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1 SR 5/US 1 BISCAYNE BOULEVARD

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LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
FROM NE 36TH STREET TO NE 67TH STREET
MIAMI -DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

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12 FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT 6
13 PROJECT FM #250224-2

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15 PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

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17 LEGION PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

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25 DECEMBER 14, 2006

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1 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Good evening and
2 welcome to the Public Information Meeting for the
3 Proposed Landscaping Improvement Project along
4 Biscayne Boulevard from Northeast 36th Street to
5 Northeast 67th Street by the Florida Department of
6 Transportation District 6. My name is Marta
7 Rodriguez-Trudeau and I am a Public Information
8 Specialist with the consulting firm Bermello, Ajami
9 and Partners. The purpose of this meeting today is
10 to provide you with some information about the
11 project and address any concerns that you may have.
12 Before I introduce the team I would like to
13 recognize Mr. Bert Gonzalez who is representing City of
14 Miami Commissioner Marc Sarnoff from District 2.

15 Now, the project team members that are here
16 tonight. From the Florida Department of
17 Transportation District 6, we have Steven Craig
18 James, landscape architect, and Project Manager,
19 Maribel Lena, District 6 Public Information Officer,
20 Kathy McLendon, District 6 Construction Public
21 Involvement Manager, Brian Rick, District 6 Public
22 Outreach and Media Specialist, Elizabeth Perez,
23 District 6 Public Involvement Coordinator for Environmental
24 Management.

25 From the consulting firm of Miller Legg we have

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1 here Brian Shore, Mike Kroll and Nelson Perez and
2 representing K&S is Mr. Kirk Hoosac.

3 From the Public Involvement Consulting Firm Bermello Ajami & Partners 4
we have here Tere Garcia, Talia Hebra, Angela Marino
5 and myself.

6 When you came in we handed out some speaker
7 cards. If any of
8 you would like to make any verbal statements or
9 express any comments verbally, we urge you to please
10 fill it out and you will have two minutes to present

11 your comments. I will collect them and when we get
12 to the section of the meeting where we take the
13 comments you will be called by name.

14 We also have a court reporter here where at any
15 time you can get up and give your statement and it
16 will be recorded in writing for the records; and
17 also we have laid out the plans of the project all
18 along the tables around you and if you have any comments
19 that you want to write in those plans you are
20 welcomed to do so and, if you do decide to do so,
21 please write your telephone number and your name
22 so that the project engineer or landscape architect can contact you if they
need to do so.

24 Now, I leave with Steven Craig James who is the
25 Project Manager and he will provide you information

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1 about the projects.

2 Oh, I am sorry. Maria Mascareñas who is from
3 the Upper Eastside Net Office is also here and Officer Nicholas
4 is also here for the City of Miami and we would also
5 like to thank them for being present here tonight.
6 Steve.

7 MR. JAMES: Thank you, Marta. Good evening, my
8 name is Steven Craig James. I am with the Department
9 of Transportation. I am the District 6 Landscape
10 Architect. Thank you all for coming this evening.
11 We appreciate such a good turn out, particularly for
12 the projects that are for landscaping. The
13 Department of Transportation doesn't typically have
14 such a large turn out for what we call landscape
15 projects, so we really appreciate your input this
16 evening. That is what this meeting is for. We are
17 to take your input whether it is, as mentioned,
18 writing comments on the plans, filling out the
19 comment cards, or speaking with the court reporter
20 tonight or even filling out the speaker cards and
21 then talking with us tonight.

22 I would like to give you a brief history of
23 this project. This has been a long going project.
24 The Board of Florida's Public Transportation has
25 been working on the construction of Biscayne

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1 Boulevard for approximately ten years. One of first
2 concepts was presented back in 1997. Since then
3 there has been extensive interaction, including with
4 the Department of Transportation, Local Government,
5 including the City of Miami-Dade County and tonight
6 the Florida Department of Transportation would like
7 to present a proposed landscape plan for Biscayne
8 Boulevard from Northeast 36th Street to Northeast
9 67th Street. The plans being presented tonight are
10 a result of public involvement meetings that were
11 held during the project development and environment
12 study of Biscayne Boulevard projects.

13 During that phase, several public meetings were
14 held right here in Legion Park. In fact, many of
15 us, including representatives from Miller Legg, were
16 here and it was approximately five years ago in the
17 same room presenting landscaping plans back then and
18 receiving comments on those landscaping plans.
19 Again, approximately five years ago we did that
20 presentation.

