

by Kara Bogasky

Although only a few of the originally large crowd was there to see it at the end of the five hour long meeting, the South Miami commissioners voted yes to the first hearing of ordinance 26, addressing retail and outlet shops in the downtown area, moving it to a second hearing.

The ordinance was drafted by manager heil.

“There was concern that the introduction of discount retail operation businesses in the hometown district would affect the integrity of the district itself, that the viability of the downtown district.” said heil.

Due to the high scale reputation the downtown has built, the mayor, Philip Stoddard, said he is “concerned that we could wind up taking shops down scale, at least in the short term.”

The final decision will largely impact the Federal Realty Investment Trust, Grass River Property and The Comras Company, who are the proud new owners of the Shops at Sunset Place.

The same three partners teamed up to buy the CocoWalk shopping center in Coconut Grove earlier this year, leaving them in control of the two of the biggest retail destinations in the area, according to the South Florida Business Journal.

At the meeting, George Spillis, principle at Grass River property and new co-owner of the shops at Sunset Place, said, “We commit to you that we, as a partnership, are here to work with the city and the staff to redevelop the shops at sunset place.”

Michael Comras, CEO of the Comras Company, was originally involved in the initial process of what became sunset place.

“It’s not something that I’m proud of, but it’s something that I’m proud of to have the opportunity to come back and make right.” said Comras.