



COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Dan Gelber and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: April 11, 2018

SUBJECT: MEETING OF THE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY COMMITTEE (SRC)
ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2018

A meeting of the Sustainability and Resiliency Committee was held on Wednesday, February 21, 2018 in the City Manager's Commission Chambers in attendance: Commissioner Micky Steinberg, Commissioner John Elizabeth Aleman, Commissioner Ricky Arriola, and Commissioner Mark Samuelian. Members of the administration and the public were also in attendance.

1. DISCUSSION ON THE SEAWALL COALITION MEMBERSHIP FOR THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH

After-action

Melissa Roberts and Matthew Ebby, representatives of the Seawall Coalition presented the item. Ms. Roberts explained the Seawall Coalition is a non-partisan group that unifies coastal cities around the nation to advocate for federal solutions to sea level rise. The group helps bring together business owners, local businesses, and organizations on a single platform to strengthen their voice. Members are provided a platform, forums, as well as opportunities and tools at no cost.

Commissioner Steinberg shared concerns over having a government entity join a 501(c)(4) non-profit without fully understanding the parameters of where funding is obtained and how it is used. Susanne Torriente, Chief Resiliency Officer and Assistant City Manager, explained the Seawall Coalition has sister organizations, which are 501(c)(3) non-profits and serve as the organization's educational arm, while the Seawall Coalition is the advocacy arm. She added many compact partners are part of sealevelriseorg which is another educational tool.

Commissioner Rosen-Gonzalez stated it would make sense to become a part of the group for the opportunity to get additional funding from the federal government. Nick Kallergis, Senior Assistant City Attorney, offered to review the agreement to make sure there would not be any issues or conflicts with becoming a member.

ACTION: Continued until City Attorney's Office completes review of membership.

2. REVIEW OF PLANNED AND IN PROGRESS RESILIENCY PROJECTS

After-action

Item presented by Susanne Torriente, Chief Resiliency Officer and Assistant City Manager. She presented the working draft scope of services that the city has worked on with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) for their Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to perform a review of the city's stormwater management program. She stated the week of April 16, 2018 has been reserved for the TAP which is represented by ULI experts in the fields of engineering, urban planning, science, finance, insurance, and the former Chief Resiliency Officer (CRO) of New Orleans. Ms. Torriente added once the committee accepts the working draft scope, it would be brought to the March Commission Meeting for the full commission to confirm it. She explained that when the panel arrives, they will first have a day of informal interviews to acquaint themselves. Then, they will have a full day of tours and interviews with about 40 interested residents and businesses that will share their experiences and concerns. After that, they will hold a public listening session in the Commission Chambers that will be televised. Utilizing all of the gathered information from staff and the community, they will spend the rest of their time working on their product. The final report with their recommendations will be submitted to the city within 60 days.

Commissioner Samuelian thanked Ms. Torriente on her efforts. He stated the TAP will provide an independent team of multidisciplinary experts to provide an independent review of the city's program while involving the community and at no cost to the taxpayers of Miami Beach.

Commissioner Steinberg presented the comment cards that were available for the public to provide feedback regarding the city's current policies and overall approach to flooding and sea level rise, their experience with sunny day flooding and recommendations about how the city can perform better community engagement. She stated all the commissioners will receive a copy of the comment cards submitted.

Members of the public addressed the committee.

Commissioner Samuelian thanked everyone for coming out. He stated they would take everyone's feedback and ensure ULI would receive it.

Commissioner Steinberg stated she would keep this as a standing item on the agenda until the process wraps up.

Commissioner Rosen-Gonzalez stated she received reports from people mentioning they were not seeing the same type of species in and around the Bay and the city should examine our efforts and pumping into the Bay. She stated the water pumped into the Bay may contain groundwater which could have high levels of ammonia. She requested a report about the water quality. Ms. Torriente explained the ULI TAP will not have a water quality component. She stated a water quality report is being addressed by a third party; water samples have been collected and the data are being sent to the third party. Margarita Wells, Environmental Resources Manager and Assistant Director, stated the expert conducting the water quality report will have results and a completed report in two months.

Commissioner Rosen-Gonzalez stated we need to find out what is killing the seagrass in the Bay and whether the water pumped into the Bay is toxic. Ms. Torriente explained staff has monthly meetings with DERM in regards to water quality and Miami Beach outfalls represent only 4% of total outfalls in Miami-Dade County into the Bay.

Commissioner Rosen-Gonzalez asked if the pumps should be turned off until we found out if the water pumped into the Bay was toxic. Ms. Torriente stated she had reached out to Monroe County regarding their process for cleaning their pumped water.

Commissioner Aleman stated without the pumps and temporary pumps installed throughout the city, the quality of life would be impacted.

Commissioner Rosen-Gonzalez mentioned she was not in favor of pumping out water into the Bay but would rather we inject the water back into the ground.

Eric Carpenter, Public Works Director and Assistant City Manager, stated there were over 400 injection wells in South Beach and there had been a rise in groundwater temperature due to the number of injection wells, as well as a rise in pressure in the groundwater around the injection wells. He explained that as the pressure increases, our ability to pump into the groundwater aquifer diminishes and over time as sea level rises the injection wells become less effective which is why the city had shifted to installing pump stations.

Elizabeth Wheaton, Environment and Sustainability Director, stated there was a standing item on the SRC agenda about the best management practices for our stormwater system which will be coming back in March.

Commissioner Rosen-Gonzalez inquired on the questions that DERM and the city have been discussing.

