

MIAMI TODAY

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Miami Design District advances building boom, pg. 13

DESIGN DISTRICT

Luxury retailers attracted to growing Design District, pg. 14



DISNEY EXTENDS STAY: A county committee approved a deal last week for London-based Disney Cruise line to extend its use at PortMiami for two more years. The port anticipates \$7.8 million from the pact if the line remains two years after the current accord ends next October, plus an added \$4.1 million if the cruise line picks up an option for fiscal 2019. In a memo to the full commission which will take up the legislation Dec. 1, Deputy Mayor **Jack**

Osterholt advised approving the agreement. Since beginning operations at the port in November 2012, Disney has guaranteed no less than 100,000 annual passenger movements but ship calls and passenger volumes have always been higher. In fiscal 2013, there were 147,000 passenger departures and arrivals; 186,000 in fiscal 2014; and 222,300 in fiscal 2015. Under the new deal, Disney's payment to the port for each passenger who leaves and returns will increase 3% annually: \$11.68 during fiscal 2016-2017 plus 36 cents per gross registered ship's ton. The cruise line operates a fleet of four ships, two with about 2,700 berths and two with about 4,000.

CONSTRUCTION COMPLAINTS: Miami commissioners have approved requirements for contractors to provide notice and contact information. The legislation mentions that the city occasionally receives complaints from neighbors about the practices of contractors building or rehabilitating buildings. The commission, the legislation says, "deems it advisable to protect the health, safety and welfare of those who live in close proximity to these construction sites by requiring contractors to post ... contact information where aggrieved neighbors can contact contractors." A posted notice is required at the site, "visible from the public right-of-way," and must have the contractor's name, phone number and e-mail address. The phone number must be answered by a live person from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, or any time during active construction.

TRANSIT USE FALLS: Daily Miami-Dade Transit use was 4.4% lower in July than July 2014, according to data Deputy Mayor **Alina Hudak** gave the county's Transit & Mobility Services Committee recently. Metrorail and Metromover average weekday boardings rose 3% and 0.5%, respectively, but Metrobus and Special Transportation Services riders fell 7.3% and 3.7%. The largest increases in average weekday Metrorail use in the one-year span were at Brickell (597 passengers gained, or 10.6%), Earlington Heights (495 gained, or 37.3%), Northside (up 251, or 16.7%) and Government Center (226 gain or 2.1%). The largest average weekday gains in Metrobus use were Route 150, Miami Beach Airport Flyer from Miami Airport to South Drive in South Beach (319 more riders, up 20.5%) and Route 34, Busway Flyer from Dadeland South to Florida City, limited stop (up 197 persons, or 12.4%).

THE ACHIEVER



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Brad Meltzer
Oversees Plaza Construction Group Florida
The profile is on Page 4

Impact fees tapped for mass transit

By SUSAN DANSEYAR

County commissioners approved using road impact fees to fund mass transit capital projects Tuesday, amending the legislation so that the proposed work comes before the board for its approval after a public hearing.

The amendment brought the legislation right back to where it was Nov. 17, when commissioners deferred voting so they could change the language to have transit projects on the same footing as road projects, which do not need to come back before the board after they've been approved by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

"The whole idea of this was not to delay the process and make sure transit projects follow the same procedures as road projects," said Jose "Pepe" Diaz, the prime sponsor of the legislation. He asked that there be separate legislation with the same requirements for road projects, which the commission will take up at another meeting.

Developers pay the county road impact fees whenever projects are built. Those funds are spent almost entirely on road construction. The use of road impact fees for public transportation was restricted to areas south or east of the Palmetto Expressway and had to undergo additional administrative hurdles to get approved. This legislation was designed to eliminate those restrictions.

However, Dennis Moss said the county can still take care of roads and balance against transit needs, but he is not comfortable giving up input before the project goes to the MPO for approval. Rebeca Sosa also said she'd like to see any transit projects come before the full board, with the opinion of experts, for open discussion so the public can hear the recommendations and give their opinions.

Transit projects will be selected for roadway trust fund backing on the basis of their expected effectiveness as capacity improvements.

County delays decision on boat show permit

By SUSAN DANSEYAR

Miami-Dade County commissioners want additional input from staff on environmental and legal implications before approving temporary docks and a water taxi plan for the Miami International Boat Show off Marine Stadium on Virginia Key.

At issue Tuesday was whether approving a permit and request for a variance by the National Marine Manufacturer's Association and the City of Miami's Department of Environmental Resources Management for use of the historic Virginia Key basin during the boat show on Feb. 11 would violate a deed restriction that the property be used strictly for marina and allied uses.

Opponents of the boat show being held at the city-owned site also said Virginia Key is a pristine area that shouldn't be ruined by what will most certainly disrupt the environment. They also claimed traffic congestion will be so bad that few will be able to get to Key Biscayne during the five-day boat show, and 90 days of preparation will inconvenience island residents who need to get to and from work.

A large group of Key Biscayne residents spoke against granting the permit for slips, variance for non-water dependent floating devices over tidal waters and seven water taxi stops to shuttle attendees. Key Biscayne Mayor Mayra Peña Lindsay and land-use attorney John Shubin hired to represent the village also voiced objections. Mr. Shubin said the entire application is predicated on a false assumption that the requested installation of a temporary 830-slip docking facility is for temporary use. "This is 100,000 people going to a specific location for five days and at least 90 days when people won't be able to go to the site," he said. "In our opinion, that's not temporary."

Xavier Suarez asked that the commissioners defer voting on the matter until the Dec. 15 meeting. In the meantime, he said he'd like an opinion from the county attorney's office on whether granting the permit affects the deed restrictions, which were part of the conveyance of land when the county conveyed the property to the city in 1963.

Additionally, Mr. Suarez asked Jim Murley, Miami-Dade's new chief resilience

officer, to weigh in on environmental aspects of the request.

Mr. Suarez also said a three-year variance is "highly objectionable" when the lease could be cancelled by the city any given year as it will be analyzed for compliance annually. "A variance makes no sense," he said. "This is something that should be, at most, very temporary."

The US Department of Environmental Protection and the US Army Corps of Engineers are also going through an approval process that Mr. Suarez said commissioners should wait to hear the outcome of before deciding the matter.

The City of Miami and the Village of Key Biscayne are in litigation over the deed restriction. John Credo, deputy city attorney, said legal issues of compliance are being fully argued in circuit court.

"We could be an indispensable party in the litigation," Mr. Suarez said in his pitch to defer.

Just before commissioners unanimously agreed to defer the vote, Jose "Pepe" Diaz questioned the wisdom of waiting, given time issues for the boat show organizers.

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THE INSIDER

GRANT FORGIVENESS FOR YWCA: A county committee has agreed to the YWCA's request to forgive its match for a \$2.5 million grant from Miami-Dade to construct a 24,000-square-foot Miami Gardens early learning and intergenerational center. The legislation, sponsored by **Barbara Jordan** at the Nov. 13 Economic Prosperity Committee meeting, explains the YWCA committed in November 2008 to providing \$2.5 million of its own funds to complete the project but, since that time, has contributed \$1,587,545, or 94% of its share. The non-profit claims it has experienced shortfalls in its federal, state and private funds and, therefore is unable to contribute the entire amount agreed upon. If approved by the full commission, the remainder of the match contribution will be waived.



Barbara Jordan

BOOSTING LOCAL BUSINESS: Commissioners agree that to foster economic opportunity, it's imperative that Miami-Dade create an environment to attract new local business and jobs. So they unanimously directed the mayor's office to report within 120 days on county practices devoted to creating and promoting local business; analyze whether those policies can be improved; identify procedures that might impede business creation and analyze potential strategies to overcome those impediments. To prepare the report, commissioners encouraged the administration to collaborate with business groups such as the Beacon Council and the Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce for help in pinpointing both lures and barriers to business creation.

CITIZENSHIP DRIVE: Miami-Dade County has joined nearly 20 cities



Jean Monestime

in Cities for Citizenship, a national initiative to increase citizenship among permanent residents and encourage cities to invest in citizenship programs. As part of the initiative, Mayor **Carlos Gimenez** created the Office of New Americans of Miami-Dade County. Commission Chairman **Jean Monestime** joined Mr. Gimenez



Daniella Levine Cava

and Commissioner **Daniella Levine Cava**, who both sponsored legislation to join the Cities for Citizenship initiative, at a press conference to make the announcement. "This county is defined by the contributions of immigrants from around the Americas and the world," Mr. Monestime said. "Becoming a citizen was for me a big part of achieving the American Dream, and I'm excited to have joined in sponsoring this legislation to help more of our immigrant community enjoy the benefits of citizenship." Permanent residents can now get help at the county's new Office of New Americans, which will aid applicants complete the citizenship application through clinics or one-on-one sessions. It also will help applicants get financial coaching and determine eligibility for the application fee waiver.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO? The City of Miami has been making information about its finances easier to access and understand, but the online service costs money. The city is finishing up its first year with OpenGov Inc., which offers proprietary financial transparency web-based services through a website the firm both hosts and maintains. The annual fee for the OpenGov software platform is about \$22,000. OpenGov displays the city's revenues and expenditures using numerous charts and graphs, in essence making the city's budgeting data readily available to audiences without requiring a deep understanding of civic budgeting practices, a staff review says. The OpenGov platform improves administrative efficiency by reducing the time city workers spend researching and compiling requested financial information. The Office of Management and Budget is pleased with OpenGov and recommended that city commissioners OK four additional one-year options to renew, which they approved.

FAIR GROWS: The Miami-Dade County Fair & Exposition drew a 10-year high 653,281 attendees this year with 350,000 of them going to the expo itself, showed 53,000 exhibits, presented \$330,000 in proceeds to students as scholarships and awards, paid \$616,000 in sales taxes and gave the county \$106,000 in rent from the land and telecommunications uses of the site, according to The Fair's annual report. The Fair had total operating revenues of \$13.7 million for the year. Its aim, said President and CEO **Robert Hohenstein**, is to enrich "our community by promoting education and South Florida agriculture while showcasing and rewarding youth achievement and providing quality family entertainment."



Robert Hohenstein

STEP INTO BRICKELL: **Ramon Casanova** will be vice president and branch manager when FirstBank Florida opens a branch at 848 Brickell Ave. early next year, Region Executive and Executive Vice President **Calixto Garcia-Velez** announced. The Brickell location will be the bank's main hub for its Platinum Banking Division. The bank, a part of FirstBank Puerto Rico, now has 10 branches in Florida and says it will have prominent signage on Brickell.

HAPPY BUSINESS OWNERS: Small-business owners in Florida felt "somewhat positive" in October about current and future economic conditions, according to a survey by Thumbtack and data housed in the Bloomberg Professional platform. The October survey rated 43 states and 62 cities. Florida was in the top five, scoring 65.64 on a 100-point scale in business economic sentiment. Sentiment nationwide has appeared to stabilize in the past two months following a steady decline after an annual high in March. Almost 70% of Florida's respondents felt "a little better" or "substantially better" about their three-month financial outlook.

KEEPING THEIR COOL: The city's Off-Street Parking Board has authorized the Miami Parking Authority to replace an air conditioning unit at its headquarters, Courthouse Center Garage, 40 NW Third St. The unit, for two office tenants, has constant need of repairs. Staff recommended replacing it and solicited bids to do so. The board approved a deal with the lowest bidder, Cool Blast Mechanical Inc., for \$26,180, which includes a 10% contingency fee.

County plans for retiring workers

By SUSAN DANSEYAR

With the population aging and an increased number of employees preparing to leave the workforce, Miami-Dade County's Human Resources Department has instituted a succession planning strategy to ensure the leadership pipeline is constantly filled with what staff say is a diverse pool of qualified and well-trained candidates for county jobs.

In May, commissioners directed the mayor's office to identify all senior-level positions in each department under the mayor's purview that will be vacant in three years due to retirement and to describe plans in place to fill the vacancies. As of August, 165 such employees are eligible to retire within three years based on Deferred Retirement Option Program date (40 employees) and longevity years of service or age (125 employees).

The number of senior managers eligible to retire in three years and their departments include 20 in Aviation, 6 in Community Action and Human Services, 11 in Corrections and Rehabilitation, 3 in Cultural Affairs, 2 in Elections, 3 in Finance, 15 in Fire Rescue, 2 in Human Resources, 8 in Information Technology, 7 in Internal Services, 1 in Juvenile Services, 1 in Library, 2 in management and Budget, 4 in the medical examiner's office, 4 in the mayor's office, 8 in Parks, Recreation and open Spaces, 7 in police, 2 in Public Housing and

Community Development, 10 in Public Works and Waste Management, 13 in Regulatory and Economic Resources, 5 at the seaport, 9 in Transit, 2 at Vizcaya Museum & Gardens and 20 in Water and Sewer.

A report presented to commissioners Nov. 3 details an action plan for each of the 40 senior-level employees in Deferred Retirement Option program including the end date of their tenure, when and whether the position has been advertised, if the various departments will recruit to fill the vacancy through an internal or open-competitive recruitment process, when the departments will initiate the recruitment/selection process and appoint a replacement, and if an overage position was approved to replace the position.

In the case of three division chiefs in the Fire Rescue Department, succession planning is limited by the current collective bargaining agreement, which restricts the ability of the fire chief to appoint potential replacements from the uniform ranks up to battalion chief. The department is trying to negotiate some changes to the agreement that would allow for some staff appointments from bargaining unit members.

According to the report written by Deputy Mayor Edward Marquez, the focus of the countywide succession plan is to address each vacancy as well as incorporate strategies when recruiting and filling positions to minimize the impact on county administration and services.

In many cases, Mr. Marquez said, using temporary overage positions in advance of anticipated vacancies has been an effective succession strategy that also includes the ability to recruit internally while keeping external open competitive recruitment options available to attract new applicants.

He said the Human Resources Department is leading the succession planning effort as a strategic partner with each department. Staff meets with department directors under the mayor's purview and provides a list of critical senior level positions that require a succession planning strategy.

Additionally, he said, Human Resources is working with the Information Technology Department to use the Enterprise Resource Planning system to explore existing technologies that could further help develop a formal succession planning system.

To date, the county has developed dashboards and prompted reports to make information readily available to departments for ongoing monitoring.

Mr. Marquez noted the Police, Corrections and Rehabilitation and Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces departments have well-established succession planning initiatives.

Eventually, Mr. Marquez said, the succession planning strategy already begun with senior level positions will evolve to include all critical technical and administrative positions in each department.

Airport West called: 'hottest market'

By CATHERINE LACKNER

Miami's Airport West market has a well-defined industrial niche, and though vacancies are low and rents high, observers don't see demand slackening.

"The hottest industrial market has always been Airport West, including Doral," said Jose J. Juncadella, a principal of Fairchild Partners and president of the Commercial and Industrial Association of South Florida. He points to Transal Logistics Center, a two-building complex with 200,000 square feet that opened seven months ago and is fully leased. Prologis, a worldwide logistics company, has a significant presence in Doral with Beacon Centre, a 225,000-square-foot complex.

"These are some of the highest rates in Miami, because the properties are in close proximity to Miami International Airport, to major highways, to rail and to the seaport," Mr. Juncadella said.

"I think the Airport West market is healthy, with a vacancy rate of 5% or less," said Chris Sutton, vice president for business development for Flagler Global Logistics, a subsidiary of Florida East Coast Industries. He is currently leasing the South Florida Logistics Center, across Northwest 36th Street from Miami International Airport, and Flagler Station in nearby Medley.

"A trend we've seen is a flight to quality," he said. As tenants

move up into class A space, "the class B-plus space is being back-filled almost immediately; which speaks to the strength of the market."

In Medley, vacancy rates are even lower, at 3% or less.

"Medley is holding its own, attracting companies who are relocating from Doral or Airport West," Mr. Sutton said. "There used to be a significant delta between rates for new construction in Medley and class B space in Airport West, but that delta has become compressed over time."

Some of the companies that lease in Flagler Station don't need direct airport access as they ship goods by truck or through PortMiami or Port Everglades, he said. If air access is critical to some part of their business, he added, they lease a satellite branch closer to the airport.

In both markets, clients want all-new buildings with 30- to 32-foot ceiling clearance, columns spaced 54 inches apart and enhanced-suppression, fast-response sprinkler systems, he said. "These features are attractive to companies that want to get more efficient. They can utilize less square footage but get more cubic volume," Mr. Sutton said. "Our clients are pretty savvy."

"Airport West has the highest industrial rents in South Florida," said Steven Medwin, managing director at Jones Lang LaSalle. "We continue to see rental rates

rising there, as supply is limited." Developers in recent years have tried to be more restrained and responsive to the market, so there is not an oversupply of space, he added.

When tenants can't find space or are priced out of Airport West, they are likely to head to Medley, he said. "There is more available land, and all-new construction. This is an area that was designed for industrial. It has great access to the Florida Turnpike, and to State Road 826."

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Apartment developer agrees to fund Overtown gateway sign

By CATHERINE LACKNER

Developers for the St. John Apartments got the extension they sought from the Southeast Overtown/Park West Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) on Monday. But—thanks to some elegant negotiation by Keon Hardemon, CRA chair and Miami commissioner—it cost them \$100,000 more than they expected.

Javier Fernandez, attorney for the developer, said several revisions

to the contract were needed before the project at 1327 NW Third Ave. could move forward. “We need a bit more time to get us to closing,” he said, namely a 30-day extension to Dec. 31. If the developer hasn’t closed on the financing at that point, it would pay an additional \$50,000 fine, he said.

The developer also wanted to change some of the contract language to be more conducive to minority job creation, and to shrink four apartments from

one-bedrooms to studios.

St. John Apartments, which was planned with 90 units and 8,000 square feet of commercial space, is the only one of five projects the CRA kick-started in September 2014 that has not broken ground. The others are:

■ A \$10 million renovation of the Town Park South and Town Park Village housing complexes with 263 units.

■ The Plaza at Lyric, with 158 units and 8,000 square feet of commercial space.

■ Island Living, an eight-story building with 70 units and 5,000 square feet of commercial space.

■ Courtside Family Apartments, with 84 units in its first phase.

All were financed with \$55 million in bonds, originally approved by the city commission in 2013.

“It’s important for them to get started,” said William Broom, special counsel to the CRA. The project has already had several amendments to its contract.

Changing the four one-bedroom units to studios was necessary because the space allotted was smaller than the legal definition for a one-bedroom

“We have to build to the needs of the community.”

Wifredo “Willy” Gort

unit, but only by 20 to 30 square feet, Mr. Fernandez said. Not allowing the change “would cause further delay.”

“It’s not a substantial change,” said Clarence E. Woods III, CRA executive director.

But, “I don’t want to set a precedent of cutting corners,” said Frank Carollo, CRA director and Miami commissioner.

