

1 CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
2 LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA)/  
3 PLANNING & ZONING BOARD MEETING  
4 VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT  
5 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026, COMMENCING AT 6:03 P.M.

6 Board Members Present at Commission Chamber:

- 7 Robert Behar, Chairman
- 8 Felix Pardo
- 9 Alex Bucelo
- 10 Nestor Menendez
- 11 Ignacio Alvarez
- 12 Gonzalo Sanabria

13 City Staff and Consultants.

- 14 Jill Menendez, Administrative Assistant/Board Secretary
- 15 Craig Collier, Special Counsel
- 16 Craig Southern, Planning Official
- 17 Jennifer Garcia, City Planner
- 18 Arceli Redila, Zoning Administrator
- 19 Gengqian Grace Chen, Principal Planner

20 Also Participating:

- 21 David Fournier

1

1 MR. SOUTHERN: Thank you, Mr. Collier.

2 If we could please have the PowerPoint  
3 presentation brought up. Thank you.

4 All right. The first item tonight is a  
5 text amendment. It's for a site development or  
6 it's a -- let me go ahead and start over here  
7 real quick.

8 It's basically -- we did a detailed  
9 analysis of multiple single-story bungalow  
10 duplexes within the Code, as you can see on the  
11 map here, and we just did a detailed analysis,  
12 and we found a couple of inconsistencies, and  
13 the one text amendment that we are proposing  
14 tonight is for Section A-36, Crafts Section.

15 Could we please go to the next slide?  
16 Unfortunately, I don't have the clicker here.  
17 Thank you.

18 So if you take a look at the slide up  
19 above, you'll see, these are all of the  
20 one-story duplex sections that are currently  
21 within the site specific section of the  
22 Appendix A of our Zoning Code. These are the  
23 sections that we took a look at. Three of  
24 them, we found actually had an inconsistency  
25 with what was developed there now.

3

1 THEREUPON:

2 \* \* \* \* \*

3 MR. COLLIER: Item E-2, an Ordinance of the  
4 City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida,  
5 providing for a text amendment to the City of  
6 Coral Gables Official Zoning Code by amending  
7 Appendix A, "Site Specific Zoning Regulations  
8 Section," to amend Section A-36, "Crafts  
9 Section" to modify building height standards  
10 for bungalow-type duplexes by removing the  
11 one-story limitation and providing that the  
12 maximum building height shall be consistent  
13 with the underlying zoning district; providing  
14 for repealer provision, severability clause,  
15 codification, and providing for an effective  
16 date.

17 Did we swear in witnesses?

18 MR. BEHAR: We did, yeah.

19 MR. COLLIER: We did, okay.

20 MR. BEHAR: We only had one.

21 MR. COLLIER: Okay. I just want to make  
22 sure.

23 Item E-2, public hearing.

24 The other Craig, I believe, is at the  
25 podium.

2

1 You'll see, briefly, A-36, the Crafts  
2 Section, we found that there was actually a  
3 two-story structure that was constructed in  
4 1981 that exceeded -- thank you. I appreciate  
5 it -- that exceeded the one story limit.  
6 Section or Site Specific Section A-79, Riviera  
7 Part 2, coincidentally, back in 2003, an  
8 ordinance was passed and it -- we actually  
9 amended the Code there. If I remember  
10 correctly, I think it's called -- Bahamas  
11 Village is there now, on the corner of Loreto  
12 and Riviera. So it's multi-story condos. So  
13 those are, obviously, no longer relevant, as  
14 well, either. And, then, the third section  
15 that we found was, A-28 Coral Bay Subsection D.  
16 It references one block, Block 28, two lots,  
17 and those are actually not existent.

18 So what we're doing, we just -- we're  
19 trying to clean up the Code. We're just trying  
20 to clean components up, and that's -- that's  
21 what this exercise has been about.

22 Let me go back here real quick. I'm sorry,  
23 let me see if we can pull this up. For some  
24 reason, our pointer is not working correctly.

25 All right. Well, if you take a look in the

4

1 Staff report, you'll see that there's a map.  
2 That's what I was trying to pull up, a map of  
3 the actual Section, A-36, the Crafts Section.  
4 Basically what we did in our analysis is, like  
5 I stated, we had found that there's actually  
6 two lots right now that have a multi-family  
7 development, that's currently two stories, and  
8 it's not consistent with the current site  
9 specific of one story.

