

# Public Feedback: Neighborhood Conservation Districts 2 & 3



*Summary of the first public workshop to discuss potential revisions to the Neighborhood Conservation Districts 2 and 3 zoning overlays held at Armbrister Park on October 14, 2017 by the City of Miami Planning Department*

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## Executive Summary

On October 14, 2017 City of Miami Planning Department staff conducted a workshop from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM at Armbrister Park in Coconut Grove. This workshop was conducted in response to recent concerns about the Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) 2 and 3 zoning overlays voiced by residents who live in the area. These concerns have fallen primarily along the lines of tree canopy, the diminishment of lots, housing affordability, public notice procedures, property values, and property demolition. There are instances in which these issues are unavoidably intersected, for example, a property owner who owns a large building site and wishes to diminish it into several small lots (i.e. the original plats from the early 1920s), and to develop those smaller lots as individual lots with homes for resale. In cases like these, the issue of lot diminishment (often referred to as “lot-splitting”), tree canopy, and housing affordability come to the fore immediately. At the same time, many of the workshop participants expressed interest in changing the procedures used by the City for approving permits.

On October 14, workshop participants provided data to assist Planning staff to begin addressing these issues. Seventy-one surveys were completed during the meeting. A question in the survey asked respondents to consider select issues and to prioritize them. From this question, one finding is that the highest priority is tree canopy followed closely by housing affordability. Additional feedback on the survey, as well as from poster activities, provide more information about workshop participants’ concerns over lot sizes, lot coverage, floor area ratio (F.A.R), the neighborhood’s character, public noticing, and several other issues.

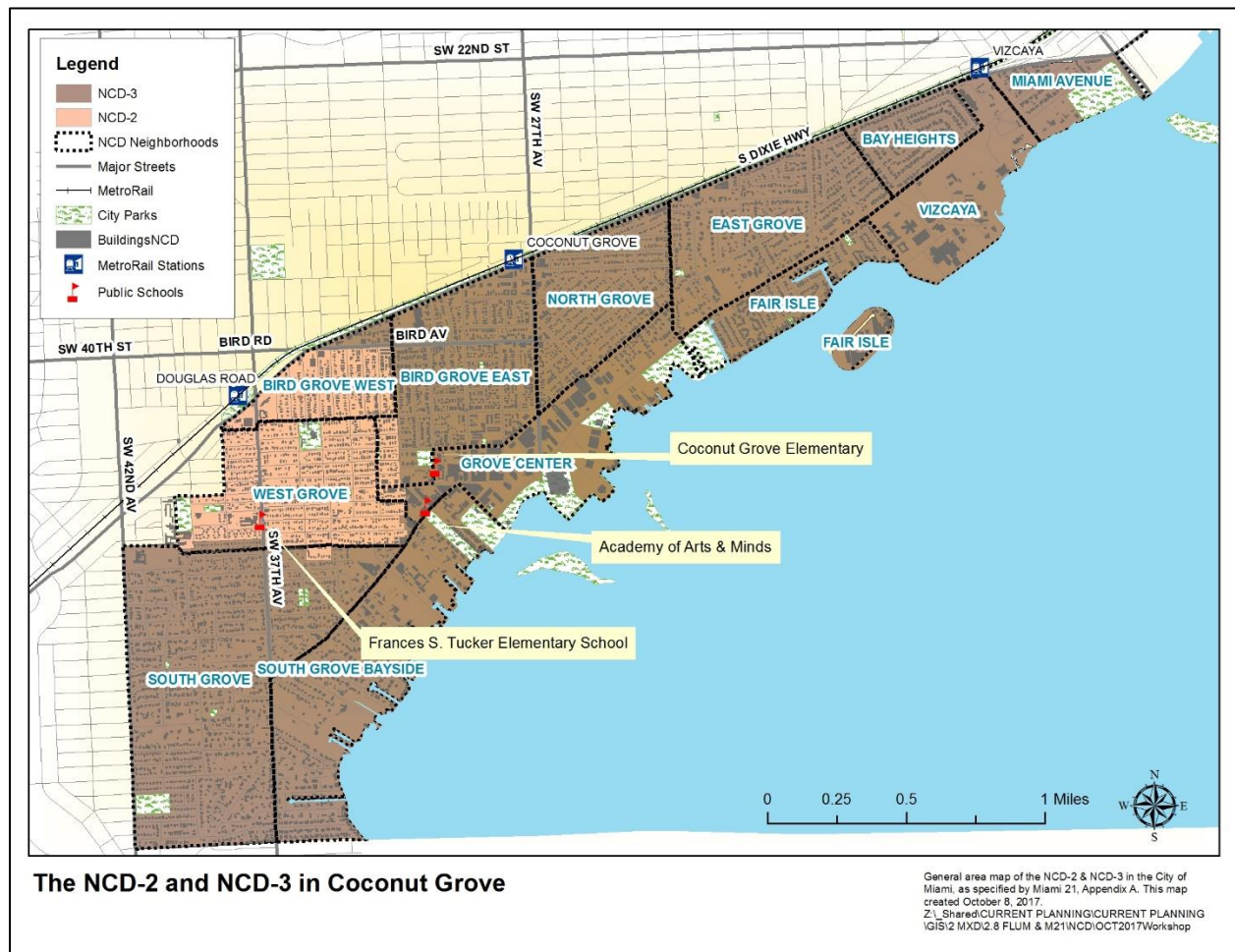
At its heart, the NCD intends to *conserve* neighborhoods. During the October 14 workshop, a good deal of time was spent working with participants trying to discern what the community wants to conserve. Participants clearly value a sense of uniqueness of Coconut Grove that is manifest in its historic legacy, architectural variety, cultural diversity, natural aesthetic, walkable character, and access to the water. Moving forward, the community desires a revised NCD policy that advances these treasured qualities of Coconut Grove and engages the entire community.