Mr. Carpenter stated DERM had asked how much groundwater was being pumped but the City currently could not quantify that. He explained there are older pipes underground which were interconnected with the newer system and the older pipes may have cracks which would allow groundwater in during high tide events.

Commissioner Rosen-Gonzalez suggested that as they look at the general obligation bond that they would be spending, they should consider raising the streets versus pumping.

Commissioner Aleman stated this was the most important issue the city is facing. She stated the city is already raising private property but cannot afford to fund the raising of private property. She stated she was concerned about residential and commercial construction sites. She stated one of the takeaways from past projects was both below the ground and above ground work which needed needs to be funded.

Commissioner Arriola stated cities got challenged with all kinds of threats but needed to adapt. He stated the city needed to embrace diversity and competitiveness among other aspects.

ACTION: Continued to the March 14, 2018 Sustainability and Resiliency Committee.

3. REFERRAL TO THE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY COMMITTEE REGARDING PARKING INCENTIVES FOR "SMARTWAY" (ILEV - INHERENTLY LOW EMISSION) VEHICLES

ACTION: Item deferred to March 14, 2018 Sustainability and Resiliency Committee.

4. DISCUSSION ON ENSURING MIAMI BEACH SPECIAL EVENTS ADHERE TO ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES.

ACTION: Item deferred to March 14, 2018 Sustainability and Resiliency Committee.

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE ORCHARD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD TEMPORARY PUMPS

After-Action

Item presented by Commissioner Aleman. She explained when the original stormwater master plan was laid out, there were very large neighborhood boundaries drawn. The Orchard Park Neighborhood was lumped into the larger Nautilus Neighborhood and was one of the first areas to be addressed within the master plan. However, the upgrades did not include a pump and improvements within this area were currently obsolete. To address current flooding issues, the city is taking temporary pumps to the area and neighbors are asking that they be left permanently since flooding events are significant even during regular rain fall. Commissioner Aleman requested that staff examine neighborhood boundaries and approach projects at a smaller scale. She explained those smaller areas should be prioritized based on elevation. There are other neighborhoods that do not experience flooding and have a more advance system in place. She added staff used the red team to analyze these issues

Roy Coley, Assistant Public Works Director, explained the Orchard Park neighborhood pump had unique issues and significant improvements were carried out in 2012. Its elevation and drain inlets are 1' NAVD and king tides are normally over 2' NAVD which would lead to current flood issues. He explained the backflow preventers would be installed in the area to provide some relief and the design team was looking into the capacity for that neighborhood to determine where and what type of pumps would be placed in those areas to provide relief during king tides. Last year, Muss Park was under construction which is where the temporary pump was installed for Orchard Park. Now that the park is being used staff will determine whether this is a feasible location for it.

Commissioner Steinberg inquired on the type of direction needed for staff to reevaluate areas of priority within neighborhoods. Susanne Torriente mentioned she would like to take the ULI scope and amend it to address how neighborhood boundaries are being drawn and prioritize low lying areas. They could give city staff recommendation on focusing, scaling, and prioritizing.

ACTION: No further action taken.

5. DISCUSS THE FLOODING IN THE SUNSET HARBOUR NEIGHBORHOOD AND WHAT THE CITY IS DOING TO RECTIFY THE SITUATION

After-Action

Roy Coley, Assistant Public Works Director presented the item. He explained Public Works had been meeting with residents and business owners to get first hand reports of their experiences. The reports were provided to the designers of the storm water system and had been directed to review their design and determine whether it would perform adequately in the face of the five-year storm that the original design was intended to withstand. AECOM will also be reviewing their work. Once the review process is complete, a report will then be submitted to the city by both entities with an explanation on whether the design was fully successful, if funding was utilized to the fullest extent and if there is room for improvement.

Commissioner Rosen-Gonzalez asked if Public Works think the city did not get what was paid for. Mr. Coley explained that the contractor and designer were fully cooperative with reviewing the original design and would remedy any issues that were found. He added Public Works did not think the contractor or designer failed in providing the city what was asked for, they were reviewing whether the original design would handle the five year storm.

Commissioner Samuelian asked how many properties were under the review. Mr. Coley explained the entire Sunset Harbour neighborhood was being reviewed for a drainage report. The report and other answers will be provided within a couple of weeks to a month.

Commissioner Rosen-Gonzalez stated that if mistakes were made, it should be stated and addressed.

ACTION: Continued until neighborhood design report is completed.

6. RESILIENCY STRATEGY

After-Action

Susanne Torriente, Assistant City Manager presented the item. She announced Miami Beach was selected as one of 35 cities to join Bloomberg's Champion Cities. The proposed idea is the creation of an alert system that would help residents make short and long term decisions in relation to flooding. Awardees are given \$100k to develop and launch their ideas. They are then given the opportunity to compete for a larger grant of \$5m.

ACTION: No further action taken.

7. SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

After-Action

Dave Doebler, Committee Chairman, provided an updated of the January 30, 2018 Sustainability Committee which included listing the committee's 2017 accomplishments.

Commissioner Steinberg added that thanks to initiatives led by Mr. Doebler, the Museum of Ice Cream would switch their plastic sprinkles to marine degradable and relocate the sprinkle pool to another location to minimize pollution.

ACTION: No further action taken.

8. DISCUSSION TO REVIEW THE CITY'S STORMWATER RESILIENCE PROGRAM.

After-Action

Discussion merged with item # 2.

ACTION: No further action taken.