

**Miami River Commission's
Urban Infill and Greenways Subcommittee
December 20, 2023**

Miami River Commission's (MRC) Urban Infill and Greenways Subcommittee Chairman Jim Murley convened a public meeting on December 20, 2023, 1407 NW 7 ST, at noon. The sign in sheet is attached.

I) Presentation Regarding Food Rescue US' Participation with Miami River Restaurant

MRC Director Brett Bibeau presented the front page of the Miami Herald March 22, 2023, "Volunteers race to collect unused food from restaurants and supermarkets for those who need it. It's a boost for the environment, too. Taking a Bite out of Climate Change". Ellen Bowen, Executive Director of Food Rescue US, is available to present information during the MRC's January 8 public meeting, and emailed information including:

"If you are like most food providers then you have inevitable food surplus. The question is what to do with it. **DONATING YOUR FOOD IS NOT ONLY EASY, IT'S BENEFICIAL.** Donating any amount of food saves your business money, benefits our planet, and helps feed your neighbors in need. Am I protected from liability? Yes. The Federal Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, passed by Congress in 1996, protects food donors and the agencies that distribute the donated food to those in need. The bill was written to encourage the donation of food and protects food produce that meets all quality and labeling standards imposed by Federal, State, and local laws and regulations even though the product may not be readily marketable due to appearance, age, freshness, grade, size, surplus, or other conditions

Food Rescue US- South Florida

- Since 2018, the South Florida location of national 501c3 non-profit, Food Rescue US has rescued unsold, unused food from a variety of donors including hotels, restaurants, markets, events, sports stadiums and convention centers, and delivered to social service agencies and shelters.
- The Federal Bill Emerson Law allows for any donations made in good faith to be free of liability for the donor. Congress recently passed the Food Donation Improvement Act making food donation every easier.
- **With over 40% of all food wasted and 1 in 5 going to bed hungry, this program not only reduces food waste and feeds the food insecure, but also helps the environment by keeping food from landfills where decomposing food produces more methane gas than auto emissions. COP26 just designated food waste as the #1 cause of climate change.**

- Since 2018, over 7.7 million lbs. of usable food was rescued, with over 90,000 lbs. rescued at last year's Formula 1 Grand Prix at Hard Rock Stadium.
- Our over 200 major food donors include hotels, like The Fontainebleau, Ritz Carlton, 1 Hotel and Loews Miami Beach, the Miami Beach Convention Center, DRVPINK and Hard Rock Stadiums and local restaurants Yardbird, Mila, Red Rooster Overtown, Café La Trova, Sugarcane, Kiki of the River and Red Steak South Beach.
- We are currently also rescuing at local markets including a number of Whole Foods, Trader Joes, Sprouts and recently opened Plum Market.
- Using our proprietary web based App technology, all donations are recorded and tracked and direct transferred to over 80 local shelters and soup kitchens like Kristi House, Buddy System Community Refrigerators, Cosac Shelters, Broward Partnership, Broward Outreach, Village FREEdge Pantry, Camillus House, Chapman Partnership, Coconut Grove Crisis Food Pantry, Miami Rescue Mission and Lotus House.
- With an all volunteer team of rescuers that number over 1200, we direct deliver the donated food within a 5 miles radius of donor location and do not take to warehouse to be sorted and shipped out of the community elsewhere in Florida. Donors always know where the food will be delivered and the community served.

For more information, contact Ellen Bowen @ellen@foodrescue.us and visit our website at <https://foodrescue.us/site/food-rescue-us-south-florida/>

MRC Urban Infill and Greenways Chairman Murley stated presenting this information at public MRC subcommittee and full MRC meetings will provide venues and public meeting minutes to provide this information to the Miami River's numerous restaurants and hotels.

II) Discuss Status of Public Miami River Greenway Connectors

Aston Martin Residences – Chairman Murley and MRC Director Bibeau have been in email communication with Iris Escarra regarding creating a seamless public Riverwalk connection between Aston Martin which is finishing construction, and the existing Riverwalk sections to the east at One Miami and to the west at Epic. Ms Escarra will present to the MRC subcommittee in January.

Miami River SAP – Director Bibeau and Chairman Murley are scheduling a meeting with City of Miami Assistant Manager Zerry Ihekwaba regarding creating a seamless public Riverwalk connection between the Miami River SAP portion of the public Riverwalk which is finishing construction, and the existing section of the public Riverwalk owned by the City of Miami at the riverfront SW 3 Ave dead end followed by Jose Marti Park.

Fort Dallas Park and City Riverwalk on North River Drive south of Flagler Bridge – Director Bibeau and Chairman Murley will schedule a meeting with City of Miami DREAM Director Andrew Frey regarding Fort Dallas Park and the City of Miami’s public Riverwalk along NW North River Drive just south of the Flagler Bridge, where a seamless connection is needed with Casa Neo’s public Riverwalk which is finishing construction.

Michele Drucker distributed a document entitled “Save the Flagler Cottage” which is located in Fort Dallas Park, advocating to transform it into an example of all the sustainable green technologies which are available for homes like solar panels, etc.

III) Discuss Status of Public Paid Parking in the Lummus Park Area

MRC Director Bibeau presented a long email chain regarding the reopening of the County’s currently closed and vacant public paid parking lot located in between Lummus Park and the WASD pump station. Parking is needed in the area for Lummus Park which has very limited parking and the area’s numerous popular riverfront restaurants. An October 5, 2022 email from the County stated, “Please be advised that the subject parking lot will soon be open to the public, and it will be operated by staff of Miami-Dade County’s Internal Service Department.”

IV) New Business

The public meeting adjourned.

Miami River Commission Subcommittee

Public Meeting

December 20, 2023 – noon

1407 NW 7 ST, Arts and Crafts Boardroom (facing Miami River)

Name

Organization

Telephone

Email

Brett Bibeau

MRC

305 6440544

brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org

Jim Murley

MDC/COR

786-719-9155

James.Murley@miamidade.gov

Michelle Drucker

DHS
employee

305-400-6192

michelle.H.drucker@~~ice~~.ICE.DHS.gov