

Coconut Grove Playhouse Project – Public Meetings

As of May 6, 2019

City of Miami Commission Hearing

Date

April 25, 2019

The City of Miami Commission held a hearing on April 25th to consider whether to repeal or uphold the action of the City of Miami's Historic and Environmental Preservation Board which denied the County's application for a special certificate of appropriateness to move forward with plans to revitalize the Coconut Grove Playhouse.

The Commission voted to defer the public hearing to make the final decision on the County-FIU Coconut Grove Playhouse project. The Commission scheduled a special meeting both to hear public input and to decide on the appeal by County to move forward with the Coconut Grove Playhouse. The Playhouse decision will be the only item for this meeting at 9:00 AM on Wednesday, May 8, 2019 at the Miami City Hall.

Roundtable with Business Owners in Coconut Grove

Date

April 17, 2019

The Miami Parking Authority hosted a roundtable meeting on Wednesday, April 17th at 10 AM with the business community in Coconut Grove. The meeting was held at Peacock Garden Bistro, located at 2889 McFarlane Road in Coconut Grove. The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs attended the meeting and provided an update on the Coconut Grove Playhouse project to local business owners, followed by a question and answer session.

Coconut Grove Business Improvement District (BID) Meeting

Date

March 12, 2019

On March 12, 2019, the Coconut Grove Business Improvement District (BID) voted to approve a resolution supporting the County's application for a special certificate of appropriateness for the Playhouse project and recommending that the City of Miami Commission grant the County's appeal and reverse the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board's denial.

City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board Meeting

Date

March 5, 2019

On March 5, 2019, the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board (HEPB) voted 6-4 to deny Miami-Dade County's application for a special certificate of appropriateness for the Coconut Grove Playhouse revival project. The County appealed this unfortunate decision to the City of Miami Commission.

City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board Meeting **Date**

February 5, 2019

On February 5, 2019, the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board (HEPB) met to consider the final step of the regulatory review process to secure a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Miami-Dade County-FIU Coconut Grove Playhouse project. HEPB members reported having technical difficulty accessing the electronic agenda materials that were submitted by the County in December 2018. Consequently, the HEPB voted to defer the Playhouse item and the entire public hearing to the next month's meeting on March 5, 2019.

Dade Heritage Trust **Date**

January 23, 2019

The Dade Heritage Trust Board of Directors voted to support the plan developed by Miami-Dade County and Florida International University for the Coconut Grove Playhouse site. Jorge L. Hernandez, the Coconut Grove Playhouse project's noted historic preservation architect, provided an overview at the Trust's meeting on January 23, 2019. The design features the complete restoration of the 1927 Kiehnel & Elliott historic front building; the creation of a 300-seat, state-of-the-art theater, incorporating the remaining historic elements from the existing auditorium space; and a site plan with a plaza, pedestrian promenade, garage, pocket park, and lush landscaping.

Founded in 1972, Dade Heritage Trust is the leading organization committed to preserving Miami-Dade County's architectural, environmental and cultural heritage. The approval by Dade Heritage Trust's board supports the action taken by the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board (HEPB), which reviewed the master plan concept for the Coconut Grove Playhouse project and voted affirmatively to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the master plan on April 4, 2017.

Circuit Court Appellate Division **Date**

December 10, 2018

On December 10, 2018, a three-judge panel of the Circuit Court Appellate Division ruled in favor of Miami-Dade County in a case regarding the historic preservation approval granted to the County to rehabilitate the Coconut Grove Playhouse. In April 2017, the City of Miami's Historic and Environmental Preservation Board had approved the County's conceptual design for the Playhouse rehabilitation project. Two City residents appealed that decision, and in December 2017, the City of Miami Commission reversed the historic preservation approval. The County thereafter appealed the City Commission's decision to court. The Court's decision accepted all of the County's arguments, finding that the City's decision was incorrect and that the conditions imposed on the County were not consistent with the governing historic designation and applicable law. In particular, the Court reversed the City Commission's condition that the shell of the existing Playhouse auditorium be saved, as the City's own historic designation report had concluded that only the historic front building retains historic architectural integrity.

be operated and programmed by GableStage, an award-winning theater company, and collaborating on educational programs with Florida International University.

Mayor Carlos Gimenez urged the conveners and the public to support the County's plan. Mayor Gimenez stated, "You have my commitment – you have always had my commitment – for us to get this project done together. I need your commitment to put aside more speculation and delay, and work with us as real partners. We can restore this landmark place back to its 1927 architectural glory. We can work with our partners, FIU and our schools, to introduce kids and families, in the West Grove and beyond, to great performances and life-changing educational opportunities. We can bring back great theater to the Grove. And we must do this without any more delay."