“It’s not a good thing for a community like Overtown,” Mr. Hardemon agreed. “If this is going to cause any heartburn, I’d rather you have it,” he told Mr. Fernandez.

Many promises to residents have been broken, added Mr. Hardemon. “First it’s a finger, then a hand, then an arm. You have to make this right,” he said.

“We’re not trying to short-change the CRA,” Mr. Fernandez said. If the developer can’t downsize the four units, it would have to enlarge the footprint of the building, a

complicated process, he said.

“Studio units always go first,” said Ola Aluko, executive director of the St. John Community Development Corporation, which plans, builds and manages affordable housing units. “People are always asking for studios.”

“As a young professional, I know we’re willing to live in a studio,” Mr. Hardemon said. “It is a product that will be utilized.”

“We have to build to the needs of the community,” said Wifredo “Willy” Gort, CRA vice-chair and Miami commissioner. But, he cautioned, the plans have to fulfill the bond requirements.

In exchange for the extension and the other concessions, Mr. Hardemon suggested the developer contribute \$100,000 to the CRA for a sign on Northwest 14 Street. “Overtown lacks a gateway sign. We bargained on one-, two-, and three-bedroom units and now we’re getting four studios. It’s a reasonable ask,” he said.

Mr. Fernandez agreed, and said the developer will voluntarily add washers and dryers to all of the units.

“We’ll take that also,” Mr. Hardemon said.

Miami has natural assets

By CATHERINE LACKNER

Reaction to Film Florida’s new strategy to revitalize the state’s moribund incentive program has been positive, if muted. “No one has come up to me and said, ‘I hate it—what are you people doing?’ But everyone understands we’d like to see a more competitive program,” Michelle Hillery, the group’s president, said recently.

Disheartened by three consecutive years of setbacks, the film advocacy organization announced a new format it would present to the legislature when next year’s session convenes in January.

The Entertainment Industry Targeted Rebate and Revolving Loan Program rolls back a 20% base tax credit program into a 15% cash rebate base, cuts in half the maximum rebate per project from \$8 million to \$4 million, suggests a rating system for projects, and creates a revolving loan program that is meant to eventually become self-sufficient, Ms. Hillery said in an email to members.

“We knew that if we went in with the same program, we would probably be met with some of the challenges we have faced before,” Ms. Hillery said. “We knew we had to get away from incentives and look at rebates. There are some legislators who don’t believe in incentives for any industry; that’s their overall philosophy.”

“Something is better than nothing, as state leadership, under our current governor’s watch, has repeatedly failed to incentivize the film business,” said Andrew Nathanson, executive producer, photographer and location manager for Gator Films, via email. “If it works similar to former Governor Bush’s plan, then so be it; but please pass something, as Florida is getting squeezed out by states like Georgia and Louisiana,” both of which have aggressive and well-funded programs.

“This is kind of a return to the Jeb Bush era, when we had a successful incentive program,” Ms. Hillery said. “The most important consideration is, what will legislators support?”

In 2010, a Jobs for Florida bill designated \$242 million over five years for tax credits for film studios and other production companies. By March 2011, \$227 million of the credits had

been committed, with the majority going to so-called high impact television shows like “Magic City,” “The Glades” and “Burn Notice.”

The state’s film incentives come in the form of tax credits based on the scope of the production, number of local people hired, the season in which filming occurs and several other variables. The production must first spend money for qualified expenses, then prove those expenditures, then apply for the credits, which can be sold at the end of the term if the production doesn’t need the equivalent tax relief.

The current incentive program will expire in July 2016; Film Florida and other stakeholders hope to have a replacement in place by then.

Part of the problem is the way the state evaluates the return on investment of the incentive program. By most measures, spending associated with film productions results in \$5 of return for every dollar of tax incentives given. But when that return is measured strictly in funds that end up in state’s tax coffers, that return drops to 43 cents per dollar. “We knew we had to rein it in a bit, to be more conservative,” Ms. Hillery said.

According to the state’s film office, during the current five-year program, 227 projects have been filmed in Florida and \$166 million in tax credits issued, Ms. Hillery said. Those projects have resulted in \$743 million in spending, \$495 million of which was for wages. But because Florida doesn’t have a personal income tax, the state doesn’t recognize a tax benefit from those salaries.

However, a strong case can be made that productions filmed here are a tourism driver. “This industry creates priceless exposure for Florida, and the tourism industry is a central economic engine for the entire state,” Mr. Nathanson said. “If leadership considers the positive financial impact—first for actual production work and second for the impact on tourism—then do something about it! Now it’s time for executive and legislative branches to make it happen.”

“The bottom line is that we have the natural assets, the weather, the crews, the talent,” Ms. Hillery said. “We don’t need to be more competitive than other states. We just need to be able to compete.”

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Brad Meltzer oversees Plaza Construction Group Florida...

When Brad Meltzer started college, he originally planned to be a doctor. After a year, however, he decided to change from pre-med to architecture, a profession he said is in his blood given that several family members became architects.

Today, Mr. Meltzer uses his training every day as president of Plaza Construction Group Florida. He said his knowledge gives clients a sense of comfort that he understands their goals and dreams for projects.

What he learned in the five-year architectural program he completed also helps Mr. Meltzer to liaise with architects and engineers, which he said provides a comfort level for clients knowing Plaza Construction is going to achieve their desires from a design standpoint even if there are budget issues.

Miami is going to continue to grow, Mr. Meltzer says, and he shows a lot of confidence in this cycle of building boom. However, he said, we face challenges in our public transportation and education systems. We need to find mass transit that starts to compete with cities such as New York, San Francisco and Chicago, he believes, and a more equal distribution of good schools in the Miami metropolitan area.

Miami Today reporter Susan Danseyar interviewed Mr. Meltzer at Plaza Construction Group Florida.

Q: What brought you to Miami?

A: I worked for Plaza in New York after graduating from Tulane University. I started as an assistant superintendent and then moved into the role of project manager, gaining valuable experience working in Manhattan. My wife is from Coconut Grove and her family is here in Miami so it was a natural move to be closer to them, once our first child was born.

I started working for a competitor in 1998 with the opportunity to manage the Mandarin Oriental Hotel construction project on Brickell Key for Swire Properties; we came down to Miami with our first son in 1999.

As I became more knowledgeable about the market here, I started KM Construction and then had an opportunity to joint venture with Plaza. Over time, the relationship evolved into a partnership and to what it is today, Plaza Construction Group Florida LLC, Plaza's Southeast Regional office.

Q: What are your responsibilities as president?

A: My responsibilities entail everything from contract negotiation, staffing, relationships with our clients, and overall profit and loss of the operation.

Q: How many people are on your staff in Miami?

A: We have currently just under 250.

Q: Are you able to use your architectural training in your work?

A: Absolutely. I think it gives our clients a sense of comfort that I understand what their goals and dreams are on their projects.

It also allows me to liaise with architects and engineers. There's a certain comfort level that they share as well that Plaza Construction is going to achieve their desires from a design standpoint even if there are budget issues that are



Photo by Marlene Quaroni

Brad Meltzer says he has a lot of confidence in this construction boom cycle but sees big challenges for the community in public transportation and the education system.

The Achiever

Brad Meltzer

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existing. We can look at those issues and try to work with them on that and still achieve the final product that they were looking for.

Q: How did you become interested in this kind of business?

A: My father is an architect. My father's brother, who recently passed away, was an architect as well, so I guess it was always in my family blood.

Q: How is the Florida group linked to the others in the country?

A: We have offices currently in New York, Washington and Miami. We are all linked together with the same parent company ownership, Plaza Construction of New York.

In 2014, China Construction America, a subsidiary of China State Construction Engineering Corp., purchased Plaza Construction, offering dynamic growth opportunities, greater financial strength, increased bonding capabilities, and global procurement for our clients.

Q: What characterizes the projects in South Florida?

A: South Florida is obviously heavy on the hospitality and the luxury condominium marketplace. We are diversified and we have many other projects that are not within that category of projects. The lion's share of our work is the multifamily and hospitality industry.

Q: Are developers running out of land

to build on in Miami and Miami Beach?

A: I think that as we continue to see Miami mature, land that previously was not desirable is now becoming desirable. So I don't think we're really running out of land. I think we're just going to be going to other areas that previously wouldn't have been considered.

Take, for example, the Miami World Center Marketplace or Wynwood, where our offices are located. Years ago this was just an industrial type neighborhood with houses, and look at what it is now. It's some of the most expensive real estate in South Florida.

Q: Where do you see the next frontiers?

A: I think west of Wynwood is going to be one of the next frontiers. I think between I-95 and Jackson Hospital is a very interesting area, again an industrial area like Wynwood has been.

The hospital and the university have a significant investment in that marketplace and, between increasing land values east and lower land values west, I think that's an area where we're going to see some significant development in the next 10 to 15 years.

Q: How do developers choose general contractors for their projects?

A: I think the savvy developers are trying to find general contractors they think are like-minded. It's a two- or in some cases three-year relationship. So we need to make sure that both the developer and the contractor think alike, we share the same values and also that we're a financially stable entity. The developer wants to make sure the contractor is going to be around for the duration of their project.

Q: Do you tend to work with the same people on projects?

A: We have a lot of repeat clients. For example, currently we are doing eight projects for the Related Group. Another client we've done a significant amount of work for is David Edelstein. He was the developer of the W Hotel, and we're currently doing some work for him. We just finished up 530 Lincoln Road for him and we're about to start 1620 Drexel.

Q: How are subcontractors overseen?

A: Because of the boom in construction, the subcontractor marketplace has

been taxed and challenged. There hasn't been enough labor support for them for the most part, and financially many subcontractors weren't prepared for this wave of work.

To be able to multiply the volume of work that they previously had and be able to finance that work at the same time has been a big challenge for the subcontractors, and that's one of the things that we're seeing right now that has been a struggle for them. So we're working very closely with the subcontractors to make sure they understand the challenges. We try to help them through that, and we also make sure that they get paid on time so they can live through this life cycle.

Q: Is it difficult to find good employees in the construction business these days?

A: One of the things making it easier is South Florida is becoming more of a draw. When I first moved here 15 or 16 years ago, South Florida had a much more transient population. Now, I think people are considering South Florida to move here, stay here, raise their families. There's a lot more opportunity here, there's a lot more culture, and I think that's making it easier for us to find good people.

Q: With the amount of work they have, are the subcontractors reliable?

A: Yes, they are reliable, but it takes constant cooperation and collaboration to make sure that everybody has the same goal and understands what it's going to take to get that end game.

Q: How do you oversee all the moving parts of the project and work together for the duration?

A: We have some great people here at Plaza. It's not me who oversees all the moving parts and pieces; it's our senior staff along with all of the project managers and superintendents. It's their responsibility to make sure all the parts that we need for a project are going to be delivered to the project in time.

We have a saying here that the project managers need to feed the superintendents. It's their jobs to procure the items, get them to the job site, and deliver them to the field staff and to the subcontractors to make sure everything is there when we need it. That takes a lot of work also with the developer and the architects and the engineers. So we all need to be mutually aligned on that effort.

Q: What's happening with the cost of construction?

A: Over the past few years it's no secret that costs have escalated. They've escalated as material prices rose, but most significantly they escalated when labor prices rose.

A worker who was making \$20 an hour before now wants to be paid \$25 an hour. If he doesn't get it, he's going across the street to a different job site. We think that's been the single biggest reason that prices have escalated.

Q: Do you do the bidding?

A: Plaza does the bidding for all of our subcontractors. We bid out all the trades. We run a transparent operation. Our clients get to see every bid that comes across our table. They partici-



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...as it now is handling eight projects for the Related Group

pate in the analysis of those bids with us.

We think one of the things that our clients enjoy about working with Plaza is that we do this together. They feel that we're a part of their team and there's nothing that we don't show them that they want to see.

Q: We haven't had a hurricane in a while but they are known to hit South Florida. How do you plan in this business for our weather season?

A: It's difficult to plan, obviously, for things like named storms and hurricanes, but all of our schedules anticipate something. It would be foolish of us to assume that nothing is ever going to happen.

We take into account history, we try to build in a certain number of weather days, we call them, into a calendar year and into a project schedule so that when they do happen they don't come as a surprise. If nothing ends up happening, we look at it as a bonus. Those are days that we didn't have to shut the job down or stop work and send people home.

Q: The cyclical nature here is everyone builds at once and stops building at once. How do you handle the down time?

A: Down time is a very difficult thing to anticipate. We have a significant backlog, so when the wave of projects that we're finishing come to completion, we have work for every single person in the company to move to the next challenge. It's my job as the president of the company to continue to find that new work for the future to sustain our business and keep our good people employed.

Q: How are developers financing their projects?

A: Developers have financed their projects differently than during the last condo boom in Miami. Banks are more conservative and buyers are required to put up larger deposits.

Q: What's your view of the growth in Greater Miami?

A: I think Miami is actually starting to

mature. If you look at the old cities in America – New York, Chicago, San Francisco – they're actually very young cities in the world scale. Look at cities in Europe, Asia and even South America, and Miami is like a baby.

If we come back to Miami in 200 or 250 years, we're going to see a city like Chicago, San Francisco, New York.

I also think because of what's happening elsewhere in the world like instability in South America, valuation changes in China and Europe, Miami is going to continue to grow.

While some people have their doubts as to how much longer this cycle of building boom is going to continue, I have a lot of confidence in it.

Q: So it's sustainable, no matter what.

A: I think so.

Q: Do you find that Miami's infrastructure is keeping up with development?

A: I think the two largest challenges we have are public transportation and education. Our public transportation system is going to need to catch up to the volume of people that we need to move around on a daily basis. The cities I just mentioned a moment ago all have public transportation, whether it's New York subways, Chicago's "L," San Francisco's trolley car system and bus system. We need to find something that starts to compete with those cities.

On the education side, in order for us to attract professionals to town we need to have a better educational system. Our public school system has pockets that are really good and pockets that aren't. Until we have a more equal distribution of good schools in the Miami metro area, it's going to be a continued challenge to attract professionals to South Florida.

Q: How does one even begin to improve public transportation?

A: I think public/private partnership might be the only way for us to achieve a better mass transit system. Until the general population understands how important it is and government and private

sector get together, there's going to need to be a sharing of responsibility when it comes to mass transit.

Q: In P3s, how can the public be assured of protection?

A: As long as the goal benefits the public and as long as the cost benefit analysis has been done and both the government and the public sector shared the same vision, I don't know that the public could lose.

Q: How do we improve the education system?

A: I think we might need to take a real hard look at our tax structure, which a lot of people don't want to do. We might need to take a strong look at how we pay our teachers in the state of Florida. They might be the single most important people for the future of our children, yet they're clearly not paid like they're the most important for the future of our children.

I think that's something for a public/private partnership; we are going to need to get together and analyze this situation and make it better.

Q: Who is your competition and how does your company distinguish itself?

A: I'd like to think sometimes we have no competition, but there are some very good construction companies here in South Florida. Right now, there's a tight pack of a few companies doing some of the larger projects in town that are also able to do so from a bonding capacity standpoint.

I think we try to separate ourselves with our people and our transparency and it's a continued spirit of collaboration and cooperation that we share with our clients. Every day, it's a challenging business; we don't mind the challenges. Actually, in many cases we welcome the challenges. We've done some very challenging projects and difficult projects others may have not wanted to take on.

Q: What are your civic and charitable pursuits?

A: I truly enjoy being involved in the community, both personally and through Plaza. Our company's annual golf tour-

namment raises funds for a chosen charity, the most recent tournament's contribution was to Voices For Children, and reflects a record-breaking amount from our South Florida tournament history, with \$150,000. Additionally, we could not have done it without the generosity of all those participants and sponsors. We extend our gratitude and appreciation to all of them.

The Voices for Children Foundation enables the Guardian ad Litem Program to recruit, train and support volunteers to serve as the "Voice" for abused, abandoned and neglected children by advocating for their best interests in dependency court proceedings. Voices' financial support also helps fulfill the children's medical, educational and social needs.

Our office also participates in the Dolphin Cycling Challenge with our largest client, The Related Group, and the Mercedes-Benz Corporate run, allowing our staff to get together outside the office to support these causes, and to enjoy the fun activities together.

I am an active member of my alma mater, Tulane University School of Architecture, as a recent member of the Board of Advisors, and I am on the Board of Advisors for the University of Miami's Masters in Real Estate and Urbanism, supporting the students in the program to achieve their goals. I am a board member of YPO, Americas Gateway chapter, and an active member of Temple Beth Shalom on Miami Beach.

Q: Tell me about your family.

A: My wife and I will have been married 20 years in March. We have three boys, ages 17, 15 and 8. The oldest was born in New York and the other two were born right here in Miami.

Q: What do you do in your free time to relax, unwind?

A: I try and spend time with my family. I play a lot of golf when I can. We ski if we have the opportunity during winter break for the kids, and the rest I'm here at 6 in the morning every day.

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Is happiness just a thing called cold? Researchers probing

A scholarly study of global happiness that's funded by the United Arab Emirates purports to show that the wealthiest nations aren't necessarily the happiest, with the United States 15th best among 158 nations



Michael Lewis

but getting less happy while the United Arab Emirates are 20th but getting happier.

We are not making this up. It's Called the "World Happiness Report 2015." If you've got insomnia, you can read it on the internet (the study actually does report on lack of sleep).

We know this 167-page report is scholarly not only because page after page is devoted solely to footnotes but also because it uses mathematical formulas whose squiggly characters are foreign to most of us.

The Wall Street Journal brought this study to our attention with a headline "Happiness Gauges Show Money Isn't Everything." Factors that the study found most relevant in gauging happiness were not only Gross Domestic Product but also life expectancy, generosity, social support, freedom and corruption.

Well, we can see all of those being important to happiness (though we'd have said it was absence of corruption,

not corruption, that makes people happy), but we think the researchers missed a couple of very important variables.

Those missing factors are the two T's: temperature and transportation.

Take temperature. The study used variable after variable and after adding them up and massaging them a bit determined that the eight nations where people are happiest are, from first to eighth, Switzerland, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Canada, Finland, Netherlands and Sweden. We're wondering why it didn't occur to the researchers to think of what those nations as a group have in common: Cold.

While this study is based on numerical graphs ad infinitum, we believe the key number is 40: the average annual temperature in the capital of each of the eight so-called happiest nations is in the 40s.

No study needed. Apparently happiness is just a thing called cold – bone-chilling cold.

At the other end of the spectrum, in the unhappiest nation on earth, Togo, the average is 80.

So if a key factor in happiness is cold, the United Arab Emirates, with an average of 81 in Dubai, are going to have trouble cracking the top 10 no matter whose government subsidizes these studies that began in 2012 (apparently it takes a while to pin down what makes us happy).

That leads to another ignored factor in the happiness realm: transportation.

