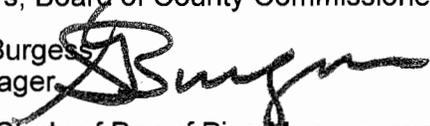


# Memorandum



**Date:** May 6, 2008

**To:** Honorable Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**From:** George M. Burgess  
County Manager. 

**Subject:** Conceptual Study of Bay of Pigs Museum and Library on Parcel "B" Site

Agenda Item No. 12(B)1

The following report has been prepared in response to Resolution R-1000-07, sponsored by Chairman Barreiro, Vice Chairwoman Jordan and Commissioners Martinez, Sosa, Seijas, Diaz, Gimenez, Edmonson, and Rolle, directing the Manager to provide a conceptual study analyzing development of a Bay of Pigs Museum and Library on Parcel B site.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

This analysis is based on the attached preliminary design of the Bay of Pigs Museum and Library prepared by Chisholm Architects proposed to be constructed on the County's 2.76 acres of land directly east of the American Airlines Arena (Parcel "B") and contains the following basic characteristics:

- A five story building approximately 82 feet high.
- Below ground, ground level and above ground level parking of approximately 353,490 square feet to accommodate approximately 1,000 cars. Although building further down is feasible, it is a more expensive process. While an above ground parking structure costs approximately \$25,000 per space, an underground facility would cost approximately \$70,000 per space.
- Three levels of enclosed space with approximately 110,000 square feet to accommodate exhibition, office, theater, storage, library and other museum space.
- Proposed lot coverage of 88.6% or 106,785 sq. ft. of 120,225 sq. ft.

It appears that there is room for the continuation of the Baywalk project between the building and the Bay, however this must be confirmed and shown on the site plan. It should be noted that Project # 142 in the BBC/GOB is being presented to the Government and Operations Committee of the Board on March 11, 2008 for modification of the language to include the Baywalk as part of the project to repair the sea wall.

## **LAND OWNERSHIP AND RESTRICTIONS:**

On January 8, 1998, the City of Miami deeded 19.04 acres of land to Miami-Dade County for the American Airlines Arena, associated structures, including the 2.76 acres of land presently known as Parcel "B." This Deed includes a Restrictive Covenant which limited the development on all of the land for a 33 year period to the following uses:

- Arena – meaning a sports and entertainment complex together with:
  - 37,500 sq. ft. of office space
  - retail, food and beverage space within the ticket secure area inside the actual Arena.
  - 30,000 sq. ft. of retail space located outside the secure ticket area
  - parking, roadways, plaza and other public spaces
- Specialty Entertainment - Up to 70,000 sq. ft. for retail, specialty entertainment, dining, cinema, public cultural facilities, educational facilities, museums, and visitor attractions, as well as administrative office space.

- Parking Facilities – adequate parking for the facilities built on the site, either below ground, above ground, surface or in a multi-level parking facility.
- The City of Miami Baywalk for downtown would have to be maintained.
- Any other development that is consistent with the land's zoning classification, which is currently Parks and Recreation.

The original American Airlines Arena Agreement between the County, Miami Heat Ltd. and Basketball Properties, Ltd. (BPL), dated April 29, 1997, provided for the development of the Arena, permanent and temporary retail on Parcel B, transient maritime docking facilities, a Baywalk, and open space. On December 16, 2003, via Resolution R-1446-03, the County approved Composite Amendment Eight to the American Airlines Arena (AAA) Agreements, terminating BPL's (the developer/operator of the AAA) rights and obligations under the Arena Agreements to the Parcel B Retail Complex in order for the County to utilize Parcel B for public open space purposes.

**PLANNING AND ZONING CONSIDERATIONS:**

The County's Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) has a written policy element devoted to Coastal Management. For the purposes of constructing a Museum on the Bay, Objectives CM-5 and CM-6 of this CDMP Element would apply:

- Objective CM-5 - new development on the shoreline shall be water dependent, water related, or at a minimum should include environmentally compatible shoreline access facilities such as walkways, piers, and viewing areas with landscaping allowing views of the water. Any new building on the water would have to consider these issues.
- Objective CM-6 directs the County to minimize user conflicts and impacts of man-made structures and activities on coastal resources.

