

City of Coral Gables Planning Department Staff Report

To: Planning and Zoning Board Members

From: Planning Department

Date: January 18, 2006

Subject: Presentation of the North Ponce Neighborhood: Strategies for Redevelopment Report.

Recommendation

The Planning Department is not seeking a recommendation at this time. The purpose is to present the North Ponce Neighborhood report and preliminary development regulations (provided as an Appendix A of the report). Staff and the City's consultant is requesting input from the Planning and Zoning Board and interested parties. The development regulations are scheduled for future consideration on February 1, 2006. After Board review, these regulations will then be provided to the City Commission as a part of the comprehensive Zoning Code rewrite package.

(Copies of the study and the regulations were previously provided to the Board; therefore, a copy is not attached).

Background

The North Ponce de Leon area is defined as the portion of the City of Coral Gables, which generally lies north of Navarre, east of LeJeune, west of Douglas, and south of SW 8th Street (see Attachment A). This area has long been recognized as a unique urban residential neighborhood with great potential for neighborhood serving commercial uses and a pedestrian friendly environment. In the recent past, numerous studies have been performed for the area. However, none of the resulting plans have been implemented. Most recently in 2002, the City held a widely attended and successful Charrette, where many ideas and recommendations for the City, and specifically the North Ponce area, were developed.

This report builds on the ideas and proposals identified in the previous studies and more specifically those contained in the 2002 Charrette report. Wherever a Charrette recommendation is utilized or expanded upon within the report, a 2002 Charrette symbol appears.



Discussion

Preliminary concepts of the Study were presented to the Board on June 8, 2005 at which time valuable input was received. Please see Attachment B for a copy of those minutes.

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Where reports in the past have failed to gain ground and affect City policy through implementation, the North Ponce Neighborhood report provides explicit text for implementation.

To insure the strategies recommended in this report are implemented, Zoning Code regulations are presented in Appendix A and if recommended for implementation, they will be folded into the Zoning Code Rewrite. In addition, to solidify implementation of the Zoning Code regulations, specific Goals, Objectives and Policies are proposed within the report on page 55, to be included with the CLUP rewrite.

The essential components of the strategies contained in the report can be found on page 9 in the section titled, "Summary of Findings and Recommendations".

Timeline

The report is also scheduled for City Commission presentation on Tuesday, January 24, 2006 (11:00 a.m. - time certain). This will allow interested parties an additional opportunity to provide input and allow Staff to secure valuable City Commission policy direction, Planning and Zoning Board policy direction and public input. Staff and the consultant will amend the Zoning Code regulations and return to the Board on February 1st.

Public Notification/Comments

Staff has completed substantial public outreach to solicit input including the following:

Type
Courtesy notification of approximately 1,116 property owners within the study area advising of the Board and City Commission public hearings.
Published the Planning and Zoning Board agenda in the newspaper and City Hall.
Posted special notice at City Hall.
Created a separate email, northponce@coralgables.com, to submit comments directly to the Planning Department.
Forwarded an email to a previously completed interested party email notification list with 24 recipients.
Posted the study, Staff report and agenda on City web page.
Invited all interested City Boards and Committees to participate and attend the Board and City Commission presentations.

Copy of December 28, 2005 notification letter sent to all property owners is included as Attachment C.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Riel, Jr.
Planning Director

Attachments:

- A. Map of North Ponce study area boundary.
- B. Minutes of June 8, 2005 Planning and Zoning Board meeting.
- C. Copy of December 28, 2005 notification letter sent to all property owners.