

MINUTES
Special Call Meeting
September 24, 2019
8:00 P.M.
Council Chambers
6601 Main Street
Miami Lakes, Florida 33014

1. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS: None

2. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Manny Cid called the meeting to order at 8:10 P.M.

3. ROLL CALL:

The Town Clerk, Gina Inguanzo, called the roll with the following Councilmembers being present: Carlos Alvarez, Luis Collazo, Josh Dieguez, Jeffrey Rodriguez, Marilyn Ruano, Vice Mayor Nelson Rodriguez, and Mayor Manny Cid.

4. MOMENT OF SILENCE:

The Invocation was led by Councilmember Alvarez.

5. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Councilmember J. Rodriguez led the Pledge of Allegiance.

6. ORDER OF BUSINESS (DEFERRALS, ADDITIONS, AND DELETIONS)

Mayor Cid motioned to amend his business item 14 (b) to include in the discussion the Town's Complete Streets Plan and Greenways and Trails Plan. Vice Mayor N. Rodriguez seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Councilmember Collazo motioned to accept the Order of Business and Councilmember Dieguez seconded the motion. All were in favor.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Lisa Labine came to speak in favor of preserving the tree canopy. She explained her neighbors removed 3 oak trees on the swell area and it has caused her house to feel overheated. Due to this, she has a personal interest in saving the tree canopy and made some suggestions on how to do so.

Joanie Graham came to speak in favor of preserving the tree canopy. She stated the Town needs to stop giving permission to cut trees.

Bonnie Citron came to speak in favor of preserving the tree canopy. She asked some questions to the council about deed restrictions and homeowners' fines for cutting trees. She stated she thought there was a lot of foot traffic in the area that was discussed by Celebration Point. She explained that Candlewood street area needs sidewalk replacement.

Hope Reynolds spoke against the removal of the trees for the larger sidewalks. She explained we need to comply with ADA but also keep the trees. The project also was not be a matching grant associated with it.

Derrick Citron stated he was happy about the tree mitigation plan, but that the Town needed to save more of the trees. He explained that it's detrimental properties to have larger sidewalks and no trees. He stated we live in different times and many kids do not walk to school.

George Slyer came to speak in favor of saving the tree canopy as much a possible. He stated the Town needs trees and not larger sidewalks.

Alex Riano came to speak on saving the trees and that the tree canopy is what makes The Town a hidden gem.

George Lozano came to speak on stopping the Safe Routes to School projects. He stated the Town needs to preserve the trees and more greenspace.

Mariana Bass had some questions for the council regarding the statistics of how many kids walk to school. She stated she was not in favor of the wider sidewalks around Celebration Point.

Albert Marquez stated he is a resident at Celebration Point. He preferred the existing sidewalk side and would not like the trees removed in his residential area. He stated he was interested to know exactly how many kids walk to school in his area.

Teresa Helms came to speak in favor of preserving the tree canopy. And she believes not many kids walk to school these days. She stated she wants to keep the existing sidewalk side.

Mirta Mendez came to speak on preserving the tree canopy. She believes we do not need to move forward with the project just because we received a grant for it. She would like to see the trees that have been removed to replaced.

Claudia Lucas came to speak in favor of the tree canopy. She explained the tree canopy is the essence of Miami Lakes. She stated the Town needs to make sure we are not overdeveloping. She believes that the widening of roads is due to the vertical development.

Angelo Garcia came to speak on preserving the tree canopy.

The Town Clerk received public comments via email in favor of preserving the tree canopy from the following: Daisy Estrada, Amy Alonso, Carolina Perez, Jaime, Miami Lakes Gardens Club, Christopher Burgeon, Felicia Salazar.

Public Comments were re-opened with Councilmember Ruano making a motion and Councilmember Collazo seconded the motion. All were in favor. The following individuals spoke:

Mirta Mendez thanked Mayor Cid and the council for listening to the residents, asked for more trees to be replaced in Lock Lomond.

Mariana Bass asked the council the question of what red ribbon on the trees meant.

Derrick Citron stated there needs to be more consequences for residents cutting down trees.

Albert Marquez pointed out the fact there were residents that spoke, and they are against the project.

Hope Reynolds stated that Israel encourages planting of trees and she traveled there with Father Murphy. She suggested the Town be like Israel.

8. APPOINTMENTS:

None.

9. COMMITTEES:

None

10. CONSENT CALENDAR:

None

11. ORDINANCES IN FIRST READING

None.

12. ORDINANCE IN SECOND READING

None

13. RESOLUTIONS

None.

14. NEW BUSINESS

A. To Discuss the Safe Routes to School Project (Collazo)

Councilmember Collazo motioned to waive the 3-minute special rules. Vice Mayor N. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Councilmember Collazo stated that he called this special call due to the community outcry to preserve the existing canopy. He stated the Safe Routes to School Project has been a part of the Town's Greenways and Trails Plan to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety since 2008. Throughout this period, the council has sought funding and allocated expenditures for this project. In early part of 2019, Councilmember Collazo stated the scope of this project included removal of 50 trees due to an installation of 8 to 10 ft walking and biking path. He stated he met with Town Manager Edward Pidermann and staff to discuss the plan to remove trees along Miami Lakeway South and North. During these meetings, Councilmember Collazo stated he asked the Town Manager and staff to walk him through the project and asked why so many trees needed to be removed. On their scheduled site visit, the Town Manager Pidermann said he would re-visit this issue and asked staff to come up with tree mitigation plan.

