



City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

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 PM Thursday, March 25, 2021

MINUTES

Committee Members in attendance:

- Betty Behar
- Michael Burnstine
- Yechiel Ciment
- Bonnie Crabtree
- Seth Gadinsky, Chair
- Eric Hankin
- Robin Jacobs
- Jerri Hertzberg Bassuk

Elected Officials in attendance

- Commissioner Steven Meiner

City Staff in attendance

- Amadeus Huff, Aide to Commissioner Meiner
- Gedel Merzius, Economic Development Specialist
- Allison Novack, Community Information Manager
- Colette Satchell, Senior Capital Improvements Projects Coordinator

- Rickelle Williams, Economic Development Director

Chair of the Committee, Seth Gadinsky, opened the meeting at 4:05 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance of the meeting.

Approval of February Minutes

Seth Gadinsky discussed the minutes from the February 25, 2021 41st 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.

Seth asked if there is a possibility that the next 41st Street Committee meeting be held outdoors, in person under the provision of social distance guidelines. Gedel Merzius stated that if there are any decisions to be made on meeting restrictions it will be done by the City of Miami Beach Mayor and Commissioners along with the City Manager. Seth asked if staff could look at having the next meeting in person outdoors in the Tasty- Beach Café seating area on 4041 Royal Palm Avenue.

AECOM Final Report

Gedel introduced Colette Satchell, Senior Capital Improvements Projects Coordinator to the 41st Street Committee to discuss the next steps for the AECOM Streetscape Plan. Colette stated that

they started the draft of the request for quotation (RFQ) incorporating the AECOM final report with the expectation to submit the RFQ to the Procurement Department by April 2, 2021. Colette stated that the RFQ is expected to be out on the market for about 45 days. Colette stated that the goal of the Office of Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) is to place the item on the June or July City Commission meeting agenda for discussion. Colette stated that they are also simultaneously working on the RFQ for the Construction Manager - At Risk with the hope of advertising the RFQ by June.

Seth asked for further clarification about what exactly is going to Commission. Colette explained that the purpose of going to the Commission is to award the RFQ to the selected bidder. After the RFQ is advertised and goes through an evaluation committee, then that document is presented to Commission for an award.

Eric Hankin asked what kind of firms will be responding to the RFQ. Colette stated that landscape architectural engineering firms will submit to the RFQ to address all the different disciplines for consideration.

Sunset of the 41st Street Committee

Gedel informed the Committee that in April 2021 the Committee is sunsetting. He explained to the Committee that if they wish to renew the Committee for another year, they will need to prepare a motion and the Mayor will decide on renewing the advisory Committee.

Seth stated that he believes that the Committee should continue to meet for the betterment of 41st Street. Seth stated that there are still pressing items that need to continue to be brought to the attention of the City. Seth mentioned that ideally the Committee could possibly morph into a property owner or merchant association, but he believed they were not there yet. Michael Burnstine emphasized that along with property owners, the residents need to continue to be apart of this committee as well.

Seth responded in agreement with Michael and mentioned that there was always discussion amongst the Committee about what the intent of the Committee was. Seth mentioned that it was never meant to be an advisory group in perpetuity.

Robin Jacobs stated that this Committee affords the residents the opportunity to get involved.

Motion: To extend the Mayor's 41st Street Blue Ribbon Committee for another year with the approval of the Mayor and City Commission.

Motion made by: Yechiel Ciment

Motion seconded by: Bonnie Crabtree

Motion passed: 8 – 0

City Updates

Gedel began the City updates by informing Committee members that Ace Hardware, located on 545 Arthur Godfrey Rd has opened after being closed for almost a year. Ace Hardware has been a staple in the community since 1947. Gedel invited Mike Siegal, property owner of 545 Arthur Godfrey, to say a few words regarding the opening of the space. Mike confirmed that Ace Hardware is back and open and discussed store hours.

Gedel informed the Committee that the lighting improvements on the 41st Street corridor have been completed. The replacement of 28 Cobra head luminaries on the tall aluminum poles have

been installed along with 50 holophane luminaries on the smaller pedestrian black poles, all the new lights are 4K LED. Gedel acknowledged and thanked Commissioner Meiner and Aide Amadeus Huff for advocating for the funding of this project.

Seth mentioned that there are some maintenance issues with rope lighting with some of the trees. Gedel stated that the maintenance of the rope lights is currently being handled by the Public Works Department and the vendor contracted to complete the project. Betty Behar detailed that there are a total of seven trees that are out.

Gedel reminded the Committee about the previous request from Yechiel Ciment at the February meeting when he discussed pedestrians crossing North-South on 41st Street who did not seem to have a lot of time to cross. He mentioned it being clocked at twenty seconds and pointed out this was not a lot of time for the elderly or people with difficulty crossing the street. Gedel noted that Yechiel also mentioned that the turn lane going from the Julia Tuttle Causeway making a left on Alton Road only had enough time to clear about three cars which is not enough to clear out the turn lane as we are currently getting back to normal rush hour traffic.

