

BILTMORE II CONDOMINIUM MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Volume 13 Issue 1

October 2020

BILTMORE II CONDO

600 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

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HOW TO REACH US

- Manager** .. manager@biltmore2.com
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- Concierge/Front Door**.. 305-443-7914
- Concierge**.. Concierge@biltmore2.com
- Maintenance**.....
- Maintenance@biltmore2.com

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday..... 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.



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MANAGER'S CORNER OCCUPANCY REGULATIONS

Dear residents,

It is important that all residents are registered with the Association Management office. As per the Association Rules & Regulations, any guests occupying a unit for more than 30 days are required to be registered, with two possible 30-day extensions which can be granted by the Manager. If any of such guests are expected to exceed the maximum period of 90 days, they shall become permanent residents and as such, must submit all personal and pertinent information for processing and review by Admissions Panel.



During the COVID-19 pandemic the pool is open to residents ONLY. Anyone in the pool who is not registered as a resident, will be subject to a fine.

Rules & Regulations can be found on the residential website, and we suggest that you review them from time to time. We also have a "forms" section on the website from where you can print forms to fill out and submit to the office.

If you have any questions regarding the registration of a permanent guest, please contact the office.

Thank you,

Vivian Medina,
Property Manager

CARAGE EXHAUST FAN REPAIR

Our maintenance staff (Ovadis Cruz and Rene De La Vega) just completed a complex repair to the large exhaust fan in the Northeast corner of the basement garage. This is one of four exhaust fans serving each quadrant of the garage. These essential building elements work continuously to remove vehicle exhaust fumes and humidity. All fans and their large enclosures were repaired 2 years ago. For some reason, the fan enclosure in the northeast section rusted significantly since then and needed attention. Ovadis and Rene removed the rusted hood and began a several-day process to grind off the rust and apply phosphoric acid to neutralize any remaining corrosion so the lost metal parts could be filled with fiberglass. Then two coats of aluminum paint were applied. The next step was to enter the fan enclosure to perform a similar procedure on the rusted frame that supports the fan, motor, and hood. Metal gaps were filled with polyester resin, and the entire enclosure frame was coated with a primer and two coats of hammered paint, which is a special rust inhibitor that gives a hammered look. Once the fan was re-installed, the hood was placed back on top. It is up and running again and now with a new treatment to resist corrosion. If this were done by a contractor, most likely it would involve fabricating a new hood the cost costing more than \$3,000 instead of only the cost of materials. Not a simple task to perform in 90-degree heat and humidity!

*Submitted by
Bob Petzinger & Eduardo Mustelier Sanchez*



NOV. 3 VOTE RUBIN YOUNG

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Punch #57

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NEWSLETTER CONTINUES IN DIGITAL FORMAT

Coastal Group Publications, our newsletter supplier, continues to provide our newsletters in digital format only. They will be providing a limited number of printed copies, in black and white, which will be placed in the lobby and mailroom. We will continue to distribute the newsletter via email blast and post it on our website.

AN ARCHITECT AND A LAWYER TEAM UP

By June Frost

THE ARCHITECT

Jose Gelabert-Navia grew up surrounded by the world of architecture, and it's easy to believe it must be in his DNA. His parents were well known architects in Cuba, and today many of the residential, commercial and government buildings they built still exist. Jose and his family left Cuba in 1961 and after living many years in Puerto Rico and Venezuela, finally settled in Miami in 1981.

He remembers that wherever his parents established residence, they created their own architecture firm from zero and were successful. Thus, the thread of architecture was always present in his growing up years.

Fifty-six years after he left, Jose went back to Cuba to see the buildings on the island including those his parents had built. Instead of using a camera to capture every wrinkle, he made pen and ink drawings of the structures. Havana is a rich colonial city. "When I was there, I wasn't looking for disrepair...to me, I looked at the things as they were." Speaking metaphorically, he likened it to looking at a woman you can tell must have been a beauty in her heyday.

After the trip Jose compiled about 100 of his architectural drawings into a book. It is a souvenir of his trip which he opted to share. The drawings symbolize the original architectural beauty of the buildings he sketched. On December 14, 2019 at Books and Books in Coral Gables he gave a slide lecture and presented his work titled: *Cuba: Memories of Travel/Recuerdos de Viaje*.

In 1977 Jose graduated from Cornell with a Bachelor of Architecture and a Master of Fine Arts. He practiced in the small architecture firm his parents had set up in Miami. In 1981 Jose joined the faculty of the School of Architecture at the University of Miami (UM) where he has been teaching for forty years. His courses have focused on architectural design and the architectural history of colonialism and



The Greater Accra Regional Hospital at Ridge, Accra, Ghana

globalization. Today he teaches two courses on world and contemporary architecture.