Take Miami. With a 76-degree average we have enough trouble being really

happy – though it's easier than in 81-degree Dubai – without ranking at the bottom for transportation, a fact that has been painfully uncovered by 2.6 million human lab rats in Miami-Dade who have proven that not being able to get anywhere on time makes us absolutely furious.

Further research disclosed that we have big-time trouble being happy and furious simultaneously. So mobility and happiness are directly linked. Again, how could the scholars have missed it? But there it sits – just like a Miami driver on the Palmetto.

Some of the report makes pretty good sense. Syrians ranked 156th of 158 nationalities in happiness back when figures were gathered. Today those beleaguered people would have to rank about 200th.

In a study that showed how national happiness had changed from 2005-2007 to the 2012-2014 period when data were gathered, Greece had gone down farther and faster than anyone. Look at the Greek financial crisis and you know why.

But researchers uncovered yet another serious issue. They call it the "laughter gap," which might be the difference between those who read this report (smiling broadly or laughing out loud) and those who had not.

In brief, this gap shows that girls and younger women smile and laugh a whole lot more than older women. We think this needs more research, possibly including going back to junior high school with a video camera.

Because this report is intended to change how governments function, the key chapter is headed "How to make policy when happiness is the goal." The careful findings could be summarized in two words: "Who knows?"

So the stumped researchers ask governments to individually make a cost-benefit analysis of happiness. "We urge Finance Ministries to take a lead in making this happen, as they have done with traditional cost-benefit analysis."

In the United States, however, we don't do cost-benefit analyses as a nation. Each lawmaker does his or her own, which amounts to "how many votes is this going to cost me versus how much will my campaign fund benefit?"

But if you asked taxpayers instead of officials to look at what low-cost actions government could take that would yield high-benefit public happiness, they'd keep it simple, no happiness study needed.

The public would ask elected officials to let the economy grow, improve transportation, do what you promised us at election time (whatever that was), treat us like adults, look at the big picture and long term, don't waste our money, level the playing field for everyone, and play nicely together.

Oh, and smile more. Be happy.

Our researchers are out in the field right now gathering lots and lots of expensive data that will prove exactly what we've already told you the results should be.

A quiz to assess your over-all well-being: check your score

It is now time to review what we've learned so far.

Myth: If you go to some hospitals in California, you will pay \$24 for a Tylenol with codeine pill that has a market price of 50 cents.

Fact: You will not pay \$24. You will pay instead \$37 for a single Tylenol pill!

Myth: A stitch in time saves nine.

Fact: I don't know what stitches you are talking about, but in most hospitals around the country, nine stitches will cost you about \$4,500.

These facts are true. I know they are true because they were reported by The New York Times on Dec. 3, 2013.

Granted, that newspaper does have a liberal bias, but even if they exaggerated a bit, you still end up with a pretty big number. Let's say The New York Times reports that a Tylenol pill costs \$37, and Fox News says it costs \$23, you still end up with an average of \$30, which is enough to build a small hospital in Kiribati.

Let's face it. If you don't want to become a victim of overpriced pills or medical procedures, you must invest in wellness. But before we jump into dangerous territory, such as getting up from the couch to eat a piece of broccoli, let's assess your overall well-being. Answer the following quiz:

1. Interpersonal well-being: When you need emotional support...

A: You hug strangers at random in the

The Writer

Isaac Prilleltensky is dean of the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Miami. Follow his humor blog at <http://prilleltensky.blogspot.com>.



Isaac Prilleltensky

mall.

B: You post tragic messages on Facebook and stare intently at the screen for hours in hope that somebody will feel pity for you and throw you a word of sympathy.

C: You flip channels until you find a reality TV show with characters more pathetic than you.

If you answered A, you should wash your hands often. If you answered B, you should go to meetup.com and start a Desperate Anonymous group. If you answered C, you are like 99.9% of Americans.

2. Community well-being: When there is crime in your neighborhood...

A: You blame the police.

B: You blame the National Rifle Association.

C: You blame Obamacare.

If you answered A, you are in trouble because the police will come after you next. If you answered B, you are a delusional, self-hating, anti-American communist sympathizer, or Piers Morgan. If you answered C, you are watching too much Fox News.

3. Occupational well-being: When you are not satisfied with your work...

A: You spend 95% of your time at work on the internet looking for another job.

B: You spend 85% of your time at work on the internet posting nasty messages

about your boss.

C: You spend 75% of your time at work pretending that you are working.

If you answered A, you are like 95% of Americans. If you answered B, you are like most reality TV characters. If you answered C, you are like the remaining 5% of the country.

4. Psychological well-being: When you feel stressed...

A: You smoke three packs of cigarettes per day.

B: You send your wife to the gym.

C: You buy a stress reduction book on Amazon.

If you answered A, don't get near me with that awful smell. If you answered B, you will be able to smoke in peace. If C is your answer, be careful the book is not delivered by a drone that will confuse you with a terrorist.

5. Physical well-being: When you feel the urge to exercise...

A: You sit tight and wait until it passes.

B: You go to the mall and buy new exercise clothes.

C: You buy an exercise video from Amazon.

If you answered A, you are like 99% of Americans. If you chose B, you are like 98% of Americans. If you chose C, the drone will eventually get you.

6. Economic well-being: When you max out on your credit card...

A: You have been buying too many exercise clothes you will never use.

B: You blame Obamacare.

C: You get a new credit card.

If you answered A, you can become the competition for Lululemon. If you an-

swered B, no need to worry because you will eventually get a job at Fox News. If you answered C, you are like 99% of college graduates.

Now, sum up how many of your answers are A, B and C.

If you answered "A" more than three times, you can become a wellness coach and start getting suckers to buy your videos.

If you answered "B" more than four times, you have a tendency to blame others for your problems and you very likely have eczema.

If you answered "C" twice or more, you should try to get your cholesterol level below 400 and eat more kohlrabi. The alternative is to pay \$30 for a Tylenol pill, or become a vegan like me.

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Sunny Isles remain sunny as about 1,000 resale condos wait

By CATHERINE LACKNER

As sales have been for the past few years, resales are strong in Sunny Isles, though international sales seem to be slowing down due to currency-devaluation problems, observers say.

"We look at the supply, and we have about 18 months of inventory in Sunny Isles," said Ron Shuffield, president and CEO of EWM Realtors. Historically, more than six to nine months of inventory supply in any given area "puts a downward pressure on pricing."

Developers who are reselling units don't generally use the Multiple Listing Service, from which Mr. Shuffield quoted statistics. The service lists 980 properties on the market now in Sunny Isles, but these probably exclude developer resales, so the real total is likely to be higher.

Glitz and glitter have descended on Sunny Isles, which 20 years ago was characterized by mom-and-pop motels and a small residential section, observers say. With the arrival of celebrity developers like Donald Trump, prices headed for the stratosphere.

Interestingly, there is a market of homes and condominium units that are priced less than \$500,000, Mr. Shuffield said. In fact, 441 of the 980 listings — almost half — are in that category. The next category, \$500,000 to \$1 million, comprises 197 listings, according to the service.

"We know there are multiple cities within cities in Miami, and that the market is different block by block and building by building," Mr. Shuffield said. Many owners in signature or high-prestige buildings "are not interested in selling," but others obviously are.

In the past month, there were 65 Sunny Isles sales; 37 of these were priced less than \$500,000, another 13 between \$500,000 and \$1 million. Monthly sales are down about 8% from a year ago, and pending sales down about 12% from a year ago, he said.

Two years ago, foreign buyers represented 35% of all sales in Sunny Isles; last year that number had declined to 27%, Mr. Shuffield said. "The pressure on their currency exchange rate is causing people to pause," he explained. Nevertheless, the countries that are the hardest-hit, including Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela, are still top buying partners, he added.

Canadians, always a presence in northern Miami-Dade and southern Broward counties, have taken a 20% hit to their currency in the past year, he said. While the Canadian dollar was historically even with or a bit higher than its American equivalent, "they now have 20% less buying power," Mr. Shuffield said. "Many are just waiting it out."

Nevertheless, he sees Sunny Isles as a healthy market "with a great variety of inventory," some of which is more affordable than conventional wisdom



'We look at the supply, and we have about 18 months of inventory in Sunny Isles.'

Ron Shuffield

would have it.

"I know a lot of people are very happy with their units and not looking to sell," said Gil Dezer, president of Dezer Development. On the other hand, there are Brazilians who bought

in 2009-10 and now "they're taking profits," said Mr. Dezer, who stressed that he is a developer who does not deal in resales but who knows the market.

Resale prices vary greatly depending on location, size and views, he said. On the ocean in a newer building, a unit can fetch \$700 to 900 per square foot, while landlocked product on the other side of Highway A1A can be had for around \$350 per square foot.

About 40 to 60 resales per month change hands in the area, he said. "That's a healthy amount of movement, and units don't last on the market more than 90 days unless they're overpriced."

While the product he develops is new, "resales can be a great alternative to new construction," which generally is selling for \$2,000 per square foot with a 50% deposit for oceanfront units in luxury buildings, Mr. Dezer said. "It's ready



'I know a lot of people are very happy with their units and not looking to sell.'

Gil Dezer

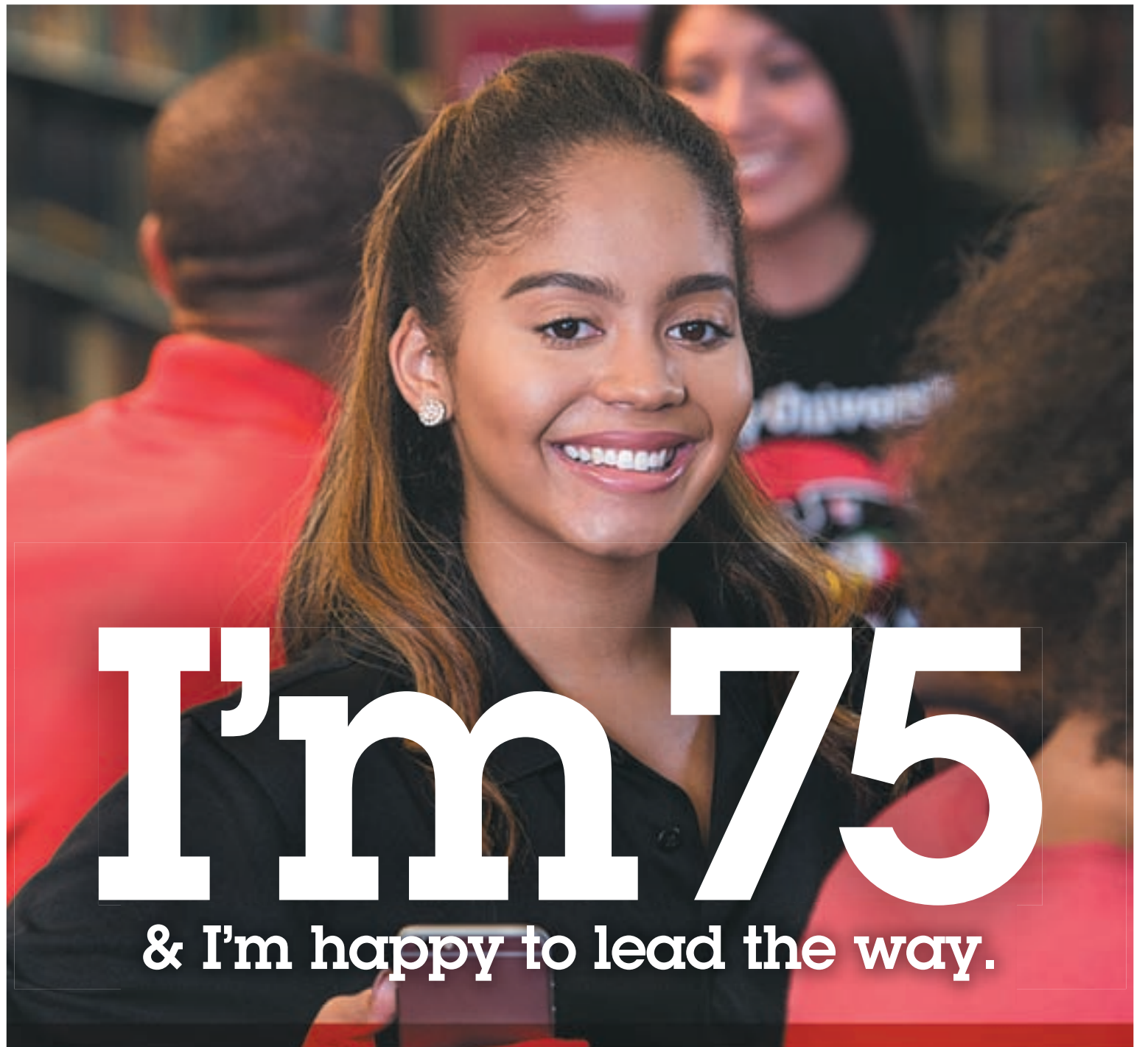
now — why wait three or four years? There's no construction risk and you know what you're getting."

"The Sunny Isles resale market continues to hold its value," said Eduard Zavulunov, global

luxury specialist at One Sotheby's International Realty. "People are always shifting from the older buildings to the new construction." The average price for a resale with direct ocean access is \$850 to \$1,000 per square foot, compared with \$1,300 per square foot for new buildings, he said.

Russia, which is in the midst of a political and currency crisis, has long been a presence in Sunny Isles, which Mr. Zavulunov predicts won't change. "It means it costs them more to purchase the property, but the good news is that Russians do like luxury. They want to live within a community, and Sunny Isles has an established Russian community, with restaurants, coffee shops, gourmet stores, anything you want to do, within walking distance."

In Sunny Isles, every third or fourth small business is owned by a Russian, he added. "It gives a little pull to be within this community."



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Assembling 138 Metrorail cars here may create 100 jobs

By CARLA VIANNA

Up to 100 employees may be hired to assemble the 136 new Metrorail cars that will replace the existing trains within the next two years, Miami-Dade Transit says.

AnsaldoBreda will use a site in Medley as its stomping grounds once the pieces of rail cars start rolling into the county. While car parts will be shipped from Europe, some will also come from within the US, the county's transit department told Miami Today, and the final assembly of each rail car will be done here.

The Italian rail car manufacturer has been charged with overseeing the assembly site, while the county reigns over the \$313.8 million contract. In total, the project will cost \$375.7 million.

AnsaldoBreda's employees will help assemble the first couple of cars, but the job will need local hands once more parts start coming in. Once the county starts taking possession of the rail cars on a regular basis, it'll ramp up the staff at the Medley



Alice Bravo

site, the transit department said.

Miami-Dade Transit Director Alice Bravo said the rail cars will meet Buy America requirements, which ensure that transportation infrastructure projects are built with American-made products, to be eligible for federal funding.

The county anticipates the delivery of the first car by the end of 2016 and the rest to gradually roll into service by the end of 2017. The much-needed upgrade will revive a rail line that's been operating with the same train cars since Metrorail opened in 1984.

The Medley site should be ready to go by the end of this year or the beginning

of next year, Ms. Bravo said.

The Metrorail project is reported to be running on schedule.

While a new fleet will surely benefit commuters, ongoing problems with the rail line's 30-year-old infrastructure might pose additional setbacks.

To address issues with the track itself, Ms. Bravo said the county plans to develop a test car – a train car with sensors attached to its base with the ability to detect defects on the tracks. The test car, which is to be developed using an existing train car, will automate a process that has historically been based on visual and manual inspection.

Wage and compensation cost gains outpacing US

Wages and compensation costs in South Florida both rose much more rapidly than in the nation as a whole for the year ended Sept. 30, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics reported.

Wages – the largest component of employment costs – rose at an annual rate of 2.6% in the tri-county area of Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties, the bureau reported. That compares with a national increase of 2.1%.

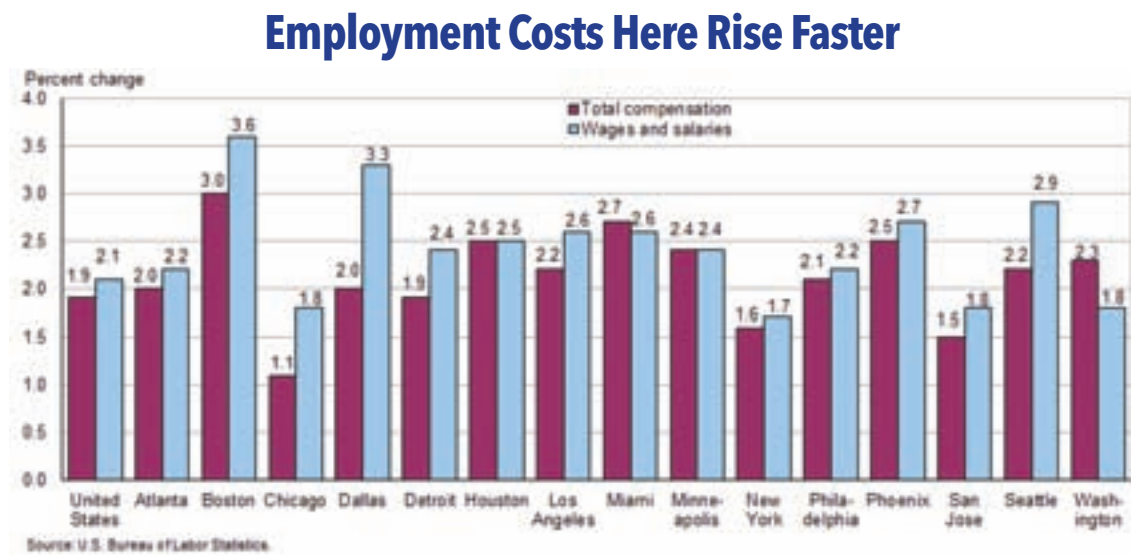
The report covers only private industry workers.

The fastest wage growth in the nation among large cities in

the 12-month period was 3.6% in the Boston area, followed by 3.3% in Dallas and 2.9% in Seattle. Phoenix was next at 2.7%, followed by South Florida's 2.6%.

Bureau Regional Commissioner Janet Rankin, who provided the figures, did not discuss in her report causes of the increases.

Total compensation costs to employers, which included not only wages and salaries but also the cost of employee benefits, also rose for South Florida far faster than for the nation as a whole or for other large metro-



politan areas.

Total compensation costs for South Florida rose 2.7%, while those for the South as a whole

rose 1.6% and those of the nation as a whole increased 1.9%.

In fact, only Boston, at 3%, had a larger annualized gain in

total compensation costs than South Florida. The smallest gain among large metropolitan areas was Chicago, at 1.1%.

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With 16 new degree programs, St. Thomas is planning more

By MARILYN BOWDEN

With eight new market-driven degree programs up and running and eight more scheduled to be unrolled in January, St. Thomas University is already planning more for the future.

