

**Miami River Commission's
Urban Infill & Greenways Subcommittee
Public Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2025**

Miami River Commission (MRC) Urban Infill & Greenways Subcommittee's Chairman Jim Murley convened the public meeting on May 12, 2025, 10 AM, 1407 NW 7 ST. The attendance sheet is attached.

I) Discussion Regarding New Allapattah Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Including Miami River's North Shore from NW 7 Ave to NW 19 Ave

Kevin Crowder, Business Flare, and Keith Carswell, City of Miami, provided information regarding the Allapattah CRA. In April the City of Miami adopted the Finding of Necessity and the Redvelopment Plan. The CRA goals include economic development, job creation, housing, parks, safety / lighting supplemental police and supplemental maintenance. Next the Board of County Commissioners will consider approving the new Allapattah CRA, and the County Commission requests the MRC to provide an advisory recommendation on agenda item impacting the Miami River. In theory the new Allapattah CRA is a potential funding for improvements along the Miami River in the CRA district (North shore from 7 Ave to 19 Ave) such as improvements to Point Park, Wagner Creek public greenspaces, generate job creation and job training with RMK Merrill-Stevens, etc. Illegal dumping creates blight therefore the CRA may pay for the removal of illegal dumping. **MRC Subcommittee Chairman Murley recommended the MRC support creating the new Allapattah CRA, and this item will be on the MRC's June 2 public meeting agenda, noon, 101 W Flagler.**

II) Discussion Regarding Revised / 2nd Draft Biscayne Bay Management Plan

Griffin Alexander, Betany Tober, and Hampton Hotard, Florida Department of Environmental Education, stated after receiving input from the public and the MRC revisions were made to the now 2nd draft Biscayne Bay Management Plan. Mr. Alexander stated the new version includes more Miami River and public access, consistent with Jim Murley's recommendations. The 2nd draft is out for public comment now, with a public meeting on May 22, 6 PM, at FIU North Campus, or via email.

III) Discussion Regarding Miami-Dade County and City of Miami's Respective Urban Forestry Plans

Jane Gilbert and Jen Cheek, Miami-Dade County, presented the "Miami-Dade Urban Forestry Plan 2025". The County's goal is 30% tree canopy. Surveys indicate the following tree canopies:

1996 = 10%

2006 = 12%

2016 = 20%

2020 = 20%

Ms. Gilbert stated trees benefit personal health, the natural environment, and reduces temperatures. Therefore, the County is partnering with cities, schools, private sector, and faith-based institutions to increase tree canopy by providing and planting trees at no cost. Ms. Gilbert stated Miami-Dade County received a \$10 million federal grant for County Wide Street Trees. Chairman Murley stated Melrose is a Miami River District single family residential neighborhood in unincorporated Miami-Dade County, and Ms. Gilbert replied the County would look into planting trees in Melrose. MRC Director Bibeau noted Booker T. Washington High School is in the Miami River District, and Ms. Gilbert replied the County would be interested in donating trees to Booker T. Washington High School. Ms. Gilbert stated Miami-Dade County's \$1.6 million budget for new trees is in jeopardy, and maybe used for street trees in Commissioner Eileen Higgins District along 17 Ave & 22 Ave.

Luiz Lam, City of Miami, presented the City of Miami's Streetscape Master Plans, which includes new trees in the Miami River District in East Little Havana for example along SW 8 Ave, SW 3 ST, SW 6 ST, and in Allapattah such as Curtis Park on the Miami River. The City of Miami's significant goal is 40% tree canopy. The City of Miami received a \$2 million federal grant and has funding from the Tree Trust Fund.

