

**PALMER LAKE AREA CHARRETTE  
MEETING SUMMARY**

*January 18, 2012 · 3:00 P.M.  
Orlando Urra Allapattah Community Center  
2257 N.W. North River Drive*

**Steering Committee Members Present**

Jose Bared, Chair, Brett Bibeau, Vice-Chair, James Kohnstamm, Jordan Monocandilos, Ismael Perera, Wendy Sager-Pomerantz, Robert Vinas

**Community Members Present**

Victor Bared, Carlos Batista, Trish Blasi, Vilma Camejo, Richard Dubin, Rick Eyerdam, Joseph Formicola, Pedro Garcia, James Holland, Christian Larach, Herminio Mendez, Bradley Siddall, Carlos Saenz, Michael Saenz, Norma Vallejo

**Public Agency Staff Present**

Miami-Dade County Sustainability, Planning and Economic Enhancement Department: Gilberto Blanco, Catherine Prince, Josh Rak, Eric Silva, Shailendra Singh, Alex Zizold  
City of Miami Planning Department: Alina Mencia, David Snow

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Eric Silva began the meeting with introductions and by recognizing the steering committee members in attendance.

Mr. Silva then reviewed the meeting agenda. Christian Larach requested that November 22, 2011 meeting summary be revised to note that signed petitions to 'Protect the Working River' were presented at that meeting. Mr. Silva continued by reviewing the action items from the last meeting and the purpose of the current meeting. Jose Bared then further discussed the actions taken by the committee at the last meeting. Carlos Batista requested clarification of those actions. Mr. Bared stated that the changes were mainly to emphasize the recommendation allowing flexibility in use for the study area and to remove specific references to policies from the comprehensive plan. Mr. Silva further discussed the purpose of including the comprehensive plan language into the recommendations and the subsequent changes by the committee.

Trish Blasi then asked what are the next steps in the planning process will be. Mr. Silva responded that the plan will be brought back before the Planning Advisory Board (PAB) with the latest changes requested by the committee, then to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for adoption; staff will then develop a zoning district that implements many of the plan's recommendations and present it to the committee for its review and then to the BCC for adoption and rezoning. Sylvia Bernstein then asked for clarification of what exactly the area would be rezoned to and whether existing uses would continue to be permitted. Mr. Silva responded that the new zoning district would permit mixed uses as allowed in Urban Centers and as well as existing permitted uses and that an

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amendment to the comprehensive plan would not be necessary prior to a future rezoning to such a district.

Mr. Batista asked whether a special taxing district will be implemented in the area. Jess Linn responded that a recommendation for such a district was included in an early draft of the Palmer Lake plan report, but was eliminated at the request of the committee. Mr. Batista then requested clarification on the difference between a special taxing district and a tax increment financing district. Mr. Linn responded with an explanation of the difference between the two and how an increment district can fund a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). A discussion then followed regarding the implementation and effects of a CRA.

Ms. Blasi then asked that if a comprehensive plan amendment is not necessary for a new zoning district to be implemented, what would be the specific uses considered in such a district. Mr. Silva responded that staff had prepared a draft zoning district for Palmer Lake which had been distributed at the last steering committee meeting. Mr. Silva then further discussed the specific standards included in that draft and the potential uses that may be permitted in various parts of the area. Mr. Bared then stated that the committee had earlier determined that the plan should be unified and not draw distinctions between areas. Brett Bibeau then stated the draft zoning district was not a part of the charrette plan. Mr. Bared then emphasized that the committee desired to treat the study area in a unified fashion and that the committee has previously reviewed and voted on the plan recommendations and that all references to specific sub-areas should be removed.

Jordan Monocandilos then questioned why certain changes were made to the plan. Mr. Silva responded that following the previous meeting, staff had changed only those items that the committee had taken action on. Mr. Bibeau stated that he believed that the minutes and the revised recommendations are correct. Mr. Bared responded that the recommendations still refer to specific sub-areas and such references should be removed. Mr. Silva responded that the notations in parentheses in the implementation table are references to sections of the report where that recommendation is discussed; those references are not intended to limit the application of an individual recommendation to a specific area. Mr. Bared then expressed his concern that there could be confusion regarding the recommendations and that and that those section references could be misleading to the reader as to the intent of the plan.

