

MIAMI BEACH

City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Dan Gelber and Members of the City Commission

cc: Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: December 12, 2018

SUBJECT: **Discussion Regarding the Heritage Trees Adjacent to the 72nd Street Parking Lot and Tree Canopy in Ocean Terrace.**

BACKGROUND

On the October 31st, 2018, the Land Use and Development Committee (LUDC) discussed the Ocean Terrace Neighborhood Urban Design Plan and the existing trees within the 72nd street surface lot were discussed. The LUDC recommended that discussion of tree canopy be reviewed and an assessment be conducted to explore the possibility of preserving the existing sea grape trees along the 72nd Street parking lot.

On November 13th, 2018, the City Commission requested that a general health assessment of the sea grape trees be conducted to determine if they would qualify for designation as Heritage Trees.

ANALYSIS

The City is currently in the process of developing its first Street Tree Master Plan, which is scheduled to be completed in summer of 2019. This plan will review our existing tree canopy and identify potential areas of enhancements where street trees will enhance the city's overall green infrastructure. In addition, matrixes will be developed as part of this plan that will give further guidance to which trees are best suited for specific site conditions within our city streetscapes, including Ocean Terrace and surrounding connecting streets. This process will help develop more efficient planting guides so that trees are planted in a manner that will promote optimal growth and overall benefit to the surrounding community. Staff will begin to implement the priority areas identified by the Street Tree Master Plan by late summer/early fall.

The Heritage Tree designation was incorporated in the city's Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance in 2015. To date, the designation has not been utilized for any street trees or park trees within the city. However, potential heritage trees will be identified as part of our on-going tree GIS inventory update that is occurring concurrently to the Street Tree Master Plan. The GIS inventory for north beach neighborhood will be completed by Fall 2019. All trees identified as

potential Heritage Trees will need to be assessed by the city's Urban Forester to assure they meet the stringent criteria for the heritage tree designation.

The city's urban forester is in the process of conducting a general health assessment of the sea grape trees associated with the 72nd Street Surface Parking Lot. This report is expected to be completed in mid-December.

CONCLUSION

City Staff recommends that the Ocean Terrace Neighborhood be prioritized during the Street Tree Master Planning process. In addition, it is recommended that Urban Forestry present the findings of the general health assessment of the existing tree canopy within the 72nd Street Surface Parking Lot at the next Sustainability and Resiliency Committee.

ESW/OJL