Meeting in the West Grove / Village West	Date
---	-------------

Coconut Grove Home Owners & Tenants Association (HOATA) Outreach Community Meeting	November 27, 2017
---	--------------------------

The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs attended a meeting in the Village West community hosted by HOATA (Linda Williams, HOATA Secretary; J.S. Rashid, HOATA President) on Monday, November 27, 2017 at 6pm. The meeting was held at the Frankie Shannon Rolle Human Services Center, located at 3750 South Dixie Highway, Room 115.

At the meeting, the County provided an update on progress of the Coconut Grove Playhouse project. The presentation included the design and the plan to return great theater to the site followed by a Q&A session regarding the Coconut Grove Playhouse.

Town Meeting	Date
---------------------	-------------

Coconut Grove Playhouse Project Update	October 19, 2017
---	-------------------------

The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs hosted a second community meeting at the Miami-Dade County Auditorium to provide an update on the Coconut Grove Playhouse project. The meeting provided an update on progress with the design and on the plan to return great theater to the site. The presentation included a brief video providing insight into the current condition of the Playhouse, the need for the planned improvements, and the opportunities that the restored historic front building, new theater building, compatible related development, and pedestrian-friendly public spaces will bring to the Coconut Grove community; and a presentation by Bernardo Fort-Brescia, Founding Principal of Arquitectonica International Corporation, highlighting the new drawings from the design development phase of the architectural work including renderings of various exterior views throughout the site as well as the interior of the theater, showing how the entire, existing proscenium arch will be re-used for the new theater.

City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board Meeting	Date
--	-------------

Playhouse Master Plan Approved

April 4, 2017

On April 4, 2017, the City of Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board (HEPB) reviewed the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the master plan submitted by Miami-Dade County and its partner Florida International University. The design team, led by Arquitectonica, and historic preservation architect Jorge Hernandez presented the project's history, conclusions derived from the extensive research conducted on the building, and updated plans based on the refinements that had taken place since the application had been submitted. After hearing extensive testimony from the public, the HEPB approved the master plan concept. This approval provides the framework for the design team to continue to develop the plans that will allow the restoration of the front building to the 1927 design by Kiehnel and Elliott and the development of a 300-seat, state-of-the art theater with supporting amenities. Once the drawings are further developed, the team will return to the HEPB to request a Certificate of Appropriateness for the building components.

Town Meeting in Coconut Grove

Date

Coconut Grove Playhouse Project Update December 8, 2016

The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs hosted a community meeting on December 8, 2016 at the Ransom Everglades School auditorium to provide an update on the Coconut Grove Playhouse project. The meeting featured detailed presentations from the design team experts relating the following: the comprehensive research completed to date on the history and evolution of the property and the resulting findings; the recommendations for saving the most architecturally significant parts of the Playhouse based on the research completed, including the entire historic corner building and interior elements where possible, such as the proscenium arch and the remaining solomonic columns; and the proposed masterplan.

Board of County Commission Meeting

Date

April 21, 2015

At its April 21, 2015 meeting, the Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved two key items as recommended by Mayor Carlos Gimenez to move ahead with work on restoring great theater to the Coconut Grove Playhouse: The agreement with GableStage to operate and program the planned 300-seat theater; and The professional services agreement with the design team led by Arquitectonica for the Playhouse's architectural and engineering work.

BCC Economic Prosperity Committee**Prime Sponsor****Date**

Discussion Item**Xavier L. Suarez March 12, 2015**

Members of the County Commission's Economic Prosperity Committee voted unanimously to move the two agenda items regarding the Coconut Grove Playhouse – the operating agreement with GableStage and the design contract with the team led by Arquitectonica – to the full County Commission meeting on April 21, 2015. These two agenda items were moved forward as recommended with no changes.

Resolution Date

R-293-15 March 12, 2015 BCC Economic Prosperity Committee

“Resolution approving an operating and management agreement between Miami-Dade County and GableStage, Inc. for the redevelopment of the Coconut Grove Playhouse for an initial term of 25 years with three 25-year options to renew; amending resolution No. R-797-13 to correct error; and authorizing the County Mayor or County Mayor's Designee to execute the agreement and to exercise all provisions contained therein.”