Mr. Batista stated he felt there was confusion regarding the revisions to the recommendations. Mr. Silva again stated that the text in parentheses following each recommendation in the implementation table are only references to specific portions of the report. Mr. Bared responded by stating that the committee needed to give staff clear direction as to the desires of the committee – that there is only one study area and that all the recommendations in the report are for the entire study area. Mr. Silva then suggested that staff could delete the section references in the implementation table. Mr. Bared then requested that those references be deleted and that there is no conflicting language in the body of the report. Mr. Monocandilos then requested that the report be further reviewed by the committee members and voted on at a following meeting. Mr. Bared responded that it was the responsibility of the committee to have reviewed the report and that the committee has already voted on the contents of the report and that further meetings

would prolong the process unnecessarily; speaking to Mr. Silva, Mr. Bared again stated that he was concerned with the section references in the implementation table and that they could be misleading to a reader of the report.

Mr. Bibeau then began to read from the previous meeting's summary regarding the actions taken by the committee revising certain recommendations in the implementation table and that those items had been revised by staff and distributed to the committee at the present time. Mr. Bibeau expressed concern requesting staff to make further changes to the report that are non-specific. Mr. Bared responded that in the actions taken at the last meeting the intention of the committee to address the study area in a unified manner was clear and that the body of the report should not conflict with the recommendations listed in implementation table. Rick Eyerdam then questioned whether any specific inconsistencies have been found in the report.

Ms. Bernstein then stated that she was confused as to why it is that the materials provided by staff differ from what the committee had directed staff to do. Mr. Bared responded that as a member of the committee and the PAB, the report and recommendations of the plan report should clearly reflect the desires and work of the steering committee and emphasized again that the entire report should refer to the study area as a single unified area. Mr. Silva responded by stating that making adjustments to the report is possible but that the main body of the report has not changed since early last year and the committee had previously reviewed and made revisions to it. Mr. Bared then stated that it is understandable for the report to be broken into sections but the individual recommendations should be consistent throughout the report. Mr. Silva then suggested that if the committee desired the section references could simply be removed. Mr. Bared responded that staff should be able to revise the report consistent with the intent and direction of the committee.

Mr. Monocandilos then began to read from the implementation section of the report and questioned whether zoning changes would be required to permit certain uses. Mr. Silva then stated it was the purpose of the recommendation to create a new zoning district which if implemented would allow new uses not presently permitted. Mr. Silva continued by explaining that the draft zoning district implements the report's recommendation for maximum flexibility. Ms. Bernstein then asked why certain areas are designated differently. Mr. Silva responded different designations are necessary due to limitations imposed by the comprehensive plan; if those limitations are undesirable then an application to amend the comprehensive plan would have to be filed. Mr. Bared then stated that the committee needs to analyze the comprehensive plan further to determine if a amendment is necessary. Referring to the draft zoning district, Mr. Silva stated that the uses permitted in that document are the most that can be done by staff.

Mr. Bibeau then asked whether the revised recommendations will be presented to the PAB at their next meeting. Mr. Silva stated that was correct except that the section references in the implementation table would be removed. Mr. Bibeau then requested that the committee vote on the additional changes being requested but that he is unclear as to what those changes are and that it should be explained exactly what changes the committee is requesting staff to make. Mr. Bared then responded that the committee will have a vote to direct staff regarding revisions to the report, but it should be known that staff had made changes at Mr. Bibeau's request without a vote of the committee or

the committee's knowledge. Mr. Bibeau responded that those changes were taken out. Mr. Bared continued by requesting that there should be no individuals communicating with staff for revisions to the report, only the committee as a whole can request changes.