10 To the north side of the street there,  
11 we've got Coral Bay -- sorry, Coral Gables  
12 District Court. We've got a bakery, we've got  
13 a cafe, which are within the MX1 and MX3 zoning  
14 districts. Over on the east side, along the  
15 Ponce de Leon corridor, we have dental offices,  
16 fitness center, kitchen and bath retail stores.  
17 Over on the west side, we have San Sebastian  
18 Apartments, to the west, and, then, to the  
19 south, we have single-family.

20 So what we're trying to do is, basically  
21 just be consistent with the Code.

22 I don't know why our PowerPoint is not  
23 working. Let me see if that will -- I don't  
24 know why this -- IT assistance.

25 Can everybody read this or no? They

5

1 probably can't.

2 All right. So, simplistically, this is  
3 what the proposed text amendment, it's that  
4 what we have right here, for Section A-36,  
5 Crafts Section, height of buildings, you'll see  
6 the crossed out section, we want to be  
7 consistent with the underlying Zoning District,  
8 which is Multi-Family, MF1, which is currently  
9 25 feet, if you're abutting any single-family  
10 district, and if you're not abutting  
11 single-family, MF1 has a maximum height of 30  
12 feet.

13 So the thing is, within this area, with the  
14 surrounding context of the neighborhood, given  
15 the list of -- you know, the cardinal  
16 directions, Staff feels that since we found a  
17 development that was built in 1981, we're going  
18 to just try to clean this up and just be  
19 consistent with the zoning district.

20 So I'm sorry that we've had a couple of  
21 problems here with the PowerPoint tonight, but  
22 if you have any questions, Staff is here to  
23 discuss.

24 MR. BEHAR: I mean, if any Board has a  
25 question now, or if they're going to wait for

6

1 Board discussion?

2 MR. SANABRIA: I have a question.

3 MR. BEHAR: Go ahead.

4 MR. SANABRIA: Craig, I see on the Crafts  
5 Section graphic that you posted --

6 MR. SOUTHERN: Yes.

7 MR. SANABRIA: -- I see, on San Sebastian  
8 and University Drive, a triangle shaped  
9 property that is under the green color of the  
10 proposed change.

11 MR. SOUTHERN: And that's the area that has  
12 that two-story structure.

13 MR. SANABRIA: Right. And I see, on the  
14 south side of San Sebastian and Salzedo, the  
15 single-family residences --

16 MR. SOUTHERN: That's correct.

17 MR. SANABRIA: -- in yellow. However, if  
18 you go eastward, parallel to the south side of  
19 San Sebastian, you see a yellow of  
20 single-family. It's not consistently drawn.  
21 In other words, it's an irregular looking kind  
22 of drawing, if you ask me. I don't see a  
23 consistency of this.

24 What was the reasoning for not including  
25 the north side of San Sebastian and Salzedo?

7

1 MR. SOUTHERN: Those are single-family.

2 MR. BEHAR: While you do that, can you put  
3 it up on the screen, what he's talking about?

4 MR. SOUTHERN: Yeah. That's what I'm  
5 having a problem doing.

6 MR. SANABRIA: Sure, that makes sense.  
7 Yeah.

8 MR. SOUTHERN: We're having a problem with  
9 the PowerPoint. For some reason, it's  
10 skipping --

11 MR. BEHAR: Can we get support to help out  
12 here?

13 MR. SOUTHERN: IT -- yeah, that one right  
14 there.

15 MR. SANABRIA: Well, why don't you point to  
16 it? You just had it. Put it back. There it  
17 is.

18 MR. PARDO: Don't touch it.

19 MR. SOUTHERN: Can you guys see that?

20 MR. SANABRIA: Yes.

21 MR. SOUTHERN: Okay. Okay.

22 MR. SANABRIA: I was referring to the  
23 triangle in green.

24 MR. SOUTHERN: Right.

25 MR. SANABRIA: And, then, it being out of

8

1 kilter, in a way, of the yellow going eastward  
2 on San --

3 MR. SOUTHERN: But that is actually -- that  
4 is not a part of that specific section. So  
5 that's single-family zoning, and that's  
6 actually not within those lots and within that  
7 section of the Crafts Section.

