RESOLUTION NO. 2019-30800

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE AT THE JANUARY 29, 2019 CITY COMMISSION GOALS CONFERENCE, AND APPROVING THE REPLACEMENT OF GRAY CONCRETE SIDEWALKS THROUGHOUT THE CITY WITH THE "MIAMI BEACH RED" SIDEWALK COLOR STANDARD, UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED BY ANY APPLICABLE CITY LAND USE BOARD; FURTHER, PROVIDING THAT THE REPLACEMENT OF GRAY SIDEWALKS SHALL BE COMPLETED GRADUALLY OVER TIME AS NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS ARE IMPLEMENTED AND THE SIDEWALKS WITHIN AN ENTIRE BLOCK ARE REPLACED; AND FURTHER, DELEGATING TO THE PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR THE AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE ON A STREET-BY-STREET BASIS IF REPLACEMENT OF SIDEWALKS TO A "MIAMI BEACH RED" COLOR STANDARD IS APPROPRIATE; AND FURTHER DIRECTING THAT THE FOREGOING BE INCORPORATED IN THE CITY'S PUBLIC WORKS MANUAL.

WHEREAS, many sidewalks in the City of Miami Beach incorporate a "Miami Beach Red" color standard (a distinctive reddish/pink color), while others incorporate a natural gray concrete color; and

WHEREAS, in LTC No. 261-2009, the Administration summarized the available historical facts concerning the origin of "Miami Beach red" sidewalks, including a conflicting record of Carl G. Fisher's intent of using red sidewalks throughout the City, given Carl Fisher's development of certain neighborhoods, such as the Palm View Historic District, with exclusively natural gray concrete sidewalks; and

WHEREAS, at the October 5, 2009 Capital Improvement Projects Oversight Committee meeting (CIPOC), the CIPOC discussed whether the City should continue to install "Miami Beach Red" sidewalks or use the more economical natural concrete color, in response to the request by Frank Gehry, the architect for the New World Symphony campus, to install natural concrete sidewalks on 17th Street; and

WHEREAS, the Administration recommendation at the time was for the City to use the natural gray concrete color standard for sidewalks in non-historic districts, and for the Historic Preservation Board to make the determination as to sidewalk color in historic districts; and

WHEREAS, the color of the older "Miami Beach red" concrete sidewalks have raised various maintenance issues with the passage of time, as the red oxide is partially or totally worn off from foot traffic and weather, exposing the sidewalks to patches of gray concrete adjacent to highly concentrated patches of red oxide powder, resulting in aesthetically unattractive irregularities; and

WHEREAS, since the 1990's, the City has exercised diligent efforts to correct and manage the patchwork and maintenance issues by thoroughly integrating the red pigment into the concrete mix for the full depth of the sidewalks in all new construction projects, utilizing a controlled color mixing formula to the cement batching plants; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the City's color integrity efforts, sidewalk color can still vary significantly from concrete batch mix to batch mix, when new sidewalks are poured by utility companies while conducting ongoing repairs and upgrades to their systems; and

WHEREAS, in addition, frequent pressure washing removes the top layer of the color cement exposing the aggregate which cannot be colored; and

WHEREAS, at its January 29, 2019 Goals Conference, the City Commission expressed their preference for the "Miami Beach red" sidewalk theme to be continued throughout the City, and as such, directed the Administration to replace gray sidewalks with the "Miami Beach red" color standard; and

WHEREAS, the Administration has recommended that the gray sidewalks be replaced gradually over time as new neighborhood projects are implemented, when an entire block is to be replaced, so as to ensure a cohesive sidewalk color pattern is maintained within each street;

WHEREAS, the Administration further recommends that the City Commission delegate to the Public Works Director the authority to determine if replacement of gray sidewalks with the "Miami Beach red" color standard is otherwise appropriate, such as in instances where significant portions of the "flags" of concrete within the same block are being replaced.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, that the Mayor and City Commission hereby accept the recommendations made at the January 29, 2019 City Commission Goals Conference, and approve the replacement of gray concrete sidewalks throughout the City with the "Miami Beach red" sidewalk color standard, unless otherwise specified by any applicable City Land Use Board; further, provide that the replacement of gray sidewalks shall be completed gradually over time as new neighborhood projects are implemented and the sidewalks within an entire block are replaced; and further, delegate to the Public Works Director the authority to determine on a street-by-street basis if replacement of sidewalks to a "Miami Beach red" color standard is appropriate; and further direct that the foregoing be incorporated in the City's Public Works Manual.

PASSED and ADOPTED this 10 day of April, 2019.