"I have been president of St. Thomas for 21 years," said Msgr. Franklyn M. Casale, "and I see things changing very rapidly. We have to stay active and agile – change some programs and add new programs. From my perspective, that's great vitality for the future."

The newly approved programs include six in the School of Business, six in the School of Science Technology & Engineering Management, one in the School of Arts & Education and three at Biscayne College, the university's liberal arts and social sciences campus.

"I am leveraging the expertise that we have acquired for some of these degree programs to create new specializations as well," said Provost Irma Becerra.

"For example, for our new undergraduate and master's programs in trade & logistics, we hired a leading expert in the field; this allows us to also offer trade & logistics as an MBA specialization and an MSM concentration.

"We are in the process of hiring a world-renowned expert in cyber security for our master's program in cyber security management, and we will do the same thing there."

Dr. Becerra, who came on board as St. Thomas' provost in October 2014, shepherded each of the new programs through a typically lengthy and complex accreditation process in under a year. Each had to be approved internally by the Academic Program Committee and then by the Board of Trustees, which also looked at its financial viability. Finally, it had to be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

"At many universities that is a very time-consuming process," she said. "Everyone worked very hard to make it happen. It's been an interesting year; I don't know of any other university that has been so aggressive.

"We've had great success, particularly with the master's in criminal justice, undergraduate and master's programs in nursing and master's in molecular biology. Our new M.A. with a concentration in pastoral ministries also has had a great reception."

St. Thomas has about 500 online graduate students around the nation, Dr. Becerra said, and the six fully online Arts & Education programs launched a year ago – master's programs in reading, teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), special education, elementary education and educational leadership, plus a doctorate in leadership management – are all doing very well.

"This fall we are introducing fully online School of Business programs," she said. "We're very excited about that."

Dr. Becerra is already planning further expansions to the curriculum.

"We are taking a deliberate and strategic look at where we can

grow," she said. "We are definitely going to expand in healthcare – for example, an MBA program in health informatics and a doctorate in nursing practice.

"In education, we're looking at expanding MAs in special education, and with specializations in Catholic school administration and charter school administration.

"In liberal arts, perhaps we will add graduate-level programs in more traditional areas such as English and history."

She said she is also looking at a

new undergraduate program in renewable energy engineering.

"It's clear," she said, "that careers in technology and engineering will continue to grow."

The image shows a family of four (father, mother, daughter, and son) gathered around a table with a birthday cake. A dog is also present, wearing a party hat. Overlaid on the image is a large blue banner at the top that reads "Here's to keeping bills low." Below the family, a smaller blue box contains the text "FPL BILLS DOWN 10%". At the bottom of the image, there are two green icons: a dollar sign and a downward arrow. The background is a bright, modern kitchen.

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City lease to firm adds parking after challenge

By JOHN CHARLES ROBBINS

A new public-private partnership between the city's parking agency and a development firm is expected to bring residential and retail development to Downtown Miami, along with extra public parking.

The Off-Street Parking Board on Nov. 4 approved a ground lease between the Miami Parking Authority and Grand Station Partners LLC for vacant land next to its flagship parking garage.

The land is owned by the authority and is adjacent to its Courthouse Center Garage at 40 NW Third St.

Referred to as Parcel B by the authority – not to be confused with the county's Parcel B on the waterfront – the undeveloped site is home to grass, sidewalks and small trees and has an address of 240 N Miami Ave.

The parking board on May 6 authorized authority CEO Art Noriega to negotiate with Grand Station Partners for redevelopment of Parcel B.

The company's proposal includes a new 8-story parking facility for more than 350 vehicles, and a 33-story tower iden-

tified as multi-family with about 258 apartments. Retail space would also be part of the project, according to the proposal.

The lease is for 99 years, with one 50-year option to extend. The lease begins when both parties sign it.

Base rent will begin at \$240,000 a year, but won't kick in for six years. Base rent commences the first day of the sixth year following receipt of a certificate of occupancy, according to the lease.

Every five years after the rent commencement date, base rent will increase 10% for the duration of the lease.

The lease calls for a \$750,000 deposit.

The lease spells out the main gain for the parking agency: an approximately six-level expansion of the existing parking garage, providing an additional 355 spaces.

"Landlord will retain all ownership and operational rights to the Parking Facility, free and clear of any and all liens and/or encumbrances whatsoever," the lease reads.

Construction must begin within 20 months of the start of the lease.



Photo by John Charles Robbins

Miami Parking Authority land beside its headquarters is being leased for a 33-story apartment tower.

After 11 years, Grand Station Partners will get the option to purchase Parcel B, except for the garage.

As an addendum to the lease, staff prepared a sheet showing facts that influenced the terms, including projected additional revenue from the added parking. For example, the additional parking revenue in year one after the new spaces are available is projected at \$737,676.

The board vote was not unanimous. Stephen Nostrand voted no, after an attorney for a competing developer claimed the move to approve the lease would be illegal.

Bruce Fischman attended the Nov. 4 meeting saying he represents North Miami Ave Realty LLC, connected with developer Moishe Mana.

Mr. Fischman alleged non-compliance with the way the parking agency was handling the matter, including errors in publishing the request for proposals.

He said any further action on the property would be "illegal" without a republication.

"Standards for all were not equal," Mr. Fischman said, asking the board to not approve the lease.

North Miami Ave Realty LLC and its affiliate Mana Miami own the southeastern corner of the block that is home to Courthouse Center Garage and Parcel B.

Robert Burlington, an attorney representing Grand Station Partners, said much work went into crafting the lease and every "i" is dotted, every "t" is crossed.

"There are no improprieties," he told the board, saying the lease is "properly before you for approval today."

Mr. Burlington also pointed out that the time for competing parties to appeal was back in early May, when the board authorized Mr. Noriega to begin negotiations with his client.

Mr. Mana's representatives did not appeal, said Mr. Burlington. Authority staff confirmed this to the board.

Board member Jami Reyes told Mr. Fischman, "It's interesting you come in at the last minute when you had all this time to reach out to us."

Back in May, Mr. Noriega told the board he would work to bring both parties to the table: Grand Station Partners and North Miami Ave Realty LLC-Mana Miami.

He said then it was his hope "to bring all parties to the table... and include the other parcel... In the grand scheme of things it

would be better to include that piece."

Mr. Noriega made in clear on the record that he would initially try to negotiate with both parties, in the hope of coming to an agreement that would redevelop the entire eastern section of that block along North Miami Avenue.

But Mr. Noriega stressed that if a collective agreement couldn't be worked out, he would proceed with a two-party contract between the authority and Grand Station Partners.

And that is what occurred.

"To be frank, it's been absolutely frustrating," Mr. Noriega told the board last week, describing what he said were numerous attempts to get Mr. Mana to focus on the matter and sit down for a discussion.

"I get it," Mr. Noriega said, Mr. Mana is involved in a lot of projects in other areas of the city, but "that doesn't mean we have to be in a holding pattern."

Mr. Noriega said he put a lot of effort into making the project work for all parties.

"I stand by the recommendation wholeheartedly," Mr. Noriega said of the lease with Grand Station Partners.

Board member Marlon Hill stated, "We've done our part."

Ms. Reyes responded, "I'm ready to move forward, too."

Opened in 2010, Courthouse Center Garage is a multi-level structure with upper and lower office space and some retail space on the ground floor. The largest office user in the building is the parking agency itself, which takes up about 10,000 square feet on the top floor. A law firm also has part of the 11th floor, adjacent to the authority offices.



Caroline Taazieh, Pharmacist (left) and Kevin Barr, Medical Surgical Attendant (right) of Jackson North Medical Center.

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Ross Report on Real Estate

by Audrey Ross

Luxury Real Estate Prices Rose By Almost 13% in 2014

According to Knight Frank, in 2014 luxury prices rose by almost 13% on average across US cities. In comparison, globally luxury market prices only rose by 2%. The US market for ultra luxury properties is hot. These US properties are considered a global safe haven for the world's High Net Worth. The US market is quickly displacing the Asian market. Driven by a combination of factors including low interest rates, foreign investors that need a place to put their cash beyond the stock markets, sluggish economic growth worldwide, and market volatility, the US property market continues

its upward movement.

While in some respects the strong dollar has slowed down foreign investment, yet the draw to the US market remains very strong. Foreign buyers remain a significant catalytic force when it comes to luxury real estate sector in the US major domestic markets. Further, the major cities such as New York, Miami, Los Angeles and San Francisco have strong job growth, and are facing rapidly expanding populations.

Bottom Line - the luxury market is booming and driving many new residential development

projects. While in recent months, some US cities have seen foreign buyers cooled off a bit, but the demand is still strong. From a global perspective there are few places in the world better to invest in real estate now, and Miami sits among the top picks. While periods of sluggishness are expected, overall, this trend does not appear to be threatened anytime soon.

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Photos by Chris Carter

FIU students in master in physician assistant studies program await white coat ceremony. Dr. John Rock, medical school dean at FIU, congratulates one of 45 program members.

FIU develops degree to add 45 needed physician assistants

BY MARILYN BOWDEN

Medical students got their first white coats at FIU's Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine as part of ceremonies welcoming the inaugural class in a new Master in Physician Assistant Studies Program.

Eligibility for the program requires a bachelor of arts degree, preferably in science, as well as a number of specific courses in science and statistics. Upon completion of the 27-month, 92-credit-hour curriculum, graduates will be qualified to do many of the things a medical doctor can do, says Dr. Pete A. Gutierrez, associate dean and founding chair of the program.

Their role is much like that of a nurse practitioner, he says, though the training more closely resembles a medical residency, with the first year dedicated to didactic education and the second to supervised clinical rotations.

While physician assistant programs have been around since the late 1960s, Dr. Gutierrez says, an acute shortage of doctors has increased demand dramatically.

"There's a big shortage of doctors throughout the nation,"

he says. "Some medical schools are closing, and all have reduced enrollment. Also, many doctors are close to retirement.

"With Obamacare, doctors need to see twice as many patients as they used to in order to make the same amount of money. So physician assistants are filling in for family doctors. About half of patient complaints are not complicated — for example, they cut themselves and need sutures.

"The physician assistant," Dr. Gutierrez says, "can also spend more time on the educational portion, such as the best time for patients to take their medication.

"They're found in every field of medicine."

He says one thing a doctor can do but a physician assistant can't is prescribe narcotics.

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics lists doctors' offices; general medical and surgical hospitals; out-patient care centers; colleges, universities and professional schools; and the federal executive branch as industries with the highest level of employment in the physician assistant field.

"In 1998," Dr. Gutierrez says,

"there were maybe 62 physician assistant programs throughout the nation. By this time next year there will be more than 240. That's how much the profession has grown."

For its inaugural year, he said, FIU's program had close to 700 applications to fill 45 slots — "and we were not even accredited at that point. So far we have over 1,000 applicants for 2016."

This year's class consists of eight males and 37 females;

their average age is 25.

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Florida currently employs 5,020 physician assistants — the fourth highest employment level nationally after New York, California and Texas — at a mean annual wage of \$97,710.

The US Department of Labor projects a 38% growth in employment in the industry between 2012 and 2022.

FIU's Physician Assistant Studies Program, like any new

program, has provisional accreditation, Dr. Gutierrez says. He says that until it is fully accredited in four or five years, the number of students will remain fixed at 45. After that, it would be possible to change that number.

"I envision it growing," Dr. Gutierrez says, "but just a bit, because there are a lot of other issues involved, such as finding the clinical rotations that we want to send those kids to during the second year."

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Miami commissioners back OK of a self-storage facility

By JOHN CHARLES ROBBINS

Miami city commissioners are backing up the action of the city's planning director in granting permission for a self-storage facility to be built in Little Haiti.

Planning Director Francisco Garcia determined that developer Banner Storage Group LLC met the criteria to allow a multi-story public storage building at 5609 NE Second Ave.

Some neighboring property owners appealed and in June the city's Planning, Zoning and Appeals Board ultimately granted the appeal and denied the warrant.

Banner Storage then appealed that decision to the city commission.

The company plans to construct a five-story building as a self-storage business on the Northeast Second Avenue site, between Northeast 56th and 57th streets, in an area also known as Lemon City.

A history of the proposed project shows that the original plan was submitted to the city's planning and zoning department for review on July 29, 2014.

The project was referred to the Projects Review Committee for evaluation. The committee requested that the exterior design of the project be revised to conform to the Little Haiti - French Creole design standards. As a result of these comments, the exterior façade was modified.

The city's zoning code, Miami 21, allows a storage facility use in an Urban Core Transect Zone but requires a warrant be issued, which calls for a closer review of a proposal.

The application for the warrant was found sufficient. Mr. Garcia approved the warrant for the storage facility on March 13 with conditions.

The warrant lists several findings, including: "The proposed self-storage facility incorporates the Little Haiti - French Creole Design and is comparable in scale and massing with those around and thus appropriate for its context."

Other findings:



This is a rendering of a storage facility for 5609 NE Second Ave., in the Little Haiti neighborhood.

■ This proposal is for a new 70,384-square-foot self-storage facility, including 666 square feet of retail on the ground floor.

■ The applicant proposes nine parking spaces (four on-site and five on-street) where nine are required. The five on-street spaces are confirmed by the Miami Parking Authority.

The conditions include:

■ The applicant must provide the planning department with a temporary construction parking plan with an enforcement policy, and a construction noise management plan with an enforcement policy.

■ Provide a landscape plan in accordance with Miami 21.

■ All proposed signage must be reviewed and approved by separate permit application.

■ The maximum size of any individual rental space shall be 400 square feet.

■ Controlled access and adequate security surveillance must be provided.

■ Hours of operation are limited to 5 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Some neighbors complained a self-storage facility would be out of character for the neighborhood, which is mostly residential to the east.

Sandra Simioni and Joseph Pierre, abutting property owners, filed an appeal.

The Planning, Zoning and Appeals Board on June 3 first

voted on a motion to deny the neighbors' appeal but the motion failed by a vote of 5 to 6. Later, a motion to grant the appeal passed 7 to 4.

By taking the matter to the city commission for resolution, the developer said the June 3 decision to approve Mr. Pierre's and Ms. Simioni's appeal and rescind the planning director's issuance of the warrant was not based on substantial competent evidence.

"The appellants did not present any substantial competent evidence to demonstrate that the City's Planning Director erred in approving [the warrant]," said the developer's representative, in requesting a reversal of the June 3 decision.

Ines Marrero-Priegues, an attorney representing Banner Storage, told commissioners her client followed all requirements necessary to get the warrant.

Mr. Garcia explained that because storage uses can adversely impact an area, a request must

meet a higher standard through the warrant process.

Miami 21 has criteria that must be met to ensure there are no adverse impacts, he said.

If an applicant complies with all the criteria, "we must then find and approve the warrant," Mr. Garcia said.

Opponents said the project doesn't meet all the criteria and is incompatible with the neighborhood.

Mr. Garcia said zoning allows five stories and the project complies with Miami 21.

Opponents referred to the neighborhood getting an arts and entertainment designation several years ago, and said a storage business wouldn't fit in.

Ms. Marrero-Priegues said the sole purpose of that designation was to allow more liquor permits to encourage development of bars, cafes, shops and so on. She said it was a "red herring" and the arts and entertainment designation wouldn't prohibit the self-storage facility.

Ms. Simioni told commissioners the designation of the arts and entertainment district was made to improve the neighborhood. "I fail to see how this will bring anything to the district," she said of the storage facility.

Ms. Simioni asked commissioners to "support the neighborhood" and not allow the storage business.

Ms. Marrero-Priegues countered that "there is no basis to deny the warrant."

Commission Chairman Wilfredo "Willy" Gort asked what other types of development would be allowed under the existing zoning.

Mr. Garcia said all commercial, office and residential uses allowed under the Urban Core Transect Zone.

Commissioner Keon Hardemon said Miami 21 is very clear: if criteria are met, a warrant "shall" be granted.

While Mr. Hardemon said he sympathized with neighbors opposing the project, "I must consider the property rights of the owner."

He added, "We can't deny the warrant—it's not lawfully within our power."

Mr. Hardemon also recognized that the developer altered the plan to accommodate the neighborhood by expanding the ground floor retail space and offering storage and meeting space for the community.

Mr. Hardemon successfully moved to reverse the planning board and allow the warrant.

Commissioner Frank Carollo agreed, saying that although neighbors made a strong argument, "we can't go by our heart." In regard to Mr. Garcia, he said, "I don't see where he erred."

MIA launches its Asia Task Force

By CARLA VIANNA

Miami International Airport officially launched its Asia Task Force last week to boost the airport's efforts in establishing nonstop service to China, Taiwan or surrounding areas — a route expansion the airport aims to solidify within the next two years.

About 45 community members and county officials attended the airport's first task force meeting Nov. 12, when Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez and Miami-Dade Aviation Director Emilio González invited various stakeholders in the community to back the airport in securing the route expansion.

Hospital professionals, cruise line employees and university representatives in attendance were asked to fill out brief surveys about their institutions' travel habits to Asia.

"One of the things I never really thought about is the number of Asians [working] on cruise liners," Mr. González told Miami Today. "But apparently the number is pretty high." A robust Asian population studying at lo-

cal universities and an uptick in medical tourism were also noted during the meeting, he said.

Additional surveys will be sent to those in South Florida's business and Asian communities who would benefit from nonstop service to Asia, to better understand the local demand, Mr. González said.

"You want to try and capture as much information as possible [about] the folks that are here permanently, the folks that visit here and the folks that work here; then start looking to see which carrier would best fit the needs of the Asian community in South Florida," he said.

All data will be compiled and eventually presented to Asian air carriers at future task force meetings.

MIA is interested in about 10 airlines that are able to make the long-haul trip, which would possibly be the world's longest route. The 10 or so air carriers will be invited to Miami once enough data has been collected.

This summer the airport announced it was in deep talks with two Taiwan-based airlines capable of completing the long-haul flight: China Airlines and

EVA Air. Officials from both airlines recently visited Miami, Mr. González said.

Discussions with both airlines will continue separate from the airport's task force efforts. The idea of creating a task force to better market a city to its desired air carriers isn't unique to Miami. InterVISTAS, the airport's route network consulting firm, has implemented similar concepts at other US airports, Mr. González said.

Miami is the only major metropolitan area without nonstop service to China, Taiwan or surrounding areas, he said. It's also the furthest geographical point from that region. Only a specific number of airlines operate an aircraft capable of flying such a long route, but still, the airport's officials remain optimistic.

MIA's desire to enter Asian air is backed by a steady increase in passenger traffic over the past five years. Passenger numbers between Asia and Miami grew by 3.6% each year since 2009 and hit a historic high in 2014, when 271,000 passengers flew between the two destinations.

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Miami Design District developers prep Paradise Plaza

By CARLA VIANNA

A block-long construction site buzzes with activity between Northeast 41st and 42nd Streets at a site dubbed Paradise Plaza, where 60 more ultra-luxury, brand-name stores will open at the end of next year or early 2017.