A second workshop was held on October 28, 2017. A second round of surveys was administered and several more poster exercises were conducted. The Planning Department is currently analyzing data from this second workshop. A report from the October 28 meeting will be presented to the public in coming weeks.

Please note that a new webpage has been created to keep the public informed about progress on the modification of the NCDs and can be accessed from this URL: <http://www.miamigov.com/planning/ncd.html>. You can call the Planning Department at (305) 416-1400 if you have questions about the NCDs or send an email to [planning@miamigov.com](mailto:planning@miamigov.com). Access to the raw data used for this report are available for viewing, by appointment, during office hours at 444 SW 2 Avenue, 3FL, Miami, FL. Due to technological constraints and concerns about confidentiality, the raw data are not being published online.

## Introduction

Appendix A of Miami 21 is subtitled “Neighborhood Conservation Districts.” There are three Neighborhood Conservation Districts (commonly referred to as “NCDs”) within the City of Miami. NCDs 2 and 3 are located within Coconut Grove. NCD-2 occupies the area nearest Douglas Road MetroRail Station, bounded by SW 32 Avenue to the South and Charles Avenue to the East. Much of the remainder of Coconut Grove is located within NCD-3. The NCDs are comprised of several distinct, unofficial *neighborhoods*. The map below depicts NCD-2, NCD-3 and the neighborhoods that exist within them.



The NCDs are *zoning overlays*. A zoning overlay is defined by the American Planning Association as “a zoning district which is applied over one or more previously established zoning districts, establishing additional or stricter standards and criteria for covered properties in addition to those of the underlying zoning district” (Property Topics and Concepts, 2017) . Article 3, Section 3.12.2 of Miami 21 states that the intent of NCDs is:

*[T]o preserve unique and distinctive neighborhoods that exhibit a certain defined character worthy of protection, such as physical features, design characteristics, and recognized cultural or historical identity. The Neighborhood Conservation District provides additional regulations or design guidelines for new construction, major alterations and additions to existing Buildings, in*

*order to protect, enhance and perpetuate the value of the neighborhood conservation area. It is further intended that such districts and the regulations adopted for them shall be in accord with, and promote the Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan (Miami 21, 3.12.2 (a)).*

In recent months, members of the Coconut Grove community have expressed concerns about NCDs. These concerns have manifested themselves in the form of direct communication from residents as well as the active participation of diverse members of the community who attend public meetings. Comments from the community have included (but are not limited to) concerns about housing affordability, lot coverage, residential density, tree preservation, public noticing, and property rights. The Planning Department has determined that the need exists to modify NCD regulations in response to these concerns. To this end, Planning staff have asked for members of the community to provide more feedback relative to the NCDs at two workshops. The first workshop occurred on October 14, 2017 and the community has graciously assisted Planning staff. A summary of community feedback is provided in the following pages.

### Public Feedback: Overview

An estimated 79 members of the public participated in the workshop on October 14, 2017 verified by the number of signatures on the sign-in sheets. Feedback from participants was collected through the “World Café” method and a survey, for general sentiments related to the NCDs. In addition to the overall NCD modification, the last hour of the meeting was used to discuss legislation that had been prepared by staff to address the diminishment of lots. That legislation had been scheduled for hearing before the Planning, Zoning and Appeals Board (“PZAB”) but was deferred due to public comment expressing a lack of information with the proposed legislation. PZAB instructed staff to engage the public prior to re-introducing the legislation again. This proposed legislation is a minor aspect to the overall effort at revising the overall NCD.