The objectives of the Coastal Management Element of the CDMP are carried out and enforced by the Biscayne Bay Shoreline Development Review Committee, which reviews projects based on the following factors:

- Trees and landscaping according to detailed criteria.
- Setback requirements from the water line based on building elevations. The proposed Museum plan showing a structure 82 feet high would require a 48.5 foot setback from the edge of the water.
- A visual corridor to Biscayne Bay must be maintained. The corridor must be at least 20% of the width of the lot (up to 100 feet max for corridor), but some credit is given for using the adjacent street as part of the corridor to the Bay.
- A side setback from the property line of at least 25 feet is required for any Structure built on the land in question.
- The Committee will also consider maintaining a walkway for the public along the edge of Biscayne Bay (Baywalk), as well as other smaller technical requirements of landscaping, parking, and building placement on the lot.
- The Committee can consider variances to the above requirements based on an overall review of the project and its affect on the Biscayne Bay Shoreline.

The property is located within the City of Miami and is therefore subject to City zoning ordinances. The current zoning for this site is PR - Parks, Recreation and Open Space. Under this zoning, major structures such as performing arts centers, museums, art galleries and exhibition space which "change the character of an existing park," shall be approved only by a Special Exception Permit or a Major Use Special Permit (MUSP).

**PUBLIC INPUT:**

The Project for Public Space, Inc., (PPS) a non-profit organization founded in 1975 to promote the design and management of public spaces through the use of workshops, training, community planning design review, research and other activities, led workshops in August 2004 and December 2004 on Parcel B. Parcel B was originally selected for analysis because the City of Miami had identified it as a key missing link along the Bayfront – between Bicentennial Park and the Bayside Marketplace – as well as a major opportunity site, due to its proximity to and views of the Bay, and its location at the center-point of the proposed Baywalk promenade.

As noted in the workshop reports, participants supported keeping this space well programmed but not overbuilt, with park-like features and amenities, such as shade trees, benches and seating, places to picnic or BBQ, and casual activities (pick-up soccer rather than scheduled leagues). There was interest and support for turning Parcel B into more of a neighborhood park that serves the communities that surround it - a place that is first and foremost designed for their use. In fact, the Urban Environment League, a Florida not-for-profit corporation founded in 1996 whose vision is “to promote a safe, clean, vibrant, sustainable community guided by the public’s interest,” while supportive of the concept of a Bay of Pigs Museum, has expressed its strong desire to have Parcel B remain a location for a waterfront park.

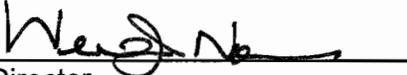
The current plan lacks green open space, covering 88.6% of the lot with building. The design contains a large open plaza in the middle of the museum but it is only accessible to museum visitors, not the general public visiting the site.

**AMERICAN AIRLINES ARENA (AAA):**

Representatives from Basketball Properties, Ltd. (operating the Arena) expressed overall support for the project but have some serious concerns which they would like addressed if the project were to move forward. They expressed serious reservations about the possibility of not having access to the water or use of the property as a staging area for acts coming to the AAA. BPL is constantly competing with other venues (particularly the Bank Atlantic Center in Broward County) which have vast parking lots and staging areas for visiting artists and Parcel B is the only area available to the AAA for this use. BPL would like to have input throughout the approval process to insure their interests are protected.

**CONCLUSION:**

Based on the aforementioned information, staff has concluded that the Bay of Pigs Museum could be built on Parcel B under current zoning and deed restrictions, subject to appropriate City and County approval. Any development on the site would require addressing the AAA’s requirement for an area to stage events and accommodate valet parking.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Director  
General Services Administration