Dan Gelber, Mayor

ATTEST:

4/23/19

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

MIAMI BEACH INCORPORATED MARCH 26TH 1915

APPROVED AS TO FORM & LANGUAGE & FOR EXECUTION

3-4-19

City Attorney RAP Date

MIAMIBEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager
DATE: April 10, 2019

SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE AT THE JANUARY 29, 2019 CITY COMMISSION GOALS CONFERENCE, AND APPROVING THE REPLACEMENT OF GRAY CONCRETE SIDEWALKS THROUGHOUT THE CITY WITH THE "MIAMI BEACH RED" SIDEWALK COLOR STANDARD, UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED BY ANY APPLICABLE CITY LAND USE BOARD; FURTHER, PROVIDING THAT THE REPLACEMENT OF GRAY SIDEWALKS SHALL BE COMPLETED GRADUALLY OVER TIME AS NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS ARE IMPLEMENTED AND THE SIDEWALKS WITHIN AN ENTIRE BLOCK ARE REPLACED; AND FURTHER, DELEGATING TO THE PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR THE AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE ON A STREET-BY-STREET BASIS IF REPLACEMENT OF SIDEWALKS TO A "MIAMI BEACH RED" COLOR STANDARD IS APPROPRIATE; AND FURTHER DIRECTING THAT THE FOREGOING BE INCORPORATED IN THE CITY'S PUBLIC WORKS MANUAL.

RECOMMENDATION

The Administration recommends maintaining the existing sidewalk color unless replacing an entire block of sidewalk at which time it would be at the discretion of the Public Works Director unless there is a Resolution or Board Order providing direction.

ANALYSIS

Many sidewalks in the City of Miami Beach incorporate a "Miami Beach Red" color standard (a distinctive reddish/pink color), while others are a natural gray concrete color.

In LTC No. 261-2009, the Administration summarized the available historical facts concerning the origin of "Miami Beach Red" sidewalks, including a conflicting record of Carl G. Fisher's intent of using red sidewalks throughout the City, given Carl Fisher's development of certain neighborhoods, such as the Palm View Historic District, with exclusively natural gray concrete sidewalks.

At the October 5, 2009 Capital Improvement Projects Oversight Committee meeting (CIPOC), the CIPOC discussed whether the City should continue to install "Miami Beach Red" sidewalks

or use the more economical natural concrete color, in response to the request by Frank Gehry, the architect for the New World Symphony campus, to install natural concrete sidewalks on 17th Street.

The Administration recommendation at the time was for the City to use the natural gray concrete color standard for sidewalks in non-historic districts, and for the Historic Preservation Board to make the determination as to sidewalk color in historic districts.

The color of the older "Miami Beach Red" concrete sidewalks have raised various maintenance issues with the passage of time, as the red oxide is partially or totally worn off from foot traffic and weather, exposing the sidewalks to patches of gray concrete adjacent to highly concentrated patches of red oxide powder, resulting in aesthetically unattractive irregularities.

Since the 1990's, the City has exercised diligent efforts to correct and manage the patchwork and maintenance issues by thoroughly integrating the red pigment into the concrete mix for the full depth of the sidewalks in all new construction projects, utilizing a controlled color mixing formula to the cement batching plants.

Notwithstanding the City's color integrity efforts, sidewalk color can still vary significantly from concrete batch mix to batch mix, when new sidewalks are poured by utility companies while conducting ongoing repairs and upgrades to their systems.

In addition, frequent pressure washing removes the top layer of the color cement exposing the aggregate which cannot be colored.

At its January 29, 2019 Goals Conference, the City Commission expressed their preference for the "Miami Beach Red" sidewalk theme to be continued throughout the City, and as such, directed the Administration to replace gray sidewalks with the "Miami Beach Red" color standard.

The Administration has recommended that the gray sidewalks be replaced gradually over time as new neighborhood projects are implemented, when an entire block is to be replaced, so as to ensure a cohesive sidewalk color pattern is maintained within each street.

The Administration further recommends that the City Commission delegate to the Public Works Director the authority to determine if replacement of gray sidewalks with the "Miami Beach Red" color standard is otherwise appropriate, such as in instances where significant portions of the "flags" of concrete within the same block are being replaced.

CONCLUSION

The Administration maintains the reservations stated above regarding the wholesale conversion to red sidewalks however we can work within the parameters of the Resolution as presented.

Legislative Tracking

Public Works

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

- History-of-Miami Beach Red-Sidewalks-LTC-261-2009-Sidewalk-Color
- Resolution

RECEIVED
2009 OCT -1 AM 10:22
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

MIAMIBEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
NO. LTC # 261-2009

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: September 28, 2009

SUBJECT: Sidewalk Color – "Miami Beach Red" vs. Natural Concrete

The purpose of this LTC is to provide information regarding the color of concrete sidewalks in the City.