## NCD Workshop Survey Methodology

A paper survey was administered during the workshop. The survey contained six questions (see Attachment A). The first two questions asked information about respondents—where they live and what their relationships are with Coconut Grove. The remainder of the survey collected information about respondents’ opinions about the neighborhood(s).

### About Respondents—Identifying Those Who Live in Coconut Grove

A total of 71 completed surveys were received. Twenty-two respondents (31 percent of respondents) identified as living in the South Grove neighborhood and 11 identified as living in the North Grove neighborhood and in the Grove Center neighborhoods (15 percent of respondents each). Eight respondents (11 percent) were from the West Grove neighborhood. No surveys were submitted from respondents from the Bird Grove West, East Grove, Vizcaya, or Miami Avenue neighborhoods. Ten percent of the surveys came from respondents who do not live in Coconut Grove and seven percent of survey respondents did not complete this answer. The table below summarizes this information<sup>1</sup>.

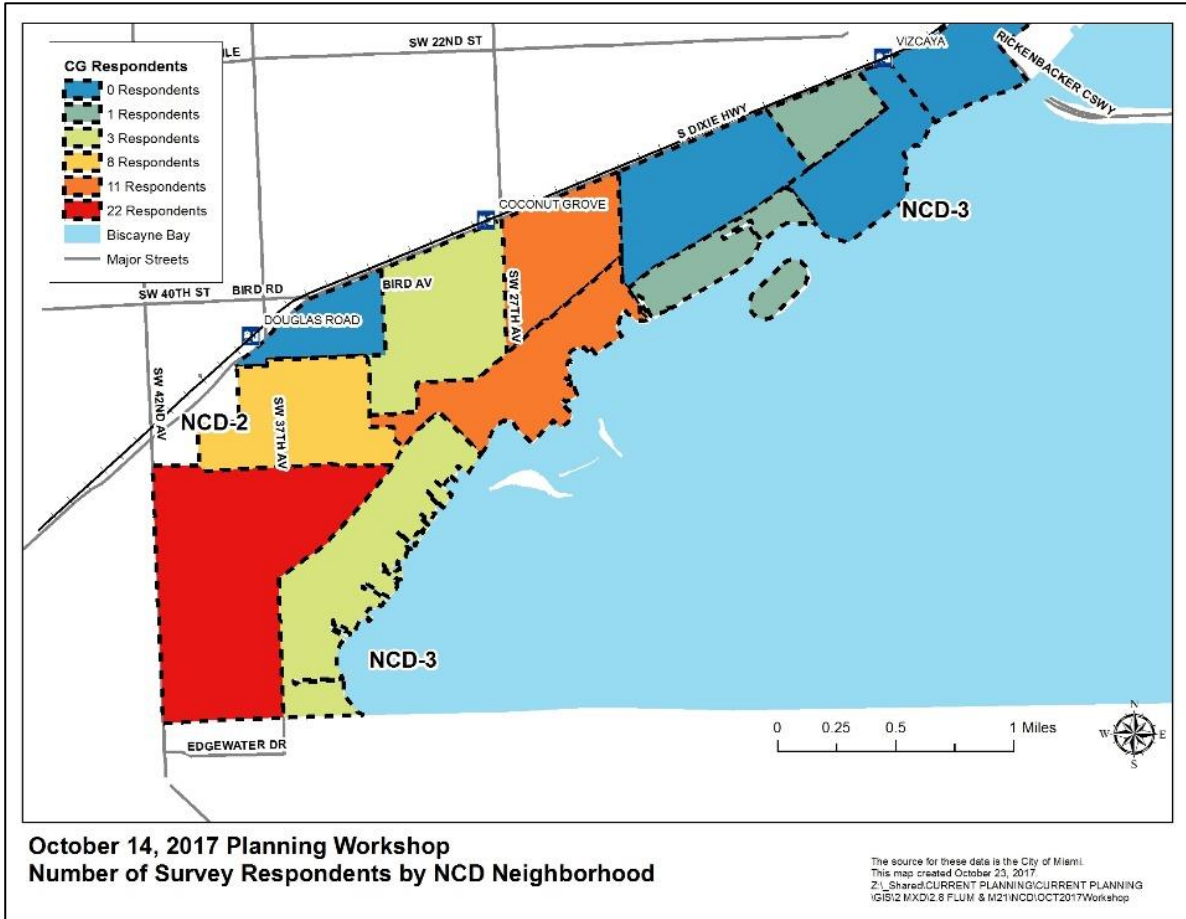
<b>Summary of Where NCD Workshop Respondents Live</b>		
<b>Respondent Neighborhoods</b>	<b># Responses</b>	<b>% Respondents</b>
<i>South Grove</i>	22	31%
<i>North Grove</i>	11	15%
<i>Grove Center</i>	11	15%
<i>West Grove</i>	8	11%
<i>I live outside Coconut Grove</i>	7	10%
<i>No Recorded Answer</i>	5	7%
<i>South Grove Bayside</i>	3	4%
<i>Bird Grove East</i>	2	3%
<i>Fair Isle</i>	1	1%
<i>Bay Heights</i>	1	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100%</b>

Eighty-three percent of respondents stated that they live in Coconut Grove. The map at the top of the next page illustrates the geographic distribution of the survey respondents who live in Coconut Grove by neighborhood.