In the years when Jose was Dean of the UM School of Architecture, he founded the School's Rome Program whereby students in their fourth year spend a semester in Rome. He said, "I set up a program which is still running in Rome to teach the students the history, literature and Italian cinema, so that they had some knowledge of the culture." And he also taught the course.

Jose not only teaches, he also practices. In 1996 Perkins and Will asked Jose to start an office in Miami. He says, "They asked me to extend their practice to Latin America and open up offices in Brazil and Mexico." The scope of their projects was extended to Peru, Chile, Colombia, Puerto Rico and beyond.

Perkins and Will is the 2nd largest architectural firm in the country with 2800 architects and 28 offices all over the world. It's a global firm, and Jose mostly manages projects in Latin America. But he is especially pleased with the project he managed when the Government of Ghana needed a brand new hospital in Accra.

Jose was in charge of a team of eight from Perkins and Will. "This is one of the projects that I am proudest of...the thing is that Accra is a city of 4 million people, and the hospital is dedicated to women and children, because infant mortality is the largest problem in Ghana."

Designing the hospital took a lot of creative thinking in order to deal with the region's unique challenges and technological capacity. For example, to compensate for regular power outages, they did not rely on electric elevators, rather covered

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An Architect and a Lawyer Team Up *(cont. from page 3)*

outdoor ramps from floor to floor were installed. They made use of mother nature for shading, natural ventilation, rainwater harvesting, solar heat, etc. And they used traditional Ghanaian building materials like concrete, wood and steel and a palette of bold colors that reflect the local culture.

Says Jose, “I really feel that after this hospital was built, life in Accra has been better. We follow a blog from people in Accra and if you just see the people talking about the hospital, you realize things have gotten better. Infant mortality has decreased dramatically, too, so that to me, those things are more important than the architecture.”

Next on the agenda is another hospital. “Right now, we are doing the best oncology hospital in all of Latin America in Bogota, Colombia.”

THE LAWYER

Mel Rea Maguire and Jose met on a blind date orchestrated by friends and married in 1992 in Coral Gables where they have lived ever since.

Says Mel, “I moved every 18 months of my growing up years primarily along the East Coast, because my father was a military officer in the U.S. Coast Guard.” In the end, she chose Florida for her higher education, her career and her married life.

When she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from The University of Florida, Mel went to Tallahassee to work in Governor Bob Graham’s administration. She is former Secretary of the Florida Department of Commerce and former Assistant Secretary for the Florida Economic Development and Tourism Divisions. Her experience working in government has served her well throughout her career.

Eventually she obtained a Juris Doctor with honors from The Florida State University College of Law and started her legal career in Miami first with Holland & Knight and later with Steel Hector & Davis, both global law firms. Mel has been a corporate lawyer for 22 years with a focus on financial institutions, international trade, economic development, corporate finance and government relations.

Her resume doesn’t stop there. She also has experience in academia. “The main thing about my career,” Mel says, “is that I have worked in a manner that is very flexible in business, law, government and community.”

In the field of academia, Mel was Associate Dean for External Affairs at UM’s School of Business Administration. She was on the business side of the School in charge of marketing, development and community outreach.

At Florida International University College of Business her title was Executive Director Management Development. In both business



Jose and Mel in our Lobby

schools her work meant she was involved in development/fund raising, development of educational programs and contracts/relationships with universities in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Since she began her career, Mel has served on numerous boards of universities and non-profit organizations not only in Miami but also in Tallahassee, Washington, D.C. and Boston. She says, “All of my work on boards has something in common in that I am working for the betterment of Florida citizens.”

Today Mel runs a business advisory firm called REA International. “I work with foreign corporations that are coming here to set up their U.S. operations.” And she has the ability to call on the deep and wide relationships she has cultivated all these years in so many fields of work.

Jose and Mel have lived in Biltmore II for five years. Their daughter Caroline, son-in-law Sage and grandson Navian live in California.



