

To: Miami Marines

We have a busy two weeks coming up as the Virginia Key Master Plan-which will effect planning for the Marine Stadium-will be presented for City Approval.

City of Miami Planning Advisory Board-June 17, at 7:00 PM; Miami City Hall, 3500 Convention Center Drive

Miami City Commission: June 25, Miami City Hall (meeting starts at 9:00 AM; no time certain has yet been given)

The Master Plan for the 1,000 acre tract of Virginia Key has been under development by the planning firm EDSA for the last several years. In a first draft, the Marine Stadium was not in the Master Plan. We are pleased that it is now included-but this is a "concept" plan only and does not mean that the Stadium will be restored.

We urge you to attend these meetings and demonstrate support for the Marine Stadium. You don't have to speak, but your presence is important, especially at the Commission meeting.

The Specific Issue: Historic Designation and Miami Marine Stadium

In October of 2008, the City Administration and Friends of Marine Stadium recommended historic designation of the Marine Stadium to the City's Historic Environmental and Protection Board (HEPB). HEPB subsequently approved historic designation of the Marine Stadium-and the designation of the basin and and a "cone" of land 100 feet east and west of the Stadium to Rickenbacker Causeway. The Administration then appealed the basin and land designation. This appeal has not yet been heard by the City Commission and directly effects the proposed Master Plan.

We now believe that the HEPB's recommendations should prevail over the City's appeal for the following reasons:

**Historic Tax Credits:** If the basin and surrounding properties are not designated, the Marine Stadium may be unable to place historic tax credits-which could finance as much as \$4-5 million of restoration costs.

The Marine Stadium Basin was constructed at the same time as the Marine Stadium and was part of the initial overall plan. We have been told by important sources that lack of inclusion of the Basin could very well jeopardize being placed on the Federal Historic Register, which is necessary in order to participate in the historic tax credit program.

**Programming at the Marine Stadium:** The EDSA Master Plan proposes new boat slips to the West of the Marine Stadium. These boat slips would make it impossible to do certain programming at the Marine

Stadium (sculling races and power boat races). The Preservation Planning Studio of the University of Miami developed a plan whereby boat slips could be added-*outside* of the basin. This would enable the City to meet its objectives without jeopardizing the basin. This proposed marina solution was reviewed and evaluated by various marine industry members and established operators.

**Compatible Historic Preservation Design Review:** New construction can be accommodated on the site- but it should be compatible and sympathetic to the Marine Stadium. HEPB review and approval of all proposals within the designated area can assure that the City gets the best and most compatible designs. Because this is public land owned by the taxpayers, we believe this extra level of scrutiny is fully warranted.

#### The Larger Issue: The Size and Scope of the Master Plan

The Master Plan was presented at a public forum on May 20 and to the Waterfront Advisory Board on June 9. The Waterfront Advisory Board rejected the plan on a unanimous vote. The main criticism that has been voiced about the plan to date is that there is too much development programmed for the site. We invite you to make your own decision. Take a look at the Master Plan at the website

<http://www.virginiakeymasterplan.com/>

You can see some critical commentary of the plan on the blog of the Urban Environment League

<http://urbanenvironmentleague.blogspot.com/>

#### Conclusion

This is a key time for us as we seek to make sure that our government and elected officials understand that a restored Marine Stadium should be an integral part of the Master Plan for Virginia Key. Please attend the meetings if you can to show support of the Marine Stadium. If you can't make it, you can write the Mayor and City Commission at

[http://www.miamigov.com/City\\_Officials/](http://www.miamigov.com/City_Officials/)

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Friends of Marine Stadium

[www.marinestadium.org](http://www.marinestadium.org)