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<sup>1</sup> Neighborhoods referenced here can be geographically referenced in the map on page 3 of this report.





### About Respondents—Other Characteristics

Respondents were asked to describe themselves based on whether they live in Coconut Grove in a home they own or rent, if they own a business in Coconut Grove or work for an employer in Coconut Grove, and if they work for a land developer. They were told that they could indicate more than one option. Forty-nine respondents (69 percent) live in Coconut Grove in a home they own and 19 (26 percent) are land developers in Coconut Grove. The table below summarizes the results for this question.

Self-Reported Information about Select Characteristics Describing Respondents		
Description	# Responses	% Respondent*
I live in a home I or my partner own in Coconut Grove	49	69%
I live in a home I or my partner rent in Coconut Grove	8	11%
I do not live in Coconut Grove	4	6%
I own a business in Coconut Grove	8	11%
I work for an employer in Coconut Grove	8	11%
I work in land development	19	27%
None of these describe me.	2	3%

\* Answers as percentages indicate the percentage of all respondents (71) who identified themselves in a particular way. The sum of all characteristics will not total to 100%; instead the sum of all respondents equals 72%

## Individual Priorities

The Planning Department has identified six major areas of concern for Coconut Grove. These issues, listed below, come from comments received from residents from Coconut Grove by the Planning Department over the past year:

- (1) Tree canopy;
- (2) Lot sizes;
- (3) Housing affordability;
- (4) Public notice procedures;
- (5) Property values; and
- (6) Property demolition.

Each survey asked respondents to rank these issues in importance, with “1” being highest. Controlling for tenure and where respondents live, responses are reported for three sub-groups: (1) Respondents who identify as those who own a home in which they live in Coconut Grove; (2) Respondents who rent a home in which they live in Coconut Grove; and (3) Others<sup>2</sup>. A total of 55 surveys<sup>3</sup> provided complete, legible responses to this question with a breakdown between the three sub-groups as follows:

- Thirty-four surveys from respondents who live in homes they own in Coconut Grove;
- Seven surveys from respondents who live in homes they rent in Coconut Grove;
- Fourteen surveys from others.

## Analysis

To analyze this question, all surveys for which every item was ranked “1”, “2”, “3”, “4”, “5”, and “6” were recorded by sub-group. After recording the data, the frequency of each ranking was noted. For example, for respondents living in Coconut Grove who own their homes, the item that was most frequently ranked a “1” was Tree Canopy, having been ranked as a “1” by 13 respondents (38 percent). Frequencies for each issue were noted for each sub-group for all rankings. The observations of these frequencies drove the analysis of respondents’ priorities.

### Priorities: Respondents Who Live in Homes They Own in Coconut Grove

A total of 34 surveys from respondents who live in homes they own in Coconut Grove were analyzed. This group of respondents indicated that, of the six concerns presented to them, Tree Canopy is the most important, having ranked this issue as a “1” by 13 respondents (38 percent). Ten respondents (29 percent) selected Housing Affordability as the most important issue for them. Tree Canopy was ranked as “2” for a priority with the highest frequency for this sub-group: ten respondents (29 percent) selected this item as their second highest priority. Lot Sizes was the next most frequently selected priority for this sub-group with seven respondents (21 percent) selecting this as a “2”.

Twelve respondents (35 percent) indicated that Property Value was the least important priority (“6”), with the highest response rate for least importance among all choices. Property Demolition was

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<sup>2</sup> Within this dataset are respondents who claimed to live within Coconut Grove but did not select that they lived in a home they rent nor did they select that they lived in a home they own.

<sup>3</sup> Seventeen surveys that did not rank all items ordinally were not included for the purposes of this analysis. Eleven surveys contained responses that provided incomplete rankings or rankings that did not prioritize the options; three surveys ranked each item “1”; and two surveys did not respond.



selected by ten respondents (29 percent) as “5”, indicating that this is a low priority. Priority ranking over Public Notice varies between 12 percent and 24 percent for all priorities. Housing Affordability also shows a range of frequencies between 18 percent and 9 percent for middle-range priorities, so it is difficult to ascertain how to rank this issue for people who might value it, but not value it as their highest priority. The table below summarizes all the results.

