



To: Miriam S. Ramos; William Ortiz

From: Craig E. Leen, City Attorney for the City of Coral Gables

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "CL", is written over a horizontal line.

RE: Legal Opinion Regarding Turtle Case

Date: September 29, 2016

---

I have spoken with the City Manager and reviewed the matter. The resident is holding the turtle in trust for the City on the property until the City park is opened nearby, at which time the turtle will be moved to the park and owned by the City. This was a condition the City asked for when the park was purchased. It is my understanding that the surrounding neighborhood is supportive of this as well, as the turtle is a beloved part of Coral Gables history in that area. It serves a public purpose for the resident to hold the turtle during this time, and it is on a temporary basis approved by the City, so would be permissible under Chapter 62 as well. In such circumstances, the citation should be dismissed, as the City has asked the resident to hold the turtle for a public purpose until the park is ready.

This opinion is issued pursuant to section 2-201(e)(1) and (8) of the City Code, as well as section 2-702 of the Zoning Code.

**From:** [Leen, Craig](#)  
**To:** [Paulk, Enga](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Turtle Case  
**Date:** Thursday, September 29, 2016 4:42:57 PM

---

Please publish.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** <[cleen@coralgables.com](mailto:cleen@coralgables.com)>  
**Date:** September 29, 2016 at 4:00:50 PM EDT  
**To:** Miriam Ramos <[mramos@coralgables.com](mailto:mramos@coralgables.com)>, <[wortiz@coralgables.com](mailto:wortiz@coralgables.com)>, <[csuarez@coralgables.com](mailto:csuarez@coralgables.com)>, <[sthrockmorton@coralgables.com](mailto:sthrockmorton@coralgables.com)>  
**Cc:** Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark <[cswanson@coralgables.com](mailto:cswanson@coralgables.com)>, <[piglesias@coralgables.com](mailto:piglesias@coralgables.com)>  
**Subject:** Turtle Case

Miriam and Will,

I have spoken with the City Manager and reviewed the matter. The resident is holding the turtle in trust for the City on the property until the City park is opened nearby, at which time the turtle will be moved to the park and owned by the City. This was a condition the City asked for when the park was purchased. It is my understanding that the surrounding neighborhood is supportive of this as well, as the turtle is a beloved part of Coral Gables history in that area. It serves a public purpose for the resident to hold the turtle during this time, and it is on a temporary basis approved by the City, so would be permissible under Chapter 62 as well. In such circumstances, the citation should be dismissed, as the City has asked the resident to hold the turtle for a public purpose until the park is ready. This opinion is issued pursuant to section 2-201(e)(1) and (8) of the City Code, as well as section 2-702 of the Zoning Code.

Craig E. Leen  
City Attorney  
Sent from my iPhone