



NEAT STREETS MIAMI  
MEETING SUMMARY  
October 25, 2017

**NSM Members Present**

William Anderson, GMCVB  
David Cardenas, MDPROS  
Dr. Claudius Carnegie, CTAC  
Councilwoman Patricia Cohen  
Miami-Dade League of Cities, Bal Harbour  
Cesar Garcia-Pons, Perkins + Will  
Britany Ziems, Citizen For A Better South Florida  
Patty Harris, Citizen  
Ramiro Inguanzo, MDC  
Rick Johnson, MDX  
Commissioner Dennis C. Moss, Dist. 9  
Maria Nardi, MDPROS  
George Puig, Kimley Horn  
Peter Trupia, Designee/MDC, Commission, Dist. 3  
Alyce Robertson, DDA

**Participants Present**

Diana Amaya, District 9  
Ginny Gutierrez, GMCVB  
Lourdes Isalgue, Retired Citizen  
Jennifer Llorente, NSM  
Gabriela Lopez, NSM  
Sue Kawalerski, Bike305  
Quatisha Oguntayinbo-Rashad, City of Miami  
Steven Duncan, MDPROS  
Jennifer Rodero, DDA  
Steve Lloyd, Florida Forest Service  
Mark Torork, Florida Forest Service  
Gloria Antia, City of Miami Parks  
Eliza Kretzmann, American Forests

**I. Welcome and Introduction**

Chairman Moss welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Commissioner Moss thanked the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau for hosting the Neat Streets Miami Board meeting.

Ginny Guterrez, GMCVB, invites all to their annual meeting next Wednesday. Ms. Gutierrez said Miami Spice and Miami Spa has been extended through October 31.

Bill Anderson reported that during the month of September, employment was up slightly at .06%. Occupancy was down 12.9% and RevPar was down 10%, however this was due to the effects of Hurricane Irma; the beach was evacuated, downtown was closed and airport was offline for 3 days.

## **II. Reports**

### **A. Activation of the Urban Forest Strike Team**

**Stephen Lloyd**  
**CFA Coordinator, Florida Forest Service**

**Mark Torok**  
**Senior Forester, Florida Forest Service**  
**Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**

The Urban Forest Strike Team is a team of specially trained foresters and arborists, who work within the incident command system to assist communities with identifying hazards on public lands (right-of-ways, parks, etc). The objective is to maintain as much low risk viable tree canopy that has fallen during a natural disaster.

Miami-Dade County has asked the Urban Forest Strike Team to review their parks. There are 54 priority parks within in the County and 15 secondary priority, totaling 69 parks for review. The Strike Team was able to cover 14 parks on their first day. The team will identify hazards, then the County will review the required work load and create work plans for crews.

All this data can be sent to FEMA for reimbursement by the County. It helps quantify FEMA reimbursement.

Gaby Lopez said since most of the parks are unmanned parks that we have not been able to get to quite yet, we are excited about resetting those viable trees. We are looking forward to receiving training, so that immediately after a hurricane we can go out there before a Strike Team is activated.

Naples is next. They have estimated a 25% tree canopy loss. The Strike Team will evaluate whether trees need to be pruned, removed, or left along.

Gaby Lopez commented that the Team puts all the data into GIS format, which is great because the County uses GIS, so it plugs right in and it's also a beginning of tree inventory.

The Strike Team is collecting data on species, size using an app called "Collector" with Arch GIS online, managed by the US Forest Service.

Commissioner Moss asked, do you have a program in place to reset trees? Is there legislation for Florida Forest lands?

The FFS manages state forests or timber stands. Each forest has its own staff of foresters and rangers, so they will conduct a salvaged timber cut.

We provide the guidance to landowners, communities, but then they need to find someone else to do the work.

Rick Johnson asked, if there were any changes since Wilma? FFS provides the data to the County and the County submits to FEMA. It's always been my understanding that there is no money to restore landscaping and resetting trees.

Typically, FEMA will reimburse for removals, pruning and debris removal. As far as resetting, I don't believe that they reimburse.

Commissioner Moss said we have resources and contracts in place for debris removal. We also need crews to reset viable trees after a storm. It costs a lot more to replant and then we have to wait 20-30 years for them to grow. I am going to pursue this at the County level.