<b>Select priorities for respondents who own a home in which they live inside Coconut Grove</b>														
	<b>PRIORITY (1 = HIGHEST, 6 = LOWEST)</b>													
	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Tree Canopy</i>	13	38%	10	29%	6	18%	5	15%	0	0%	0	0%	34	100%
<i>Lot sizes</i>	4	12%	7	21%	8	24%	4	12%	5	15%	6	18%	34	100%
<i>Housing affordability</i>	10	29%	6	18%	3	9%	5	15%	6	18%	4	12%	34	100%
<i>Public notice</i>	4	12%	5	15%	7	21%	8	24%	6	18%	4	12%	34	100%
<i>Property Value</i>	3	9%	4	12%	5	15%	3	9%	7	21%	12	35%	34	100%
<i>Property Demolition</i>	1	3%	2	6%	5	15%	8	24%	10	29%	8	24%	34	100%

### Priorities: Respondents Who Live in Homes They Rent in Coconut Grove

A total of seven surveys from respondents who live in homes they rent in Coconut Grove were analyzed. This group of respondents indicated that Tree Canopy is tied with Lot Sizes as a first priority with three respondents selecting these items (43 percent). The priority ranked as “2” most frequently was Tree Canopy by three respondents (43 percent), followed by Housing Affordability by two respondents (29 percent). The most frequent “5”-ranked priority was Property Value by three respondents (43 percent), followed by Lot Sizes by two respondents (29 percent). The item most frequently ranked as a “6” was Property Value, by four respondents (57 percent).

Tree canopy is a clear priority for respondents from this sub-group, discernable from the fact that all but one of them selected Tree Canopy as priority “1” or “2”. The value of property and property demolition were most lowly ranked with greatest frequency. The table below summarizes the results from this sub-group.

<b>Select priorities for respondents who rent a home in which they rent inside Coconut Grove</b>														
	<b>PRIORITY (1 = HIGHEST, 6 = LOWEST)</b>													
	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Tree Canopy</i>	3	43%	3	43%	0	0%	1	14%	0	0%	0	0%	7	100%
<i>Lot sizes</i>	3	43%	0	0%	1	14%	1	14%	2	29%	0	0%	7	100%
<i>Housing affordability</i>	1	14%	2	29%	4	57%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	7	100%
<i>Public notice</i>	0	0%	1	14%	2	29%	3	43%	1	14%	0	0%	7	100%
<i>Property Value</i>	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	43%	4	57%	7	100%
<i>Property Demolition</i>	0	0%	1	14%	0	0%	2	29%	1	14%	3	43%	7	100%

### Priorities: Other Respondents

A total of 14 surveys from respondents who live in other circumstances were analyzed for this ranking. Seven respondents (fifty percent) ranked Housing Affordability “1” and three respondents (21 percent) gave Public Notice the same ranking. Four respondents (29 percent) ranked Property Value “2” while three respondents (21 percent) gave the same ranking to Tree Canopy and Housing Affordability.

For the lower priorities, four respondents (29 percent) ranked Public Notice “5” with three respondents (21 percent) giving the same ranking to Lot Sizes and Property Value. The most frequently selected “6”-ranked priority was Property Demolition, chosen by five respondents (36 percent), followed by Public Notice, selected by four respondents (29 percent).

Housing Affordability is a very high priority for this sub-group of respondents with ten respondents (71 percent) ranking this as either a “1” or “2”. Property Value and Tree Canopy still figure prominently as highly-ranked priorities: five respondents rank these as a “1” or “2”, representing 36 percent of respondents. Public Notice ranks low, with eight respondents (57 percent) ranking this as either a “5” or “6”. The table below summarizes the results from this sub-group.

Select priorities for respondents who live in homes they neither own nor rent in Coconut Grove (aka "Other")																
Item	PRIORITY (1= HIGHEST, 6 = LOWEST)														TOTAL	
	1		2		3		4		5		6		#	%		
Tree Canopy	2	14%	3	21%	3	21%	3	21%	2	14%	1	7%	14	100%		
Lot sizes	1	7%	2	14%	3	21%	3	21%	3	21%	2	14%	14	100%		
Housing affordability	7	50%	3	21%	2	14%	0	0%	2	14%	0	0%	14	100%		
Public notice	3	21%	0	0%	2	14%	1	7%	4	29%	4	29%	14	100%		
Property Value	1	7%	4	29%	0	0%	4	29%	3	21%	2	14%	14	100%		
Property Demolition	0	0%	2	14%	3	21%	3	21%	1	7%	5	36%	14	100%		

### Overall Discussion of the Surveys

Reviewing the frequency by which respondents rank issues highly versus ranking issues less highly, what can we learn? There is no question that all respondents share a great concern about the Tree Canopy in Coconut Grove. Housing Affordability is also ranked very highly with a great frequency—33 percent of all respondents ranked both of these issues “1”. Tree Canopy as a priority is so prevalent, it emerges as the most frequent “2” priority, with this priority having been selected 29 percent of the time. Lot Sizes is the most frequently selected “3” priority, with this issue being selected as this level of priority 22 percent of the time. The table below summarizes the priorities of the respondents, 1 through 6, with the corresponding frequencies at which the items were selected.

