

# **Miami River Commission Meeting Minutes January 3, 2022**

The Miami River Commission (MRC) public meeting convened at noon, January 3, 2022, Downtown Library Auditorium, 101 Flagler.

## **Miami River Commission (MRC) Policy Committee Members and/or Designees attending:**

Horacio Stuart Aguirre, MRC Chairman

Patty Harris, designee for Governor

Jim Murley, designee for Miami-Dade County Mayor Cava

Megan Kelly, designee for City of Miami Mayor Francis Suarez

Bruce Brown, Miami River Marine Group

John Michael Cornell, Designee for Luis Garcia

Tom Kimen, Neighborhood Representative appointed by City of Miami

Mike Simpson, designee for Member at Large Appointed by Miami-Dade County

David Maer, designee for ST Attorney Katherine Fernandez-Rundle

Sandy O'Neil, designee for Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce

## **MRC Staff:**

Brett Bibeau, Managing Director

## **Others attending interested in the River:**

Sign in sheets available upon request.

### **I) Chair's Report**

MRC Chairman Horacio Stuart Aguirre provided the following report:

The Miami River Commission's November public meeting minutes were emailed in advance of today's meeting, and printed copies were distributed today. Do I have a motion on the minutes?

The Miami River Commission's 2021 Annual Report was distributed.

The Miami River Commission's 2022 Calendars were distributed. On behalf of the MRC, thank you to all our generous sponsors for renewing their annual support.

The Miami River Commission has been actively assisting the efforts of the City, County, State, and private sector to clean up the Miami River District. In addition to the maintenance professionals the MRC pays daily to remove litter, invasive plant species, graffiti and provide landscaping services along the Miami River, the MRC thanks the volunteers from Hands on Miami, whom on November 7 and December 5 picked up garbage along the public Riverwalk at the County's affordable housing Robert King High, on November 14 and December 12 picked up garbage along the public Riverwalk in Curtis Park, in Curtis Park, and on December 19 picked up garbage along the Miami River's shoreline in Sewell Park.

**II) Presentation Regarding 114-236 NW North River Drive and 300 SW 2 ST**

Iris Escarra, Greenberg Traurig, Jim McDonnell, Cube 3, Barry Miller, Savino Miller Design, Alex Mantecon and Guillermo Alvarez, MV Real Estate presented plans, Letter of Intent and Covenant stating they will comply with the public Riverwalk code requirements (3.11 and Appendix B) and the Comp. Plan required working river disclosure. The presenters stated the project will activate the public Riverwalk, which will connect in all directions as required by code.

The project features the Dream luxury hotel, 2 restaurants, Garcia's Seafood Fish Market, event space, nightclub, and managed dockage with a dockmaster, etc. Please see provided Letter of Intent and Plans for more details.

In addition, the project will make enhancements to the connecting existing public Riverwalk beneath I-95, such as improved lighting. The public Riverwalk will have 4 entry points for bicycles and pedestrians. In addition, there are 2 loading zones and a valet drop off area.

**The Miami River Commission unanimously recommended approval of the presented Riverside Wharf.**

**III. Miami River Commission's Subcommittee Reports**

**Greenways Subcommittee** - MRC Managing Director Bibeau provided the following report:

Since the City and County's adoption of the *Miami River Greenway Action Plan*, 6.75 miles or 67.5% of the planned 10-mile public Miami River Greenway has been constructed.

Currently 4 sections of the public Riverwalk are under construction at Aston Martin, One Miami, Miami River SAP, and a new restaurant in Little Havana.

I thank the Florida Department of Transportation and the Transportation Planning Organization for recently awarding a \$1 million competitive grant to the City of Miami to construct the next section of the Miami River Greenway along NW North River Drive, from NW 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue to NW 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The public Miami River Greenway provides a safe alternate form of transportation for pedestrians and bicycles to live, work, and play in the most densely populated neighborhoods in the entire State of Florida, including Allapattah, Little Havana, Overtown, downtown, etc. The public Miami River Greenway is becoming a destination landscape attracting tourists and improving the resident's quality of life from the areas multi-cultural neighborhoods by linking them to the Miami River and its 9 public parks. In addition, the Greenway is stimulating economic development along the Miami River, with 25 open restaurants and 22 more planned restaurants, over 11,910 new residential units, with an additional 6,667 approved residential units, along the public Miami River Greenway. In addition, using the public Miami River Greenway improves personal physical and mental health, while reducing vehicular traffic, emissions and fuel consumption.

The MRC, City and County continues working on numerous private and public sector potential funding opportunities to secure the remaining funding needed to finish construction of the public Riverwalk.

Stormwater Subcommittee – The Stormwater Subcommittee’s September 2021 public virtual workshop (no votes nor actions taken) minutes were distributed. The next MRC Stormwater public virtual workshop will be held January 5, 2022.

#### **IV. New Business**

John Michael Cornell stated in the 2 months which passed since the MRC starting working on Miami Riverday for April 2, 2022, the Omicron variant has been breaking previous records on the numbers of Covid Cases. Therefore, he suggested the MRC communicate more about whether to continue spending money and time planning Miami Riverday, or renew last year’s successful Your Miami River Cleanup Campaign. The MRC decided to have a virtual workshop discussion (no votes or action will be taken) to discuss this difficult decision further on January 18 at noon. **The MRC adopted a unanimous resolution authorizing MRC Chairman to make the final decision based on the comments heard during the MRC’s January 18 public virtual workshop.**

The meeting adjourned.