



City of Miami Springs, Florida

The Architectural Review Board met at 7:00 p.m., on Wednesday, March 6, 2013 in the City Hall Council Chambers.

1) Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at: 7:00 p.m.

The following were present:

- Marc Scavuzzo
- Joe Valencia*
- Fredy Albiza
- Ana Paula Ibarra
- Valentine Soler

*Arrived at 7:07 p.m.

Also present:

- Board Liaison – Vice Mayor Jennifer Ator
- Board Secretary Elora R. Sakal

2) Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of the December 7, 2011 meeting were administratively approved as written.

Board member Ibarra moved to approve the minutes as written and Board member Albiza seconded the motion, which carried unanimously on voice vote.

Vice Mayor Ator introduced herself to the board and said that she routinely attends the meetings although she was unable to attend the previous joint meeting. She commented that as shown in the previous meeting minutes, there were some disagreements and everyone on the Board, with the exception of Board member Ibarra resigned. She appreciates everyone serving on this Board, although she is uncertain of how much work there will be for them to do.

Vice Mayor Ator stated that the duties that were in the code for the Architectural Review Board were removed in the past two years. She noted that she is running for Mayor and her hope is to add some of those things and provide the Board with something to do because there is nothing worse than being on a committee that does not have a reason to meet. She explained that one of the reasons for meeting was to appoint a Chair. The Board needs a chair because the chair will also sit on the Memorial Committee.

Discussion ensued regarding the Memorial Committee and the process and objective of the Board and what the chair would be responsible for on that Board.

*Board member Valencia arrived at this time.

Vice Mayor Ator stated that she is uncertain what the Board's other duties would be at this point because there is nothing concrete. This Board has traditionally tried to be more assertive in which she feels that they should. She used the Education Advisory Board as an example of being very assertive and putting things in front of the Council.

Board member Ibarra asked Vice Mayor Ator if the assignments that had been referred to the Board no longer needed to be done and Vice Mayor Ator replied that there were items that were put into the 36th Street ordinance that would require it to come to this Board for revision, but they were all removed from the ordinance in which she voted against. She repeatedly said that everything should not be taken away from the Architectural Review Board.

Discussion ensued regarding why the previous Board members resigned from the Board.

Vice Mayor Ator explained that the previous Architectural Review Board did some work and it was passed on to Calvin Giordano for reviewing and for use of a basis to do their plan. Signs were approved by Calvin Giordano and they were beautiful and expensive. The Board's predecessors took into account that things needed to be fixed and that are not custom and expensive and their plan was not like Calvin Giordano's. Calvin Giordano's plans were approximately \$100,000 for one intersection and the City was not willing to pay that amount.

Vice Mayor Ator stated that the City did not do anything because the plan was very expensive. There was approximately \$125,000 left in the budget last year for Downtown funding that was used to balance the budget because a budget was passed that did not have enough income without dipping into reserves and she voted against it. There is only so much she can do from sitting in seat four and that is why she is running for Mayor.

Vice Mayor Ator explained the duties of the Chair and asked Board Secretary Elora Sakal if she contacts the Chair for agenda items. Board Secretary Sakal responded that the Board discusses what they would like to place on the agenda for the next meeting.

Board member Scavuzzo asked if the commercial colors were still part of the Architectural Review Board's duties and Vice Mayor Ator replied that the only items the Board can work on is what has been assigned to the Board from Council.

Vice Mayor Ator said that the Board can discuss whatever they want to or suggest to Council that they place an item on the agenda. The Board can ask a Council member to sponsor an item. She has been repeatedly contacted by Boards that she is not the liaison for to have items placed on the Council agenda.

To answer Board member Soler's question, Vice Mayor Ator said that if a board member has a situation that is related to architecture it can be discussed and then asked to be reviewed by Council. All other situations that are not related to architecture should be taken to the City Manager.

Board member Valencia commented that it is difficult to do a job when one does not know what the job is and Vice Mayor Ator replied that the Board does not really have a job right now.