Family Thanksgiving trip to Lisbon, Portugal 2019. L-R Son-in-law Sage Noh, grandson Navian Noh, daughter Caroline Gelabert-Noh, Mel and Jose

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TRAFFIC CALMING

The City of Coral Gables is working with Miami-Dade County to calm traffic (e.g. reduce speed) throughout Coral Gables. This project is divided into 5 geographic zones (1, 2, 3, 4 and 5). For details go to the City's website for the traffic calming project – <https://cocg-multimodal-transportation-cggis.hub.arcgis.com/>. Biltmore Way residents were omitted from the public information session for residents of Zone 2, so the City agreed to hold a separate teleconference for them – even though traffic calming on Biltmore Way is not part of the City's traffic calming multi-zone project but is part of the separate Biltmore Way Streetscape project. The make-up session for Biltmore Way residents occurred on September 16, 2020. Even though the information does not apply to Biltmore Way, it does impact residential streets nearby, so this is offered as general information for Biltmore II residents.

3 traffic calming measures are planned for residential streets: Speed Tables, Speed Cushions, and Traffic Circles. 19 such installations are currently planned for Zone 2 (exclusive of Biltmore Way). Speed Tables are street width ramps with cement borders and base with brick pavers covering the ramps and "table" top. They were recently installed near Biltmore II on Aragon Ave., off Segovia. See picture below:



Speed Cushions are two separate rubber-like ramps, one for each direction, that allow wide emergence vehicles to pass over them without jarring or slowing them as some emergency vehicles have a wider wheelbase. The picture below is on Biltmore Drive that

connects Blue Road to Riviera Dr:



Traffic Circles – only larger circles are being planned now as the many mini-circles on residential street intersections have caused a variety of problems for larger vehicles. Mini-traffic circles will no longer be implemented. Traffic circles have reduced speed significantly.

These traffic calming measures are only implemented IF 50% of the residents most directly impacted vote via paper ballot to approve them. For Traffic Tables and Traffic Cushions, the ballots go only to residents on the street block where the device will be installed. For Traffic Circles, ballots are sent only to the 4 corner residential properties that face the intersection where the traffic circle will be placed. The City will install the devices even if the vote is 50% but not a majority.

Robert Petzinger

TREASURER'S REPORT

(Financial Month of August 2020)

Collections: Regarding the collection of maintenance fees, we have only one owner with a late maintenance payment this month.

Income/Expense: The month of August shows a budget surplus of \$ 558.46 and a year-to-date deficit of \$(4001.73). We continue working with our Manager and our Maintenance Supervisor to control maintenance supply expenses that have increased due to the current pandemic situation.

Funding: The funds available in our operating accounts are \$370,310.00 at the end of August.

As for Reserves, we have \$ 2,789,579.16 of funds available at the end of August, which seems appropriate to cover the expected projects in 2020.

Amadeo Molinos – Treasurer



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WAS YOUR CLAIM DENIED OR UNDERPAID?

BILTMORE WAY STREETSCAPE

This project is part of the City of Coral Gables "Complete Streets" initiative. It is project managed by the City's Public Works department and encompasses a complete redesign of the 4-block long Biltmore Way corridor that includes a residential section (the 2-blocks from Anderson Road to the Segovia circle that includes Biltmore II and several multi-family residential condominiums) and a commercial section (the 2-blocks from the Segovia Circle to LeJeune Road). The project was introduced to the public on March 19, 2019 at the War Memorial Youth Center. Biltmore II had 19 residents in attendance, the most of any group.

An information session just for Biltmore II residents was scheduled for December 2019 at Biltmore II with the Public Works project management staff but was cancelled by the City

Manager a few days before the session. The reason for the cancellation was the Coral Gables Commission decision made at that time to cancel dedicated bike lanes (on Alhambra Circle from Coral Way to San Amaro Drive) due to intense anti-bike lane resident reaction. Since dedicated bike lanes were part of the City's plan for Biltmore Way, the City Manager felt it necessary to re-focus the Biltmore Way Streetscape project before engaging in further public information sessions. That design review has been underway since then.

Streetscape planning is managed by the City's Planning Director, Ramon Trias. He advises that the City is trying to "refocus this effort ... as a result of past public input". This is a reference to the opposition to dedicated bike lanes. He goes on to state "at this point our plan is to schedule a public workshop when it is safe to hold such meetings". All residents

will be notified by the City and by the Association when such a meeting is scheduled.

Following the March 2019 introductory workshop, City staff was reminded of the 5 priorities put forward by the Biltmore II residents who attended that session. The priorities are 1) calm traffic, 2) make pedestrian street crossing safer, 3) beautify the corridor perhaps with a center median of beautiful trees, 4) provide shade trees in the sidewalks to provide sun protection for pedestrians, and 5) minimize reduction in on-street parking spaces in the 2-block residential section. To date the Biltmore II Board of Directors has not taken a formal position on the Streetscape project. This may change once the City releases its proposed design model.

Robert Petzinger

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