

Miami River Commission

Meeting Minutes

June 7, 2021

The Miami River Commission (MRC) public meeting convened at noon, June 7, 2021, Main Library Auditorium, 101 W. Flagler.

Miami River Commission (MRC) Policy Committee Members and/or Designees attending:

Horacio Stuart Aguirre, MRC Chairman

Patty Harris, designee for Governor

County Commissioner Eileen Higgins

David Maer, designee for Miami-Dade ST Attorney Fernandez-Rundle

Megan Kelly, designee for City of Miami Mayor Suarez

Jim Murley, designee for Miami-Dade County Mayor Cava

Philip Everingham, designee for Miami Marine Council

Neal Schafers, designee for Downtown Development Authority

Bruce Brown, Miami River Marine Group

Sandy O'Neil, designee for Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce

Tom Kimen, Neighborhood Representative appointed by City of Miami

Sallye Jude, Neighborhood Representative appointed by Miami-Dade County

John Michael Cornell, Designee for Luis Garcia

MRC Staff:

Brett Bibeau, Managing Director

Others attending interested in the River:

Sign in sheets available upon request.

I) Chair's Report

MRC Chairman Horacio Stuart Aguirre provided the following report:

The Miami River Commission is proud to distribute the 18th Annual Miami River Map and Guide. We appreciate everyone which placed ads, and will put the funding to good use improving the Miami River District. The 18th Annual Miami River Map and Guide features the public Riverwalk route, 16 historic sites, 23 points of interest, and 52 advertisements. Please take as many as you would like to help us widely distribute them.

In lieu of Miami Riverday in 2021, the Miami River Commission is reaching out to Riverday sponsors and any potential new supporters with the “Your Miami River Cleanup Campaign”, where 90% of all donations will be spent directly removing litter and invasive plant species, landscaping, and painting over graffiti along the Miami River. Please consider this the last call for any final sponsors.

The Miami River Commission has been actively assisting the efforts of the City, County, State, and private sector to clean up the Miami River District. In addition to the maintenance professionals the MRC pays daily to remove litter, invasive plant species, graffiti and provide landscaping services along the Miami River, the MRC thanks the volunteers from Hands on Miami whom on May 29 picked up garbage along the shoreline in City owned Curtis Park, and on April 24 and May 15 picked up garbage along the Miami River’s shoreline at the County owned affordable housing at 1407 NW 7 ST.

The Miami River Commission thanks the City of Miami for recently shutting down 4 locations on the Miami River and Seybold Canal where illegal charters were picking up and dropping off passengers in single family neighborhoods, and were leaving behind garbage, urinating in front yards, making noise late at night, etc.

The MRC thanks the State of Florida for providing over \$500,000 for their improvement project for the State-owned Miami Circle site, which is a designated national historic landmark. As you recall the project was previously presented to the MRC, and features over 46,000 square feet of new sod, and 1,466 new plants along the site’s public Riverwalk. Starting June 14, the special ancient site will be closed for 100 calendar days.

The MRC unanimously adopted their distributed April 5, 2021 public meeting minutes.

II) Consideration of Land Use and Zoning Amendment at 1160 NW North River Drive from T5 to T6-8-O

Ines Marrero Priegues, Holland & Knight, distributed and presented a Letter of Intent, Plans for the proposed “boutique rental” development, and draft Covenant (available at <https://miamirivercommission.org/Agenda06.05.21.html>) for their proposed Land Use and Zoning Amendment at 1160 NW North River Drive from T5 to T6-8-O, with a required public Riverwalk.

Jim Murley, Chair of the MRC’s Urban Infill subcommittee, distributed pages 26-30 of the MRC’s adopted strategic plan, the *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan*. Mr. Murley noted the site is located within the designated “Spring Garden Historic District”. Therefore, in addition to the proposed land use and zoning amendments to increase the site’s density, the proposal would require a “Certificate of Appropriateness” for the proposed demolition of the existing 2 story “Bermuda House” rental apartments, followed by a “Certificate of Approval” for the proposed new construction, from the City of Miami’s Historic and Environmental Preservation Board. MRC Urban Infill Subcommittee Chairman Murley suggested that based on the MRC’s adopted strategic plan, the *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan* and the City’s Zoning Code Miami 21, that the MRC recommend denial of the proposed Land Use and Zoning Amendments at 1160 NW North River Drive.

A letter from Ernie Martin in opposition to the subject up-zoning was distributed. Mr. Carlos Salas, President of the Spring Garden Civic Association, distributed a petition with numerous signatures in opposition, and a letter of opposition to the proposed up-zoning, with attachments from the City of Miami (including a “Project Fact Sheet” stating in part “The applicant has been advised the Planning staff would not be providing a favorable recommendation.”). Numerous Spring Garden residents spoke in opposition to the proposed up-zoning. Chris Rupp, Director of the Dade Heritage Trust (DHT) stated the DHT is recommending denial of the subject up-zoning within the designated Spring Garden Historic District.

The MRC unanimously (13-0) recommended denial of the proposed Land Use and Zoning Amendments at 1160 NW North River Drive.

III. Miami River Commission Subcommittee Reports

The MRC deferred their subcommittee reports.

IV. New Business

The meeting adjourned.