



City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

MAYOR'S AD HOC BLUE RIBBON 41ST STREET COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, January 11, 2024 - 5:00 p.m.

First Horizon Bank 400 Arthur Godfrey Rd, Ste 210, Miami Beach, FL 33140

Minutes

Committee Members:

Yechiel Ciment, Chair (P)
Bonnie Crabtree, Vice Chair (P)
Jerri Hertzberg Bassuk (P)
Betty Behar (A)
Michael Burnstine (P)
Seth Gadinsky (P)
Eric Hankin (P)
Robin Jacobs (P)
Marcella Novela (A)
Jeremy Wachtel (P)

P = Present; A = Absent, E = Excused

Commission/City Staff:

Steven Meiner, Mayor
Veronica Coley, Chief of Staff to the Mayor
Daniel Sommer, Senior Policy Advisor to the Mayor
Albert Gonzalez, Miami Beach Lieutenant
Daniel Han, Miami Beach Sergeant
Alejandro Inocencio, Miami Beach Police Officer
Jose Gonzalez, Director, Transportation and Mobility Department
Heather Shaw, Assistant Director, Economic Development Department
Diana Fontani Martinez, Redevelopment Specialist/Committee Liaison, Economic Development Department
Jeff Huber, Brooks + Scarpa
Isabella Pedrosa, Brooks + Scarpa

Community Attendance:

Michael Goldberg

Yechiel Ciment opened the meeting at 5:10 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **NOVEMBER MINUTES** - Motion to approve minutes was made by Bonnie Crabtree and seconded by Jerri Hertzberg. Motion passes unanimously.

2. **BI-ANNUAL REPORT-** Motion to approve the Committee Bi-Annual Report was made by Bonnie Crabtree and seconded by Eric Hankin. Motion passes unanimously.
3. **APPROVAL OF 2024 MEETING DATES-** Motion to approve the 2024 meeting dates was made by Bonnie Crabtree and Eric Hankin. Motion passes unanimously.

4. CITY UPDATES

- A. Chair/Vice Chair Elections- Yechiel Ciment would like for the elections to be held in February. The Committee agreed.
- B. 41st Street Corridor Streetscape Project Update – Herman Fung provided a project update overview. He presented “scaled back” changes in response to Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) comments. At this stage, the design is conceptual, and the consultant would like to receive the Committee’s feedback and FDOT’s approval before “hard lining” drawings with more detail.

Jeff Huber from Brooks + Scarpa presented the 41st Street corridor plan update. The following comments/questions were raised:

- 1) The Committee questioned why FDOT would not approve the original design. Jeff Huber responded that FDOT will not approve changes in the plans on the corridor throughway. The restrictions from FDOT are largely due to the corridor being an evacuation route and raising safety concerns. Eric Hankin expressed his disappointment in the overall project and shared lack of significant change in the corridor plan.
 - 2) Clarification was requested regarding the implementation of the rubber surfaces. Jeff Huber clarified that rubber surfaces are intended to accommodate tree roots. This would remediate current issues that have been identified, including tree roots breaking sidewalks and causing trip hazards. The rubber is also a permeable surface.
 - 3) The Committee raised a concern about seat walls attracting the homeless. Miami Beach Police added that the homeless population congregates in shaded areas. Jeff Huber assures the committee that they will continue to consider this in the design. There are seat wall options that can prevent or restrict certain activities.
 - 4) The Committee would like to ensure the corridor between Alton Road and Pine Tree Drive is a signature destination and highlight the design. Jeff Huber agreed and will ensure this is part of the design. The corridor will incorporate vertical elements like public art and signage. The Committee questioned if lighting will be incorporated and Jeff Huber responded that due to cost restrictions, new lighting in this project will be limited. He added that string lighting that is currently on the trees will be removed and replaced with ring lights that will up light the tree canopies.
 - 5) The Committee would like to see existing Royal Palms represented in plans.
- C. Transportation Update- Jose Gonzalez, Director of Transportation and Mobility Department, gave an update on the pilot flashing traffic lights program on 40th Street and Prairie Avenue/40th Street and Royal Palm Avenue. The program is a six-month test and will end in February. Miami-Dade County oversees the program and the City will follow up with the County for the results. Jose Gonzalez shared that the pilot program has received positive

resident feedback and that the County would likely approve stop signs instead of traffic lights at the intersections, because drivers tend to block the box more at traffic lights than at stop signs.

Jose Gonzalez gave an update on traffic software technology along 41st Street. He shared that the Transportation and Mobility Department has seed money for traffic/signals technology, in the amount of \$300,000, for a pilot project that would use state of the art technology to optimize traffic signaling on 41st Street. The pilot project will be competitively bid.

Yechiel Ciment asked Jose Gonzalez if anything can be done about the traffic on the north and south side streets along 41st Street. Jose Gonzalez responded that he has spoken to Miami-Dade county about the issue. He shared that there are potentially two ways to address this issue. The first method, signal timing, involves adding 15- 20 seconds to the traffic timing. The second method would be to try to squeeze an additional lane on these side streets. Jose Gonzalez shared that the Police Department has hired Traffic Service Aides to assist in the mediation of traffic throughout the City. Jermey Watchell suggested that the traffic aides should model what New York City does, which is prohibiting turning on certain streets during certain times of day. After further discussion on this issue, the Committee passed the following motion:

The Mayor's 41st Street Blue Ribbon Committee recommends the Mayor and Commission provide Traffic Service Aides to assist and mediate traffic issues and traffic flow on 41st Street and adjacent side streets during high impact times, which is Monday thru Friday from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Motion made by: Bonnie Crabtree
Motion seconded by: Eric Hankin
Motion passed: 8-0

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – No public comment.
6. **MEETING ADJOURNED:** 5:58 p.m.
7. **NEXT MEETING DATE:** Thursday, February 8, 2024