IV) Discussion Regarding CITT Funding Opportunity to Construct More Sections of the Public Miami River Greenway

MRC Director Bibeau stated funding is needed to construct the on-road Miami River Greenway along NW South River Drive from NW 17 Ave to NW 22 Ave. Currently portions of this subject area, such as in front of Sewell Park, have no sidewalks, no curb, no gutter, etc. A significant funding opportunity for the City is the City's share of the ½ penny sales tax for which the City receives a monthly \$2.5 million dollar payment (\$30 million over 12 months) from the CITT. In addition, the City of Miami a couple months ago received \$80 million from the CITT / ½ penny sales tax, for which the City submitted a potential list of projects. The on-road Miami River Greenway is a bike ped / street transportation project with direct connectivity to mass transit; therefore, it is eligible to receive reoccurring half penny sales tax funding.

V) Discussion Regarding Status of Fern Isle Park Expansion (South Shore of South Fork Tributary)

MRC Director Bibeau provided this email as an update regarding the MRC recommended waterfront expansion of Fern Isle Park along the Miami River's South Fork Tributary:

From: brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org <brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org>

Sent: Wednesday, April 23, 2025 5:20 PM

To: 'Claudio Diaferia' <cdiaferia@gmx-way.com>

Cc: 'Chris Evans' <CEvans@miamigov.com>; 'Roberto Tazoe' <RTazoe@miamigov.com>;

'Francisco Castaneda' <FCastaneda@miamigov.com>; 'Miguel Angel Gabela'

<MAGabela@miamigov.com>; 'Victor Turner' <VTurner@miamigov.com>; 'Jose R. Perez'

<JRPerez@miamigov.com>; 'Hector Badia' <hbadia@miamigov.com>; 'Jorge Mora'

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<JMora@miamigov.com>; 'Natasha Colebrook-Williams' <NColebrook-Williams@miamigov.com>; 'Kristy Duarte' <KDuarte@miamigov.com>; 'Barbara Hernandez' <BaHernandez@miamigov.com>; 'James (RER)' <James.Murley@miamidade.gov>; 'Brett Bibeau' <BrettBibeau@MiamiRiverCommission.org>
Subject: RE: Fern Isle Park Expansion

Dear City of Miami,

Per emails below, please "reply all" an "official request".

Thank you

Sincerely,
Brett

From: Claudio Diaferia <cdiaferia@gmx-way.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 7:00 PM
To: brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org
Cc: Chris Evans <CEvans@miamigov.com>; Roberto Tazoe <RTazoe@miamigov.com>; Francisco Castaneda <FCastaneda@miamigov.com>; Miguel Angel Gabela <MAGabela@miamigov.com>; Victor Turner <VTurner@miamigov.com>; Jose R. Perez <JRPerez@miamigov.com>; Hector Badia <hbadia@miamigov.com>; Jorge Mora <JMora@miamigov.com>; Natasha Colebrook-Williams <NColebrook-Williams@miamigov.com>; Kristy Duarte <KDuarte@miamigov.com>; Barbara Hernandez <BaHernandez@miamigov.com>; Brett Bibeau <BrettBibeau@miamirivercommission.org>
Subject: Re: Fern Isle Park Expansion

Brett,

Given the recent change from MDX to GMX, the license agreement that was sent previously is no longer applicable. I would need to create a new license agreement with the specifics of the request. I need the Park Department to send me an official request with the proposed plans so I can create the new license agreement.

Claudio Diaferia, M.S., P.E.
Interim Chief Operating Officer
Greater Miami Expressway Agency
305.637.3277 x2113



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On Apr 22, 2025, at 5:49 PM, brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org wrote:

THX Claudio,

Would GMX please be so kind to "reply all" a draft "license agreement with the Parks Department for the use of the Right of Way"?

