



April 23, 2018

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Dear City of Miami Beach Mayor, Commissioners, and City Officials,

On behalf of the MidBeach Neighborhood Association (MBNA), we would like to express our appreciation to Mr. David Gomez, from the Office of Capital Improvement Projects, and to Paola Vega, Lauren Firtel, Gianni Feoli and Kevin Pulido for attending our MBNA Meeting on April 11th, and providing updates on the Recreational Corridor (or "Beach Walk" as it's commonly known).

Although we are very excited to see this project coming to fruition after so many years, and we certainly have no intention of affecting the timeline, once again we want to advance the concerns expressed during numerous meetings and discussions over several years. The Beach Walk has been on the Agenda for every MBNA Meeting and has been discussed with representatives from the FDOT and CMB who have attended our meetings and have listened to the requests and concerns of our membership. These discussions are all included in our **Meeting Minutes**, and can be provided at your request. In addition, our MBNA President, Anamarie Ferreira de Melo, and MBNA Director Charlotte Tomic, attended the **January 4, 2018** meeting organized by Capital Improvements and Environmental Department. At this meeting, they spoke to Mr. David Martinez, and once again reiterated our issues and concerns. This was followed by numerous emails and conversations.

Since we hope to schedule another meeting with CIP staff for next week, we find it appropriate to express our concerns in writing, beforehand, so that we can obtain responses to our specific concerns when we meet.

1. PALM TREES ON TOP OF PAVERS

a. For several years of meetings regarding this project, we have asked for shaded areas, benches and drinking fountains and were told these were not possible. The installation of "palm trees" on top of the pavers was never once mentioned.

b. Palm trees that will reach 30-35 feet in height will not serve to provide shade. (*Read interesting article: <https://www.citylab.com/solutions/2011/12/problem-palm-trees/748/>*)

c. The 18" base of these trees will reduce the width of the Beach Walk to a narrow 13.5' in most areas, and the trees will become obstacles for walkers/joggers.

d. Instead of "slowing down cyclists" as suggested, we believe that palm trees installed on top of the pavers, will create a "fun obstacle course" for cyclists to race and do "figure eights."

MBNA'S POSITION: Palm trees should be installed to the East (preferably) or West of the pavers. There are numerous examples of this on our current Beach Walk; (*see photo collage on page 3.*)

2. PAVER DESIGN

a. We understand the FDOT's position regarding the multi-purpose use of the entire corridor and that it's not possible to create a separate bicycle "lane." We also feel that 15 feet is too narrow an area to safely accommodate bicyclists, runners, joggers, dogs on leashes, etc. However, many Boardwalks, Beachwalks and Riverwalks throughout the Country create visual separations with painted lines, materials or paver designs.

MBNA's POSITION: Pavers should be installed with a design that creates a visual separation between walkers/joggers and bicyclists; (*see photo collage on page 4.*)

3. MOTORIZED VEHICLES

- a. Electric bicycles (E-Bikes) are the new trend. These bikes are already being rented at a couple of bike stores in Miami Beach and we've observed them riding at high speeds on the boardwalk.
- b. E-Bikes are made with motors that have 250 to 300 Watts of power and can travel at speeds of up to 20 mph. Some are designed to go at higher speeds.
- c. Obviously, these must be prohibited on the Beach Walk and enforcement measures should be adopted to ensure the safety of Beach Walk pedestrians, joggers, and bicyclist.
- d. *Are E-Bikes Less Safe:* <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2016/08/e-bike-safety-speed/494936/>
Unofficial info. re Electric Bike Laws in the United States: <https://electricbikereview.com/guides/ebike-laws-usa/>

MBNA'S POSITION: E-Bikes and other motorized vehicles should not be allowed on the Beach Walk.

4. SIGNAGE. Aluminum signs need to be installed throughout the Beach Walk stating the following:

- *Bicyclists on the Beachwalk must ride on the outer sides, maintain speeds below 5 mph and yield to Pedestrians.*
- *Motorized vehicles, including Electric Bicycles, Scooters, Skateboards, Segways and Motorcycles are strictly prohibited and will be subject to fines.*

MBNA'S POSITION: Safety signage should be installed throughout the Beach Walk.