Rick Johnson explained that MDX restored 300 trees and lost about the same amount.

Councilwoman Patricia Cohen said, how critical is time when resetting trees? It is in our best interest to reset trees.

Rick Johnson explains it depends on weather, whether it rains or not.

Mark Torok states that as long as you keep roots covered and moist...tree can be still viable.

Roots don't like air. It also depends on how much root is out of the ground and if the roots are damaged. As far as the Strike Team goes, we remove trees if the tree has more than a 30% lean and has more than 50% of the footplate lifted is exposed. FEMA doesn't address setting trees back up.

Commissioner Moss asked staff to compare the cost of replacing trees versus the cost for resetting trees. A case could be made for creating a strategy, not only for the County, but municipalities too, that in the case of a storm event to decide on whether to reset or not reset because it has an impact on the County.

Gaby Lopez explained that Director Maria Nardi has already asked RAAM to get going on that.

9 out of the 10 trees that go down after a storm was due to the fact that it wasn't properly planted. The rootball was not properly treated before going in the hole. A lot of contractors do not take the time to shave circling roots. The roots don't grow out, they grow in that little ball so there is no support for that tree.

The best source of information on planting in this part of the country is Dr. Ed Gillman, University of Florida retired professor.

Gloria Antia commented on how the City of Miami responded post-Irma. A team went out and evaluated 600 trees that went down in parks. She explains that the Tree Trust Fund was used to work with contractors to brace trees. 300 trees were reset in a week and half, using \$110,000 from the tree trust fund. There are lots of opportunity for lessons learned.

Commissioner Moss asked for a formal presentation from the City of Miami at the next board meeting.

Ramiro Inguanzo asked if the City of Miami has done any assessment on private property.

Quatisha Oguntayinbo-Rashad explained that the City of Miami is collecting data on public right-of-way and they are looking at an aerial perspective to see what the ratio between public and private spaces.

She continued by saying that if we plant, plant, plant, we need to have the right resources to manage our trees. If not, then we will be right back here.

Commissioner Moss added, and we need to make sure that we plant the right trees.

**B. Fundraising Efforts Post-Hurricane Irma**

**Eliza Kretzmann**  
**Manager, Urban Forest Programs**  
**American Forests**

American Forest, based in DC, has been around for over 140 years and helped start the Forest Service. American Forest has worked in every state, and a little internationally. Since the 90s, we have planted over 50 million trees. We have worked in both urban landscapes and wild forests.

We have worked with 11 cities this year. Some cities, we do one planting but we have other cities that are considered long-term cities. Miami is one of them. Houston and Detroit are our other two long-term cities.

Goal for urban forestry is to champion the expansion of urban forest tree canopy cover and greenspace throughout America.

We've planted 130 Million Acres of Urban Forests and 190 Million Acres of National Forests. We've planted more in wild lands due to costs: \$1 per tree in forests, while \$500 in urban settings.

We've created a new tool called Vibrant Cities Lab, which gathers best practices across the nations from different cities, mainly related to urban forestry and green spaces. It has the most up-to-date research, best practices and tools to maximize the proven impact of trees on your community's health, economy and resilience.

With Miami-Dade County, we have helped fund the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment and we are now working on a post-Irma tree canopy assessment. We have also funded an online Canopy Planner for Miami-Dade County to determine where to strategically plant.

Our Change Model starts with building partnerships, following plans guided by science, planting and restoring tree canopy, advocating and funding, and finally communicating and replicating.

Some plantings throughout Miami-Dade County:

- Liberty City Elementary School
- Miami Gardens Linear Recreation Trail

Hurricane Response

- Updating Urban Tree Canopy Data: American Forests will put \$25K towards 77K total cost
- Canopy Action Plan – include hurricane perspectives
- Pursuing Additional Funding

Commissioner Moss said that it is important to show how much the hurricane has impacted Miami, so that we can show funders and policy makers.

FEMA is not enough, because most people do not see trees as necessary green infrastructure in a city and therefore they are not included in that funding stream.

Maria Nardi asked if there has been a discussion about how we can get the federal government and other agencies to raise that topic to that level of where trees are seen as a vital part of life safety issues. We live in one of the hottest climates and as climate change comes to fruition, have trees started to be considered as part of infrastructure?