Towering cranes and closed roads clearly paint the picture of an evolving neighborhood to any passerby in the Design District — Miami's newest shopping mecca rising from the dirt.

Dacra, the Miami Beach-based developer credited with much of the neighborhood's transformation, is working on its second phase of development that will duplicate the open-air, two-story shopping plaza called Palm Court on Northwest 39th Street. The store-lined passageway — Paseo Ponti — that connects pedestrians from the street to the existing plaza will be extended across city blocks from Palm Court to the new Paradise Plaza.

Fifty of the sixty stores planned for Dacra's first phase are now complete. Another five should be open by Christmas, with the remainder opening early next year, said Steven Gretenstein, VP & COO at Dacra.

Cartier, Hermès and Louis Vuitton are among flagship stores now open.

Dacra also has a 119-key boutique hotel in the works. Shovels will dig into the ground on the



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Work has commenced on Paseo Ponti, pedestrian walkway leading to Dacra's new Paradise Plaza.

northwest corner of Northeast 39th Street and Northeast First Avenue early next year to begin construction of the 10-story building.

"Nobody, really, is putting a shovel in the ground," said Lyle Chariff, except the projects in which his real estate firm, Chariff Realty Group, and Dacra are involved with.

He went on to list the several reasons why cranes and closed roads dot the neighborhood's façade.

On the southeastern corner of the district, Amicon Construction is busy working on what will soon house the Brown Jordan furniture company's second US location. The land at 3625 NE Second Av-

enue was previously owned by Chariff Realty Group, but recently sold, Mr. Chariff said.

The 6,000-square-foot, two-story building, designed by architect Touzet Studio, will have a 3,000-square-foot rooftop entertainment deck. Although the building is composed of only two stories, with high ceilings, the exterior is closer to six stories in height.

"It's the first design of that caliber on that part of the district," he said, adding that the store is to be completed by Art Basel in December.

About one block to the north, on the corner of Northeast 38th Street and Northeast Second Avenue, another piece of land recently sold by Chariff will be

home to a two-story building comprised of 9,000 square feet of ground floor retail, an 8,000-square-foot mezzanine and a rooftop deck; also designed by Touzet Studio. The former Power Studios site sold for \$14 million to New York City-based real estate firm Wharton Equity Partners, Mr. Chariff said.

A large tenant described as a "design-type business" is in negotiations for the whole top floor and rooftop, he said.

Moving closer to the district's center-of-action, a mixed-use seven-story commercial building called Design 41 is rising on Northeast 41st Street. The building will offer office suites ranging from 1,500 square feet to a

full 9,000-square-foot floor, "high-street" retail space, and an 11,000 square-foot rooftop restaurant and lounge, according to the project's website.

The project is a joint venture of Florida Overseas Investment Center and Design District Development Partners LLC. The building is to be approved for occupancy during the third quarter of 2016, said Dan Fickett, Design 41 creative director.

Another building is under construction on the same street, next to the de la Cruz Collection Contemporary Art Space, Mr. Chariff said. The new "state-of-the-art museum-quality building" will be nestled between the de la Cruz and Institute of Contemporary Art's new location. Currently the project is tenant-less.

The ICA broke ground on its new 37,500-square-foot building at 61 NE 41st St. on Monday.

Another construction project is ongoing at 73 NE 40th St., on a site that's been under the same ownership for 35 years. The owner knocked down the former business and is rebuilding a 4,500-square-foot retail store with a rooftop terrace, Mr. Chariff said.

"Those are the actual buildings being built as we speak," he said. "Most of the people that own stuff or have acquired stuff are kind of in the planning stages and working on entitlements. As they do that, they're hoping and expecting that the rates in the market will go up."

ICA Miami begins work on permanent 37,500 sq ft home

By SUSAN DANSEYAR

The Institute for Contemporary Art broke ground on its new, permanent home in the Design District this week and unveiled plans for the new 37,500-square-foot building.

Designed by the Spanish firm Aranguren & Gallegos Arquitectos, in collaboration with Wolfberg Alvarez, ICA Miami will feature 20,000 square feet of exhibition galleries and a 15,000-square-foot sculpture garden on Northeast 41st Street.

Scheduled to open in mid-2017, the new museum's mission is to provide an international platform for the work of what officials describe as the most experimental artists practicing today.

The design and construction of the new museum, along with the acquisition of land for the sculpture garden, has been funded entirely by a major capital gift from Irma and Norman Braman.

"The start of construction on the new building marks a significant milestone for the museum and for Miami, which has the most supportive and engaged cultural communities in the coun-



The Institute for Contemporary Art's new location boasts 20,000 square feet of exhibition galleries and a sculpture garden. The northern façade seen here will bring in natural light to the galleries.

try," said ICA Miami's incoming Director Ellen Salpeter, who begins at the museum on Dec. 1. In a written statement, she said she's thrilled to be joining as the next critical phase of institutional development begins, and to be working with ICA Miami's staff and board.

The southern façade, which will serve as the main entrance to the new museum, features a geometric layer of interlocking metal triangles and lighted panels that will change colors.

The northern façade, in contrast, features a curtain wall system of windows, which will bring natural light into the museum's

galleries, and allow visitors to take in views of the sculpture garden and the Design District. Ground-level galleries will flow and open into the sculpture garden.

The interior of the new museum will include a variety of multipurpose areas and adjustable gallery spaces for artist installations, exhibitions, and performances that ICA Miami presents, as well as increase space for educational and community programming.

The galleries and alternative work areas, including several visible halls and continuous exterior and interior paths, will feature elevated ceilings and support for

state-of-the-art acoustic and lighting technologies.

"The new ICA Miami has been designed as a dynamic and open forum for visitors of all ages to engage with the art of our time," said Irma Braman, co-chair of the museum's board of trustees. "With this groundbreaking, we are one step closer to our goal of creating a new cultural landmark for the city that will stand as a symbol of Miami's growing and vibrant visual arts community, and serve as a vital public and educational resource for audiences throughout the region and beyond," she said.

The design of the new building

responds to the needs of "an energetic, experimental art museum that requires spatial flexibility, and will empower us to continue to support the work of innovative contemporary artists, whose evolving practices require increasingly adaptable and creative spaces," said Alex Gartenfeld, deputy director and chief curator of ICA Miami.

"We look forward to being able to provide Miami with a broader scope of exhibitions and programming that will increase the public's understanding and appreciation of contemporary art, and enliven the city's cultural landscape," Mr. Gartenfeld said.

As plans for the new building move forward, ICA Miami continues to operate in its temporary location in the Moore building, 4040 NE Second Ave.

A major solo exhibition of video and performance artist Alex Bag and a comprehensive presentation of Shannon Ebner's photography will be on view during this year's Art Basel Miami Beach in December. Museum officials say both exhibitions speak to the rapidly advancing media culture of contemporary society.

Luxury retailers continue to be drawn to Design District

BY CATHERINE LACKNER

As the Design District rolls along toward completion and brand-name stores continue to open their doors, retailers of all kinds are signing up, for a variety of reasons, observers say.

Dacra, developer of the luxury shopping village, has recent signed leases for the only Florida locations of Joseph, Alice & Olivia, Zilli and Isabel Marant, and the only US location for Sevan Biçakçi. The original flagship of Be Miami, a high-end sneaker and contemporary street wear retailer, is set to open late this year or in early 2016.

Between Sept. 3 and Nov. 5, Tom Ford, Fendi, ECJ Luxe, and Hermès opened. Lanvin moved into its permanent space. Saint Laurent, Tory Burch, Tod's and Loro Piana also signed leases.

"The opening of Hermès, for me, was a tipping point," said Dacra President and CEO Craig Robins. "We've turned a corner and have transitioned from a construction site to having a substantial and robust group of stores open in a kind of free-standing neighborhood that doesn't exist in the rest of Miami."

Dacra has also signed specialty stores such as perfume house Creed (its first location outside New York), cult skincare line Aesop, and the first US location of high-end Italian marble furniture showroom Citco, which will feature a collection by "starchitect" Zaha Hadid.

Already open or set to begin by 2016 are Christian Louboutin, Christian Louboutin Men's, Maison Martin Margiela, Dior Homme, Louis Vuitton, Berluti, Celine, Rick Owens, Zadig & Voltaire, Loewe, Delpozo, and Marc by Marc Jacobs. Alice & Olivia and Diane von Furstenberg are projected to open in 2017.

While Dacra has landed the brand-name leases, Chariff Realty Group handles 90% of leases to non-major-brand stores, said principal Lyle Chariff.



Photos by Maxine Usdan

Sunshine, art and luxury brand name stores bring out shoppers to the Miami Design District.

"Every tenant has a different story and a different classification," he said. "You have smaller businesses opening near brand-name stores, hoping to get the runoff of the big anchors. There is a big herd effect," he said.

These tenants are willing to pay more per square foot (\$300 compared to \$150, for instance) than the big names, he added. "They want to be next door to a name that's known across the world. It's the normal course of action."

Fans of those stores, like a European couple Mr. Chariff recently encountered, "are on a laser-guided mission to land in Hermès. These buyers are loyal; they will seek out and travel any distance to go and make their purchase."

The luxury retailers "are always going to do well. They could be anywhere," he said. Whether the smaller boutiques and stores with non-name brands will be as successful is another question.

Unlike Aventura Mall and Bal Harbour, the Design District is still under construction, so it's not as easy to evaluate, Mr. Chariff said. "There are always going to be naysayers, and some people are taking a wait-and-see attitude. Some people won't come where there's dust, so you can't evaluate it based on what you see today.

"Dacra is doing an amazing job at marketing it and being very selective and strategic in who they lease to," he said. "Architects are designing stores here in ways that have never been done." The developer's music and art events for families and young people showcase the center, he said.

"Tenants who are coming in now have a head start and they're getting locked into a specific location, but tenants coming in at the end will have the advantage of that marketing," Mr. Chariff said. The ones who are interested but haven't signed leases yet "will have to calculate the cost of waiting in their business model to see if the vision of Dacra to make this a spectacular destination is realized."

Brown Jordan, a manufacturer of luxury outdoor furniture since 1945, is set to open its 8,600-square-foot flagship in time for Art Basel in early December. Located at 3625 NE Second Ave., its showroom was designed by Touzet Studio, named 2015 Miami Architect of the Year by the American Institute of Architects. The brand's portfolio of more than 30 collections features furniture from noted designers including Michael Smith, Richard Frinier, Michael Berman and John Caldwell.

The decision to open in the

Design District was motivated by a desire to "show off our collections to all channels," said Jim Hardy, Brown Jordan president. "It's omni-channel marketing," meaning the showroom will welcome everyone from retailers and buyers for hospitality chains to designers and consumers. "No matter who you are, you can get the depth, breadth, and fullness of what Brown Jordan has to offer."

Miami and the Design District were natural choices, not only because of the warm weather and affluent pool of buyers, but because of what Mr. Hardy calls "the creativity and electric energy."

While South Beach was once the focus of that energy, "What's going on now on the mainland — in Wynwood, Midtown, and Brickell — is equally energizing.

It's visionary. And design has always been right here."

Art and architecture were the attraction for Tamara Medvedeva, co-owner with sister Julie Medvedeva of Sartorial Miami, its first store in the US. The shop at 111 NE 40 St. carries Italian high-end men's clothing that is extremely successful in Europe (particularly in Italy) and in Russia.

"Sartorial reflects the founding vision: to provide a personalized luxury shopping experience to gentlemen with discerning taste," said Tamara Medvedeva in a release.

"Sartorial's carefully curated selection of luxury menswear is a virtual tour of Italian style, craftsmanship and creativity. Their best work is often difficult to find in the United States. These offerings include ultra-fine cashmere polos; limited-edition Jacob Cohen denim; Kiton, Castangia and Pal Zileri suits and jackets; hand-sewn Marol and Luigi Borrelli shirts; and Borsalino hats. Shoe collections and accessories feature crocodile and leather detailing from brands including Cesare Paciotti, Sergio Rossi, A Testoni, and Barrett."

Given the ongoing construction, there is not a lot of foot traffic right now, observers say. Ms. Medvedeva predicted that within five years, that will all change.

"The Design District targets people who really appreciate luxury goods, and the art and architecture here will bring them in," she said.



A bit of window shopping in Miami Design District outside Fendi.

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MIAMI TODAY

Northeast expansion of Design District to bring benefits

By JOHN CHARLES ROBBINS

The expansion of the Design District to its northeast corner will not only bring 82 new residential units and more commercial square footage to the booming neighborhood, but also millions of dollars in taxes, fees and other improvements.

It was a selling point made by developers earlier this year in gaining an expansion of the Design District boundary from the Miami City Commission.

A firm called 4201 NE 2nd Avenue LLC joined Miami Design District Associates LLC in requesting the footprint of the Design District be expanded to the north.

Commissioners who approved the expansion applauded the expansive work to redevelop the blocks north of I-195 into a luxury retail destination.

Keon Hardemon, vice chair of the commission, said he appreciated all of the work to bring positive change to the area.

"I appreciate what's happening there," he said.

The commission approved three resolutions to: amend the future land use designation of the added property; amend the original Special Area Plan under the Miami 21 zoning code for the district; and approve a new development agreement for the area.

This amends the previously approved "Miami Design District Retail Street Special Area Plan" by adding additional properties located at approximately 220 NE 43rd Street. The block was home to a church for decades.

The purpose of a Special Area Plan is to allow parcels greater than nine abutting acres in size



Photo by Maxine Usdan

The development site at 220 NE 43rd St. used to be home to a church and is ready for new growth.

to be master planned to provide greater integration of public and private improvements and infrastructure, and "greater flexibility so as to result in higher or specialized quality building and streetscape design."

The original Special Area Plan for the district was approved by city commissioners in July 2012, with general boundaries of Northeast 43rd Street to the north, North Federal Highway and Biscayne Boulevard to the east, Northeast 38th Street to the south and Northeast Miami Court and North Miami Avenue to the west.

The addition of the two new properties will increase the number of total proposed residential units, and the amount of retail space and open space in the overall Design District. The site is being developed by Helm Equities.

Development of the site is expected to include about 82 residential units, approximately 70,000 square feet of commercial

uses, parking for more than 300 vehicles, civic space of about 4,049 square feet and about 5,264 square feet of open space.

The Planning and Zoning Department recommended the changes.

A staff analysis of the expansion said it would benefit the area by creating an enhanced program of residential units, commercial uses, as well as civic and open space for the enjoyment of the general public, "generating public benefits within the development, resulting in higher or specialized quality building and streetscape design."

The expansion keeps the intent to provide mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented retail uses within an urban development, meeting the Miami 21 development concept in the interaction with the surrounding areas of Miami, the analysis says.

The project was deemed "critically important" to the economic revitalization and enhancement of the Design District, staff said,

and consequently a positive impact to the city in general by creating recurring and non-recurring financial benefits as well as temporary and permanent jobs.

Javier E. Fernandez, an attorney representing both applicants, said the planned public space will provide abutting neighbors with a needed recreational amenity, and complement the linear park improvements proposed by Miami Design District Associates for portions of Northeast 42nd Street.

Mr. Fernandez said all of the added improvements "will provide a rational terminus of the commercial district and an appropriate transition to the abutting residential neighborhoods to the north and guard against future commercial encroachment."

Residents of the adjacent Brentwood and Buena Vista residential neighborhoods welcomed the change, in large part because it will bring more parking and green space to the area.

In a letter to Helm Equities, Mr. Fernandez cited the results of an analysis of the fiscal and economic benefits of developing the new site.

Recurring benefits to the city include an estimated \$472,556 annually in taxes. Non-recurring benefits to the city from building permits and impact fees are expected to total \$878,788. Miami-Dade County will benefit in part from an estimated \$1,166,885 in road impact fees (non-recurring), according to the economic analysis.

"Development of the ... [site] is estimated to exceed \$37 million in hard costs. An additional \$9.25 million will be expended for soft costs inclusive of architectural and engineering fees, marketing, leasing and sales commissions, and project overhead. Accordingly, the project will cost a total of \$46.25 million to develop exclusive of land costs and developer fee/profit," the letter reads.

In late September, the city commission approved a request from 4201 NE 2nd Avenue LLC to abandon a 10-foot wide platted utility easement on the site, creating a unified development site.

The city's planning and zoning staff recommended approval of the abandonment.

A staff memo noted: "The proposed utility easement closure is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan. This closure will facilitate cohesive development, economic growth, and revitalization, as the proposed development on this block is within the Miami Design District Retail Street [Special Area Plan] SAP."

Nearby residential projects want to share Design District name

By CARLA VIANNA

High-end shops and a restaurant here and there leave little room for high-rises in the core of Miami's Design District.

Sitting on top of Midtown and Wynwood, where about 1,000 condo units and 2,100 rental apartments hang in the pipeline, the Design District itself caters more to shoppers than to local homebuyers or condo investors.

To the north of the district sits Buena Vista, the historical residential neighborhood boasting classic Neo-Mediterranean homes, smaller single-family homes and duplexes. The district is surrounded by pockets of older neighborhoods showcasing single-family homes priced at several levels.

At 48 NW 39th St., west of the district's main shopping attractions, a three-bedroom house built in 1948 is selling for \$750,000. Less than a quarter-mile away, a two-bedroom home on Northwest 40th Street is selling for about half that price.

On Northeast 44th Street, north of the district and east of North Miami Avenue, two five-bedroom homes are selling for well over \$1 million, and a three-bedroom house at 159 NE 45th



District 36 is just one mixed-use development poised to bring residential close to the Design District.

St., north of the district, is selling for \$2.49 million.

Dacra, the developer credited with transforming the Design District into a high-end shopping destination, has included a residential component in its master development plan, although further details have not yet been released.

While Dacra is currently focused on commercial projects, other developers are pursuing residential development in the area, said Steven Gretenstein, VP & COO at Dacra. "Eventually we'll do it, but it's not in the pipeline right now," he said.

District 36, wedged between

the meshed boundaries of the Design District and Midtown, and Baltus House, located between the eastern edge of the district and the Bay Point waterfront neighborhood, were among projects Mr. Gretenstein pointed to.

The first, a 19-story tower composed of retail space and almost 200 rental apartments, is under construction at 3635 NE First Ave. The targeted completion date is October 2016.

The 15-story Baltus House was completed this year, adding 167 condo units to the market. Developed by The Related Group, the condo tower at 4250 Biscayne Blvd. finished closing

on its units in September, said Javier Cuadros, a project manager for the developer. About 20% of buyers were end-users; the rest were second-home buyers from Latin America.

Prices started at \$300,000 and went up to \$850,000, Mr. Cuadros said.

"When we launched Baltus House, we pretty much launched it as the first residential building in the Design District," he said.