5. SEATING & ADDITIONAL SHADE

- a. Shade is essential to be able to enjoy and on some occasions withstand the stroll through the Beach Walk, especially through the MidBeach Condo-Canyon area where City owned and maintained access points are limited.
- b. At the January internal meeting between MBNA, CIP and the Environment and Sustainability Department, Representatives collectively brainstormed ideas of structures that did not pass the ECL or were not bolted to the ground, and therefore, could be accepted by federal standards.
- c. A plausible suggestion was to make shade structures that are similar to the iconic Miami Beach lifeguard stands that can be moved in the case of a storm. Although seating could possibly be designed within the shade structure, MBNA has also discussed small seating that would not be too inviting but would allow a rest spot e.g. simme seat design.
- d. Even though funding for these items would not be included in the current project, MBNA offered to assist the City in exploring non-traditional funding options now in order to assure the structures would be plausible shortly after the completion of the Beachwalk.

MBNA'S POSITION: A removable seating and shade structure that is reflective of Miami Beach's style and branding as well as a development, funding, and maintenance plan should be created.

6. DRINKING WATER ACCESS

- a. MBNA members have expressed a serious concern for the well-being of Beach Walk goers that find themselves between 47th and 56th street without public access to fresh drinking water (with the exception of park areas south of 47th and between 53rd/54th).
- b. The model that has dominated this conversation was around a possible public/private partnership that would have the owners along the condo canyon area provide easement for the City to pull water and create public water features just west of the ECL.
- c. Although, we recognize this would require coordination and advocacy to our stakeholders, MBNA members have suggested that the overall community benefit is greater than the individual condominium and/or hotel property loss. Members also expressed concerns with the City's ability to maintain current drinking facilities and the allotment for them to be deuteriated and used as a bathing center by individuals experiencing homelessness.

MBNA'S POSITION: There needs to be a plan to provide access to fresh drinking water along areas that are privately owned.

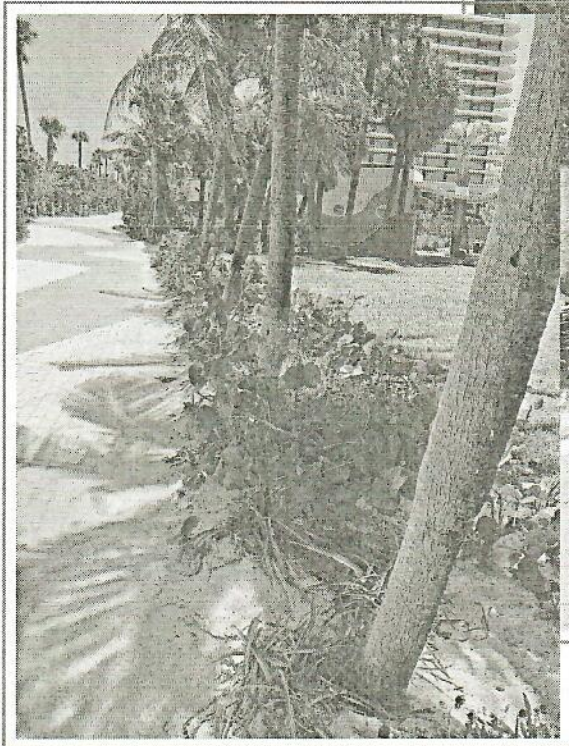
We're looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

