

the G A T E

Summer
2009

REBUILDING THE CORAL GATE WALL

by Mary Andreu

"This is the first and only chance to obtain funds to rebuild the Coral Gate Wall," stated Commissioner Tomás Regalado to Coral Gate board members at a January meeting to outline the steps required to initiate project that will replace our crumbling 60-year-old wall. Since then, your Coral Gate

Steering Committee, led by María Doval, has worked tirelessly with residents and city of Miami staff to "rebuild the wall."

The first step is to obtain permission from the 26 homeowners whose homes abut the existing wall. Most of the easement agreements are in and were signed with great enthusiasm and support for the project. A few neighbors are meeting with city representatives to address their concerns, and one by one, they are signing on to allow construction crews onto their property to build a wall that none of us could afford. Cost for the modular 10-foot wall is estimated at 1.3 to 2.1 million dollars.



Monies for the capital improvement project have been raised through the half-penny transportation tax and tie into 32nd Avenue improvement projects. "It is so rewarding to see our tax dollars at work in our very own backyard," comments María Doval. "We are deeply grateful to Commissioner Regalado and his staff, to Mr. David Méndez and his crew, and to Victoria Méndez, the Miami city attorney who drafted the easement agreements."

David Méndez, Assistant Director for the Department of Capital Improvements

(C.I.P.) is the lead engineer who also built the U.S. 1 wall for Natoma Manor and Bay Heights. His words of advice, "Stay involved. Be proactive. Don't be shy about asking questions." That's why he has availed himself to our residents in various meeting and visits to their homes to address their concerns.

Commissioner Regalado has placed the Coral Gate Wall on the "expedite" list. That means the project moves to the "front of the line" in each city department slated to review it. Mr. Méndez says the city is ironing out details for the design and should be ready to present to Coral Gate residents by the end of June.

Responsibility for general maintenance of the wall...(contd.)

WELCOME TO OUR SUMMER 2009 ISSUE.

The Gate features news, information, personal stories and reminiscences from your neighbors. We hope it will make your life in Coral Gate —one of Miami's best neighborhoods!— a bit easier and more enjoyable. Feel free to send us your comments or suggestions anytime at:

coralgatesec@hotmail.com

Coral Gate Crime Watch Meeting

Be alert, be informed, be part of it.

Day: June 24th

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Coral Gate Park

BE PART OF THE GATE.

Help us improve our historic neighborhood. We need volunteers to help us distribute newsletters or contribute ideas.

TIME TO PAY YOUR HOMEOWNER'S FEE.

Annual homeowners association fee is still **only \$15...** and voluntary!

Please send your check payable to:

Coral Gate Homeowners Association
P. O. Box 450215, Miami, FL 33245

REBUILDING THE WALL... (CONTD.)

...and painting over graffiti will fall to the CGHA. In fact, we are planning to add climbing vines to foil any graffiti opportunists. Major repairs to the wall will be the responsibility of the city of Miami. This was a key issue with the easement agreements, as neither the CGHA nor any homeowner could afford that potential expense.

Finally, once the project is underway, it will follow what Mr. Mendez calls "Train Construction." Beginning at one end, the old wall will be demolished and replaced by the new foundation and concrete panels. A chain-link fence with privacy screen will be added as the old wall comes down and stay up until the new panels are installed. Construction crews won't leave the site until the property is secured for the night.

Robert Valledor and former board member Gloria Xiques initiated the dialog with Commissioner Regalado to get a new Coral Gate Wall onto the city's docket. This project was launched in April 2008 with unanimous approval by the CGHA Board. Since then, we have spent the year building closer ties with neighbors and city of Miami staff as we work together to create something lasting, a new wall for Coral Gate.

and vastly improved the parking garage lighting. They have also filled in the open floor areas within the building to increase the floor size. Miracle Marketplace will contain 250,000 square feet and is being redeveloped by Talisman Cos, which specializes in redeveloping under-performing retail centers and has redeveloped more than 7 million square feet of retail space nationwide. Bally Total Fitness will soon be joined by Bed Bath and Beyond (now open), Marshalls (soon to open), Michaels, Ultra Cosmetics, Petsmart, DSW and Payless Shoe Source and best of all, Nordstrom Rack. Sweet Tomatoes was announced as one of two restaurants.

Soon we'll have a "big box" retail center we can walk to.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CGHA CHAIRPERSON...