21 At that time the landscape that was presented

22 was included with the roadway work that should be in
23 construction out there now. Since that time, due to
24 many reasons, the landscaping has been separated
25 from the roadway area and will be installed at a

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1 later date near, hopefully, very shortly after the
2 construction. At this time the estimated
3 construction start date for the landscaping is in, I
4 believe, in the fall of 2008. In order to present
5 more specific design information on the plans that
6 you will receive tonight, I would like to turn it
7 over to the landscape architecture designers, Miller
8 Legg and Associates, who will give much more
9 detailed information about that. We would ask you
10 to hold your comments until the presentation is
11 complete and at that time we will be willing and
12 happy to open the mic up to the public for comments
13 and input from you all. Thank you. Mike Kroll from
14 Miller Legg.

15 MR. KROLL: Thank you. My name is Mike Kroll
16 and I am the Vice-President of Miller Legg and I am
17 very proud to have participated in this design for
18 this project. As mentioned before, this project
19 started about five years ago. We were at the same
20 point, same building, same room and presented the
21 original concepts and received the comments from the
22 public with the development of actually all the
23 plans that you see here and to what they have
24 derived to at this point in time. A lot of that
25 input, as Greg has mentioned, came from the public,

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1 came from community associations, came from the
2 municipals, as well as the City. So again, these
3 plans were generated by input and those parties as
4 well as the significant safety concerns and
5 improvements to come for years, to really expand,
6 shady walkways, et cetera.
7 Those comments were generated from the public
8 to initial reviews in the original design of the
9 development plans. So that is my song and dance, so
10 I am going to turn it over to the guys who have
11 really been working on the plans with Greg and DOT.
12 I will say this, I mean, DOT is not known for
13 landscaping and I really feel strong that this is a
14 commitment that DOT has made a significant
15 commitment to the improvement of the communities
16 here and these public meetings to get input on
17 these. I am going to turn it over to Brian Shore
18 who is the Project Landscape Architect.

19 MR. SHORE: Good evening, everybody. I would
20 like to give you a brief overview of the forward.
21 We he have presented three boards here and a picture
22 color coding each of the dynamic areas. There are
23 five different areas that have developed from some
24 of the concepts five years ago, that developed some
25 of these same cross sections to aid in all of the

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1 development for the shade tree palm and other
2 cross sections. Starting on the south end from 36th
3 through 38th is existing palm trees. During the
4 construction that were deemed to remain to
5 transition to the other section leading up to the
6 Art Center. Moving forward the yellow sections

7 basically represent narrow medians that were part of
8 the traffic and management deemed was necessary for
9 the construction in those area will have ground
10 covers which are spaced out at a close ratio as much
11 as possible to the standards.

12 The next section I will get back to, but going
13 to the red section we were given the opportunity for
14 wider medians to reestablish some of the Royal Palms
15 within the medians and going to the outside to give
16 the shape canopy for the pedestrians up against the
17 commercial partials. Going to the yellow portions
18 of the plan and up to the orange now the 37th
19 through the 38th, 57th and 61st north are the areas
20 where there is no median put into these areas, so
21 you will see shade trees adjacent to the right of
22 way lines of the pedestrian access.

23 In the Baypoint going back there we have
24 preserved all of the Date Palms. They are out
25 there. There is a few areas that are missing. They

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1 are going to be replaced and accentuate with Royal
2 Palms on each end to transition the area, and Shade
3 Trees on the west side that will remain during
4 construction and additional Shade Trees added within
5 and along the pedestrian zone.

6 Basically there is a list on the end of the
7 plans that actually give you some of the key codes,
8 so if you have a specific question on any of the
9 plans you can look at that list and we welcome any
10 comments on the plans.

11 MR. JAMES: Next on the agenda is the project
12 schedule. As I mentioned to you all earlier, the
13 landscape portion of this project has not yet to
14 begin until approximately 2008, and again that is
15 due to the roadway construction needs to be
16 completed first and the lack of funds that we had.
17 As this project started out five years ago as we are
18 mentioning the landscape budget was significantly
19 less than what it is today, and the reason that we
20 went through that process of separating out the
21 landscaping, because the input that we received from
22 the public back at that time was overwhelming at
23 that moment and they wanted landscaping included.
24 So, therefore, we had to take a step back and
25 identify some of the available funds in order to do

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1 what you see tonight.

2 I am not sure -- can someone help me out when
3 to roadway completion is estimated?

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Somewhere in the fall of 2008
5 right now.

6 MR. JAMES: So there should not be a large gap
7 with the completion and when the landscape
8 installation will begin. With that I will turn the
9 mic over to Marta.