Gedel informed the Committee that the City of Miami Beach Transportation Department staff responded to Yechiel's request by stating that they performed some field observations and reviewed the timing from the eastbound left turn from Julia Tuttle to Alton Road. Staff from the Transportation department concluded that the eastbound left turn time varies throughout the day depending on the demand. At some points of the day, it is skipped because of no demand. In moments of high demand, the signal takes a maximum of two cycles to clear, however, this condition is not consistent, and the signal does not commonly provide the maximum time. Based on this condition, an extension of the eastbound left turn was found to not be warranted due to the anticipated detrimental effects to westbound traffic.

The Transportation Department also addressed the pedestrian crossing time noting that the pedestrian crossing time is compliant with industry standard, however, since there is a desire to be more pedestrian friendly, based on the high number of younger and older pedestrians in the corridor, they will be increasing the crossing time to match the recommended walking speeds for younger and older pedestrians which is 2.5 ft/second.

The Transportation Department asked for patience as they coordinate with Miami-Dade County to perform the modification. Members of Transportation Department also highlighted the additional pedestrian crossing time that will reduce the amount of green time for east-west traffic between 3-8 seconds depending on the location. Additionally, the Transportation Department stated that there may be some minor additional congestion in the east-west direction because of the modifications.

Yechiel stated that he agreed with most of the Transportation Department findings but did state that on high impact periods during the day the timing of the lights can be inefficient for traffic. Yechiel stated that this news was satisfactory and there will be members of the community that would appreciate the modifications. Gedel stated that members of the Committee are welcome to meet on site and discuss with the Transportation Department.

Potential 41st Street Business Improvement District

Seth began the discussion by asking Gedel to give a brief explanation of the details of the March 23rd informational presentation that discussed how to establish a business improvement district (BID). Gedel stated that the basis of the presentation came in large part from the Committee members who approved a motion to conduct a virtual town hall discussion regarding the potential

creation of a BID within the 41st Street business corridor. The presentation explained that a BID is a legal mechanism for property owners and businesses in a defined geographic area to jointly plan and put in place a sustainable funding source to pay for services and initiatives to improve the respective area. Gedel also reminded Committee members that the City of Miami Beach will not be directly involved with the formation of a BID.

Gedel also informed the Committee that following the BID presentation meeting, an individual by the name of Ira Giller shared that there was a merchant association that was established in the late 1990's. A not-for-profit merchant association was formed called the Middle Partnership to promote 41st Street in conjunction with the City. Mr. Giller stated that they had a full-time director paid by the City. This group brought the pavers, trees, facade improvements, street art show, and other activities to the street. Mr. Giller stated that while the group has been dormant for many years, it could be the vehicle to help 41st Street thrive again.

Seth then asked property owner Holly Wallack on what her impression of the BID presentation was. Holly stated that she asked several questions to Timothy Schmand, Executive Director of the Lincoln Road BID and Troy Wright, Executive Director of the Washington Avenue BID such as what the annual budget of each BID is and what was their most important project. Holly stated that she left the meeting informed of what BID was but also felt that there was not enough information to decide.

Seth stated that he would like to see some information on how much it will be per square foot for property owners within the BID parameters. Seth invited Andrew Resnick, a member of the Washington Avenue BID to speak about his experience with the BID process. Andrew stated that the Washington Avenue BID has only been established for a year, and they pay \$.50 per square foot per property. Andrew emphasized that the BID gives property owners one voice in its relation to the City of Miami Beach. Andrew mentioned that the Washington Avenue BID's main objective in the future is to implement lighting on the corridor. Andrew stated that he believes 41st Street should focus on what is the most important aspect on the corridor.

Seth stated that perhaps the first thing that would be needed is establishment of a merchant association for the 41st Street corridor. Gedel stated that the Lincoln Road BID was first an association which transitioned to a BID.

Bonnie stated that there should be more information regarding the economic impact of BIDs throughout Miami-Dade County. Bonnie emphasized that more data is needed to showcase what exactly the property owners would gain from a BID. Seth agreed and referenced that Coral Gables and Coconut Grove both have BIDs that are doing a phenomenal job for the property owners.

Seth stated that he would be interested in forming an association with other property owners in the 41st Street area and figuring out what their goals and objectives are. Seth emphasized that there does need to be more unification with the property owners on 41st Street. Betty Behar stated that there was an association recently established and it wasn't very well attended. Betty also stated that with assistance of fellow Committee member Robin Jacobs, they tried to create a 41st Street business association. Robin stated that during the beginning of the association the meetings were well attended with the first meeting having an estimated 120 people in attendance. Then COVID came, and they were forced to suspend all activity.