The Design District is now a global magnet for high-end retail. The incoming stores will generate jobs, which will subsequently generate demand for

more residences, Mr. Cuadros said.

Another proposed development promises to bring 38 luxury townhomes to the district. Although it sits east of Biscayne Boulevard, One Bay Residences, proposed at 455 NE 39th St., markets itself as a Design District project.

With 40% of its homes under reservation, the developer — Chile-based G & L Real Estate Development — expects to break ground in December, said Linette Guerra, One Bay's sales and marketing director. Most of the interest so far has come from local buyers looking to occupy the home year-round, she said.

The two- to three-bedroom boutique townhomes will start at \$600,000 and go up to \$1.4 million, Ms. Guerra said. Each are adorned with a rooftop terrace, a summer kitchen, Jacuzzi and an indoor garage.

Meanwhile, Dacra's long-term plans will emphasize a work-live-play environment offering housing to those who work and shop in the neighborhood.

"We think there is a significant residential demand," Mr. Gretenstein said on behalf of Dacra. "It is a component of the overall master plan."

Commercial land values soar in popular shopping venue

By CARLA VIANNA

As the Tory Burches of retail move in, the real estate values move up.

Miami's Design District is poised to become the Rodeo Drive of South Florida, and developers are catching on. The emerging neighborhood's impressive catalog of top-shelf merchandise and world renowned brands is giving Miami Beach's Lincoln Road a run for its money.

"These are Lincoln Road prices," said Lyle Chariff, founder and owner of Chariff Realty Group. "These are New York prices."

New York-based developers, a unique group of professionals accustomed to swapping land at sky-high prices, are flying south to buy the district's now-scarce parcels. Developers like TriStar, Brooklyn-based RedSky Capital and London-based JZ Capital are paying close to—or more than—\$3,000 per square foot for Design District property. They're amassing swaths of dirt and buildings in a neighborhood whose real estate values are on a fast-lane to the top.

"They have the vision," Mr. Chariff said. "They assume that we're going to be able to keep bringing these [high-end] tenants, and eventually there will be the sales to justify the rent that will justify the property



Photos by Maxine Usdan

Louis Vuitton is just one of the many growing luxury retail offerings in the booming Design District.

values."

Mr. Chariff said land prices are as high as \$4,000 per square foot, whether there's an existing building on the site or not.

"Very few places in the world other than New York have prices of these levels," he said.

Property at the edge of the district, on Northeast Second Avenue and Northeast 36th and 42nd Streets, is trading for \$2,000 to \$2,500 per square foot. But at the district's core, numbers approach \$4,000, he said.

The experienced developers closing in on the area understand what a top-of-the-market district can look like and appreciate the corresponding rental values, said Ken Krasnow, ex-

ecutive managing director of South Florida at Colliers International.

"I don't think they're deterred from a rapid rise in values because there is such high demand from companies wanting to be in the Design District," Mr. Krasnow said.

The more developers buy and the more luxury brands flood in, the more solid the district's values become, said Steven Gretenstein, VP & COO at Dacra. The recent interest by a number of developers, he said, validates the district's high-valued market.

But there are few sellers on the market at this point in time. Supply is increasingly scarce, said Tony Arellano, executive

VP of Metro 1 Commercial. He believes owners will hold onto their property as the district continues to evolve.

"These are irreplaceable assets," Mr. Arellano said. "The Design District, in my opinion, is just getting started."



Big, bold and colorful public art installations accent the district.

Design District fosters 'artistic environment' for school

By CATHERINE LACKNER

The Design and Architecture High School enjoys a degree of community support and participation that can only be described as "incredible," according to

Stacey Mancuso, its principal.

The school at 4001 NE Second Ave. is truly interwoven with the artistic environment of the Design District, and students have ample opportunities to experience the careers to which they aspire,

she added.

"Our location in the Design District is crucial," Ms. Mancuso said. In addition to core courses required of all high school students, there are programs in fine art, interior design and architec-

ture, visual communications, industrial design, entertainment technology and fashion design.

DASH, as it's known, is ranked No. 2 among high schools by the State of Florida (after the International Studies Charter High School, also in Miami) and the No. 21 high school in the country by US News and World Report magazine. It prides itself on being "the premier design high school in the nation."

"We've received incredible support from [Dacra developer] Craig Robins," Ms. Mancuso said. "He's been with us since the beginning and is very active. He brings artists here, creates internships for our students, and endorses them," as they begin their careers and look for opportunities, she said.

Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz and the Knight Foundation together gave the school \$500,000 to fund a pre-college program that sends 38 students to New York for three weeks each summer to study at trend-setting institutions including the Parsons School of Design and the School of Visual Arts.

"They take courses that are not in their program here—someone who is interested in fashion design might study architecture, for instance—and come back with three college credits," Ms. Mancuso said.

As students at the art schools, they also have discounted access to New York's museums, arts events, and Broadway plays. They become, if only temporarily, part of that city's arts community.

"It's a wonderful experience for them," Ms. Mancuso said.

Each month, one student's portfolio is featured on the school's website. In their junior and senior years, students can spend every other afternoon interning for artists, craftspeople, architects or other established local businesspeople. They can build their networks, get academic credits for their work and are paid if they work beyond school hours, she said.

"Many of them end up being hired if they do good work. That connection with the community is so powerful," said Ms. Mancuso.

Saturday, Nov. 14, the school was scheduled to hold Taste of Design, its yearly fund-raiser. Local restaurants voluntarily committed to preparing enough food to feed 400 at no cost to the school, and many owners of local galleries and showrooms donated pieces to be part of a silent auction, said Ms. Mancuso, who is retiring this year after 42 years in education, the past 17 years at DASH. This year's Taste of Design will be a tribute to her, according to the school's website.

"We have been the beneficiary of so much generosity, both within and outside of the school," she said.

"The staff is incredibly committed to what we are and what we do. I've been very, very fortunate to have been here. I leave every day with a smile on my face. Not many principals can say that," Ms. Mancuso said.



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Design and Architecture Senior High (DASH) Principal Stacey Mancuso (center) watches Kelley Kwiatkowski (right) instruct student Rachel Jean-Mary on the finer points of industrial design.

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Court sides with City of Miami in revived mortgage litigation

In another important legal victory for the City of Miami, the US Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit recently denied petitions for rehearing filed by Wells Fargo, Bank of America, and Citigroup, after the court previously reversed a federal district court's decision to throw out three lawsuits the city brought against the banks for alleged discriminatory mortgage lending practices.

Miami filed the lawsuits against Bank of America, Wells Fargo, and Citigroup in late 2013, alleging these banks violated the federal Fair Housing Act by engaging in a lengthy pattern and practice of steering minority borrowers into more expensive and higher risk mortgages than loans that

were issued to similarly-situated white borrowers.

By filing the lawsuits, Miami seeks to vindicate the city's long-standing objective of providing residents with all of the personal, professional, and societal benefits of living in an integrated community, along with recovering damages incurred by the city when borrowers defaulted on these more expensive and riskier loans and the properties entered foreclosure.

This resulted in a reduction in property taxes collected by the city, as well as additional expenditures to alleviate the blight and dangerous conditions that existed in the neighborhoods where the foreclosed properties were located.

The city also seeks to prevent these banks from continuing to issue more expensive and riskier loans to minorities in the future, thereby reducing the number of foreclosures that will plague the city's neighborhoods.

On Sept. 1, the appellate court issued a unanimous opinion reversing the District Court's order of dismissal of the Fair Housing Act claim.

The court held that (1) Miami possesses legal standing to pursue its claim under governing Supreme Court and Eleventh Circuit precedent, (2) the lawsuits adequately allege the city's damages were caused by the banks' unlawful conduct, and (3) the "continuing violations" doc-

trine applies to the lengthy pattern and practice of issuing more expensive and riskier loans, even if the types of loans issued are not identical because the focus is on the discriminatory practice itself, not the particular characteristics of the mortgage loans themselves.

Wells Fargo, Bank of America, and Citigroup filed Petitions for Rehearing asserting that the three judge panel erred when it held that the continuing violations doctrine applies to the city's claim. Bank of America and Citigroup also filed Petitions for Rehearing En Banc challenging the panel's conclusion that the city had standing to proceed with its claim.

Miami airport announces new and improved mobile app

By CARLA VIANNA

Miami International Airport has a new mobile application in the works, which will be a new and improved version of its existing app – MIA Airport Official – that launched last November.

The second version of the app will be released early next year, airport officials said.

The current app allows a user to search for flight information and record where he or she parked. It also shows the different parking fees associated with the airport's various parking facilities. Additional features include a dining and shopping directory equipped with maps, ground transportation information, an airport map, and an "Around Me" portal that allows passengers to pinpoint their location and view all amenities within a five-minute walk.

"We put out last year a way-finding app for the Miami International Airport, knowing that we were going to have to update it right away," said the county's aviation director Emilio T. González.

Describing the app as "state-of-the-art" and "unlike anything at any other airport," Mr. González said the mobile platform will be integrated with the airport's beacon technology. Beacons, tiny location transmitters based throughout MIA's terminals, can interact and send notifications to mobile devices. Miami's airport has 500 beacons installed on its grounds.

Beacons will be used to communicate with passengers via the new airport app, acting as a personal airport guide, Mr. González said. The new app will quickly inform passengers about flight delays, gate changes and the number of minutes they have before boarding commences.

"If the first one was 1.0," he said, "this is going to be 3.0." The airport is skipping version 2.0 altogether. Within one year, the app's first version was downloaded nearly 59,000 times.

The airport director stressed that within two years, MIA went from an airport that lacked a social media presence to one with an award-winning social networking platform. Pushing forward with mobile solutions for its passengers is one way

the airport is adapting current technology to operate more efficiently.

MIA has also worked with the US Customs and Border Protection to make the department's Mobile Passport

available for its passengers. When the airport adapted the technology in February, it was one of two US airports to do so.

Also a mobile application, the Mobile Passport expedited a passenger's entry into the US.

It allows travelers to enter and submit their passport and customs declaration information on their smartphone or tablet.

When a traveler's documentation is approved, he or she can move to the front of the line

and scan their smartphone or tablet, Mr. González said, adding that about 50% of MIA's passengers qualify to use the app due to legal restrictions regarding US citizenship and residency.



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CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

A public hearing will be held by the City Commission of the City of Miami, Florida on December 10, 2015, at 9:00 a.m., in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall, 3500 Pan American Drive, Miami, Florida, 33133, for the purpose of waiving the requirements of obtaining sealed bids for the sole source purchase of one hundred fifty-four (154) video event recorders with related equipment, at an amount not to exceed \$199,079.00, from Lytx, Inc., located at 18911 Balboa Avenue, Suite 200, San Diego California, 92123, for the Department of Solid Waste.

Inquiries from other potential sources of such a package who feel that they might be able to satisfy the City's requirements for this item may contact Pearl Bethel, Procurement Contracting Manager, at the City of Miami Procurement Department at (305) 416-1949.

All interested persons are invited to appear and may be heard concerning such proposed acquisition. Should any person desire to appeal any decision of the City Commission with respect to any matter considered at this hearing, that person shall ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, including all testimony and evidence upon which any appeal may be based (F.S.286.0105).

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, persons needing special accommodations to participate in the proceeding may contact the Office of the City Clerk at (305) 250-5361 (Voice) no later than two (2) business days prior to the proceeding or TTY users may call via 711 (Florida Relay Service) no later than three (3) business days prior to the proceeding.



#22736

Todd B. Hannon
City Clerk

CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

A public hearing will be held by the City Commission of the City of Miami, Florida on December 10, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall, 3500 Pan American Drive, Miami, Florida, for the purpose of waiving the requirements of obtaining sealed bids for the procurement of five (5) High Definition Pan-Tilt Zoom Camera Systems with Installation, for the Department of Fire-Rescue, from Earthworks, Inc., d/b/a as Weatherbug, a Non-Minority/Non-Local vendor, located at 12410 Milestone Center Drive, Suite 300, Germantown, MD, 20876, for an amount not to exceed \$46,250.00;

Funds will be allocated from Urban Area Security Initiative ("UASI") Grant Program Project No. 18-180064; Task – 01.02.01; Award No. 2121; Expenditure Type – Equipment; Expenditure Organization – 189000 General Ledger Account No. 11100189000.664000.0000.00000.

Inquiries from other potential sources of such a product who feel that they might be able to satisfy the City's requirement for this item may contact Richard D. McLaren, City of Miami Department of Purchasing, at (305) 416-1958.

All interested persons are invited to appear and may be heard concerning such proposed acquisition. Should any person desire to appeal any decision of the City Commission with respect to any matter considered at this hearing, that person shall ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, including all testimony and evidence upon which any appeal may be based (F.S.286.0105).

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22737

Todd B. Hannon
City Clerk

New book tracks Merrick, visionary Coral Gables creator

By Laura Albritton

For a lesson in sheer entrepreneurial chutzpah, you could not find a more dramatic South Florida saga than *George Merrick, Son of the South Wind: Visionary Creator of Coral Gables*.

In this new biography, historian Arva Moore Parks chronicles the extraordinary rise – and precipitous fall – of a true Miami pioneer. Out of “rocky, palmetto-choked pineland,” George Merrick created a nationally famous landmark city, a feat as remarkable in the 1920s as the modern emergence of Abu Dhabi and Dubai from the sands of the Emirati desert.

Ms. Parks, former chairman of the Coral Gables Museum and author of a wide range of books on South Florida history, initially delves into Merrick’s distant ancestors, grandparents and parents. While readers may be tempted to skip ahead to the Miami material, one cannot miss the



An aerial view of The Colonnade rotunda (left) on the corner of Ponce De Leon Blvd. and Miracle Mile, in 1926.

story of his grandfather, Henry Fink, and his wildly profitable snake oil, “Fink’s Magic Oil,” used to treat “Chills and Fever, Cholera” and other ailments.

As the biographer points out, Fink “achieved this remarkable success by hiring a group of salesmen and launching an aggressive and creative advertising campaign – a skill he would pass on to his grandson, George Merrick.”

Ms. Parks painstakingly traces

each step on Merrick’s journey, as George and his father Solomon first arrive in Miami in 1899 to discover “their life savings invested in this inhospitable, rocky piece of real estate.”

While the reality plunged his minister father into a profound depression, 13-year-old George Merrick threw himself into the challenge of transforming the land, first by cultivating grapefruit and eventually by

acquiring and developing property.

Ms. Parks portrays Merrick as a man of contradictions, a dreamer who “despite George’s hard work as a farmer and vegetable salesman... still found time to write poems and short stories.” He later studied law in New York, where he encountered architecture and planned communities that would inspire his lavish schemes.

After graduation he returned south, where he learned to sell real estate. Ms. Parks asserts that “Although George profited from Miami’s rapid development, he viewed money only as a means to an end. Every dollar, every new project, and every additional acre of land” brought him nearer his goal of creating a model, Spanish-style town imbued with “Beauty and Inspiration – words he always capitalized.”

The biography explains how trips to St. Augustine and Cuba, along with his interest in the City Beautiful movement, shaped his aesthetic sense and led him to commission impressive Mediterranean-style structures that still stand in Coral Gables.

Remarkably, George Merrick himself never traveled to Spain or Italy, but instead relied upon his architects and his own imaginative interpretations. To name Coral Gables’ avenues, for instance, he and his wife Eunice Peacock Merrick simply “opened Washington Irving’s *Tales of the Alhambra* and named the streets after the old Spanish cities he described.”

Sleeping only four or five hours each night, Merrick created a whirlwind of advertisement and promotion around his new community. One marketing scheme involved luring would-be buyers and journalists from other Florida towns on all-expenses-paid bus tours to Coral Gables.

Ms. Parks recounts that he “built thirty-one miles of road, twenty-one miles of sidewalk, and six miles of water main, and was installing the first ‘White Way’ electric streetlights.” From churches to schools, the University of Miami to Coral Gables City Hall, Merrick orchestrated the city’s creation in extravagant style.

Ms. Parks also establishes that Merrick’s meticulous control over nearly every aspect of Coral Gables’ development, along with his eventual position as city commissioner, allowed him an unmatched influence.

Even so, Merrick’s efforts to sustain his development’s galloping pace during the Florida Land Boom eventually faltered. As the bubble burst in 1926, the consequences for Miami – and George Merrick – were disastrous. Ms. Parks’ narrative sympathetically captures the great man’s slide into bankruptcy and ruin; she highlights Merrick’s frailties, as well as the enduring optimism that sustained him until his death at age 55.

The author ends on a positive note, with a look at how Merrick’s legacy has survived thanks to the efforts of local preservationists. Ultimately, *George Merrick* offers a cautionary tale about irrational exuberance, while celebrating the astonishing achievements of a South Florida legend.

George Merrick, Son of the South Wind: Visionary Creator of Coral Gables by Arva Moore Parks, University Press of Florida, 384 pages hardbound. Published Nov. 3, 2015. \$31.95.

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ART

Thursday 11/19

SPECIOUS MORPHOLOGY

The Miami Dade College Museum of Art + Design presents "Specious Morphology," which explores a curiosity for life forms through the artist's use of clothespins to construct sculptures that undulate around forms, such as trees. The exhibit also features mixed-media paintings that incorporate natural materials and three-dimensional elements. 5-7 p.m. Homestead Art Space, Homestead Campus, 500 College Terrace, Homestead. Details: (305) 237-7700 or mdc.edu/galleries.

Friday 11/20

PATTERN RECOGNITION

Bossa Gallery presents "Pattern Recognition" by Fernando Velázquez. The exhibit features 12 images, synchronized in an oscillating fashion, that are captured by a drone to create an overall image of a forest. The images from close up reveal an intricate wood; from afar they form patterns, in a synchronic set of aerial, side-ways, upward and downward views. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Bossa Gallery, 4141 NE Second Ave., Suite 107, Miami. Details: (305) 603-8233 or <http://www.bossagallery.com/>.

Saturday 11/21

SPEECHLESS

Pérez Art Museum Miami presents "Speechless," which displays a custom-built aviary that houses five parrots taught to mimic phrases from T.S. Elliot's 1922 poem "The Waste Land." It is also furnished with sculptural letters that spell out the terms "global warming," "climate change" and "sustainability." 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Pérez Art Museum Miami, 1103 Biscayne Blvd., Miami. Details: (305) 375-3000 or info@pamm.org.

BOOKS

Thursday 11/19

THIS PRESENT MOMENT

Gary Snyder discusses his latest collection of poems, "This Present Moment," as part of the Miami Book Fair. The book explores the author's journey to the Dolomites, the north shore of Lake Tahoe, Paris, Tuscany and more. The book also focuses on the author's life as a homesteader, householder, father, husband, friend and neighbor. 6 p.m. Chapman Conference Center, Building Three, Second Floor, Room 3210, 300 NE Second Ave., Miami. \$15. Details: (305) 237-3258 or <http://miamibookfair.com/event/an-evening-with-gary-snyder/>.