8 We're specifically looking at the bungalow  
9 duplex type. These are single-family. So this  
10 is specifically Lots 1 through 4 of Block 38,  
11 and Lots 1 through 11 of Block 39. That's all  
12 we're looking at, and these are the only ones  
13 that actually had that one story height  
14 limitation, that would tie to the ones that you  
15 see identified here.

16 MR. SANABRIA: Those ones in yellow are not  
17 duplexes?

18 MR. SOUTHERN: No. Those are  
19 single-family. So they're already able to go  
20 to a two-story maximum height.

21 MR. SANABRIA: Okay.

22 MR. SOUTHERN: So that's all we're trying  
23 to do, is just be consistent. At the same  
24 time, the single-family can already go to two  
25 stories, and that's what we want to allow, is

1 have defined, but we've never had bungalows  
2 defined, in a historical component,  
3 architectural component, on within our Zoning  
4 Code.

5 So I've looked into potentially what would  
6 be a general definition, and it's anywhere  
7 between one, one and a half, and two stories is  
8 what -- and I think I even scribbled it down  
9 here --

10 MR. PARDO: Anyway, there's a perfect  
11 example on Madrid of a bungalow and the  
12 bungalow that's there, it's one story.

13 My question is, when you get to protections  
14 of different types of zoning, when you are  
15 abutting or next to certain zonings, you are  
16 not allowed to go high rise.

17 MR. SOUTHERN: Right. Correct.

18 MR. PARDO: Okay. What is -- what is the  
19 protection with the property immediately to the  
20 north of us, which is now the courthouse today,  
21 as far as this change? Does it manipulate,  
22 change, alter any types of protection, because  
23 I'm looking --

24 MR. SOUTHERN: No.

25 MR. PARDO: -- at the green, but I'm

1 to have the --

2 MR. SANABRIA: Okay. I'm satisfied with  
3 that answer.

4 MR. BEHAR: Okay. Go ahead, Mr. --

5 MR. PARDO: I've got a couple of questions.  
6 Can you put that back up, please? Can you  
7 put the exhibit back up, please? There we go.

8 MR. SOUTHERN: There we go. Thank you.

9 MR. PARDO: So just so I understand,  
10 bungalows are basically one story cottages,  
11 that's the bungalow, right?

12 MR. SOUTHERN: We don't have a definition  
13 of bungalow in our Code, and we actually --

14 MR. PARDO: But we have bungalows  
15 throughout the house -- throughout the entire  
16 City, on Madrid -- I mean, you name them,  
17 you'll see them. They're documented in your  
18 Historical Department.

19 MR. SOUTHERN: If I may --

20 MR. PARDO: No, go ahead.

21 MR. SOUTHERN: I just want to say that we  
22 had, within this analysis, meetings with Ana  
23 and Kara in Historic and also the City  
24 Architect, Juan Riesgo, about, hey, do we have  
25 any -- and I know that we have cottages that we

1 concerned for the people in yellow, which are  
2 the single-family homes.

3 MR. SOUTHERN: Right. Right, and that's  
4 already in the MF zoning district. It already  
5 indicates that if you're abutting a  
6 single-family, you can only go to the exact  
7 same height of that single-family --

8 MR. PARDO: 45 feet.

9 MR. SOUTHERN: -- 25, for single-family.

10 MR. PARDO: No. No.

11 MR. SOUTHERN: Now, going to the Coral  
12 Gables Courthouse, that's 45.

13 MR. PARDO: For example, on Le Jeune, where  
14 you do have duplexes, and then you have a  
15 certain distance, I think it's --

16 MR. BEHAR: A hundred feet.

17 MR. PARDO: -- a hundred feet, and then you  
18 cannot go beyond 45.

19 MR. BEHAR: 45.

20 MR. PARDO: So I just want to make sure,  
21 very clear, that you're still protecting the  
22 single-family homes that are abutting from the  
23 back on that.

24 MR. SOUTHERN: We are. We are.

25 MR. PARDO: And the other thing is that,

1 the triangular parcel that is there, can this  
2 be developed into anything else but  
3 single-family?