Rezoning of the Surface Lots

Andrew Resnick began the discussion by explaining to the Committee that he owns a two story

building on Jefferson Plaza, and that the space has retail on the first floor but has office space on the top. Behind the space there is a surface parking lot that is about 25,000 square feet. Andrew shared that the biggest problem is that everything facing 41st Street is CD-3 zoning and all the parking lots in the area are CD-1 zoning. Andrew stated that you cannot transfer FAR from CD-1 to CD-3 which in his opinion means that development opportunities are scarce. Andrew stated that he would like to build something that is more comprehensive and efficient for office and multifamily spaces. Andrew stated that many people are interested in this idea but not interested in the aspect of possible hotel use.

Andrew stated that he has had discussions with Tom Mooney, Director of Planning for the City of Miami Beach and Nick Kallergis, First City Attorney for the City of Miami Beach, about the possibility of having prohibited uses on a referendum ballot with a prohibition on hotels with a companion zoning overlay.

According to Andrew, Nick stated that this action would benefit all the lots on 41st Street, with the focus on the south side of 41st Street. Andrew feels like it would be a catalyst project for the whole corridor.

Seth asked Andrew why are community members of 41st Street reluctant about hotels being developed on the corridor. Andrew stated that he believes there are enough hotels on Washington and Collins Avenue. Andrew stated that he doesn't believe a hotel would do well on 41s Street and doesn't plan to place a hotel in any of the surface lots he owns.

Yeziel stated that when observing many of the successful neighborhoods throughout South Florida that have improved throughout the years, the impetus has been to bring scale or critical mass to support the businesses. Yeziel believes that building a hotel would welcome transient tourist that may be good for the neighborhood but may not be good for the overall community of 41st Street. Yeziel stated he would be supportive of office space and activation of first floor retail but not a hotel especially since the residential community is near the main business corridor.

Michael asked Andrew about the multifamily component he mentioned, specifically what type of housing is he envisioning to bring to the area. Andrew stated that the housing types he envisions would be mainly an extension for families.

Yeziel asked about the timeline of the proposed project. Andrew stated that they would like to get development up and running as soon as possible. Robin stated that this type of development is the trend in urban planning and development across the country. Mixed use, residential and commercial development falls in unison with the City of Miami Beach and their live-work-play strategy. She added that this had the potential to be a great concept to implement within 41st Street.

Michael stated that an obstacle to possible development will always be traffic and that discussion will be raised immediately. Andrew stated that there will be plans to build a parking garage on the parking lot. Andrew stated that this is a bigger conversation that perhaps a BID can discuss.

Eric asked Andrew what exactly does CD-3 allow in terms of height and what are its restrictions. Andrew stated that for CD-3 properties there is a 75 foot height limit and CD-1 properties have a 50 foot height limit.

Before stating the motion, Yeziel mentioned that any type of proposal should have some

mechanism to sunset if the City or any type of committee is supportive of an item and that it should not be lagging in perpetuity. Yechiel stated that there should be some sense of developments happening in the near term. Andrew stated that placing a sunset provision is a good idea, but Andrew also stated that he is not sure that it is applicable to a FAR change on referendum.

Motion: To support ways to incentivize future development of the 41st Street corridor including a potential up zoning of the parking lots north and south of 41st Street, with a specific focus on residential and commercial uses; with the understanding that the 41st Street advisory committee recommendation has a sunset provision of the developer beginning work within two years of such recommendation.

Motion made by: Yechiel Ciment

Motion seconded by: Robin Jacobs

Motion passed: 7 – 1

Chairman's update

Seth began by stating that he has met with Commissioner Meiner and Aide Amadeus Huff and the property owners of the Roosevelt Theatre. Seth stated that there was discussion about the vision and redevelopment for the Roosevelt Theater and the surface lot behind the property. Seth stated that they are planning to have ongoing conversations regarding the future of Roosevelt Theatre.

Public Comment

Avra Bank introduced herself to the Committee and commented on how the activation of a supermarket would fit right in with the plans of the community and their vision of a live, work and play model. Seth stated that there has been conversation with the City Mayor and Commissioners, Manager and the Planning department, and everyone is in full support of the idea of developing a supermarket on the 41st Street corridor. Seth mentioned that there is the obstacle of medical marijuana chains being developed and the classification that they have as pharmacies. Seth stated that some grocery stores in the City of Miami Beach may be prohibited from having pharmacies, so he is waiting on the decision of the grocery store on whether they still have interest in developing a grocery store in the area without a pharmacy. Seth stated that he will hopefully have more information in time for the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:37 PM

Next meeting date: April 29, 2021