We appreciate your continued time and assistance

Sincerely,
Brett

From: Claudio Diaferia <cdiaferia@gmx-way.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 8:35 AM
To: brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org
Cc: Chris Evans <CEvans@miamigov.com>; Roberto Tazoe <RTazoe@miamigov.com>; Francisco Castaneda <FCastaneda@miamigov.com>; Miguel Angel Gabela <MAGabela@miamigov.com>; Victor Turner <VTurner@miamigov.com>; Jose R. Perez <JRPerez@miamigov.com>; Hector Badia <hbadia@miamigov.com>; Jorge Mora <JMora@miamigov.com>; Natasha Colebrook-Williams <NColebrook-Williams@miamigov.com>; Kristy Duarte <KDuarte@miamigov.com>; Barbara Hernandez <BaHernandez@miamigov.com>; Brett Bibeau <BrettBibeau@miamirivercommission.org>
Subject: Re: Fern Isle Park Expansion

Brett,

GMX would need to execute a license agreement with the Parks Department for the use of the Right of Way.

Claudio Diaferia, M.S., P.E.
Interim Chief Operating Officer
Greater Miami Expressway Agency
305.637.3277 x2113
<[image001.png](#)>

On Apr 21, 2025, at 3:38 PM, brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org wrote:

THX Claudio

What does GMX need from the City for the desired extension of Fern Isle Park into GMX right of way?

I hope you have a nice afternoon

Sincerely,
Brett

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From: Claudio Diaferia <cdiaferia@gmx-way.com>
Sent: Monday, April 21, 2025 10:35 AM
To: brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org
Cc: Chris Evans <CEvans@miamigov.com>; Roberto Tazoe <RTazoe@miamigov.com>;
Francisco Castaneda <FCastaneda@miamigov.com>; Miguel Angel Gabela
<MAGabela@miamigov.com>; Victor Turner <VTurner@miamigov.com>; Jose R. Perez
<JRPerez@miamigov.com>; Hector Badia <hbadia@miamigov.com>; Jorge Mora
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<BaHernandez@miamigov.com>; Brett Bibeau <BrettBibeau@miamirivercommission.org>
Subject: Re: Fern Isle Park Expansion

Brett,

The meeting did occur, we discussed the potential extension of Fern Isle Park into GMX right of way and other future projects in the vicinity. No definitive direction was taken.

Claudio Diaferia, M.S., P.E.
Interim Chief Operating Officer
Greater Miami Expressway Agency
305.637.3277 x2113
<[image001.png](#)>

On Apr 18, 2025, at 6:53 PM, brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org wrote:

Dear Mr Diaferia,

Per the January emails below, did this meeting occur? Please be so kind to "reply all" the current status.

Thank you

Sincerely,
Brett

From: brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org <brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org>
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2025 10:58 AM
To: 'Evans, Chris' <CEvans@miamigov.com>; 'Tazoe, Roberto' <RTazoe@miamigov.com>;
'Castaneda, Francisco' <FCastaneda@miamigov.com>
Cc: 'Gabela, Miguel Angel (Commissioner)' <MAGabela@miamigov.com>; 'Turner, Victor'
<VTurner@miamigov.com>; 'Perez, Jose R.' <JRPerez@miamigov.com>; 'Badia, Hector'
<hbadia@miamigov.com>; 'Mora, Jorge' <JMora@miamigov.com>; 'Colebrook-Williams,
Natasha' <NColebrook-Williams@miamigov.com>; 'Mora, Jorge' <JMora@miamigov.com>;
'Duarte, Kristy' <KDuarte@miamigov.com>; 'Hernandez, Barbara'

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<BaHernandez@miamigov.com>; 'cdiaferia@gmx-way.com' <cdiaferia@gmx-way.com>
Subject: Fern Isle Park Expansion

Happy Friday,

Per emails below, I respectfully recommend the City please schedule a virtual meeting with Claudio Diaferia, GMX (formerly MDX, cc'd on this email), regarding the Fern Isle Park expansion.

I hope you have a nice weekend

Sincerely,
Brett Bibeau
Managing Director,
Miami River Commission
Cell 305 987 4446"

VI) New Business

The public meeting adjourned.

Miami River Commission's Urban Infill & Greenways Subcommittee

Public Meeting

May 12, 2025 - 10:00 AM

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Organization

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Email

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