

# MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS AND PUBLIC TRUST



In Re: Patricia Keon

C 20-44-11

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## PUBLIC REPORT AND FINAL ORDER

Complainant Maria Cruz (Cruz), a resident, filed this complaint against Coral Gables Commissioner Patricia Keon (Keon), alleging that Keon engaged in unethical conduct by the following actions: being a strong advocate for developers by pushing Commission items that benefit developers; engaging in discussions with a city consultant and city staff; and attending a Planning and Zoning Board meeting where her presence influenced the discussions at said meeting. Cruz alleges that Keon has a pattern of showing up to board meetings and giving opinions which are beneficial to developers.

Legal sufficiency exists where the complaint adequately alleges a violation of an ordinance within the jurisdiction of the Ethics Commission, committed by an individual within the authority of the Ethics Commission and filed with the Ethics Commission within three years of the alleged violation.

This complaint fails to allege any act in violation of the County Ethics Code. The City's Zoning Code amendments/re-write is a matter of concern to the citizens of the City of Coral Gables. A public official is expected to address matters of public concern and the fact that her comments contradict or oppose the views of her constituents is not enough to constitute a violation of the County Ethics Code.

Keon appeared at a Planning and Zoning board meeting where the board discussed impending zoning ordinance amendments. Keon was asked by the Chair to make some remarks. Keon explained the history of the zoning code changes and the basis for the current zoning ordinance amendments. While this Commission does not recommend such action, a public official's expression of views from the *dais* or before another city board on a matter of public concern, does not violate the County Ethics Code. See INQ 2020-104.

Finally, a public official's discussions with a city-retained consultant and city staff is not a violation of the County Ethics Code.

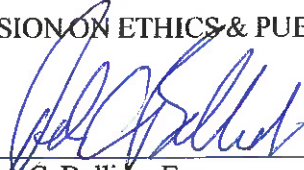
On December 9, 2020, the Ethics Commission dismissed the complaint for lack of legal sufficiency. Wherefore it is:

**ORDERED AND ADJUDGED** that COMPLAINT C20-44-11 against Respondent Keon is hereby dismissed.

**DONE AND ORDERED** by the Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics & Public Trust in public session at the virtual meeting held on December 9, 2020.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMISSION ON ETHICS & PUBLIC TRUST

By:

  
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Nelson C. Bellido, Esq.  
Chair

Signed: 12-21-2020