To clarify, Mr. Silva then asked the committee if all the references to the various sub-areas should be removed from only the implementation table or both the table and the body of the report as well; Mr. Bared responded that the area references in the implementation table should be taken out and if necessary the body of the report should be made consistent with the recommendations as revised by the committee. Robert Vinas asked if the existing zoning would be overwritten by the plan being recommended for implementation. Mr. Silva responded that the draft zoning district document is a concept of how staff interprets the recommendations; Mr. Vinas then asked how that relates to the plan document since it does not distinguish between sub-areas. Mr. Silva responded that the limitations of the comprehensive plan have been incorporated into the draft zoning district; Mr. Bared continued, stating that if the committee feels that a recommendation should be made to amend the comprehensive plan then it should do so. Mr. Bibeau then asked that why would every page need to be revised if the desired changes were already made at the last meeting. Mr. Bared then stated that had just been discussed over the past hour and the desire was to ensure consistency within the report. Discussion continued among Mr. Vinas, Mr. Bared, and Mr. Bibeau regarding the potential for amending the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Linn then stated that in each section of the report urban center uses are recommended to be permitted; therefore in regards to uses, the entire study area is addressed in a similar manner within the body of the report. Mr. Bared then responded that while that is understood, there continues to be confusion which should be addressed so that the intent of the committee is clear. Mr. Batista suggested that a footnote should be included in the report stating that any internal contradictions should be disregarded. Mr. Bared agreed while that was a good suggestion, staff should be working to remove any inconsistencies and it is staff's responsibility to ensure that the intent of the committee is clear. Mr. Bared continued by stating that the committee extensively reviewed the implementation table because it would have required an extraordinary amount of time to have the same level of discussion and debate for the entire report.

Mr. Bibeau then stated that if he were to leave at this point, the committee would no longer have quorum, but that he would stay out of respect for the rest of the committee. Wendy Sager-Pomerantz then asked Mr. Bibeau why he opposed the changes to the report being discussed. Mr. Bibeau responded that he had no understanding of the changes being requested and the specific changes should be known prior to making a decision. Mr. Bibeau continued by stating he feels that the different areas in the plan should be treated in an individual manner due to their unique geography and that the sub-sections in the plan and report have been present to the public since the time of the charrette and should not be changed at this time. Mr. Bared responded by stating that staff had made changes to the report at Mr. Bibeau's request and were not brought to the attention of the committee and such actions were not proper. Discussion continued among Mr. Monocandilos, Mr. Bibeau, and Mr. Bared regarding the participation of property owners in the study area during the planning process.

Mr. Bared then made a motion to instruct staff to review the changes that were made to the implementation table by the committee are clearly reflected in the body of the report through whatever means by staff feels is appropriate and that the report should be made more clear that the study area is addressed in a unified manner. The motion was seconded and a vote was taken. The motion passed 6-1.

Ms. Blasi then asked whether the Core and Center sub-areas in the draft zoning district document were established due to comprehensive plan limitations. Mr. Silva responded that those area are different due to the unique design standards for streets and setback areas. Mr. Bared than asked when the committee would further review the proposed zoning district standards; Mr. Silva responded that a committee meeting would be held, likely following the plan's adoption by the BCC. Ms. Bernstein then asked if the committee would have an opportunity the review the additional changes to be made by staff; Mr. Silva responded that the revised report would be sent to the committee for their review prior to the PAB meeting and if the committee was not satisfied then another meeting would have to be scheduled.

Mr. Batista then asked Mr. Bibeau to state his objection to the motion passed by the committee. Mr. Bibeau then responded with the position of the Miami River Commission (MRC) regarding the development of the upper river area. Mr. Bared then stated that the MRC should focus on attracting and promoting marine industrial activity rather than advocating for restrictions on property owners regarding the use of their land. Mr. Bibeau responded that the MRC is currently working with the Beacon Council on attracting a marine industrial user to the river and allowing non-industrial uses could make it difficult to attract marine uses in the future. Discussion continued among Mr. Bibeau and Mr. Bared regarding uses in the study area. Mr. Monocandilos then discussed the difficulties property owners have complying with public agency regulations; Mr. Bibeau then discussed his experience as a member of the Manatee Protection Plan review committee.

Mr. Bared then stated that the revised report should be distributed for the committee's review prior to the PAB meeting and that if there are no substantive changes then the report should be moved forward. Mr. Silva then requested that any comments should be limited only to those changes that staff has made at the direction of the committee's motion.

The meeting was adjourned.

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