R-294-15 March 12, 2015 BCC Economic Prosperity Committee

“Resolution approving award of a professional services agreement to Arquitectonica International Corporation for architectural, engineering, and specialty consulting services for Project No. A14-CUA-01 - Coconut Grove Playhouse in an amount not to exceed \$2,398,680.00 over a four year term with two one-year options to renew and funded using Building Better Communities General Obligation Bond Funds; and authorizing the County Mayor or County Mayor's Designee to execute the agreement and to exercise the provisions contained therein.”

Resolution Date

R-797-13 March 12, 2015**BCC Economic Prosperity Committee**

“Resolution approving an operating and management agreement between Miami-Dade County and GableStage, Inc. for the redevelopment of the Coconut Grove Playhouse for an initial term of 25 years with three 25-year options to renew; amending resolution No. R-797-13 to correct error; and authorizing the County Mayor or County Mayor's Designee to execute the agreement and to exercise all provisions contained therein.”

Resolution	Date	Prime Sponsor	Co-Sponsor
-------------------	-------------	----------------------	-------------------

R-797-13	October 1, 2013	Xavier Suarez	Sally A. Heyman
-----------------	------------------------	----------------------	------------------------

Page 4, Background

“Key principles of County-FIU Agreement - Subject to review and approval of a bid waiver by the Board, the County will enter into an Operating Agreement with GableStage to operate, program and maintain the theater. GableStage will be responsible for all costs associated with the operations and programming of the theater.”

Updated Business Plan attached to the Lease – same key business points as above

Resolution	Date	Prime Sponsor	Co-Sponsor
-------------------	-------------	----------------------	-------------------

R-621-13	July 16, 2013	N/A	N/A
-----------------	----------------------	------------	------------

Coconut Grove Playhouse: Approval of a Lease with the State of Florida

Page 3, Background

“Key principles of County-FIU Agreement - Subject to review and approval of a bid waiver by the Board, the County will enter into an Operating Agreement with GableStage to operate, program and maintain the theater. GableStage will be responsible for all costs associated with the operations and programming of the theater.”

Page 37, Business Plan: Key Business Points

“Miami-Dade County will negotiate and execute an operating agreement with GableStage for programming and maintaining the theater and will determine the best approach to managing the rest of the site, subject to FIU’s concurrence.”

“Any additional future development of the site will be subject to the review and concurrence of the State, FIU, and Miami-Dade County. The use of any additional revenue that may result from such development is subject to the review of the State, FIU, and Miami-Dade County and the approval of the State.”

Report to BCC – issued by Mayor, March 5, 2012

Page 4

“Planning for the Operations of the New Playhouse

Central to our plan for returning great regional theater to the Playhouse property is to finalize the work initiated by the Playhouse board to enter into a management agreement with GableStage, one of the most celebrated and established theater companies in the Southeastern United States. GableStage understands that it would be responsible for managing, programming and fundraising specifically to support its operation of the theater, in order for this project to be successful. GableStage historically has received County grant support through the competitive grants programs of the Department of Cultural Affairs and it is our intention, and GableStage’s understanding, that this is the only County operational support that is anticipated to be available. To ensure that GableStage is ready to assume this responsibility, our Department of Cultural Affairs, with the expert assistance of AMS Planning & Research, will work with this outstanding non-profit cultural organization on operational forecasts of expenses and revenues for

programming the new Playhouse as well as on a transition and implementation plan to ensure GableStage's readiness to grow as a major regional theater and deliver outstanding public programs year-round in Coconut Grove. AMS is one of the nation's leading arts management firms with a strong track record for helping governments and non-profit organizations plan and successfully execute operational plans for theaters. We will present an update to the Board on this work in conjunction with recommendations to advance the conveyance of the property."

Report to BCC – issued by County Manager, February 22, 2011

Page 1

"Page 5 of the attached "Coconut Grove Playhouse: Recommended Course of Action" memorandum outlines the proposed scope of the capital project for the Playhouse (i.e., a new 300-seat theater on the Playhouse site). This memorandum outlines the steps necessary to initiate this project; it must be emphasized that each of these steps will require significant additional work by staff and Board review and approval (i.e., completion of the due diligence work necessary for the Board's acceptance the conveyance of the property; selection of an architect; design of the building; utilization of capital cost estimates based on the design to ensure that capital funds are sufficient to bid the project; etc.). Recent new, local projects that constructed theaters confirm that the favorable environment for construction may enable us to improve upon this cost estimate (e.g., the recently opened, 14,864 sf Aventura Arts & Culture Center was built for approximately \$7 million or \$470/sf). Preliminary cost estimates for the new 300-seat theater at the Playhouse site were utilized to confirm that a theater project of this size could be accomplished within the \$20 million budget (approximately 36,000 sf at \$545/sf), taking into account design fees, project management costs and construction of a facility specifically designed to house a regional theater (see attached building program for a 300-seat professional theater). Prerequisites for every capital project include: the use of reliable cost estimating services during the design phase; the thorough review of responsible construction bids that are within the project's budget; and the provision of sufficient revenues in the project's contingency fund to address any unforeseen circumstances".