10 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: I would like to remind
11 you that the Florida Department of Transportation
12 has implemented a public involvement program to
13 provide you with information throughout all phases
14 of the project. I am the Public Involvement
15 Specialist for the design phase of this project and
16 if you have any questions or concerns you may call
17 me at the number indicated in the invitation that

18 you received, which is 305-860-3740. I also have
19 business cards available that I can give you on your
20 way out and also at this point, at this time also I
21 would like to recognize Alyce Robertson, who is the
22 Community Image Manager with the offices of the
23 County Manager from Miami-Dade County. Thank you
24 for coming.

25 Now, we are going to go to the questions and
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1 answers period of the meeting and if there is any of
2 you that have not handed in your speaker card this
3 is the time to do it and I will be happy to get it
4 from you and call your name. Meanwhile, I am going
5 to start reading the names of the ones I have here
6 with me in order that I
7 received them. The first gentleman to speak is David
8 Treece, and please limit your comments to two
9 minutes. Thank you.

10 MR. TREECE: I just have one question. Can you
11 talk about the maintenance or if you have
12 information between the City, the County, I mean, I
13 know that is a concern to make sure everything is
14 properly maintained.

15 MR. JAMES: Again, sorry to keep going back to
16 history, but when this project first started, again
17 back about five years ago, the way that the
18 maintenance was being done at that time and
19 considered by an agreement has between Miami-Dade
20 County and the City of Miami. Since then those
21 concerns have changed significantly as I have
22 already mentioned the same thing with the landscape.

23 At this time the Department of Transportation
24 is working with City of Miami Transportation
25 Department in order to execute agreements for those.

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1 So at this time they are in the process and so there
2 is an agreement for who is to do the maintenance in
3 progress.

4 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: The second person is
5 Frank Rollason.

6 MR. ROLLASON: Good evening. The first
7 question on the maintenance was answered. The next
8 question I have on those large plants that will be
9 adjacent to sidewalk curbs and gutters will there be
10 root guards installed in those?

11 MR. KROLL: As much as possible. I mean, they
12 will not let me put a tree in without the root
13 guards.

14 MR. ROLLASON: So that is the plan, to put them
15 in?

16 MR. KROLL: Yes.

17 MR. ROLLASON: And what are you doing with all
18 the fiber optics that have been placed under there?
19 Are those --

20 MR. JAMES: There will be no running into the
21 fiber optics. Trees will not be placed near fiber
22 optics.

23 MR. ROLLASON: This is the other comment that I
24 want to make on behalf of the homeowners'
25 association and they are not here tonight. The

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1 president has asked me to make the comment. I
2 noticed in here when we are going from the low areas

3 with no median that there is strictly the shade
4 trees going in, and since this project has started
5 or was on the drawing boards this area has been
6 designated the Miami Historic District, of which
7 this is a piece of that and in the original time
8 there were Royal Palms that ran up and down this
9 area and what we are asking for as much as possible,
10 even in these areas, if there is a way to disburse
11 some Royals along with each Shade Tree to get that
12 look back as much as possible and we certainly want
13 that on the 67th Street, which I know is not this
14 group, but so the Boulevard looks continuous. If
15 there is any thought in being able to disburse with
16 the Shade Trees --

17 MR. JAMES: Absolutely. There are several
18 locations along the corridor, and Brian might be
19 able to answer those in more detail, where we are
20 trying to group the Royal Palms in the side street
21 areas where we have large possible opportunities to
22 include those Royal Palms in there, because we have
23 received several comments regarding the desire to
24 keep that look of Royal Palms.

25 If you look more on the plans themselves as

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1 opposed to the typical section, that is where you
2 probably will see in those specific locations that
3 you are just talking about and I know there is one
4 on the west side where there is a very large median
5 and therefore gives the opportunity where you have a
6 large area for additional trees in that area and the
7 opportunity -- that every opportunity -- I have
8 instructed the designers that every opportunity they
9 have were to get Royal Palms and that we are going
10 to do that.

11 There was one other comment you had at the end
12 regarding the consistency of the Boulevard. I would
13 like to briefly address that and at least to give
14 you all an understanding and, again, I am just on a
15 larger scale of public involvement that we had for
16 this portion of Biscayne and from other projects on
17 Biscayne Boulevard starting up at the north end of
18 124th Street all the way to Downtown Miami. Every
19 one of those had an overwhelming response from the
20 citizens to put in the Shade Trees on the sidewalk.
21 You will see them already installed on the north of
22 this area from 87th all the way up to 124th. Those
23 were two different projects and the local agency
24 there, Miami Shores, were very supportive and very
25 strong with their request to get shade trees out

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1 there.

