

Council tackles agenda

■ The council has had trouble getting a quorum recently, but it had one Tuesday and it got a lot done.

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Tuesday's Westchester Community Council meeting — the first in two months — made it through a full agenda and brought two long-standing issues to a close.

In one case, it was good news for members of the Little Gables Homeowners Association. The council denied dentist Pablo Fonseca's request to develop a dental office at 1300 SW 42nd Ave.

The council had deferred the request to give the two sides a shot at a compromise.

But Fonseca held fast to his plan for a medical office, which residents said would bring more traffic into the area and would fill the neighborhood swales with cars that couldn't find parking at the proposed office.

Karen Shane, the president of the association, says they were also worried about setting a precedent.

"When you allow one property to be rezoned, it becomes a spiral," Shane said.

Little Gables is less than a square mile and is surrounded on three sides by Coral Gables and on one side by Miami.

Association member OzziRodriguez says the group has been fighting to keep the neighborhood free of commercial property for 20 years.

"We have a lot of incredible people who live in our neighborhood," said Rodriguez. "We make things happen."

But at the meeting, they had some additional help from Margaret Pass, the

• TURN TO MEETING, 50

Development issues discussed

• MEETING, FROM 4

Building and Zoning Director for Coral Gables, Pass told the council that Little Gables had requested annexation by the Gables, and she said no zoning changes can take place to turn residential property into a commercial site since Little Gables is going through the annexation process.

Pass says if the area is annexed into Coral Gables, Little Gables will remain a primarily residential area.

"[Coral Gables] doesn't allow any commercial activity in residential areas," Pass said.

But this wasn't the main reason for the council's decision.

"I would support an application with no medical or dental," said council member Jesus Rodriguez before they voted 3-1 to deny Fonseca's request.

After a two-year wait, a new shopping plaza, complete with a drug store, sports store, Wendy's and Rey's Pizza, will be added on the northwest corner of Bird Drive and Southwest 147th

Avenue.

The developer had originally submitted plans to have a storage facility on the property, but ditched that idea after residents protested.

Residents at Tuesday's meeting were worried because the developer had proposed the Rey's Pizza stay open 24 hours. But Santiago Echemendia, the lawyer for the developer, said there would be no 24-hour operation businesses in the new plaza.

The pizza place's hours of operation will match those of the Wendy's: 6 a.m. to midnight Monday through Friday, and 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. Friday through Sunday.

"We've been [at council meetings] for an entire year," Echemendia said. "We've really addressed all of the concerns."

Council member Jose Blanco was impressed by the camaraderie between the developer and the residents. "I live in the area, and I want to congratulate the developer [for taking the time to speak with the neighbors]," Blanco said.

**LITTLE GABLES
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

305 448-1864 Phone or E-mail: lgneighbor@aol.com

B.O.L.O. NOTICE

(BE ON THE LOOK OUT)

Tuesday, March 2, 2004

Officer Paul M. Hernandez from the Miami-Dade Police Department has notified us of three residential burglaries in our neighborhood. These burglaries occurred between Monday, February 23 and Tuesday, February 24, 2004 between the hours of 9:30 and 11:30 A.M. The subjects are older between 40+ years of age, short and slim. They could be wearing a baseball cap and working in teams of three. The suspects may be driving a green or bluish green four door smaller domestic vehicle, 1990-1995. They could be staking out the area on bicycle. OR possibly a grey Astro Van.

Call 911 if you see a burglary in progress.

Call 305 4 POLICE (476-5423) Non-emergency

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NOTIFICACION

El departamento de la policia de Miami-Dade reporto tres robos residenciales en la vecindad de Little Gables. Estos robos ocurrieron entre el lunes 23 de febrero y el martes 24 de febrero de 2004 entre las horas de 9:30 a.m. a 11:30 a.m. Los sujetos son mayores entre 40 y mas anos de edad, bajos en estatura y delgados. Pueden tener puestos una gorra de beisbol. Es posible que trabajan en grupos de tres y pueden estar manejando un carro pequeno domestico de color verde o azul de cuatro puertas del ano 1990-1995. Tambien pueden estar vigilando el area en bicicleta.

Si usted ve un crimen en progreso llame al: 9 1 1

Si usted ve estos sospechosos o nota algo que este pasando en su cuadra, llame al : 305 4 P O L I C E o 305-476-5423.

Usted puede ser la diferencia en su vecindad.