Page 2

"Page 6 of the attached "Coconut Grove Playhouse: Recommended Course of Action" memorandum describes the benefits of developing a management agreement to operate and program the new Playhouse with GableStage, one of our community's most celebrated, successful and financially stable theaters. Pursuant to a management agreement for the theater, GableStage will be responsible for raising the funds to operate and program the new theater; annual County support to GableStage will continue to be solely from the competitive grants programs offered by the Department of Cultural Affairs. Since it came up at the February 7, 2011 Recreation and Cultural Affairs Committee meeting, it should be noted that local governments and non-profit organizations (e.g., GableStage) are exempt from paying property taxes."

Report to BCC – issued by County Manager, October 12, 2010

Pages 6-7

“GableStage and the Future of Theater in Coconut Grove

It is important to note that a public process was conducted in 2009 to identify and select a partner to manage and program the new 300-seat theater proposed for the Playhouse site. GableStage was selected and, pursuant to the terms of a management and operating agreement (see Attachment 3), this distinguished theater company would manage and operate the new Playhouse, providing professional regional theater, complementary performing arts activities and theater education programs for the community. This arrangement offers the following benefits:

- GableStage is one of our community’s most celebrated theater companies. Over the past 12 seasons, GableStage has been nominated for 148 Carbonell Awards and won 38, including either Best Production or Best Musical Production every year since 2004. Producing Artistic Director Joseph Adler has been nominated for 20 Carbonells (13 at GableStage) and has won seven Best Director and two Best Director of a Musical awards. This company has demonstrated its capacity to develop into a major regional theater;
- GableStage continues to exercise strong cultural leadership, regularly giving its entire house to not-for-profit organizations with all ticket proceeds going entirely to these community groups. Among the groups that have benefitted from this policy are the Human Services Coalition (seven times), Family Counseling Services, The Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies and, New World School of the Arts High School Jazz Band, among others. GableStage also has helped to support and nurture some of our community’s most promising young theater companies, including Ground Up and Rising, Mad Cat, Promethean Theatre, Alliance Theatre Project and, State Theatre Project;
- GableStage is currently located in a leased space, generously made available by the Biltmore Hotel. The partnership with the Coconut Grove Playhouse would provide this valued cultural institution with a permanent home in which to grow and to serve our community; In the current economic environment, the most prudent course of action in selecting a theater partner is to work collaboratively with an existing, successful cultural organization rather than creating a new operating company for the Playhouse. GableStage has a strong, long-established track record for financial stability and operational excellence. It has demonstrated the potential to grow and its board of directors is committed to making the necessary transition to Coconut Grove; and
- The selection of GableStage to manage and program the new Playhouse can serve as a catalyst to help GableStage continue to develop and expand its board with civic leaders who are committed to helping this talented company grow and dedicated to establishing a major regional theater in Coconut Grove.

Our Department of Cultural Affairs will work with the board of directors and staff of GableStage to develop a pro forma for the operations and programming of the new Playhouse and on a planning process to ensure that GableStage can build upon its current fundraising success to raise the additional revenue that will be required for the

new Playhouse. In addition, while the capital project is being implemented, the Department of Cultural Affairs will work with GableStage to assess its capacity to assume ownership of the property and contingent upon its readiness, develop a transition plan to transfer the property to this non-profit organization. It is understood by GableStage that County support for the operations and programming of the new Playhouse is available only through the Department of Cultural Affairs' competitive grants programs, which are subject to annual budget appropriations by the Board.

Action Steps: Review the management and operating agreement with GableStage and adapt this document, as necessary, to serve as the operating management agreement between Miami-Dade County and GableStage. Redirect annual grant funding formerly designated for Playhouse programming to GableStage, subject to the annual budget process, and have our Department of Cultural Affairs work with GableStage to: present performing arts activities on the Playhouse site in order to activate this important area of Coconut Grove during the design phase; invest in professional management services to develop an operating pro forma and business plan that will enable it to make the transition from its current facility to the new, 300-seat theater; involve GableStage in providing essential input on the development of that theater; and work to assess and develop a plan to transfer title of the property to GableStage.”