2 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Okay. The next speaker
3 is Sandra Stefein.

4 MS. STEFEIN: I like what I see so far and my
5 only concern and question is I see everything going
6 up to 67th street and you mentioned a few things
7 that are ringing my attention. I am a restaurant
8 owner on the area that is going to be done on the
9 8th of January until 400 and some odds days after.
10 When is the continuation of your corridor going to
11 be landscaped/completed? In other words, is it
12 going to be ten years? Because landscaping is
13 similar to construction. You have inconvenience,

14 you have to instruct people, whatever, you know,
15 lines that are blocked. So do you have a timeline?
16 Thank you.

17 MR. JAMES: Yes. The next phase I believe is
18 scheduled for 2008.

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: They are starting in the
20 middle of the year, 450 days in.

21 MR. JAMES: Sorry, I don't have that exact
22 information. We will be having another meeting next
23 month in January so -- but I believe the landscaping
24 project is going to begin about the same time.

25 MS. STEFEIN: You got the plans --

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1 MR. JAMES: Yes. We will not start the
2 construction until we have the plans.

3 Just to give you a rough estimate as to the
4 budget, and I am sorry, but let me go ahead and
5 address that. Just to be honest with you, a few
6 years ago this was a big issue. There was some
7 question as to whether the Department of
8 Transportation was funding the landscaping. The
9 funding of landscaping was never removed from these
10 projects. It was simply not enough for what the
11 citizens wanted. Therefore the original estimate of
12 the landscaping was approximately \$200,000. That
13 \$200,000 is nowhere near what you see here tonight.
14 That original budget of \$200,000 was used to
15 relocate the Royal Palms, not remove them, but
16 relocate them to another location.

17 So the original \$200,000 was never taken away.
18 There was discussion about that years ago that
19 funding was taken away. It was never taken away.
20 It was always there. It was used to relocate the
21 Royal Palms from the Boulevard. Since then the
22 project that you see here presented tonight the
23 budget has now increased to \$1.75 million. That's a
24 significant increase from the original budget of
25 \$200,000.

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1 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Next is Alyce
2 Robertson.

3 MS. ROBERTSON: I am going to split my comments
4 into two sections. First, as a County Community
5 Image Manager, Many of you don't know what that
6 involves, but we are dealing with gateways in and
7 out of the community where most of our tourist
8 travel and making sure that those gateways are
9 enhanced. Biscayne Boulevard is one of those
10 gateways.

11 In fact, I have an involvement as far as we
12 were talking about the maintenance there are certain
13 maintenance activities being done in order to keep
14 the Boulevard looking good. Right now we are not in
15 this section of Biscayne Boulevard because really
16 nothing helps right now.

17 Now, I am going to take my other minute as a
18 resident. I have live in Morningside. I have lived
19 there since 1984. We try to occasionally walk to
20 the restaurants near here. In the summertime it's
21 unbearable. There is no place to walk, as far as
22 the palms don't provide any shade whatsoever. In
23 the summertime it is impossible to do that in the
24 middle of the day. So I see this as an opportunity

25 to enhance the pedestrian traffic in the

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1 neighborhood to the restaurants and that is a real
2 positive thing.

3 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Next is Maureen Joseph.

4 MS. JOSEPH: I have a couple of questions to
5 the planning in front of Baypoint. The Oak trees in
6 the south portion of where it's mostly sidewalk,
7 where will the Oak trees be planted down there?

8 MR. JAMES: If you recall, the Department of
9 Transportation was to make all of Biscayne Boulevard
10 an extremely fast track project. Due to that
11 fast track project we were doing concepts and at the
12 same time final design. Therefore, we did not know
13 exactly where the trees would go. Therefore the
14 sidewalks that are being installed now and wherever
15 the trees are being proposed, that would not
16 conflict with underground utility along Biscayne
17 Boulevard, and we also have safety requirements that
18 we are trying to meet. With those considerations in
19 mind the designers have placed the trees where they
20 can. We apologize for the confusion going on out
21 there.

22 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Next is Celia Hogan.

23 MS. HOGAN: I spoke to Marc Sarnoff last week
24 and he said to the best of his knowledge all of the
25 piping and conduit was in place for planting and

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1 irrigation, but he was not aware of that financing
2 situation. Are you?

