

From: [Charles Burkett](#)
To: ["Figueras, Tere - Miami"](#); ["Hood, Micaela - Miami"](#)
Subject: RE: Letter to the editor
Date: Thursday, November 20, 2008 5:27:00 PM

Tere,

I will try to trim and resend shortly.

Thank you

Charles

From: Figueras, Tere - Miami [mailto:TFigueras@miamiherald.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2008 10:15 PM
To: Hood, Micaela - Miami
Cc: Charles Burkett
Subject: RE: Letter to the editor

Mr. Burkett,

Thanks for your submission. We will try to get it in to an upcoming edition of Neighbors - however, it's likely that we will have to trim a bit of your letter. We generally ask that submissions to Soapbox are 350 words or less. Your letter is more than 600 words. I realize this is a complicated issue of great importance to your community, so perhaps it would be best if you take the trimming on yourself. (The 350-word rule is a guideline; depending on space we can sometimes go into the 400-word range.)

Please feel free to call or email me. My contact information is below.

Regards,

Tere Figueras Negrete
Neighbors Editor, Miami Herald
1 Herald Plaza
Miami, FL 33132

Phone: 305-376-3556

Fax: 305-376-5287

-----Original Message-----

From: Hood, Micaela - Miami
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2008 8:18 PM
To: Figueras, Tere - Miami
Subject: FW: Letter to the editor

-----Original Message-----

From: Charles Burkett [mailto:Charles@burkettcompanies.com]
Sent: Wed 11/19/2008 12:47 PM
To: Hood, Micaela - Miami
Cc:
Subject: Letter to the editor

Dear Editor,

Now with the election and one subsequent Commission meeting behind us, I would like to outline what I believe to be the most sensible and responsible way to proceed with our COMMUNITY CENTER project.

Passions have been very high, tempers have been lost, money has been wasted and confusion has been compounded on this subject, but I am now further reassured that we need a reasonable, manageable and affordable plan for going forward.

I would propose the following seven steps given that we were told at our last Commission meeting that we have \$6.7 million in funds available.

1) The Town immediately cuts expenses and increases efficiencies (reduces its budget) by 7.5% and saves approximately \$750K per year.

2) We build the pool as planned and reduce the building size so the project comes in at no more than \$5M. Given that the project's cost downsizing requires us to forego the LEED certification which would have kept annual cooling and operating costs significantly lower, we reposition the building to the southern portion of the lot which is permanently in the shade from the shadow of the 12 story building to the south. This perma-shade location keeps the significantly all glass building much cooler, provides panoramic views to the east, north and west and keeps operating costs way down.

By relocating the building into the southern perma-shaded area of the lot, the benefits for the pool deck are unrestricted flows of Ocean breezes, unobstructed views including sunrises and sunsets to the east and west, and more sunshine on the pool deck until much later in the afternoons. The final bonus for the relocation of the building is that we would not be contributing to the wall of mostly 12-story buildings that block Surfside's amazing Ocean breezes and views that all should be able to enjoy!

3) We set aside an additional \$1M for unforeseen contingencies. This should not have to be utilized, but I believe it is a responsible step to insure a “stop free” project once it begins.

4) We, at least temporarily, have to set aside all other proposed "wish list" projects in order to fund, start and finish the Community Center. This includes the idea to buy a waterfront home and lot on Bay Drive and 95th Street with approximately \$1.7M of our savings to expand the park. Hopefully, with the future revenue savings possible from the “fire switch” many of our wish-list items can be quickly revisited.

5) The center is built over the next year and a half during which about \$1M is accumulated as a result of our cost cuts and added to the \$1.7M remaining in our savings account.

6) This gives the Town a reasonable safety cushion of \$2.7M for unforeseen emergencies.

7) The center opens, resident’s taxes are not raised and there is no need for a bond issue.

I’m hopeful that our other elected officials recognize that our residents want their pool back ASAP and I’m convinced there’s not much debate about that.

With respect to the building, we need to provide what we can afford and that’s probably the bathrooms, lockers, gym, and café located on the first floor, along with a large high ceiling, all windowed, hardwood floored, multipurpose second floor. A second floor that can be used for parties, banquets, community meetings, voting, daily adult and children’s programs, and whatever else you can do with 7K to 10K square feet of wide opened air-conditioned, floor to ceiling windowed space, that has incredible views!

Surfside Commissioners, enough planning and debating - it's time to get this project done!

Charles W. Burkett

Charles W. Burkett, IV
President
The Burkett Companies
801 Alton Road, Suite 2
Miami Beach, FL 33139

305-534-8711 Direct
305-673-2075 Fax

www.burkettcompanies.com

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