Recently, as part of the discussion on the design of the New World Symphony Campus Expansion building and the proposed Lincoln Park, the issue of the color of the concrete sidewalks was raised. Both designers, Gehry Partners and West 8, have expressed a strong preference for having the sidewalks adjacent to these projects be a natural concrete color, as opposed to the City standard of Miami Beach Red. During the design review process, the sidewalks for these projects were approved to be natural color concrete.

This discussion caused staff to take a closer look at the current City standard and is prepared to implement a change from Miami Beach Red sidewalk color to natural concrete color for all areas outside of an historic district. For area inside an historic district, this decision would be left to the Historic Preservation Board. The main reasons for this recommendation are detailed below.

As part of this process regarding a change in City standard, staff has placed this discussion on the October 5, 2009 Capital Improvement Projects Oversight Committee Agenda and will also prepare a referral item to the appropriate City Commission Committee.

A Summary of What We Know

There is a recurring story in Miami Beach that all City sidewalks were historically red because that is was the way that Carl G. Fisher intended for it to be. It has been stated or suggested that Carl Fisher believed red sidewalks would "cut the glare from the sun" and would be symbolic of "putting down a red carpet for tourists". This may have been Mr. Fisher's view at one point in time but there are certainly conflicting stories about when red sidewalks came significantly into being in Miami Beach. Ironically, one of Carl Fisher's earliest residential real estate developments dating back to1920, the area known today as the **Palm View Historic District**, located between 17th Street and the Collins Canal, west of Meridian Avenue, has exclusively natural grey concrete sidewalks. Over time, these grey sidewalks have taken on a patina and character very similar to weathered keystone, a natural local material emitting no glare and contrasting gracefully with the grassy swales and tropical landscape of Miami Beach that Fisher so admired. This patina of age is due partly to the lime content in the natural concrete, which is similar to keystone. These natural concrete sidewalks are still seen throughout the Palm View Historic District today in the same locations they appeared in both the 1927 and 1941 aerial photographs. Their 'aged' color has remained uniform and their appearance aesthetically pleasing. No residents of

this historic district are demanding that their natural concrete sidewalks be replaced by Miami Beach red sidewalks.

Carl Fisher was notoriously particular about making the "first impressions" of his potential real estate clients "good" and "lasting" impressions. It was all about successfully marketing a product and building an attractive new city in the tropics. The City's early red sidewalks, whatever their color origin, reportedly utilized a red oxide powder that was blended in thoroughly with the concrete during mixing, so the entire 'mix' became red. It would have been an expensive process then and it remains expensive today.

Sometime after World War II, it is reported that the City began to trowel red oxide powder into the surface of the fresh poured concrete sidewalks rather than blending the oxide thoroughly in with the concrete mix. This was reportedly done in order to reduce the cost of the sidewalks to taxpayers. Unfortunately, this post-war 'surface treatment' is part of the reason why so many the City's red sidewalks today are an irregular patchwork quilt of oxide red color mixed with natural grey concrete in various shades and concentrations. This effect is further compounded by the irregular aging (or fading) of the red oxide over time.

The color of older red concrete sidewalks in Miami Beach varies almost from concrete section to concrete section. As these 'surface finished' sidewalks age the surface red oxide is also partially or totally worn off from foot traffic and weather, exposing large areas of grey concrete adjacent to highly concentrated patches of red oxide powder, resulting in highly unaesthetic irregularities. This is clearly not the appealing "red carpet" notion of colored sidewalks that Mr. Fisher may have conceived in the first half of the previous century. The actual result is the unfortunate patchwork quilt of red sidewalks we have today. These sidewalks have proven nearly impossible to maintain in an acceptable aesthetic condition over the years, even at additional cost to the taxpayer.

When Did Red Walkways Begin to Appear on a Large Scale in Miami Beach?

Kenneth Treister, the local architect responsible for designing the Holocaust Memorial and the Meridian Avenue bridge, states that when he grew up on the Beach in the 1930s and 1940s he does not remember the City having red sidewalks. He believes the change to red colored sidewalks occurred predominantly sometime well after World War II. Aristotle Ares, who also grew up in Miami Beach and joined the City's Public Works Department after World War II, where he worked for 45 years, reported in a recent correspondence to Fred Beckmann, Public Works Director, that City Engineer, Morris N. Lipp began the practice of blending red oxide powder into the surface of the freshly poured grey concrete sidewalks sometime after the War. Aristotle also states that he was told by Mr. Lipp the idea for red sidewalks originated with Carl Fisher (Fisher died in July, 1939). In 1992, local attorney Dan Paul, stated in the *New Times*, "Red sidewalks came into Miami Beach when some public-relations man got the idea that this was like rolling out the red carpet for tourists. But he overlooked the fact that the red dye fades in the sun, and the sidewalks have come to look very ugly. They put red dye in the concrete and it costs more than if they poured the concrete white." Howard Gross, a lifelong resident of Miami Beach, recalls the following: "Around 1964-65 the city began to paint sidewalks "hot pink" or "red clay color" They had been regular gray sidewalks. Paul Bruun then Editor of Miami Beach Sun Reporter did a series of editorials and front page stories calling the city idiots because those colors made the sidewalks burning hot from the sun. He campaigned against them to no avail until he died." Former Mayor, Harold Rosen, recalls the introduction of red sidewalks during the late 60s and the 1970s.