Recently, we all received a flyer from The Solid Waste Department. I spoke to Virginia Pérez, the Coral Gate Inspector, who asked me to pass this on to all residents:

1. Inspectors will soon be giving out citations for violations of the City Code for Solid Waste.
2. In Coral Gate some residents are placing their Green Garbage Can before pick up. This should only be done Monday/Thursday nights.
3. Trash pickup is Thursdays. Trash cannot be placed in the swale until the night before.
4. Landscapers that are caring for your lawns must not place the waste in the swales any other day but Wednesday. They can work any day, however they must place waste in garbage bags and give it to the residents, so they can place it out on Wednesday.
5. Recycling Bins should be placed out in the swale on Monday evenings.

Any landscaper seen by an inspector or police officer placing the waste in the non-assigned days will be ARRESTED on the spot by MPD and given a fine as well by Solid Waste Inspectors.

Inspectors have been very flexible, but they've had too many complaints by residents and the City has ordered Inspectors to follow the Code.

The CGHA supports the City of Miami code. We're trying so hard to beautify our neighborhood with trees and it certainly does not look good to have trash around for long periods of time by not following the rules. Please help us by following the rules.

Thanks in advance to all neighbors,
Maria C. Doval, Chair, CGHA Board



MIRACLE MARKETPLACE BY BOB VALLEDOR

As everyone in Coral Gate has seen, the Miracle Marketplace (formerly Miracle Center) is almost finished with their two-year long renovation. If you haven't been by the building lately you should. What they have done is impressive. In addition to opening the building with lots of windows, installing people friendly escalators on the Coral Way side, they have replaced the "downhill ski sloop" with a very car friendly double spiral ramp

MEET YOUR BOARD:

SERGIO BARRERO



We have lived in the Gate since 1997.

I am married and have two sons. I've been a member of the Coral Gate committee since 1998.

I enjoy running, fishing and scouting. I grew up in Miami and attended Coral Gables High, Miami-Dade Community College and FIU.

My favorite things about living in Coral Gate: my neighbor Julie Hood, living near where I grew up, my sons attending the same schools I attended and living in the heart of Miami near the Beaches, Coconut Grove and the Gables.

LET'S WALK ABOUT IT

Coral Gate Ranks High in Walkability

By Mary Andreu

One of the key selling features for me when we bought into Coral Gate was its "walkability." I liked the curving streets, well-maintained sidewalks and numerous streetlights for evening strolls. In fact, I turned down other neighborhoods for being poorly illuminated at night. All this was before we began the fight for barricades to keep out excessive drive-through traffic. Now, Coral Gate is ranked as one of the most "walkable" neighborhoods in the nation.

In fact, Coral Gate achieves a national score of 85% on a web site that has compiled a list of "America's Most Walkable Neighborhoods." WalkScore's top picks are San Francisco at 86%, New York City at 83% and Boston, 79%.

What makes a neighborhood walkable? One of the requirements is "streets built for the right speed with lanes that are narrow or have traffic calming in place." Does that not spell C-O-R-A-L G-A-T-E? Other key features are businesses and residences which are located near each other, with parks, recreation, shopping and dining nearby. Most of these are within a 1-mile radius of Coral Gate, which gives the area its topnotch score. Typing in *Coral Gate, Miami, Florida* at Walkscore.com generates listings of local restaurants, business, schools and shopping.

While this is only a fun real estate marketing tool, it does support why so many of us are enamored with The Gate and its central location. It is also why we have fought so hard to protect our streets and our residential integrity. So, see you around The Gate — walking, that is.



TIPS FOR A SAFE 4TH

Independence Day means summer, barbecues, family get-togethers, fireworks and parties. Unfortunately, July 4th also ranks as our nation's deadliest holiday. According to the most recent data from the National Safety Council, July 4, 2005 was the most lethal holiday on record. Alcohol played a big role but firework injuries were also to

blame. In 2004 alone, fireworks caused \$21 million in property damage. But it doesn't have to be that way if we all take some simple precautions and follow some simple safety tips:

- Before using any firecrackers, make sure they are legal in our city
- Never let young children handle fireworks (*almost half of all injuries are to children under age 15*)

- Adults must supervise older children
- Always light fireworks outdoors away from people, houses or pets
- Light only one firecracker at a time and always keep your distance
- Never light up firecrackers inside containers
- Soak any duds with plenty of water and discard

Source: National Safety Council
Website: www.nsc.org