BELIEVER: MY FORTY YEARS IN POLITICS

David Axelrod discusses his book "Believer: My Forty Years in Politics," as part of the Miami Book Fair. The book tells of the author's journey through the inner workings of American democracy and gives readers a behind-the-scenes view of today's political world. 8 p.m. Chapman Conference Center, Building Three, Second Floor, Room 3210, 300 NE Second Ave., Miami. \$15. Details: (305) 237-3258 or <http://miamibookfair.com/event/an-evening-with-david-axelrod/>.

Friday 11/20

MARCH: BOOK TWO

Congressmen John Lewis and Andrew Aydin discuss their graphic novel "March: Book Two," as part of the Miami Book Fair. The novel explores and captures pivotal moments from the civil rights movement. 9:30 a.m. Chapman Conference Center, Building Three, Second Floor, Room 3210, 300 NE Second Ave., Miami. Free. Details: (305) 237-3258 or <http://miamibookfair.com/event/authors-congressman-john-lewis-nate-powell-and-andrew-aydin/>.

WOLF BY WOLF

Ryan Graudin discusses her book "Wolf by Wolf" as part of the Miami Book Fair. The book follows the adventures of Yael, a skin-shifter and



AN ARTIST ON THE EASTERN FRONT: The Wolfsonian-FIU presents its installation "An Artist on the Eastern Front." The exhibit showcases a selection of original Feliks Topolski drawings made during his expedition to the USSR and pieces of 20th century war art. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Nov. 21. The Wolfsonian-FIU, 1001 Washington Ave., Miami Beach. Details: (305) 531-1001 or <http://www.wolfsonian.org/>.

calendar of events

week of thursday,
november 19, 2015

victim of painful human experimentation, as she joins a motorcycle race to seek revenge. 10 a.m. Room 2106, Building Two, First Floor, 300 NE Second Ave., Miami. Free. Details: (305) 237-3258 or <http://miamibookfair.com/event/author-ryan-graudin/>.

BUSINESS

Thursday 11/19

MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The Commercial Industrial Association of South Florida hosts its "All Roads Lead to and Through MIA" discussion, at which attendees can learn about new developments, updates on highway projects to improve the movement of people and receive information on what products are moving in and through Miami International Airport. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. The Landing at MIA, 7415 Corporate Center Dr., Northwest 19th St., Suite H, Miami. \$45-\$70. Details: (305) 662-6115 or info@ciasf.com.

WOMEN'S SUCCESS SUMMIT

The Office Depot Foundation hosts this year's women's success summit. Attendees can network, join in a panel discussion and learn business strategies to help their businesses grow. 8 a.m.-7 p.m. The Event Center, 137 NE 19th St., Miami. Details: <http://womenssuccesssummit.com/#home-2>.

Friday 11/20

STARTUP FIU

Techstars Startup Program hosts its startup weekend for entrepreneurs, developers and designers. Attendees can pitch their own concepts, create their own business case, design and build a prototype, test their concepts with potential customers and present their ideas to a panel of judges. Attendees will have access to startup experts, coaches, mentors and investors on site. 6:30 p.m. TechStation at Florida International University, 11200 SW eighth St., Parking Garage #6, Tamiami. Details: <http://www.techstars.com/>.

CHILDREN

Saturday 11/21

LEAF

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden hosts its let's explore at Fairchild program. Attendees can visit the learning garden as they are instructed by Fairchild staff and trained volunteers about nature. Guests can also play science-themed games, complete educational worksheets and participate in planting activities. 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables. Details: <http://www.fairchildgarden.org/>.

NARNIA

The Actors' Playhouse presents its musical adaptation of "Narnia: The

Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe." The play begins with the land of Narnia frozen in a perpetual winter of darkness and despair, due to the White Witch, Queen Jadis. As a result, Aslan King of Narnia returns, bringing with him an end to the long winter by making the ultimate sacrifice of love. 2 p.m. Actors' Playhouse at the Miracle Theatre, 280 Miracle Mile, Coral Gables. \$23. Details: <http://www.actorsplayhouse.org/childrens.htm>.

MIRACLE OF 136TH ST.

The Falls hosts its miracle of 136th St. parade featuring local marching bands, holiday-themed floats, bagpipers, stilt walkers, giant puppets and holiday characters. 4-10 p.m. The Falls, 8888 SW 136th St., Kendall. Free. Details: (305) 255-4570 or <http://www.simon.com/mall/the-falls>.

Sunday 11/22

SPROUTS KIDS' DAY

The Miami Beach Botanical Garden hosts its sprouts kids' day as part of the Seedfood and Wine Festival. Guests can plant their own container gardens at the hands-on gardening lab, participate in a yoga session, make their own veggie pizzas and visit Bunnie Cake's cupcake lab to decorate their own organic, vegan and gluten-free cupcakes. 2-6 p.m. Miami Beach Botanical Garden, 2000 Convention Center Dr., Miami Beach. \$15-\$25. Details: [\[andwine.com/festival/\]\(http://andwine.com/festival/\).](http://seedfood</p>
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DINING OUT

Sunday 11/22

BRUNCH FOR THE ANIMALS

The Humane Society of Greater Miami hosts its 19th annual brunch for the animals, which provides gourmet food for dogs and their owners while raising funds for the care, medical treatments and shelter of more than 400 animals. 11:30 a.m. On the Lawn at Fontainebleau Miami Beach, 4441 Collins Ave., Miami Beach. \$50 per child, \$200 per person, Dogs free. Details: (305) 749-1825 or <http://www.humanesocietymiami.org/brunch-for-the-animals/>.

Thursday 11/26

BAZI

Bazi hosts its Thanksgiving feast featuring a five-course Asian-inspired meal created by Chef Michael Pirolo. 6 p.m. The Marlin Hotel, 1200 Collins Ave., Miami Beach. Details: (305) 695-0101 or <http://bazimiami.com/>.

MEAT MARKET

The Meat Market presents its Thanksgiving themed à la carte dinner specials featuring holiday-inspired dishes. Noon-Midnight. Meat Market Miami Beach, 915 Lincoln Rd., Miami Beach. Details: (305) 532-0088 or <http://www.meatmarket.net/enter.html>.

THE DUTCH

The Dutch hosts its Thanksgiving pre-fixe dinner with a specialty menu created by Chef Adonay Tafur and pastry chef Josh Gripper. 7-11:30 p.m. The Dutch, 2201 Collins Ave., Miami Beach. Details: (305) 938-3111 or <http://thedutchmiami.com/>.

QUATTRO GASTRONOMIA ITALIANA

Quattro Gastronomia Italiana hosts its Thanksgiving lunch and dinner featuring its special holiday menu. 4-11 p.m. Quattro Gastronomia Italiana, 1014 Lincoln Rd., Miami Beach. Details: (305) 531-4833 or <http://www.quattromiami.com/>.

3030 OCEAN

3030 Ocean hosts its Thanksgiving Day pre-fixe-three-course meal featuring its holiday menu. 5-9:45 p.m. 3030 Ocean, 3030 Holiday Dr., Fort Lauderdale. Details: (954) 765-3030 or <http://www.3030ocean.com/>.

BLT PRIME

BLT Prime hosts its Thanksgiving Day lunch and dinner featuring its holiday menu with a range of autumnal options. 7 a.m.-10:30 p.m. BLT Prime, 4400 NW 87th Ave., Doral. Details: (305) 591-6606 or <http://www.e2hospitality.com/blt-prime-miami/>.

EXHIBITS

Thursday 11/19

BENJAMIN CAÑAS

New World School of the Arts presents "Benjamin Cañas: A Selection of Works," featuring paintings by the Latin American artist as part of the gallery's new art permanent collection. Exhibits through Dec. 18. New World School of the Arts, 25 NE Second St., Miami. Details: (305) 237-3135 or <http://nwsa.mdc.edu/>.

MOTHER-MATRIX-MATTER

The Lowe Art Museum at the University of Miami presents "Mother-Matrix-Matter" by Liliane Tomasko. The exhibit will feature oil paintings based on photos taken of sculptures created from fabrics stacked in dimly-lit interior spaces created by the artist. Exhibits through Jan. 31. Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, 1301 Stanford Dr., Coral Gables. Details: (305) 284-3535 or <http://www6.miami.edu/lowe/exhibition/Tomasko.html>.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

The Miami Dade College Museum of Art + Design presents "Childhood Memories from the Other Side of the Water" by Eduardo del Valle. The exhibit will display photographs depicting childhood experiences and recollections of Cuba from the artist's

calendar of events

ART



Geistlos.

One Man Exhibition

The Diana Lowenstein Gallery presents its one man exhibition "Geistlos," by Udo Nöger. The exhibit features paintings that portray an endless meaning of a complete space made of pure and absolute light. The event will include a conversation with the artist and Ombretta Agró Andruff, the gallery curatorial advisor. 7:30-9:30 p.m. Nov. 21. The Diana Lowenstein Gallery, 2043 N Miami Ave., Miami.

Details: (305) 576-1804 or info@dianalowensteingallery.com.

BOOKS



Book fair

Miami Book Fair International

The Center for Literature and Theatre at Miami Dade College presents the 32nd annual Miami Book Fair International. The fair presents eight days of cultural and educational activities, while showcasing more than 600 authors' works. The event will in-

clude pop-lounge "The Swap," which showcases Florida writers, music, dance, film, history and art. The fair will also host book readings, author meet and greets and more. Nov. 15-22. Times and locations vary.

Details: (305) 237-3528 or www.miamibookfair.com.

FILM



Gremlins.

Joe Dante

The Actors' Playhouse screens "Gremlins," directed by Joe Dante, as part of its free film series. The film tells the story of Billy and his new pet named Gizmo. Billy is given three rules he must follow while caring for his new pet and breaks one of the rules, causing Gizmo to multiply and terrorize the town they live in. 8 p.m. Nov. 21. Actors' Playhouse at the Miracle The-

atre, 280 Miracle Mile, Coral Gables.

Details: (305) 444-9293 or <http://www.actorsplayhouse.org/>.

BUSINESS



Business Growth Club.

How to Build a Successful Business

Mastermind 2020 hosts its 'Business Growth Club: How to Build a Successful Business,' meeting. Attendees will learn tips and strategies to help build their businesses grow while networking with other business professionals. 7-9 p.m. Nov. 25. 990 Biscayne Blvd, 900 Biscayne Bay, Office 501, Miami. Free.

Details: <http://www.mastermind2020.com/>.

MUSIC



Nu Deco Ensemble.

Deering Estate

The Deering Estate presents the Nu Deco Ensemble in a concert performance titled "Water Music." The concert will explore re-imaginings of Bach and Bizet as well as American composer Aaron Copland. Further works include the music of Andy Akiho, LCD Sound System, co-founder Sam Hyken and French-pop duo Daft Punk. 5 p.m. Nov. 22. Deering Estate at 16701 SW 72nd Ave., Palmetto Bay. \$25 per person.

Details: <http://www.deeringestate.org/> or <http://www.nu-deco.org/seasonone>.

OUTDOORS



La Feria del Mercado.

Spanish goods marketplace

Bayfront Park hosts La Feria Del Mercado de San Miguel, which encompasses 9,000 square feet of combined interior tent space, an outdoor tapas bar and seating area. The tent's interior serves as a marketplace of Spanish foods with numerous kiosks, stands, counters and carts offering a variety of goods. 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Nov. 22. Bayfront Park, 301 Biscayne Blvd., Miami.

Details: <http://www.bayfrontparkmiami.com/>.

SPECIAL EVENT



Creative trees.

Festival of the Trees

Florida International University's Interior Architecture Department hosts its 29th annual festival of the trees to sup-

port quality interior architecture education. Attendees can participate in a tree auction and purchase "trees" designed by various local architecture firms. 6:30-9:30 p.m. Nov. 19. Moore Building, 191 NE 40th St., Miami Design District. \$85 per person.

Details: <http://festivalofthetrees.net/>.

SPORTS



Miami Heat.

Heat vs. the Knicks

The Miami Heat basketball team takes on the New York Knicks. 7:30 p.m. Nov. 23. American Airlines Arena, 601 Biscayne Blvd., Miami. \$37-\$424.

Details: www.nba.com/heat.

THEATER



Genus Genet.

Miami Theater Center

The Miami Theater Center presents "Genus Genet," as part of its first SandBox series performance. The play tells of French playwright Jean Genet's life through the lens of his own rebellious and philosophical imagination. Guests will see the artist's turbulent experiences, ranging from his time spent in orphanages to the French Foreign Legion and prostitution. 8 p.m. Nov. 21. Additional performances through Nov. 28. Miami Theater Center, 9806 NE Second Ave., Miami Shores.

Details: (305) 571-9550 or <http://www.mtciami.org/>.

EXHIBITS

cont.—

perspective. Exhibits through Aug. 28. MDC Museum of Art + Design, Freedom Tower at MDC, 600 Biscayne Blvd., second floor, Miami. Details: (305) 237-7700 or museum@mdc.edu or www.mdcmod.org.

OPERATION PEDRO PAN

HistoryMiami presents "Operation Pedro Pan: The Cuban Children's Exodus." The exhibit presents the story of more than 14,000 unaccompanied children who left Cuba from 1960 to 1962 in the largest recorded child refugee exodus in the Western Hemisphere. Exhibits through Jan. 17. HistoryMiami, 101 W Flagler St., Miami. Details: (305) 375-5792 or www.historymiami.org.

HOLOCAUST HEROES: FIERCE FEMALES

The Alper JCC presents "Holocaust Heroes: Fierce Females," an exhibition by Linda Stein. Through the use of fabric, metal, text and mixed media, Stein uses mediums of tapestry and sculpture to honor 10 positive female role models who stood up to violence and oppression during the Holocaust. Also on exhibit are two Holocaust remembrance books by artist Tatiana Kellner. Exhibits

through Nov. 29. Futernick Art Gallery at the Dave and Mary Alper Jewish Community Center, 11155 SW 112th Ave. Details: (305) 271-9000 or alperjcc.org.

PHILODENDRON

The Wolfsonian-FIU presents "Philodendron: From Pan-Latin Exotic to American Modern." The exhibit charts the migration of tropical plants from their native habitats to North American and European gardens and interiors while drawing together objects from the Amazon, Caribbean and beyond. Exhibits through Feb. 28. The Wolfsonian-FIU, 1001 Washington Ave., Miami Beach. Details: <http://www.wolfsonian.org/>.

FROM MANGROVE TO TOURIST MECCA

The Wolfsonian-FIU presents "Miami Beach: From Mangrove to Tourist Mecca." The exhibit depicts photographs of "lost" hotels such as the Nautilus, Flamingo, King Cole and others while presenting how these resorts lured the rich and famous with regattas, elephant rides and amenities. Exhibits through Jan. 17. Wolfsonian-FIU, 1001 Washington Ave., Miami Beach. Details: (305) 535-2622 or <http://www.wolfsonian.org/>.

FORMS OF STILLNESS

The Canale Diaz Art Center pre-

sents "Forms of Stillness." The exhibition assembles the most recent paintings and sculptures of Cuban-American artist Heriberto Mora. Exhibits through Dec. 13. Canale Diaz Art Center, 146 Madeira Ave., Coral Gables. Details: (786) 615-2622 or info@canalediaz.com

AMERICANS ALL

The Wolfsonian-FIU presents "Americans All: Race Relations in Depression-Era Murals." The exhibit showcases preparatory paintings, drawings, and mosaics that reveal how artists deal with the nature of the US as a racially diverse nation, reflecting the contentious and unsettled state of early 20th century race relations through their representations of blacks, whites, American Indians and Asian immigrants. Exhibits through Jan. 17. Wolfsonian-FIU, 1001 Washington Ave., Miami Beach. Details: (305) 535-2622 or <http://www.wolfsonian.org/>.

A MODULOR BROTH

Gallery Diet presents "A Modulor Broth," an exhibition by Nicolas Lobo. The exhibit features, a series of 6-foot-tall panels that manipulate the parameters of Le Corbusier's Modulor Man to reconsider how the human form's material tolerances quantify both industrial and personal space. Exhibits through Nov. 25.

Gallery Diet, 174 NW 23rd St., Wynwood Art District, Miami. Details: www.gallerydiet.com.

FILM

Friday 11/20 BROOKLYN

The Tower Theater screens "Brooklyn." The film tells the story of Eilis Lacey, a young Irish immigrant who navigates her way through a 1950s Brooklyn. Lured by the promise of America, Eilis departs Ireland and the comfort of her mother's home for the shores of New York City. Her initial homesickness quickly diminishes as romance sweeps Eilis into the intoxicating charm of love. But soon, her new vivacity is disrupted by her past, and Eilis must choose between two countries and the lives that exist within. Times vary by film. MDC's Tower Theater, 1508 SW Eighth St., Miami. Details: (305) 237-2463 or towertheater@mdc.edu.

ALL THINGS MUST PASS

The Tower Theater screens "All Things Must Pass," a feature documentary film examining Tower Records' explosive trajectory, tragic demise and legacy forged by its rebellious founder Russ Solomon. Times vary by film. MDC's Tower Theater, 1508 SW Eighth St., Miami.

Details: (305) 237-2463 or towertheater@mdc.edu.

THEEB

The Tower Theater screens "Theeb." While war rages in the Ottoman Empire, Hussein raises his younger brother Theeb in a traditional Bedouin community that is isolated by the vast, unforgiving desert. The brothers' quiet existence is suddenly interrupted when a British Army officer and his guide ask Hussein to escort them to water located along the old pilgrimage route to Mecca. So as not to dishonor his recently deceased father, Hussein agrees to lead them on the long and treacherous journey. The young, mischievous Theeb secretly chases after his brother, but the group soon finds itself trapped amidst threatening terrain riddled with Ottoman mercenaries, Arab revolutionaries, and outcast Bedouin raiders. Times vary by film. MDC's Tower Theater, 1508 SW Eighth St., Miami. Details: (305) 237-2463 or towertheater@mdc.edu.

Saturday 11/21 LOVE 3/D

The Miami Beach Cinematheque screens "Love 3/D." The film follows Murphy as he listens to a voicemail message from Electra's mother, who is sick with worry and wants to know whether he has heard from her daugh-

PEOPLE

International Finance Bank appoints VP

International Finance Bank has appointed **Roberto Gatica** vice president of the bank's preferred banking department. Mr. Gatica had been vice president and head of the Latin American desk at Banco Sabadell. He holds a bachelor's degree from Northwestern University.



Roberto Gatica



Eric Montes de Oca



Clara Pausa

Latin Builders name president elect

The Latin Builders Association has appointed **Eric Montes de Oca** president elect. Mr. Montes de Oca is the vice president of Grycon LLC. He holds an associate's degree from Wentworth Institute of Technology and a bachelor's degree from Florida International University.