Since the 1990s, the City has tried earnestly to correct and manage the problem of the 'patchwork red' nature of the sidewalks by thoroughly integrating the red pigment into the concrete mix for the full depth of the sidewalks in all new construction projects. This is done in accordance with a controlled color mixing formula provided by Public Works. While this has proven more successful (but also much more expensive to the taxpayers) the color integrity of the sidewalks can still vary significantly from concrete batch mix to batch mix and from contractor to contractor, even under close construction supervision. This variation is unavoidable in large scale construction over prolonged periods of time and is much of what causes the inconsistent nature of even our newer red concrete sidewalks today, which still range in color from dark-red to pink-red to orange-red, even after they have aged. And an even greater challenge occurs after new sidewalks are poured and FPL as well as other utilities come in to make their inevitable and ongoing repairs and changes to their lines. The sidewalks are chopped out in odd places and then randomly patched with yet additional new shades of red concrete, further exacerbating the problem. In some cases, property owners have even given way to painting their sidewalks (without approval) a single shade of red in front of the entire length of their properties to create some kind of consistency.

Should There Be Red Sidewalks Everywhere In Miami Beach?

Large areas of the City Center Neighborhood (which were earlier either a part of the municipal golf course or public parking lots) as well as the Lake Pancoast Neighborhood (around the Woman's Club block, especially) never even had sidewalks, or their sidewalks were introduced well after the war or more recently. We may never know for sure whether they were originally grey and then colored red or they were red from the start. It should not be construed there have always been 'historic' red sidewalks throughout the City that must always be recreated. In the 1941 City aerial photos of the Lake Pancoast Neighborhood only three buildings existed south of 24th Terrace (the Woman's Club, Chevy Chase Apts, and the Helen Mar) and only a single sidewalk connects the footbridge crossing Lake Pancoast from Collins Ave westward to the Helen Mar. The original sidewalk color is unknown but the walkway of the footbridge across the Lake (built in 1953) is still natural grey concrete today.

The CIP Neighborhood Streetscape Improvement Projects Program affords a rare opportunity for the City to begin to address the unfortunate current patchwork- quilt nature of our sidewalks that has accumulated over the past few decades. This is particularly true in neighborhoods which are scheduled to have all of their sidewalks removed and replaced by new and wider sidewalks, in conjunction with the installation of new underground infrastructure, bulb-outs, and landscaping, or as a result of serious deterioration. In the City Center Neighborhood, where several of the sidewalks were only installed after World War II and others are already natural grey in color, this is the correct time for the City to take the responsible action of providing better, more affordable, more attractive, and easier to maintain sidewalks. All of the sidewalks around the New World Symphony and the new Pennsylvania Avenue Parking Garage (which are in the City Center Neighborhood) will be natural grey in color at the express and correct request by Frank Gehry and Partners as will the other new sidewalks in the City Center Neighborhood.

The replacement of existing red sidewalks with new natural grey sidewalks will be looked at on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis by the City. In historically designated areas where the Historic Preservation Board specifically determines that the red sidewalks are historic and should be replaced in kind by new red sidewalks, this will be done. But as

always, the board will base its decision on competent evidence that the red sidewalks are historic. In neighborhoods of the city which are not historically designated and the sidewalks must be completely replaced, the replacement should be with natural grey color sidewalks unless there are circumstances that dictate otherwise.

We see this as the most logical method for addressing this sensitive but important issue of good aesthetics, good value, and good and easier sidewalk construction and maintenance over the long run. It is much simpler and much less costly to repair and replace natural grey concrete sidewalks than it is 'difficult' red sidewalks. And the color results over the years are much more predictable and manageable.

As noted above, the staff recommendation is to consider changing the City standard in non-Historic Districts to natural color concrete, and for the Historic Preservation Board to make this determination in Historic Districts. This is being referred to the CIPOC and staff will make a referral to the appropriate Commission Committee prior to full implementation.

Please feel free to call me with any questions or concerns that you may have.

C: Tim Hemstreet, Assistant City Manager
Jorge Gomez, Planning Director
Fred Beckmann, Public Works Director
Charles Carreno, CIP Director

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