



June 13, 2008

To: Mayor Bower, Commissioners and City Manager  
1700 Convention Center Drive  
Miami Beach, FL 33139  
From: Ray Breslin, President, CPNA

As a longtime member of the Collins Park Cultural Oversight Committee, I am aware of many things regarding the Cultural Campus that you may or may not know. I'd like to bring you up to speed. When we first reviewed the Collins Park plan, it included renovating the Rotunda into a small performance space. Once the old library was removed, it became evident that the \$500,000 allocated for this project was inadequate. The cost would likely to be more than 1.4 million dollars. The City Manager's office said this amount was not in the park budget. The committee, after much discussion, voted to allocate the Park's \$500,000 to the Little Stage Theater because that would be enough money to replace the non-functioning A/C unit and bring the building up to an acceptable standard for use by the many smaller theater groups serving our community and residents. The Rotunda was to be sealed and protected for future use when funds might become available. It would have been a win for all. I was fortunate enough to have seen many performances at the "Little Stage" before it closed and miss this intimate venue.

Recently, the City put out an RFP for the Carl Fisher Clubhouse that is attached to the "Little Stage". It certainly would have been the ideal time to include the Theater with the Clubhouse, but that didn't happen. SoBe Music Institute was chosen to continue their program at the Carl Fisher Clubhouse by the RFP selection committee and we certainly hope you will approve their suggestion when it comes before the Commission at the next meeting.

At the CANDO meeting on June 10<sup>th</sup>, we found out that part of the RFP for the Carl Fisher Clubhouse included adding ADA compliant bathrooms at a cost of \$150,000. However, no consideration was given to reopening the Little Stage Theater, something the CANDO committee had asked for. I believe there are already ADA compliant bathrooms in the theater and the \$150,000 that is being spent to add them to the Carl Fisher could have been used for the combined property and reopen the "Little Stage" not to mention the \$500,000 the Oversight Committee generously gave up to open this theater. Do we know what happened to that money?

In closing, the Collins Park Neighborhood Association would like to pledge \$1000 toward getting the "Little Stage Theater" opened and returned to our community. It is a small token of our commitment. Now, it's up to you. You can make it happen. Yes, we have to tighten our belts but we can be effective when we do it. This is a perfect solution until the more grandiose RDA plan can be funded. Thank you for any help you can give to get this project moving on the right track.

Sincerely,  
Ray Breslin for the Board

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