Councilmember Collazo stated the commencement project was scheduled for the 1st week of October. He asked the Town Manager and staff to review the tree mitigation plan and the Town Manager and staff was able to drop only 20 trees to be removed. However, Councilmember Collazo said a part of the Safe Routes School Plan still impacts a large portion of the tree canopy near Celebration Point. He stated he is not comfortable with this and is asking the Town Manager and staff to mitigate more trees. He stated that if more trees are unable to be mitigated, then he is not in favor with moving forward with the Safe Routes to School project. He thanked staff and the Town Manager for trying to address all the concerns and is interested staff recommendations on how to address the tree mitigation.

The Town Manager Pidermann stated that staff has been working on tree mitigation plan and is trying to work under the confines of the FDOT grant guidelines and approved budget. Carmen Olazabal, the Town's Planning, CIP and Special Services Director, along with staff have tried to develop with solutions to mitigate trees as well as using different materials such as porous concrete along Miami Lakeway Drive. However, these changes will affect the project's cost to go up.

The Town Manager stated also that the staff came up with recommendations to interrupt the trail near Celebration Point. The trail would start from Miami Lakes K-8 center and it runs Northeast until the end of Miami Lakes K-8 Middle as the Town Manager explained. These changes would require the Town to go back to FDOT for more funding. The Town Manager stated he hoped the motion from the council would be to price out the options and meet with FDOT to see if its possible to interrupt the trail in this new plan. He stated no shade trees will be sacrifice. It will be 10 sable tress that are 14 inches in diameter or less, and 1 weeping bottlebrush tree.

After much discussion and public comments, Councilmember Collazo motioned to resind the commencement date of the project. Councilmember Dieguez seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Councilmember Dieguez asked the Town Manager what the consequences were if the Town backed out of the grant project and the Town Manager Pidermann said he would have to meet with FDOT to find out. He believes it would jeopardize future funding and certification with them.

Deputy Town Attorney Lorenzo Cobiella elaborated on the new Florida House Tree Bill. Deputy Town Attorney explained if the tree is on the swell area homeowners need to seek a permit from the Town that and the Town arborist must attest there is something wrong with the tree or is causing endangerment. The State law allows homeowners to cut down the tree on their property with out permitting. But homeowners still need to hire a certified arborist to state the tree is endangerment or it is sick.

Councilmember Dieguez asked the Town Manager what percentage of the project's funding was coming from FDOT or PTP and the Town Manager explained the percentage.

Councilmember Alvarez asked if the latest plan included using the Town 's budget money or just PTP or FDOT for the project. The Town Manager says he needs to work with staff to run the numbers to set how much mu\money is needed to offset set.

Councilmember Ruano asked how much money needs to be returned to FDOT and the Town Manager responded with \$50,000. Councilmember Ruano suggested the project either needs to not happen if it can't incorporate the Miami Lakes way.

Councilmember J. Rodriguez stated he spoke with residents in the area where their driveways and walkway will be affected by installing a 10-foot sidewalk. The 14 residents are not happy about this he stated. He suggested to pause this project and analyze on how to improve it.

Vice Mayor N. Rodriguez mentioned that the 170th street sidewalk project was a success and is being used by pedestrians and children. But this project should not include cutting down 57 trees shade tree in order to accomplish this. The project needs to be put on paused and re-assessed.

Mayor Cid stated that after speaking with the Town Manager he is in favor of a walkability community and having safety for pedestrians, but he acknowledges that the canopy is important. The project needs to be paused.

Councilmember Alvarez motioned to amend the main motion to alter the plan to re-assessed effecting those 14 homes Councilmember J. Rodriguez spoke on. Councilmember Collazo seconded and all were in favor.

After much discussion on the sidewalk size and how to offset the costs, Councilmember added another amendment to the main motion. He motioned the Town Manager to meet with FDOT to discuss a new plan that includes more for tree canopy protection Councilmember J. Rodriguez spoke with residents to include 6-foot to 8-foot sidewalks. Furthermore, would like staff to come back with more cost assessments.

The Town Clerk called the roll, on the main motion as amended, and the motion passed 7-0.

Councilmember Collazo motioned that the Town Manager and staff re-examined all upcoming projects to identify similar impacts as this project has to the tree canopy. Councilmember Dieguez seconded. All were in favor.

Councilmember Collazo motioned to direct the Town Manager and staff to request a lower speed zone along the pedestrian path from Crooked Palm to Miami Lakes K-8 center. Vice Mayor N. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Mayor Cid motioned to extend to 12 AM and Councilmember Collazo seconded the motion. All were in favor.

B. To Discuss the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program for the Bob Graham Education Center - \$241,143 (Cid)

Mayor Manny Cid stated this project will not impact the tree canopy. The Town Manager Pidermann concurred. It's about adding crosswalks and some extension of sidewalks from 6- feet to 8-feet.

Councilmember Dieguez suggested this size of sidewalk be used for the Safe Routes School Project.

15. MANAGERS REPORT

None.

16. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Approved this _ day of December 2019.

Manny Cid, Mayor

Attest:

Gina Inguanzo, Town Clerk