Vice Mayor Ator commented that the City Attorney has stated that the Boards do not have any individual authority and any power that they have derives out of the Council. She suggested that the Board can present items to Council that they believe should be addressed at a Council meeting.

Board member Valencia would like to propose that the Council prepare a mission statement for what the Board is supposed to do.

Vice Mayor Ator clarified that the Board's rules and regulations are listed in the code which was amended to be clearer since many of their duties were removed.

Board member Valencia proposed that the Board should ask Council to determine what they want the Board to do other than act at the direction of the Council.

Vice Mayor Ator suggested that the Board prepare what they propose to be their mission statement and list the things that they should be doing and then send it to Council for revision. She noted that she has also asked the City Manager to always have a person from the City at all of the Board meetings other than the clerk. The obvious choice for this board would be Planning and Zoning Director Jim Holland.

Board Secretary Sakal clarified that it was not necessary for Mr. Holland to be present at tonight's meeting since the only agenda item is to appoint a Chair and Vice Chair.

3) Old Business: None.

4) New Business:

a) Selection of Chair

Board member Soler recommended Board member Scavuzzo as Chair, and by consensus all agreed.

b) Selection of Vice Chair

Board member Soler recommended Board member Ibarra as Vice Chair, and by consensus all agreed.

5) Other Business:

The Board members each introduced themselves.

Vice Chair Ibarra suggested that the Board could possibly start to look at the original study and see if they can go to Council with their ideas about implementing some of those plans when the funds become available and prices can be researched so that funds can be placed in the budget for the following year.

Vice Chair Ibarra commented that the code was being made too uniform. She used the McDonald's as an example because they had to apply for many variances and those requirements would only apply if something is being done on Westward Drive. There was some concern that the code was driving business away or making it more complicated for businesses. These are items that the Architectural Review Board can address.

Discussion ensued regarding the Coral Gables Architectural Review Board and the duties and strengths that they have.

Vice Chair Ibarra said that one item to place on the agenda for discussion would be to make suggestions or modifications to the code that the Board feels would bring some consistency. Another suggestion that the previous Board had was to make recommendations for improvements in Miami Springs such as signage, Westward Drive and the Downtown area.

Chair Scavuzzo asked if Council would be amenable to having a screening Board for new projects that come into the City and Vice Mayor Ator believes that it depends on the Council that will hold office after the elections.

Vice Mayor Ator explained that in her experience, former Mayor Bain has never been a fan of telling people what to do about their property. He is a very down to earth and basic man and he has his core beliefs and does not move off of those core beliefs. He never wants to raise the fees that the City charges for occupational licenses. The other members on the current Council are not as much like that. She said that the City Attorney did not want the Architectural Review Board to be able to review the items and was opposed to it when it was passed the first time.

Vice Mayor Ator commented that there are candidates that are running who are interested in seeing change and are interested in moving forward and for this Board to be a part of the process. She believes that the Board has good suggestions and they should be discussed. She noted that former Chair Mark Trowbridge is the President of the Chamber in Coral Gables and he can come to speak with the Board.

Vice Mayor Ator stated that if a Board member comes before Council requesting something and she is not the Mayor and the current Mayor is still the Mayor, he cannot say no to anyone. She has never met anybody who cannot say no to anybody better than Mayor Garcia.

Vice Mayor Ator said that if the Board as a whole was to come to a Council meeting and they are on the agenda and feel strongly about something then they will be more likely to get it approved.

Board member Soler would like to place green space for commercial purposes on the next Architectural Review Board agenda.

Discussion ensued regarding an area on Curtiss Parkway that is being used as a parking area and how the City had an RFP regarding this area. (See attached photo distributed by Board member Soler).

Board Secretary Sakal advised the Board members that they cannot go into detail about this item unless it is on the agenda and she will place it on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting as requested by Board member Soler.

Chair Scavuzzo would like to place the color palette on the agenda for the next meeting.

6) Adjournment

There was no further business to discuss and the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elora R. Sakal
Board Secretary

Approved as written at meeting of:

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