Resolution	Date	Prime Sponsor	Co-Sponsor
R-627-10	June 3, 2010	Carlos A. Gimenez	Sen. Javier D. Souto
COCONUT GROVE PLAYHOUSE RESOLUTION DIRECTING COUNTY MAYOR OR MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO RECOMMEND COURSE OF ACTION FOR RECONSTRUCTION, MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF COCONUT GROVE PLAYHOUSE			

Report to BCC – issued by County Manager, December 22, 2009

Pages 1-2

“An Outstanding Theater Partner is Selected

Earlier this year, the Coconut Grove Playhouse conducted a public process to identify and select a partner to manage and program the proposed, new 300-seat theater planned for the site. A selection was made and negotiations conducted through the late summer and early fall, culminating in a memorandum of understanding entered into by the boards of the Coconut Grove Playhouse and GableStage in November 2009. Pursuant to a long-term agreement that is currently being negotiated, GableStage will manage and operate the theater, providing professional regional theater and theater education programs for the community. This arrangement offers the following benefits:

- GableStage is one of our community’s most celebrated theater companies. Over the past 12 seasons, GableStage has been nominated for 148 Carbonell Awards and won 38, including either Best Production or Best Musical Production every year since 2004. Producing Artistic Director Joseph Adler has been nominated for 20 Carbonells (13 at

GableStage) and has won seven Best Director and two Best Director of a Musical awards. This company has demonstrated its capacity to develop into a major regional theater.

- GableStage is currently located in a leased space, generously made available by the Biltmore Hotel. The partnership with the Coconut Grove Playhouse would provide this valued cultural institution with a permanent home in which to grow and to serve our community.
- In the current economic environment, the most prudent course of action in selecting a theater partner is to work collaboratively with an existing, successful cultural organization rather than creating a new operating company for the Playhouse. GableStage has a strong, long-established track record for financial stability and operational excellence. It has demonstrated the potential to grow and its board of directors is committed to making the necessary transition to Coconut Grove.
- It is anticipated that over time, the relationship between the boards of directors of the Coconut Grove Playhouse and GableStage will evolve, and it is likely there will be a transition that will result in the current board of the Playhouse being succeeded by the board of GableStage. The selection of GableStage to manage and program the new Playhouse can serve as a catalyst to help GableStage continue to develop and expand its board with civic leaders who are committed to helping this talented company grow and dedicated to establishing a major regional theater in Coconut Grove.

The Coconut Grove Playhouse board retains the responsibility of addressing the debt that accumulated before the theater's closing. The Playhouse continues to work closely with creditors in an effort to resolve any remaining issues with the confidence that long-time supporters of the Playhouse will rally to support the recovery plan.

Next Steps

With the selection of GableStage as the theater partner, the Department has entered into planning with GableStage and the Coconut Grove Playhouse to activate, as necessary, the carried-over FY 2007-2008 (\$300,000) and FY 2009-2010 (\$170,000) Major Cultural Institutions grants approved for the Coconut Grove Playhouse. These grant funds would be used for the following purposes:

- ***Theater Will Return to the Grove in 2010 and Beyond.*** A season of theater in Coconut Grove is being planned to begin in early 2010. GableStage will present theater activities on an outdoor stage designed to occupy part of the Playhouse's parking lot. County grant funds will cover costs including staging, programming, marketing and essential infrastructure costs (e.g., insurance, power, etc.). In addition to returning outstanding theater to Coconut Grove, this initiative can play a role in helping with the revitalization of the Coconut Grove business district. The stage will be designed so it can continue to be used until a new Playhouse is completed.
- ***GableStage Will Begin the Transition to a Regional Theater.*** The Playhouse will continue its relationship with AMS Planning & Research to advise, design and create the management and operational plans and instruments required for this next phase

of work. Grant funds will help defray the costs of developing agreements between the Playhouse and GableStage. In addition, the grant funds will be matched by resources from GableStage to help the theater company develop an action plan to transition its programming, fundraising and board to the work of managing the new 300-seat theater."

Citizen's Presentation – by Playhouse Board to BCC December 7, 2009

"Ms. Shelley Spiveck, Chairwoman, Coconut Grove Playhouse Board of Directors, gave a brief update regarding the Coconut Grove Playhouse. She said she was very pleased regarding the partnership between Joe Adler and Gables Stage."