3 MR. JAMES: Yes, ma'am. I have responded to
4 your e-mail. Do you recall we emailed each other
5 back and forth? So we are very knowledgeable about
6 what you brought up. The conduit has been installed
7 for future possibility of having landscape lighting
8 in that median. The construction now is including
9 that project in their work.

10 At this point, we have not identified the
11 funding for landscape lighting. Particularly the
12 Department of Transportation does not fund that type
13 of lighting. We consider that to be above and
14 beyond what expenditures would be. However, that is
15 not to say it cannot be done. We would be happy to
16 work with the City of Miami and we would be willing
17 to work with them in order for that to get done. At
18 this time the funding has not been worked out, but
19 like you said, in the near future it may be done
20 later. We can either enter into a grant or a joint
21 agreement between the Department of Transportation
22 or the City of Miami to just put a permit and have
23 that installed. So we would have to look at that as
24 the next phase once the landscaping is complete and
25 be able to include that.

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1 MS. HOGAN: And that includes irrigation as
2 well?

3 MR. JAMES: Yes, ma'am. That includes
4 irrigation as well. Now, the irrigation will be
5 done along with this project.

6 MS. HOGAN: My other question is, I am sure you
7 have probably walked that Baypoint area, there is a
8 very narrow strip almost the entire length of the
9 wall, between the wall and the sidewalk. We have

10 had an ongoing battle with the City of Miami as to
11 who takes care and who maintains that. When it was
12 all grass it was very poorly handled. Are you
13 planning to put grass in that little narrow area or
14 are you considering rock or what, possibly, crown of
15 thorns? There is going to be a problem, because
16 obviously the sidewalk is in use. What is going to
17 be installed?

18 MR. KROLL: Probably low grow shrubs that will
19 support in that area, on the ground floor.

20 MS. HOGAN: It will probably help with the
21 security and also the water. Thank you.

22 MR. JAMES: I am not sure what is proposed on
23 the plan, but you can certainly take a look and see
24 if there is any specific material there and if there
25 is not something that you would like to see out

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1 there, please make the comment, write on the plans
2 there or write it on there.

3 MS. HOGAN: Perhaps just put rock or pebbles.

4 That might be the best answer. Then when I was
5 looking at the crown of thorns that might work.
6 It's very hardy and hardly needs any water. That's
7 what I feel.

8 MR. JAMES: Well, we are willing to work with
9 you all and if there can be an agreement made and
10 then we can agree on what type of material to be
11 placed there --

12 MS. HOGAN: Thank you.

13 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Next is Eric Silverman.

14 MR. SILVERMAN: Good evening and, Craig, I think
15 you are doing a great job tonight compared to last
16 night's meeting that we had here so my compliments.
17 We are off to a good start.

18 Frank Rollason was kind enough to mention the
19 Historic District that we now have, which is MIMO
20 District, and it's really just a wonderful grouping
21 of old motels from the '50s and this section
22 includes the South Pacific, the Sinbad, the
23 Shalimar, the Davis Hotel and the Stardust. We
24 really feel that the Royal Palms were when the
25 northerners thought when they came down US 1 from

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1 Maine down to Key West or Miami and that the trees,
2 even the Shade Trees, it is very important for us to
3 have mature trees in the area. I think when we are
4 talking about Royal palms, we are talking about 16
5 foot because we have some special signage and neon
6 in the area that some of the old trees would totally
7 block and we will lose the objective of designating
8 this area.

9 The second thing I would like to mention is the
10 lighting. We would like very much to have specific
11 lighting that compliments the architecture of this
12 area, similar to what they have done on Lincoln Road
13 is a wonderful example. I was hoping that you might
14 be able to elaborate a little bit on the enhancement
15 funds, the Key 21 Fund, the safety lieu that you
16 mentioned earlier, because if the people in the
17 community get together, I think you were saying some
18 of these things could be accomplished and possibly
19 even if Department of Transportation can match some
20 of these grants in doing so.

21 The last thing I would like to mention that
22 came up last night, which I thought was a very good
23 idea, cleaning up around the property. We need
24 garbage cans in this neighborhood. There is a lot
25 of litter, as mentioned, over on Baypoint. I was

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1 picking up McDonald bags and Taco Bell and
2 everything else. We need to have some kind of a
3 coordinated maintenance of the area. So I was
4 hoping that you might be able to address the trees,
5 the landscaping as far as size, the lighting and
6 things like the garbage cans and maintenance.