Thomas A. Dye



John Beauchamp



Ashley Hamilton

International Finance Bank appoints senior VP

International Finance Bank has appointed **Clara Pausa** senior vice president and chief operations officer. Ms. Pausa had been vice president and an operations and IT manager at International Finance Bank. She holds an associate's degree from Miami Dade College.



Andres Correa



Jenny Consuegra



Roger Kobert

Feldman Gale adds partner

Feldman Gale P.A. has added **Thomas A. Dye** as a partner of its Miami office. Mr. Dye had been an equity shareholder at Carlton Fields Jordan Burt. He holds a bachelor's degree from the Col-

lege of William and Mary and a JD from University of Miami.

Morgan Lewis Bockius adds associates

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP has added **John Beauchamp** and **Ashley Hamilton** as associates.

Mr. Beauchamp had been a law clerk at Clare Locke LLP. He holds a bachelor's degree from

University of Florida and a JD from Georgetown University.

Ms. Hamilton had been a legal intern at ACE Group. She holds a bachelor's degree and a JD from University of Pennsylvania.

Coral Gables Bar appoints president

The Coral Gables Bar Association has appointed **Andres**

Correa president. Mr. Correa is a partner at Jaramillo, Correa & Martinez. He holds a bachelor's degree from Florida International University and a JD from St. Thomas University.

Broad and Cassel names associate

Broad and Cassel has named **Jenny Consuegra** an associate. Ms. Consuegra had been an associate at Dresnick, Rodriguez & Perry P.A. She holds a bachelor's degree from Florida International University and a JD from Loyola University.

Federal Bar adds to executive board

The Federal Bar Association has added **Roger Kobert** to its executive board of its international law section. Mr. Kobert is a partner at Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman P.L. He holds a bachelor's degree from University of Pennsylvania and a JD from University of Miami.

Berkowitz Pollack adds in tax service

Berkowitz Pollack Brant Advisors and Accountants has added **Cherry Laufenberg** as associate director of its tax service practice. Ms. Laufenberg had been an accountant at Pickett & Co. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of St. La Salle.

Levine Kellogg adds associates

Levine Kellogg Lehman

To Submit Information

Miami Today welcomes news of job changes, promotions, hiring and awards. Please send your submissions to Katya Maruri at People@MiamiTodayNews.com or mail them to Miami Today, 2000 S. Dixie Highway, Suite 100, Miami, FL 33133. Be sure to include contact information. We will select submissions for publication.

Schneider + Grossman LLP has added **Matthew McGuane**, **Chad Lipsky** and **Marcelo Diaz-Cortes** as associates.

Mr. McGuane had been an attorney at Wargo & French LLP. He holds a master's degree and JD from the University of Miami.

Mr. Lipsky had been an attorney at Sreenan Law P.A. He holds a bachelor's degree from Jacksonville University and a JD from Florida State University.

Mr. Diaz-Cortes had been a research editor at the Florida Law Review. He holds a bachelor's degree from Florida State University and a JD from the University of Florida.

MDW Insurance names in sales

MDW Insurance Group has named **Jodi Pirowskin** as a sales executive. Ms. Pirowskin had been an account executive at Western & Southern Financial. She holds a bachelor's degree from University of Delaware.

New look at the story of the devil in Massachusetts

BY MARILYN BOWDEN

In one of the least understood episodes in American history, 14 women, five men and two dogs were executed in 1692 for witchcraft in Massachusetts Bay Colony, based largely on the accusations of adolescent girls.

"The Witches: Salem, 1692," by Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and biographer Stacy Schiff, examines the community that gave rise to the Salem witch trials and their strange aftermath.

Ms. Schiff is guest speaker at a members-only meeting of the Prologue Society, a book club dedicated to the appreciation of history, at noon Nov. 20 in the Riviera Country Club, 1155 Blue Road, Coral Gables. The society is sponsored by Brickell Bank, Miami Today and Books & Books. (Details: theprologue.society@gmail.com or 305-323-1154)

"Even at the time," Ms. Schiff writes, "it was clear to some that Salem was a story of one thing behind which was a story of something else altogether. Much of its subtext is lost to us, like the jokes in Shakespeare."

Seventeenth-century New England did not lack for learned men, many of whom had studied divinity at Harvard. But few had any legal training. "Men



made them do it was never in dispute.

As a result, Hathorne, one of the presiding magistrates, "never asked saucy Abigail Hobbs to produce the finery the devil had promised. Nor did he quarantine the girls or interview them separately, as every legal manual advised. ... Hathorne does not appear to have questioned how — despite all the grievous pinching, choking, biting, punching — the bewitched remained in the pink of health. He trusted their special sight even when he himself could not make out a middle-aged parishioner perched, in her skirts, on the rafters."

So twisted was the logic of the court that confessed witches were spared, while those who refused were condemned. "If you could save your life by admitting that you flew through the air on a pole," Ms. Schiff asks, "wouldn't you?"

The devil's siege lasted from January through September. With the last hangings, Salem went dark. The Puritans were prolific diarists and record-keepers, and yet those nine months were completely expunged from official files. While some, particularly among the families of the dead, railed against the injustices perpetrated in that black time, only one justice stepped forward to assume some responsibility,

made them do it was never in dispute.

As a result, Hathorne, one of the presiding magistrates, "never asked saucy Abigail Hobbs to produce the finery the devil had promised. Nor did he quarantine the girls or interview them separately, as every legal manual advised. ... Hathorne does not appear to have questioned how — despite all the grievous pinching, choking, biting, punching — the bewitched remained in the pink of health. He trusted their special sight even when he himself could not make out a middle-aged parishioner perched, in her skirts, on the rafters."

So twisted was the logic of the court that confessed witches were spared, while those who refused were condemned. "If you could save your life by admitting that you flew through the air on a pole," Ms. Schiff asks, "wouldn't you?"

The devil's siege lasted from January through September. With the last hangings, Salem went dark. The Puritans were prolific diarists and record-keepers, and yet those nine months were completely expunged from official files. While some, particularly among the families of the dead, railed against the injustices perpetrated in that black time, only one justice stepped forward to assume some responsibility,



and he later regretted doing so. Some of the accusers apologized — always blaming the devil for their conduct.

For more than 300 years, the story of the devil in Massachusetts has haunted popular imagination, spawning books and plays and movies and giving Salem a thriving industry of witchcraft- and sorcery-related tourism. "The Witches" grapples with the social and psychological questions behind this eerie chapter of our past, scrapping away accretions of sensationalism to reveal a starker, stranger reality.

"The Witches: Salem, 1692," by Stacy Schiff, 498 pages, is \$32 hardcover from Little, Brown and Co. Details: littlebrown.com.

FILMING IN MIAMI

These film permits were issued last week by the Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory & Economic Resources' Office of Film and Entertainment, (305) 375-3288; the Miami Mayor's Office of Film, Arts & Entertainment, (305) 860-3823; and the Miami Beach Office of Arts, Culture and Entertainment-Film and Print Division, (305) 673-7070.

Spike Productions Corp. Biscayne Park. Protein World 2. Crandon Park Beach.

Check Your Head Films. Toluca Lake. 50 Bleu. Crandon Park Beach.

Telemundo Studios/NBC Universal Media LLC. Miami. Quien es Quien. City of Hialeah.

Chori Perros Productions LLC. Miami. Ballers Season 2. South Pointe Neighborhood.

North of NY. New York. Dunk League. Port of Miami Terminal J.

Love Child Pictures LLC. Los Angeles. Bastards. Collins Avenue/41st to 87th Streets.

Imagina Content LLC. Miami. Que Noche Con Angely y Raul. Swale Parking.

Rocket Entertainment LLC. Venice. Hey USA x. Miami Beach citywide.

N House Productions. Miami. Carters. Countywide.

Venus Fashion Inc. Jacksonville. Venus Swim Shoot. Miami Beach citywide.

Spike Productions Corp. Biscayne Park. Ice Network. Countywide, Miami Beach citywide.

Pro One Productions Inc. Miami Beach. Spring/Summer Fashion. Countywide, Miami Beach citywide.

Six Degrees Productions. Miami Beach. Fashion Catalog Spring 2016. Miami Beach citywide, Miami Beach Residential.

Spike Productions Corp. Biscayne Park. X Productions (German Catalogue). Countywide, Miami Beach citywide.

Elizabeth Star Photography. Miami. Holiday Mini Sessions. Kendall Indian Hammocks Park.

Stillmax Media LLC. Miami Shores. Fashion Catalog. Countywide, Miami Beach citywide.

Stillmax Media LLC. Miami Shores. Eric Bompard. Countywide, Miami Beach citywide.

Stillmax Media LLC. Miami Shores. Galeries Lafayette. Countywide, Miami Beach citywide.

First Option Productions Inc. Miami Beach. Match Norway. Countywide, Miami Beach citywide.

N House Productions. Miami. Next Directory. Countywide, Miami Beach citywide.

Britton Marketing & Design Group. Fort Wayne. Vera Bradley Summer 16. Crandon Park Beach, Miami Beach citywide.

The Production Factory LLC. Miami Beach. Harpers Bazaar Germany. Countywide, Crandon Park Beach, Miami Beach citywide.

Spike Productions Corp. Biscayne Park. Protein World 1. Crandon Park Beach, Matheson Hammock Park.

Select Services Inc. Miami. Geox. Countywide, Miami Beach citywide.

Miami Dade College. North Miami. Chains That Bind Us. Unincorporated Miami-Dade County.

Transportation Department no longer desires MIC ownership

By SUSAN DANSEYAR

The Florida Department of Transportation is no longer willing to own and operate the Miami Intermodal Center (MIC), so county officials are looking for ways Miami-Dade can maintain control of what they describe as its central transportation station.

However, while a number of commissioners believe the best scenario is for the county's Transit Department to keep the intermodal center within its portfolio, it will be an expensive endeavor.

Alice Bravo, director of the county's Department of Transportation and Public Works, said that in 2009 the estimated cost of operating the MIC was \$1 million a year. "Now, we know it is more," she said, adding that today it would be approximately \$2 million a year which is not in her department's budget.

"Back in 2009, the steering committee for MIC made decisions for where [the intermodal center] would go with financial



Photo by Maxine Usdan

The state and county entered in to an agreement in 1999 detailing construction of the Miami Intermodal Center (MIC) next to Miami International Airport. Ownership of the facility may be decided Dec. 1.

considerations," Ms. Bravo said during a discussion last week at the Transit & Mobility Services committee. "At the time, it was deemed MDX [Miami-Dade Expressway Authority] would subsidize it. I don't know if a lot of those factors have changed."

In 1999, the FDOT and Miami-Dade County entered into an agreement detailing their respective obligations to finance, design and construct the MIC adjacent to Miami International Airport.

The FDOT conveyed the Rental Car Center to the county for incorporation as property of the Aviation Department in November 2011 and retains ownership of the balance of the facilities making up the MIC.

FDOT District Six Secretary Gus Pego said the state has delivered on its part of the agreement and it's time to "pass the baton" to another agency. He added governance issues of the MIC have been ongoing since 2011 and MDX considered "stepping up" to oper-

ate the facility if it's cost neutral.

MDX Executive Director Javier Rodriguez reiterated such terms, saying his board accepted the terms of taking over ownership and governance of the MIC with conditions that it be cost neutral. He said MDX will front the financing to build additional facilities so the MIC can generate more revenue but must have a guarantee it will be paid back.

Chairman Esteban Bovo Jr. said last week and during prior committee meetings that he does

not want MDX governing the MIC. Rather, Mr. Bovo's first choice is for the county to own and operate the intermodal center. Should that not be feasible, his second choice is a "hybrid" ownership and governance between MDX and the county.

Additionally, Mr. Bovo asked that the contract with FDOT give right of first refusal to the county, should MDX take over the MIC and ever want to sell it.

Commissioner Dennis Moss said "you can feel the way you want about MDX but it is a major part of dealing with our transit issues in this community." The county does not have the resources to pay operating costs of approximately \$2 million a year, he said, but MDX does and is in the best position to "do what needs to be done" right now at the MIC.

Nor can FDOT continue to pay some \$250,000 a month for basic maintenance, he said.


"I'm looking for enhanced maintenance and MDX can do it," Mr. Moss said. "Their facilities are well-maintained; they have a proven record of maintenance."

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Announcement



MIA-Lower Concourse "E" 3RD Floor Sterile Corridor MCC-T-072-E

MCM is soliciting bids for this project under the MCC-8-10 Program at Miami-Dade Aviation Department:

Scope: Provide ceiling replacement including lighting, HVAC grill, fire alarm system and fire sprinkler, other wall finishes, matrix and other low voltage systems.

Bidding: SBE/Construction Trade Set-Aside Packages: Pkg. "A" General Work, Pkg. "B" Misc. Metals, Pkg. "C" Doors/Hardware, Pkg. "D" Drywall, Pkg. "E" Painting, Pkg. "F" Fire Protection, Pkg. "G" HVAC, and Pkg. "H" Electrical.

Pre-bid Conference (Mandatory): Wednesday, December 9, 2015 @ 10:00 AM Location: MCM 4301 NW 22nd Street, Building 3030, 2nd Floor Sealed Bids Due: Monday, December 21, 2015 @ 2:00 PM Bonding required for bids of \$200,000 or higher

For information, please contact MCM's MIA offices (305)869-4563


Announcement

Norman Schatz, M.D. is announcing the closing of his practice located at Mt. Sinai Medical Center on December 1st, 2015. To obtain your medical records, address your request to: Lourdes Donikian C/O Neuro-Ophthalmology Associates PO Box 824662 Pembroke Pines, FL 330821-4662

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Employment

Health Services Manager

Health Services Manager wanted in N. Miami Beach to plan, direct, or coord. health svcs. in physical rehabilitation ctr. Req: B.S. degree in Physical Therapy or equiv. & 5 yrs. exp. in job offered. Mail resumes to Adriana Tafur Services Incorporated, 2020 NE 163 St, #207, N. Miami Beach, FL 33162

SOFTWARE

Focus Technologies LLC seeks Software Eng III: Req MS in CS, Comp Eng, or Elec Eng & 2 yrs as Software Eng. In lieu of MS & 2 yrs of exp, Employer will accept BS in CS, Comp Eng, or Elec Eng & 4 yrs of exp as Software Eng. Up to 20% in-state travel req. Position in Sunrise, FL. Mail resume to Attn: Rachel Clark at 1300 Sawgrass Corp Pkwy Ste 300 Sunrise, FL 33323. EOE

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Notice of Action

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No: 2014-DR-3591-02D-K
IN RE THE MARRIAGE OF:
HUGO D. GOMEZ,
Husband, and
LEONOR GARCELL CHAVEZ,
Wife

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR PUBLICATION

TO: Leonor Garcell Chavez

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that an action for Dissolution of Marriage, including claims for dissolution of marriage, payment of debts, division of real and personal property, and for payments of support, has been filed against you. You are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to this action on JOSE ANGEL RODRIGUEZ, ESQ., of JOSE A. RODRIGUEZ LAW PL, Petitioner's attorney, whose address is 817 E. Michigan Street, Orlando, Florida 32806, on or before 12/14/15, and file the original with the clerk of this court at Seminole County Courthouse, 301 North Park Ave; Sanford, Florida 32771, either before service on Petitioner's attorney or immediately thereafter; otherwise a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the petition.

WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings. Dated: this 4th day of November, 2015. Maryanne Morse CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT Patricia Cochran Deputy Clerk



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Notice of Administrative Action

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
STATE OF FLORIDA, OFFICE OF FINANCIAL REGULATION

PATRICIA ALEXIS, D/B/A PA SERVICES
Administrative Proceeding Docket No. 56939
Patricia Alexis, d/b/a PA Services
6306 N.W. 2nd Avenue
Miami, Florida 33150

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that an Administrative Complaint (with Notice of Rights) has been filed against you by the State of Florida, Office of Financial Regulation, for failure to comply with certain requirements of Chapter 560, Florida Statutes. As such, your written defenses, if any, must be received at the address provided below by 5:00pm ET, on November 26, 2015.

FAILURE TO RESPOND AS PRESCRIBED will result in a default entered against you regarding the allegations and penalties contained in the Administrative Complaint, including but not limited to, a total administrative fine imposed of \$14,000 and revocation of license number FT30800777.

A copy of the Administrative Complaint may be obtained from, and your response must be filed with the Agency Clerk of the State of Florida, Office of Financial Regulation as follows:

GIGI HOLDER, Agency Clerk
State of Florida, Office of Financial Regulation
Post Office Box 8050
Tallahassee, FL 32314-8050
Email: Agency.Clerk@fiofr.com
Tel: (850) 410-9889
Fax: (850) 410-9663

A copy of your response should be sent to:

Jenny Salvia
Assistant General Counsel
State of Florida, Office of Financial Regulation
1313 N. Tampa St., Suite 615
Tampa, FL 33602-3394
Tel: (813) 218-5308

10/29, 11/05, 11/12 & 11/19/2015

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Fictitious Name

Notice Under Fictitious Name Law Pursuant to Section 865.09, Florida Statutes
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of **AVENUE 31** located at 860 Ocean Drive, in the County of Miami-Dade, in the City of Miami Beach, Florida, 33139, intends to register the said name with the Division of Corporations of the Florida Department of State, Tallahassee, Florida.

Dated at Miami, Florida, this 11th Day of November, 2015.
860 Ocean Drive LLC
Owner

Summons

SeaWatch Plantation Owners Association, Inc. v. Stephanie T. McIntosh-Luis
Civil Action No. 2015-CP-26-6576
Court of Common Pleas, Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, Horry County, South Carolina

TO: STEPHANIE T. MCINTOSH-LUIS

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to answer the Complaint in the above referenced Civil Action within thirty (30) days after the first publication of this Summons and to serve a copy of your Answer to the Complaint on the Plaintiff's attorney at the following address:

Butler Law, LLC
Attn: Dan V. Butler, Esq.
1293 Professional Drive, Ste 224
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577

For your information, the Complaint was filed September 4, 2015 with the Clerk of Court for Horry County, South Carolina. You can obtain a copy of the Complaint from the Office of the Horry County Clerk of Court located at 1301 2nd Ave, Conway, South Carolina.

If you fail to answer the Complaint within the time aforesaid, the Plaintiff in this action will apply to the Court for the relief demanded in the Complaint and judgment by default will be rendered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint. The Answer must be in writing and signed by you or your attorney and must state your address, or the address of your attorney if signed by your attorney.

BUTLER LAW, LLC
Dan V. Butler, Esq.
1293 Professional Drive, Ste 224
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
Ph: (843) 855-3157
Fax: (707) 348-1560
Email: dbutler@butlerlaw.net
Attorney for the Plaintiff

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