

Miami River Commission
Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2021

The Miami River Commission (MRC) public meeting convened at noon, April 5, 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
Maggie Fernandez, designee for Commissioner 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

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:

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” fundraising 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.

In addition, advertisements are currently for sale in the 18th Annual Miami River Map and Guide. We appreciate everyone which has already placed their ads, and we announce this “last call” for any additional potential advertisement purchases before we send the map to the printers.

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 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 March 13 picked up garbage along the shoreline in City owned Curtis Park, and on March 27 picked up garbage along the Miami River’s shoreline at the County owned affordable housing at 1407 NW 7 ST. In addition, the MRC thanks the volunteers from Hands on Miami whom on April 10 will pick up garbage along the shoreline in City owned Curtis Park, and on April 24 will pick 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 removing two derelict vessels from the Miami River.

The MRC unanimously adopted their amended February 1, 2021 public meeting minutes.

II) Consideration of Land Use and Zoning Amendment at 1100-1110 NW North River Drive from T4 to T5

Steve Wernick, Wernick and Co., distributed and presented a Letter of Intent, Plans, and draft Covenant (available at <http://www.miamirivercommission.org/Agenda04.05.21.html>) for their proposed Land Use and Zoning Amendment at 1100-1110 NW North River Drive from T4 to T5, featuring the code 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 sites 2 existing single-family homes are considered “contributing structures” in the subject 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 2 single family homes, 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 the MRC recommend denial of the proposed Land Use and Zoning Amendments at 1100-1110 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 their petition with 93 signatures and letter of opposition to the proposed up-zoning. Numerous Spring Garden residents spoke in opposition to the proposed up-zoning.

The MRC unanimously (12-0) recommended denial of the proposed Land Use and Zoning Amendments at 1100-1110 NW North River Drive.

III. Miami River Commission Subcommittee Reports

A. Greenways Subcommittee - MRC Director Bibeau distributed copies of the “Miami River Greenway Update – Aerials presented from East to West – 3/2/21”. The document depicts the 6.75 miles of constructed public Miami River Greenway, and the remaining 3.25 miles which need to be constructed by the City, County, FDOT, and Miami Parking Authority. Currently 4 sections of the public Riverwalk are under construction at Aston Martin Residences (private sector), both sides of the 1 ST Bridge (FDOT), and Fern Isle Park (City of Miami). The MRC is pursuing multiple public and private funding sources for the remaining funding needed to construct and help maintain the remaining sections of the public Riverwalk.

IV. New Business

The meeting adjourned.