7 MR. JAMES: First of all, I would like to let
8 you all know that we are working with the architects
9 because we are well aware that the area has been
10 designated a special area and I respect that very
11 much. We have a presentation of set of plans being
12 submitted at this time, a list of some ideas about
13 what to do on the sidewalk obviously. So at this
14 point they are only ideas. Please understand that
15 any of these type of treatments, whether it be trash
16 cans, decorative treatments to the sidewalk,
17 decorative lighting, all of those types of
18 treatments are not typically funded by the
19 Department of Transportation, which is why I was
20 talking earlier with maybe a possibility of grants
21 that are available from the Federal Government. The
22 State of Florida generally calls it Enhancement
23 Funds, no matter what the Federal Government calls
24 it, but absolutely please be aware that the funds
25 are available. That funding is typically for the

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1 items specifically that you are talking about. That
2 is not funded by the Department of Transportation.
3 So I urge you all to get together, organize
4 yourselves, work with your local agencies and put
5 together some good grant applications and submit
6 them and we will be happy to work with the local
7 government and the citizens in order to implement
8 those type of treatments out there. There are a few
9 different grants that are available.

10 Let me just mention quickly a couple of things
11 about blockage of signs. I want to make sure that
12 the designers are aware and they will work with you
13 all. However, please, we have got to get some of
14 those specific locations from you. Don't depend on
15 them to be going out and making sure they are not
16 blocking your signs. That is what tonight is for.
17 If we are blocking a sign tell us. We will move a
18 tree. We will work with you to make sure we are not
19 blocking any signs.

20 MR. SILVERMAN: Thank you.

21 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Next is Sean-Paul
22 Melito.

23 MR. MELITO: Hi, good evening. I actually
24 requested an opportunity to give a small
25 presentation of the history of Biscayne Boulevard,

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1 but I was not allowed to do so. I brought it here
2 tonight so if you would like to take a look at it.
3 I think you guys are doing a great job. I agree
4 it's a lot better meeting, a lot more information
5 being delivered.

6 I had collected 100 signatures in support of
7 landscaping for Biscayne Boulevard. I have
8 presented that petition as it's been growing
9 (i n a u d i b l e) --

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I can't hear you.

11 MR. MELITO: -- some of the commissioners
12 including Commissioner Sarnoff who seems to favor
13 preservation of Biscayne Boulevard's landscape and
14 it's kind of disconcerting to see all these plans
15 here with shade trees and hardly any Royal palms.
16 I think I counted about 29 or so Royal palms that
17 are going to be placed and 80 or less have been
18 removed. I have 16 businesses here along this
19 Boulevard which have signed this petition interested
20 in the historic perseveration of Biscayne Boulevard.

21 MR. JAMES: I can confirm with you that we have
22 worked very closely with the City of Miami to make
23 the decisions that can be made here tonight. A
24 historian that was here long ago is no longer with
25 us and was very involved with the decision process

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1 five years ago and looked into and researched
2 whether the Royal palms were a historical
3 significance or not and a formal decision was made
4 on that prior to any decision to remove the Royal
5 palms. My point really is I can't talk specifically
6 about city ordinances that I am not familiar with,
7 but I can tell you we work very closely with the
8 city historian preservation staff to come up with
9 the designs you see here tonight.

10 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Now, our next speaker
11 is Jim McMaster.

12 MR. McMASTER: Hi, I'm Jim McMaster. I have
13 got more involved recently on projects that dealt
14 with tree widening or renovations and there is a
15 recent project on 27th Avenue running from US 1
16 North and residences surrounding 27th Avenue on both
17 sides between US 1 and Coral Way regarding tree
18 issues and they wanted more trees put back. It
19 turns out the State said, well, we have sight lines
20 and so the residents there contacted the
21 Commissioner's office and they spoke with the State
22 and by the time we came back we had tree plans
23 along the sight lines and if you look at the plans
24 from US 1 to Coral Way you couldn't put any trees.
25 Because of the sight lines and there is a variance

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1 process that allows you to put in trees.

2 The reason I am here tonight is I am all for
3 trees and to simply talk about the fact that you can
4 always put in more trees. When I am dealing with
5 transportation and road people you are thinking
6 about traffic flow, et cetera. So when I see a plan
7 like this I see you got these canopy trees here and
8 I know you made a comment earlier about streetlights
9 or lots of things, but canopy trees spaced out from
10 one end to the other there are locations for many,
11 many Royal Palm trees. So my question here tonight
12 is do you know why can't you intersperse Royal Palm
13 trees on the sides? What you appear to have and I
14 only looked at this briefly, but basically it would
15 appear from one end to the other you really only
16 have one area that is consistently Royals and so my

17 question is if you are looking for uniformity why do
18 you have -- and then you have a couple of spaces
19 scattered. Why can't you, from one end to the
20 other, intersperse Royal Palms from one end to the
21 other from the sidewalk? And so I urge you to do
22 that.