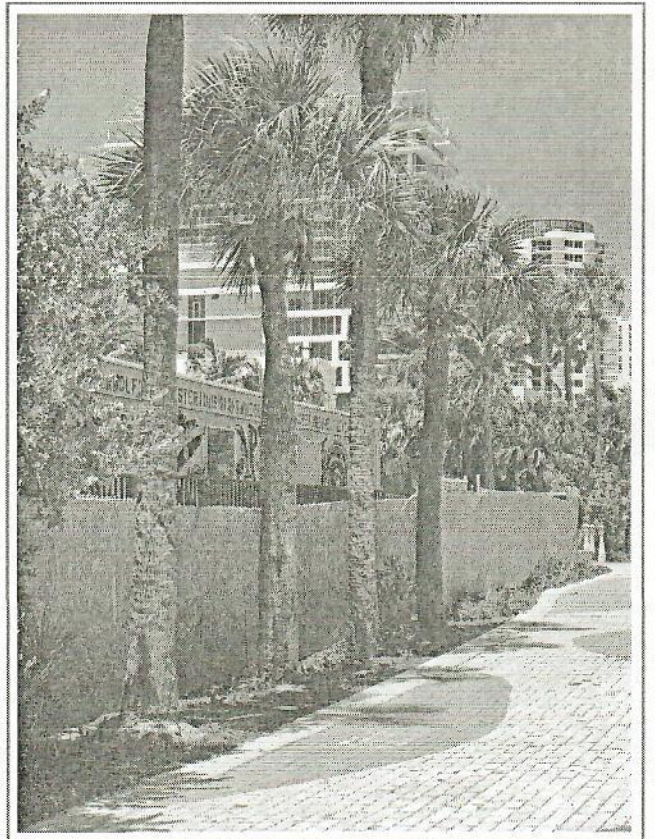
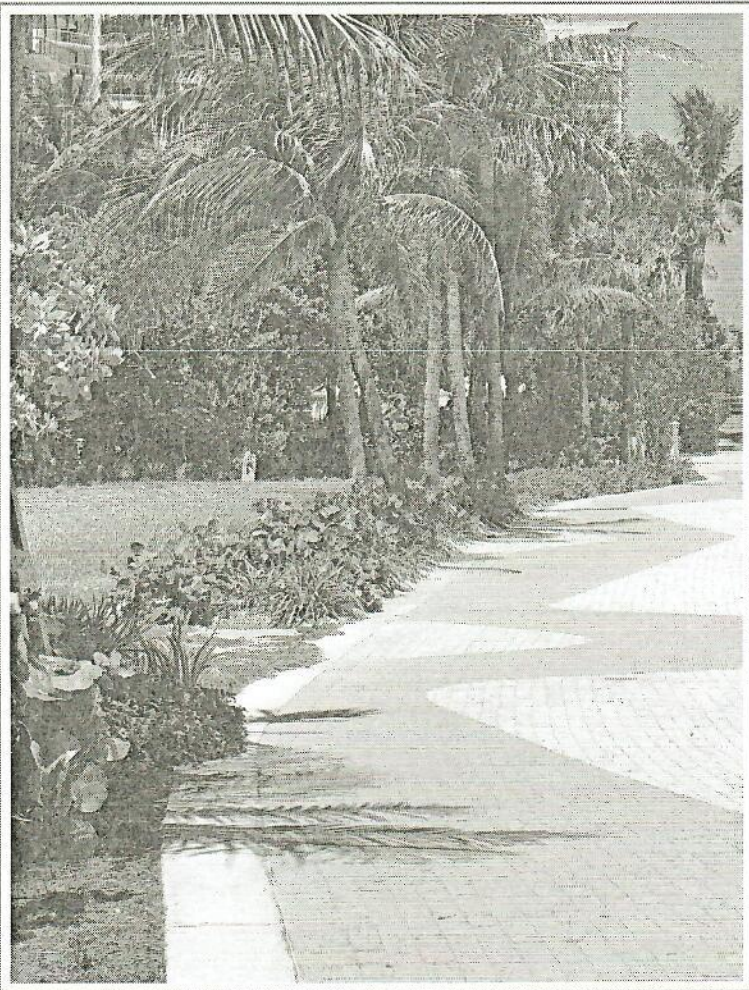
On behalf of the MidBeach Neighborhood Association (MBNA)