Eliza Kretzman replied saying that we really are only seeing these conversations at the local level. At the federal level, the funds are so finite and getting smaller.

### **C. Best Practices and Lessons Learned**

**Steve Duncan**  
**Superintendent, RAAM**  
**Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Department**  
**Miami-Dade County**

We have a couple of documents that we refer for guidelines and best practices:

- FOR 118: Wind and Trees: Lessons Learned from Hurricanes
- FOR 117: Assessing hurricane damaged trees and deciding what to do

Both documents are part of the Urban Forestry Hurricane Recovery Program Series (University of Florida School of Forest Resources and Conservation) These are comprehensive reports based on data compiled since 1992 and most recently revised in June 2017.

What they have found is that no species and no tree is completely Hurricane proof. It is important to point out that in addition to wind intensity and speed, other factors influence urban forest damage during hurricanes:

- Conditions accompanying the hurricane: precipitation (soil saturation less friction between roots and soil) and (wind duration)
- Other Conditions: Tree species, age, health, and structure
- Site characteristics, such as soil conditions (e.g., soil depth, water table, soil compaction) and soil composition
  - Shallow soils, such as in Miami-Dade County with soils no more than 1 foot deep, will also behave differently from those planted in deeper soils. Trees in shallow soils are more prone to blow over than trees rooted more deeply.

We completed our annual seasonal tree planting program of County and State roadways during the last week of August (1295 trees and palms). All newly planted trees are selected, as per code, from the Landscape Manual, Street Tree Master plan or Florida Friendly

We began preparing for Irma the very next week, on September 4th. One of the first things we did was to secure bids from the installation vendors for re-setting services for newly installed trees. We did this before the storm.

Immediately after the storm, we began field assessments, starting with the most recently installed trees (as recommended in Lessons Learned), of the condition of our inventory. Newly planted trees are more viable, so we wanted to reset those trees first.

We also put together guidelines for re-setting established trees that were installed in FY 15- 16 and before.

Resetting would be based on:

- The condition/ survivability of the tree at assessment- how large, was it completely uprooted or only leaning, % damaged root system (compromised stability)/damaged canopy
  - o The condition of the root system (specifically the critical root zone)- rips & tears to structural roots caused by tree wind throw was a major determining factor in whether the tree was considered a “survivable” asset
  - o % of intact roots as a measure of future stability- “trees that lack their main support” or anchoring “roots are hazards in the landscape
- The size of the tree- would damage, compromised roots ever be able to regenerate to restore appropriate canopy-to-root ratio for stability, health and vigor

Regular pruning will provide strong tree structure and minimize failure in future storms. One study from 1996 showed that survival from pruned trees was 73% as compared to 46% unpruned trees, showing that pruned trees are less likely to fail during hurricanes.

Commissioner Moss mentioned, maybe we could mark trees that will not be reset, showing that it poses a danger, as part of a PR campaign.

Maria Nardi said, we can prepare for hurricanes through a steady drum beat on how to prune, starting Earth Day, through multi-social media avenues, repeatedly putting out the same message.

Stephen Lloyd said he was sitting in a restaurant and overheard someone saying that they were going to get rid of all of their trees. He said when he hears this, he uses the following analogy: Your home is your castle and the trees are the walls around your castle. If you are under attack from a storm and one of your walls fall, do you take down all your walls, or do you replace that wall with a better stronger wall? And you also must maintain your wall.

### **III. Action Item – Approval of 9/27/17 Minutes**

Chairman Moss asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Rick Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes and the motion was seconded by Chairman Moss. Minutes were unanimously approved.

### **III. Updates**

- a. Neat Streets Miami – Gabriela Lopez

Upcoming events: There is an Adopt-a-Tree event at Tamiami Fairground this Sunday. Please share on social media. Tree planting and clean-up with a pharmaceutical company on November 8<sup>th</sup> at Haulover Dog Park. We are working with DHL for a tree planting event on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

We also launched the Street Tree Matching Grant. Please share on social media.

- b. Landscape/Tree Committee
  - i. No Report
- c. Marketing / Education Committee
  - i. No Report
- d. Transportation Corridors and Gateways
  - i. No Report

## **VI. Closing Remarks**

Chairman Moss closed the board meeting.