23 MR. JAMES: I would like to emphasize that the
24 design variances were not given out very easily.
25 Design variances are specifically for safety issues.

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1 The Department of Transportation, the City of Miami
2 and Miami-Dade County together will not put
3 themselves into a situation where we can be sued by
4 motorist who have an accident. I have to at least
5 inform to the public that those variances that were
6 and still are they have not been granted at this
7 time, because they do not come easily, but please, I
8 don't want to mislead anyone here tonight.

9 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Next speaker is Kay
10 Hancock.

11 MS. HANCOCK: I would just like to make a
12 comment. I agree with you that Royal Palms together
13 with beautiful shade trees look good.

14 I have two questions. One, in 2008 whether the
15 landscaping in the Fall is the approximate time for
16 it to go, the area in front of Baypoint is going to
17 be finished supposedly in 2007. We are to wait for
18 landscaping in that area until all of it is
19 completed up 87th; is that correct?

20 MR. JAMES: Yes.

21 MS. HANCOCK: Okay. So if we are going to be
22 finished it's certainly going to look pretty bad for
23 a long time.

24 Okay. The second thing I have heard a lot
25 about shade trees. The shade trees that we are

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1 talking about are the same that have been put up in
2 Miami Shores, correct?

3 MR. JAMES: Yes.

4 MS. HANCOCK: Can you tell us -- just tell me
5 how fast they grow and how long it's going to take
6 before they become a shade tree?

7 MR. JAMES: First of all, I am a landscape
8 architect and I would have your question answered by
9 a professional who can give you a precise scientific
10 -- based on experience. I would not try to stand
11 here and answer that question.

12 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: I am going to call the
13 next three speakers so they can get ready. Peter
14 Ehrlich, Ulrich Michel and Nikki Pulridge.

15 MR. EHRLICH: Thank you very much for the
16 presentation tonight. It's so nice to see so many
17 people here on a Thursday night. I just have two
18 comments.

19 One regarding Northeast 59th Street, we would
20 hope you to have continue excellent landscaping
21 there and my second comment is (inaudible).

22 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: If you could please
23 speak closer to the mic so we can hear you.

24 MR. EHRLICH: Oh, I'm sorry. I hope that the
25 duct work that you are putting in that someone is

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1 there supervising to make sure it's all in working

2 order (inaudible). Thank you very much for your
3 attention.

4 MR. JAMES: We are working very closely with
5 the construction department to make sure they are in
6 working order.

7 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Next speaker is Ulrich
8 Michel.

9 MR. MICHEL: Hello. Most of my questions have
10 been answered by previous questions here. I just
11 have a concern about the irrigation, too.

12 As Steve Hagen could not be here tonight and he
13 had a request of what he would like to see basically
14 Palm trees, he would like to see that, because he
15 thinks Palm trees goes back the veterans of, I
16 think, World War I and he has concerns about the
17 plans and all that. I cannot read the page, because
18 I left my glasses at home so if somebody wants to
19 read it or --

20 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Thank you. We will put
21 it on the record.

22 Next speaker is Nikki Pulridge.

23 MS. Pulridge: Hi, everybody. I have two sort
24 of phases that -- first I want to talk about
25 funding. I got some questions about the funding.

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1 Glad you got \$1.75 million for this project. We
2 need more than that. I want to know the \$200,000
3 that you spent to remove the Royal palms; do you
4 have an agreement? Are they giving you \$200,000
5 back to our area or are they replacing those trees?

6 My second thing is funding is obviously a big
7 issue. You said that you want to landscape Biscayne
8 Boulevard up the entire way to Miami Shores. Do we
9 have enough money in the budget that we can look at
10 Miami Shores that very much of Biscayne Boulevard
11 that is what our neighborhood is going to look like,
12 because it's not going to look like one continuous
13 stretch if you don't.

14 The other thing is I am a biologist and I am
15 concerned about these what they call group barriers
16 that may inhibit the size of the canopy, the
17 potential of the canopy of these Oak trees to
18 actually be large to become Shade trees and, yes, as
19 a biologist I could say in 15 to 20 years we could
20 see some shade there and so I hope some of you will
21 get to enjoy it.

22 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: The next three speakers
23 are Elvis Cruz, Gregg Juszu and Karen McGuire.