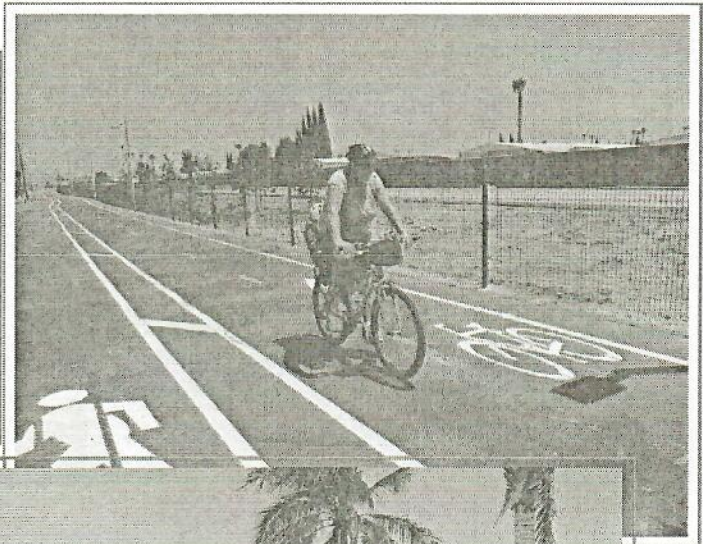
Anamarie Ferreira de Melo

Anamarie Ferreira de Melo, MBNA President

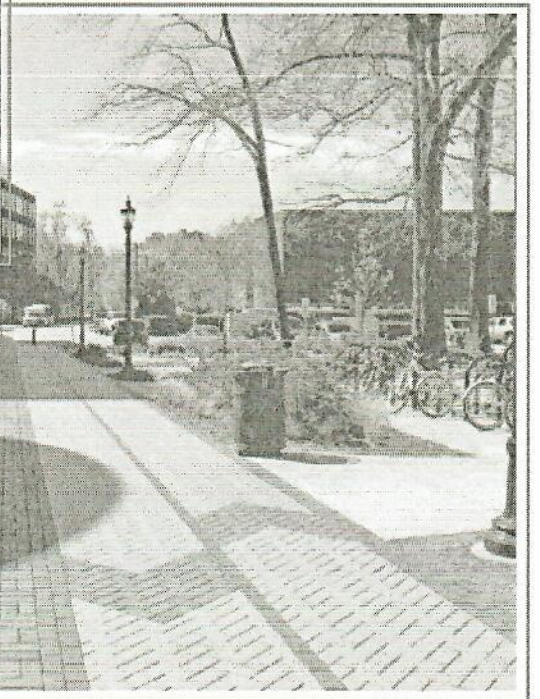


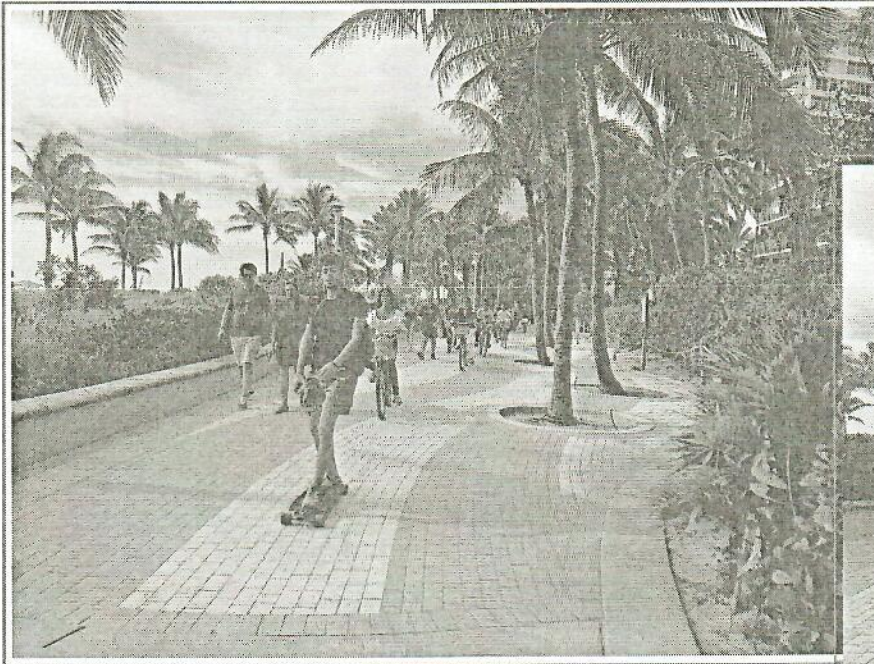
Palm Trees have been installed on the East and West sides of the Beach Walk in numerous places.