List of priorities in ranking order		
Rank	Item	% of Respondents who selected this at this priority level
1	Tree Canopy <i>tied with</i> Housing Affordability	33
2	Tree Canopy	29
3	Lot Sizes	22
4	Property Demolition	24
5	Property Value	24
6	Property Value	33

## The Big Questions: *World Café*

Staff spent most of the morning working with the participants by discussing the bigger, more conceptual issues around the NCD using a “World Café” methodology. The World Café methodology requires all participants to break up into various groups around tables to discuss a specific question as posed by the facilitator. Each group has a designated table leader who serves as a scribe, ensuring that the tables’ participants’ responses are recorded on a single sheet of paper. The groups work to determine which response is most compelling to the question posed by the facilitator. At the conclusion of the session (approximately 15 minutes), the table leader reports this response to the larger group. All members of each table must move to a new table for the next question to be posed by the facilitator. For the October 14 meeting, this process was repeated for a total of three questions. The responses were recorded by the designated table scribes on large posters with narrative and pictures.

### Question 1: What are the most important parts of a neighborhood?

Each table was first asked to discuss, what the most important parts of a neighborhood are in general (as opposed to each persons’ neighborhood). An overwhelming range of responses reflected a sense that a “community” nature is important. Individual responses included words and phrases such as: “Community (interact)”; “Caring for where you live”; “Knowing your neighbors”; “Tolerance (respect each other)”; and “People first”. Eleven responses indicated that the group values diversity with responses such as: “Diverse architecture”; “Diversity (social and economic)”; and “Activities for kids and elders”. Nine responses valued walkability using the term in some form. Eight responses each valued safety; four posters actually used the word “Safety.” Other aspects of neighborhoods that emerged as important included:

- (1) Low traffic speeds;
- (2) A particular neighborhood character;
- (3) Cleanliness;
- (4) Historic preservation; and
- (5) Affordable housing.

### Question 2: What about Coconut Grove needs to be protected?

Upon reporting responses to question 1 to the larger group, all participants switched tables for the next question: “What about Coconut Grove needs to be protected?” Four themes emerged from responses to this question. One theme, regulation, emerged. Participants expressed several ideas, feelings, and frustrations that seem to be tied to regulation. Examples of these statements include: “Stop developers from irresponsibility towards neighborhoods”; “City notices need to be provided with accurate dates and better descriptions”; “Limitation of density”; “NET office needs more staff”; “No lot splitting”; “Throwing trash on the street”; and “Less upzoning”. Because this question was about protection, these responses were interpreted as statements that seemed to suggest that some aspect of regulation would mediate these things, though the things to be mediated varied.

Another theme that emerged was an interest in participants in protecting walkability. Comments approached walkability from several perspectives as observed in the following comments: “Make walking safer”; “Enhance access to boardwalks”; and “Walkable waterfront.” The protection of trees was an extremely popular response, six posters state “Tree canopy” or “Protect tree canopy.” These comments likely overlap with regulation.

Other aspects of Coconut Grove that participants want to protect include the following:

- (1) Housing affordability;
- (2) Bahamian architecture/character;
- (3) Economic vitality of the village center;
- (4) Historic preservation;
- (5) Open spaces;
- (6) People (i.e. concerns about displacement—this seemed to be related to housing affordability);
- (7) Safety;
- (8) Traffic; and
- (9) The waterfront.

### Question 3A: What does Coconut Grove need more of?

Question 3 was a two-part question. In addressing what Coconut Grove needs more of, the respondents had many ideas that were similar to what needed to be protected. Participants provided responses that suggested issues related to regulation merit attention. Responses included the following: “Streamlined process”; “Neighborhood Conservation Dist. Enforcement”; “Clear code language that promotes environmental quality”; “Transparency”; “Smart development (master plan)”; and “Financial penalties (for those who do not comply with the Code)”. A number of posters provided feedback that we broadly categorize as “government-community collaboration”. Statements participants provided that we categorized like this included: “Better interaction of Police and Community”; “Transparency in decision making”; “Compassionate code enforcement”; and “Preserve existing housing (loan programs and code enforcement)”. No other significant themes emerged from the responses, but the following broadly encapsulate the themes of responses that participants provided:

- (1) Affordable housing;
- (2) Business opportunities;
- (3) Pedestrian safety/walkability; and
- (4) Tree protection.