24 MR. CRUZ: Good Evening, Ladies and gentlemen.
25 I am one of the 100 people on the petition of

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1 keeping Biscayne Boulevard the way it was for 80
2 years. I have attended about five or six of these
3 meetings over the years and I have come to realize
4 that any design tends to reflect the philosophy of
5 the designer. The designs are usually about moving
6 traffic efficiently and safely which sounds good,
7 but it could be taken to an extreme.

8 For example, Coral Way, the main highway
9 approaching the road all throughout Coral Gables,
10 some of the most beautiful and beloved streets in
11 Dade County could not be built today without the
12 landscaping design criteria. Biscayne Boulevard is

13 Miami's newest historic and first commercial
14 historic district. There should have been a more
15 historic preservation philosophy involved in
16 designing the landscaping. Historic preservation is
17 not only about buildings, it's also about
18 landscaping.

19 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Okay. The next three
20 speakers are Greg Juszu, Bob Flanders and Karen
21 McGuire.

22 MR. JUSZU: Really fast, if you look at Miami
23 Shores from 87th it's curb and gutter, is it
24 possible for a little strip of a sidewalk to this
25 project at all?

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1 MR. JAMES: As we were talking a little bit
2 earlier about typical sections also show how much
3 right of way, the Department of Transportation has
4 in order to include the roadway, sidewalks and the
5 landscaping. The right of way for Biscayne
6 Boulevard changes significantly as you go from north
7 to south up and down the Boulevard. So off the top
8 of my head I believe the section north of here have
9 a larger right of way, which there is an opportunity
10 to give a grass strip sidewalk and the trees on this
11 section. If we don't have that right of way to do
12 that we can't do that.

13 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Mr. Bob Flanders is
14 next.

15 MR. FLANDERS: Greg, let me shake your hand.
16 This has been a long collaboration and we would like
17 to thank you and the staff. Fighting for this
18 roadway meant bettering the economy, but what we
19 have also fought for other issues as well as
20 lowering crime, et cetera, and in any case we have a
21 good track record and in other words the street will
22 be both user and pedestrian friendly. Thank you
23 very much.

24 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: Our last speaker is
25 Karen McGuire.

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1 MS. MCGUIRE: Hi. My name is Karen McGuire and
2 I am a resident of Bayside. I live on 67th Street
3 and I also worked for the Department of
4 Transportation for five wonderful years and I'm
5 sorry, but I had to leave and work as Transportation
6 Enhancement Coordinator and I saw what worked and
7 what didn't work and I think it's really hard when
8 you have a history of 20 years of people trying to
9 come together to make a vision of how they see the
10 city and right now we are standing at the point. We
11 look behind 20 years, but we also have to look ahead
12 20 years. Maybe we can't see it now, but when I
13 came here five years, you know, I was unimpressed
14 with Miami. I said, you know, it looks like the
15 girl who stayed too long at the party because the
16 Palm Trees looked a little sad, but then you get to
17 love this city.

18 Now, I know that we cannot live in the city the
19 way it is. What we are becoming no longer fits the
20 physical constraints of this area. That means that
21 we have to change the area in the way that we move
22 and to the way that we live. That is why we have to
23 make this city work, but I think we need shade trees

24 to make it more pedestrian friendly and to make it
25 more transit friendly. You know, we have a little

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1 bit of time to kind of work out the edges and I
2 really just appreciate your hard work and, you know,
3 how this city will look in the next 20 years. Thank
4 you.

5 MR. JAMES: I'd like to thank you all for your
6 comments this evening. I want to emphasize that we
7 do not have a lot of time to make these decisions
8 and the plans that you see here tonight are moving
9 forward. They are being finalized. So we will be
10 taking all your information that you all are
11 providing us here this evening and continuing to
12 finalize these plans in the near future. So I just
13 want to emphasize that. Thank you.

14 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TRUDEAU: On behalf of the
15 Department of Transportation we would like to thank
16 you very much for taking the time out in your busy
17 schedules to express your comments and show your
18 interest in our project and I also would like to
19 thank the City of Miami and the Legion Park's staff
20 for letting us use this facility. Thank you very
21 much. Have a good night.

22 (Thereupon the meeting concluded at 8:42 p.m.)

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1 STATE OF FLORIDA : : SS
2 COUNTY OF DADE :
3

4 I, CORINNE GRASSINI, certify that I was
5 authorized to and did stenographically report the
6 foregoing proceedings and that the transcript is a true
7 record to the best of my ability.

8 Dated this 29th day of December 2006.

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Corinne Grassini
Court Reporter

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