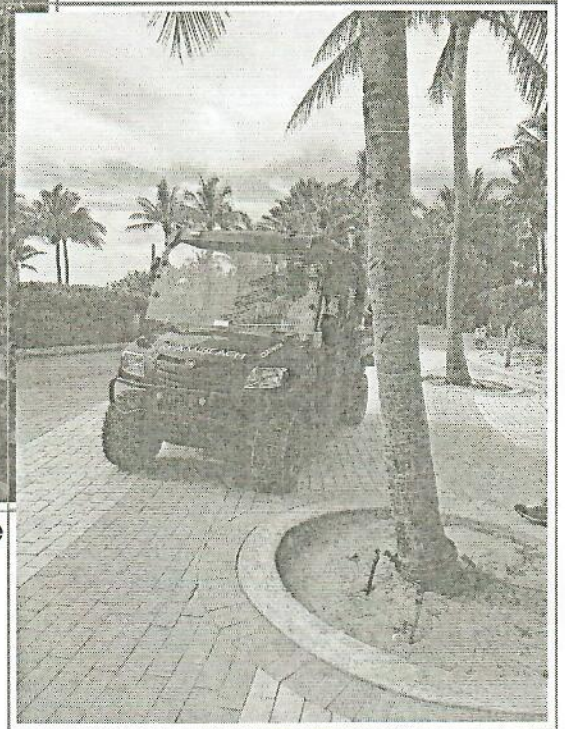


**Beach Walk designs that
create visual separations
for bicycles and
pedestrians**

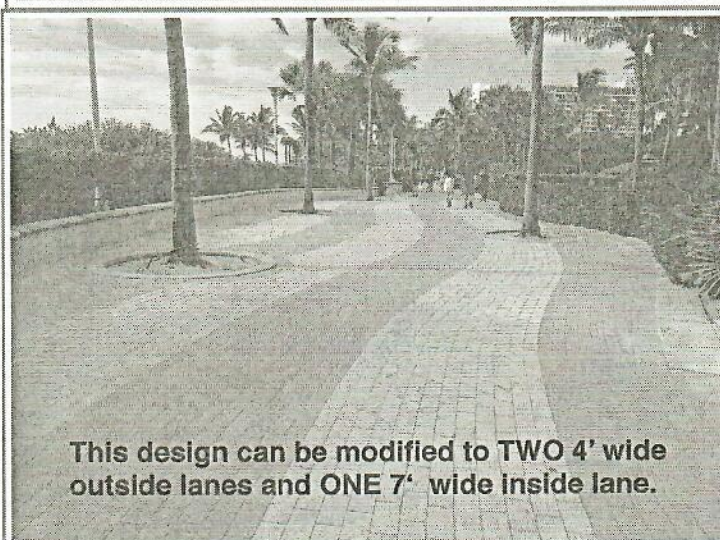
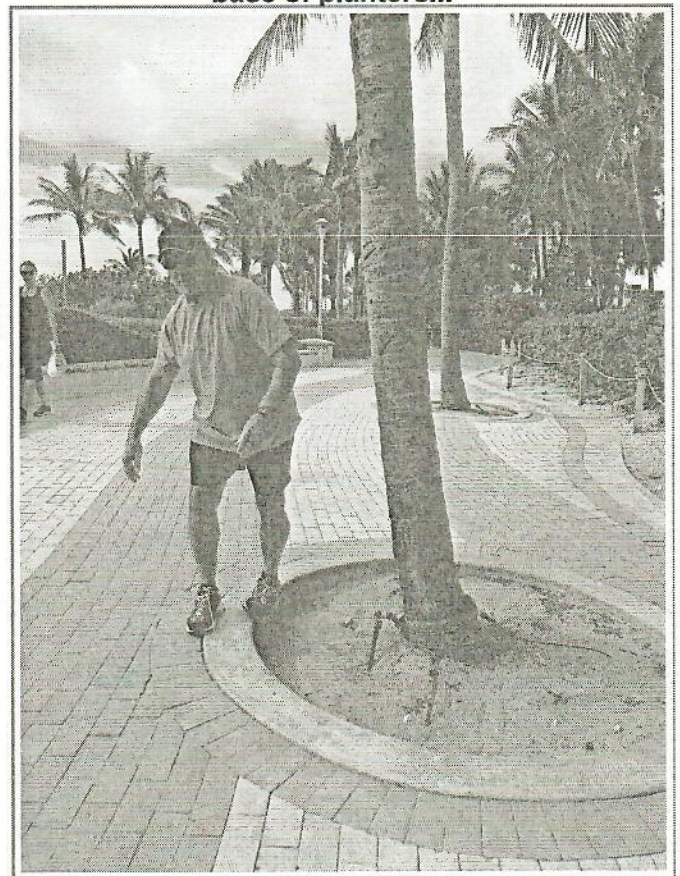




Palm trees are placed only in wide areas. Even here, they're narrowing the Beach Walk and are not providing shade.



Dangerous tripping hazard at base of planters...



This design can be modified to TWO 4' wide outside lanes and ONE 7' wide inside lane.