### Question 3B: What does Coconut Grove need less of?

The second part of Question 3 was what the area needs less of. Participants provided much less feedback for this response than any other response. For example, there were 99 responses to Question 3A; however, there were only 35 responses to Question 3B.

Fifteen of the responses to this question are roughly categorized as comments in which participants want less “bad development” for lack of better terms (understanding that “bad development” is a purely subjective concept). Examples of statements made that were categorized this way include: “Big white boxes”; “Hardscape”; “Over development (exclusive)”; “Density”; and “Subdivided lots”. Additional feedback included that participants want less behaviors from City government perceived as undesirable, such as unilateral decisions and conflicts with the County. Feedback also included a desire for less traffic.

### Discussion

The World Café added depth to the data collected by the October 14 workshop. Staff’s intention with this exercise was to elicit from members of the public in attendance at the meeting what aspects of

the local neighborhood merit conservation. By doing this, staff's aspiration is to ensure that the intent of any revised NCD policy aligns with the values of the people who live in the Coconut Grove neighborhoods today.

The tree canopy, walkability, small-scale development in single-family areas, access to water, and protection of density all are aspects of Coconut Grove that participants stated are important for protection. Throughout the World Café exercise, many posters that were collected made many references to "diversity." It seems that "diversity" is often invoked to describe the people and the architecture of the neighborhood. The community values the historic legacy of the neighborhood, with the original settlers from the Bahamas. There are concerns about safety, traffic speeds, economic vitality, and affordability of housing.

## Zooming in: Considering Proposed Legislation

Due to the concerns of many members of the Coconut Grove community, Planning staff has drafted legislation for tentative consideration for the public. This was advertised for original hearing for Planning, Zoning and Appeals Board (PZAB) on July 31, 2017. At that time, the item was continued by the board in response to several members of the public who expressed concerns about the legislation. Planning staff has received feedback from members of the community with many opinions: Some wish for the legislation to be heard; some wish for the legislation to be changed and heard; some do not want the legislation at all.

### This Legislation and Its Relationship to the Overall NCD Revision

The vision is to modify the NCD policy overall; however, in response to a sense of urgency regarding the diminishment of lots (often referred to as "lot-splitting") in Coconut Grove, Planning staff have attempted to bring forward legislation to address this particular issue. In this sense, this legislation is "broken out" of the overall NCD effort to stem the tide of lot diminishment to address the sense of urgency. The Planning Department recognizes that the community desires the entire NCD policy to be modified. The intention is to modify the entire NCD. The legislation that is being introduced at this time is intended to eventually blend in with all new NCD regulations in a single, holistic piece.

### Summary of Initial Legislation Proffer

The initial legislation draft that has been proffered by Planning staff proposed the following policies to address lot diminishment and tree canopy in the NCDs, in their entirety:

- (1) Lots of over one acre, if diminished, may only be diminished if the diminishment results in lots with minimum area of 10,000 square feet and 100 square feet of lot width;
- (2) Lots of an acre or more in size, if diminished, may only be diminished if the diminishment results in lots with minimum area of 20,000 square feet and 100 square feet of lot width;
- (3) In analyzing proposed diminishments, Planning staff will review subject sites and their 500 foot radius to ascertain the average size lot. Based on that, new, diminished lots must not be smaller than the average size lot;
- (4) Planning staff will review the original plat in the Municipal Atlas;
- (5) Regarding trees, applicants will be subject to City Code requirements, creating a tree disposition plan, a tree boundary survey by a licensed surveyor, a tree protection plan, a certified arborist report, and photos of the site, keyed to the site plan; and

- (6) Variances and waivers to minimum lot area and lot width are prohibited.

### Public Input on the Legislation

This legislation was reviewed at the meeting by Planning staff. During the presentation by staff, a number of general comments between members of the public and staff were noted. Below is a summary of comments noted by staff:

- *This legislation makes development more difficult.*
- *One acre is too big for the threshold for subdividing lots.*
- *Why is the lot width 100 feet?*
- *The prevailing lot size in the grove is 5,000 square feet.*
- *You have to break lots down to the predominant size relative to the surrounding context.*
- *Affordability is best addressed by FAR.*
- *The warrant process is too easy.*
- *Is there a way to approve this besides the warrant process?*
- *Control the size of homes on lots.*
- *Most people bought their homes because they like the rural feel.*
- *The problem with the approach is the 500 foot radius—reviewing by the street scape (corridor analysis?) is a better approach.*

Participants were asked to provide written feedback on the legislation on poster sheets. Main features of the legislation that received attention from workshop attendees fall along the following lines:

- (1) Concern about the definitions of terms;
- (2) Concern about excessive density in Coconut Grove;
- (3) Many comments addressed concerns about permitting processes. No fewer than three written comments requested that warrants be discontinued in favor of public hearings.
- (4) Concern about lot coverage, lot sizes, and lot splitting. To some degree, these issues may be related. A summary of these comments:
  - a. "Lot coverage – reduce"
  - b. "Platted lots: All cannot be 'split' to smaller than predominant lot size"
  - c. "Platted lots: All structures to be built on such split lots to have reduced floor to area ratio and lot coverage to be in character with neighbors"
  - d. "I think we need strict rules which prohibit 'splits' of existing building sites—no exceptions because some building sites in the neighborhood have greater density"
  - e. "Include the words no more than one single family residential structure"
  - f. "10,000 sq ft with 100 feet frontages"
  - g. "If you are splitting a lot up, then have requirement to build smaller home"
- (5) Concern about protecting trees;
- (6) A range of other issues, such as:
  - a. Larger setbacks;
  - b. Generally increasing restrictions in the NCDs;
  - c. Streetscapes and Swales;
  - d. Stairwell enclosures;
  - e. Center Grove;



- f. Height restrictions at 25 feet; and
- g. Concern not to have two NCDs.

## Conclusions

Prevailing concerns among people attending the meeting on October 14, 2017 appear to coalesce around the concepts of tree canopy and housing affordability. Tree canopy is closely tied to the issue of lot diminishment because as lots are diminished for redevelopment, site plans can be designed which proposed the destruction of trees. The question remains: what steps do we take from here to address the concerns of the community?

- (1) The Planning Department has received a large volume of public feedback regarding the legislation regarding lot diminishment. The Planning Department is reviewing the feedback and taking the public input under consideration for revisions to the legislation that was presented at the October 14 meeting.
- (2) Work with the community to consider policy alternatives for affordable housing. Based on feedback gained at the October 28<sup>th</sup> workshop, Planning staff will begin to draft a policy framework to address affordability and present it to the stakeholders in a format yet to be determined.
- (3) Work with the community regarding the protection of trees. Chapter 17 of the City Code already contains a number of provisions to protect trees and Miami 21 offers several protections as well. The NCDs, as a zoning overlay, can add steps to the review process related to tree protection—these proposals were shared with the community in the October 28 workshop based on the October 14 meeting to further clarify community preferences for policy.

## Next Steps

From lot diminishment, tree canopy and affordability, the Planning Department is following the cues from the community for revising the NCD code. Discussion at the October 28 meeting has provided additional feedback to assist the Planning Department to more clearly understand how the community will receive various planning alternatives. A report based on data collected from the October 28 meeting will be released in the coming weeks. Modifications to the legislation will be drafted to address community preferences and will be presented to the public. To keep the community involved, the Planning Department has created a new webpage<sup>4</sup> exclusively for the NCDs and this page is updated on a regular basis.

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<sup>4</sup> Access the webpage at <http://www.miamigov.com/planning/ncd.html>

## Reference

*Peroperty Topics and Concepts*. (2017, October 23). Retrieved from American Planning Association:  
<https://www.planning.org/divisions/planningandlaw/propertytopics.htm#Overlay>

**APPENDIX A**

**Coconut Grove NCD Survey |**

**Please write comments as neatly as possible so your feedback can be easily read by City Staff!**

1. Where do you live?

Please indicate which neighborhood you live in. If you do not live in Coconut Grove, please indicate option "M," for living outside Coconut Grove.				
A	South Grove		H	Fair Isle
B	South Grove Bayside		I	East Grove
C	West Grove		J	Vizcaya
D	Grove Center		K	Bay Heights
E	Bird Grove West		L	Miami Avenue
F	Bird Grove East		M	I live outside Coconut Grove
G	North Grove			

2. Please indicate which statement(s) best describe you.

Check here	
	I live in a home I, or my spouse/partner owns, inside Coconut Grove.
	I live in a home I rent, or my spouse/partner rents, inside Coconut Grove.
	I do not live in Coconut Grove.
	I own a business in Coconut Grove.
	I work for an employer in Coconut Grove.
	I work in the field of land development (realtor/attorney/architect/general contractor/other) in Coconut Grove.
	None of these describe me.

3. Please rank from highest to lowest. 1 is highest and 6 is lowest (you can add additional comments on the back of this form).

	Tree canopy
	Lot sizes
	Housing affordability
	Public notice for land development
	Property value
	Property demolition

4. In your immediate neighborhood (listed in question 1 above), what do you want to conserve?

**Be sure to return this survey to City Staff prior to your departure today!**

## APPENDIX A

### Coconut Grove NCD Survey |

**Please write comments as neatly as possible so your feedback can be easily read by City Staff!**

5. Throughout Coconut Grove, what do you want to conserve?

6. Please add any other comments here.

**Be sure to return this survey to City Staff prior to your departure today!**