the purpose would be to make it a bit more uniform and safer.

### **Motion**

**That the City continue the pilot program of the outdoor seating in perpetuity with the agreement that any and all outdoor seating structures be in compliance with a set of uniform regulations established by the city.**

**Motion made by:** Yechiel Ciment

**Motion seconded by:** Robin Jacobs

**Motion passed:** 9 – 0

Yechiel stated he wanted them to discuss pedestrians crossing North-South on 41<sup>st</sup> Street who did not seem to have a lot of time to cross. He mentioned it being clocked at 20 seconds. He pointed out this was not a lot of time for the elderly or people with difficulty crossing the street. He also mentioned the turn lane going from the Julia Tuttle Causeway making a left on Alton Road only had enough time to clear about 3 cars which is not enough to clear out the turn lane as we are currently getting back to normal rush hour traffic. Seth asked Gedel if he could investigate it and report back to the committee for the next meeting and if there is a conflict or further discussion needed, they would invite someone from transportation to the next meeting.

Yechiel said he knew it was an actual problem because he has clocked it. Yechiel stated if there was something that could happen beforehand without needing a meeting it would be better.

Seth Gadinsky agreed and asked Gedel to ask someone and let the Committee know and as a group they would decide if they need to be added to the upcoming meeting.

Yechiel said the problem with that especially with a lot of traffic going west bound, the only efficient way would be to get off of Julia Tuttle on 41<sup>st</sup> Street and explained that clearing out 3 cars at a time is not the best way. Yechiel mentioned that having that flexibility would be helpful to people who live on those blocks.

Amadeus Huff mentioned that he and Vice Mayor Meiner had walked the corridor and recorded that before the pandemic. He stated that since the pandemic they might have adjusted it a bit, but he would reach out to someone to let them know.

Yechiel stated there was a period where it did begin to get better, but it had reverted since the pandemic.

Vice Mayor Meiner explained they had met with Commissioner Eileen Higgins and a traffic signal person from Miami-Dade County to coordinate the lighting. Vice Mayor Meiner mentioned the county would be able to do the changes and they would be working with them.

Seth Gadinsky asked Rickelle to give a 41<sup>st</sup> Street design update.

Rickelle explained the CIP department was putting together a draft RFQ to solicit eligible firms to go through the design development phase of the 41<sup>st</sup> Street conceptual plan and turn it into a reality. Rickelle explained they were still in the process of putting the scope together. Rickelle

mentioned they had just received the final document from AECOM which was a necessary element for the CIP department to have to include it in the scope.

Seth Gadinsky asked Rickelle when she thought the deadlines for the bids would be. Rickelle said she did not have an estimate for that, but she could have David Martinez the capital improvement projects director provide a rough estimate of when he thinks the solicitation would go out and for proposals to be received.

Seth Gadinsky stated it would be nice to get an updated email as a group of what the timeline looked like. Rickelle said she would coordinate with Gedel and David to provide that information to the Committee.

### **Chairman Update**

Seth Gadinsky stated that he has had some discussions with the city about the lot behind the Roosevelt Theater. Seth explained one of the owners had made an unsolicited offer for the lot and explained that due to it being on the water the City must require a referendum. Seth mentioned he had sent an email to Vice Mayor Meiner and Amadeus before the meeting asking if that was something, they could sponsor so they could get the process started.

Seth mentioned that on the lot behind Roasters and Toasters there has been continuing conversation between a grocery chain and the City. He pointed out it has been interesting, and the good news is that there is sincere interest from both parties, stating that because the city was interested in controlling medical marijuana outlets in the city, they had to classify them as pharmacies. Seth explained that if the grocery store was placed there, they would not be able to do a pharmacy so they are in the process of determining if they could make their business work without a pharmacy. He mentioned the City looked at every possible angle and it would require changing rules on pharmacies city wide. Seth stated they should have more information by the following week.

Seth explained that initially when medical marijuana had been approved, he had negative thoughts about it, but they are being run like real businesses and the public should not be as scared of these dispensaries as they might have been in the beginning. He explained if there were to be any negative reports made, maybe there would be some discussion in changing that.

Seth asked the committee and the public if there was anything they would like to address. Seth asked Allison if she had any update on the proposal for the AECOM design timeline. Allison stated that the city is looking to provide an update in a couple of months and she is looking to get back to the committee with more specifics in a couple of months.

Seth referenced Rickelle had just received the final document from AECOM, so he imagined there was a target date for them giving an update. Allison stated yes, they just received the final report and Gedel could share with the group if he hadn't already.

Gedel announced the date set up for the BID town hall meeting was March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6pm, and the 41<sup>st</sup> Street committee meeting will be held Thursday March 24<sup>th</sup> at 4-6pm.

### **Public Comment**

No Public Comment.

Meeting adjourned 5:12 PM

**Next meeting date: March 25, 2021**