4 MR. SOUTHERN: No. So it's Multi-Family 1.

5 MR. PARDO: Multi-Family, yeah.

6 MR. SOUTHERN: So that's what -- this whole  
7 area that's identified in green here.

8 MR. PARDO: Right.

9 MR. SOUTHERN: And that's all MF1  
10 currently.

11 MR. PARDO: Right, because the triangular  
12 parcel is very truncated, based on the --

13 MR. SOUTHERN: It is already at a  
14 two-story, so that's the maximum height they  
15 can go at, and we tried to do some research.  
16 We found it was constructed in 1981, but that's  
17 why -- we want to kind of get rid of some of  
18 these inconsistencies. It's a very minor one,  
19 and that's really what this is.

20 MR. BEHAR: And no matter what, you're  
21 keeping it 25 feet which is consistent with the  
22 single-family.

23 MR. SOUTHERN: Correct, since it's  
24 abutting, yeah.

25 MR. PARDO: And my last comment is that,

13

1 MR. SOUTHERN: That's it. That's all we're  
2 doing.

3 MR. PARDO: Those are all of my questions.

4 MR. BEHAR: Thank you.

5 What I'm going to do now is, I'm going to  
6 open it up to the public comments in the  
7 Chamber.

8 Jill, do we have anybody in the Chamber?

9 THE SECRETARY: Yes. We have one person  
10 that signed up for this item, David Fournier.

11 MR. BEHAR: David, come up, please. You  
12 were not sworn in.

13 MR. FOURNIER: No, I was not.

14 MR. BEHAR: Come up forward, please.

15 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)

16 MR. BEHAR: Take the microphone, and state  
17 your name and address, please.

18 MR. FOURNIER: Good evening. My name is  
19 David Fournier, 128 San Sebastian.

20 The reason why I came and why I signed is  
21 because, that was -- I couldn't understand the  
22 project, so I'm a little bit -- like you, I was  
23 a little bit lost. So I really want to  
24 understand. We are talking about two stories?

25 MR. SOUTHERN: Yes. That's correct.

15

1 for me, any type of alteration of Appendix A is  
2 always alarming, to me. I understand what  
3 you're doing here.

4 MR. SOUTHERN: Right.

5 MR. PARDO: But Appendix A was put in for a  
6 very specific reason, for very specific  
7 restrictions on specific lots.

8 MR. SOUTHERN: Right. Right.

9 MR. PARDO: So I am concerned about that,  
10 making sure that, for example, frontages that  
11 are called out in specific properties, like the  
12 triangular parcel, they will tell you that the  
13 frontage to the particular structure faces this  
14 street or that street. None of that has being  
15 changed, correct?

16 MR. SOUTHERN: No. No, none of that. The  
17 only thing that's being -- if we could go to  
18 the next -- the only thing that's being altered  
19 at all is this right here, the language.

20 MR. PARDO: Okay.

21 MR. SOUTHERN: We're crossing out one  
22 story, and we're just putting with a maximum  
23 building height, consistent with the underlying  
24 zoning district.

25 MR. PARDO: And nowhere else in the City?

14

1 MR. BEHAR: Yes. The way it's going to be  
2 changed is only limited to two-story, 25-feet,  
3 the same way as the single-family behind it.

4 MR. FOURNIER: Exactly.

5 MR. BEHAR: That's the limitation. You  
6 can't do any more than that.

7 MR. FOURNIER: Perfect. And the triangle?

8 MR. SOUTHERN: The same.

9 MR. BEHAR: The same thing. That whole --

10 MR. SOUTHERN: It's all the same.

11 MR. COLLIER: Craig, it would be better if  
12 you're going to be testifying to be at the  
13 microphone.

14 MR. SOUTHERN: Forgive me.

15 Yes, that's correct.

16 MR. FOURNIER: Okay. So that's why I came,  
17 because I couldn't understand. I didn't  
18 know -- usually, when they come, they want to  
19 put high rise and everything. So, basically,  
20 what you want to do, you want to clean up and  
21 come with a nice process?

22 MR. SOUTHERN: Correct. Correct.

23 Well, no. I mean, there's existing  
24 multi-family there now. So like I said  
25 earlier, we found two other inconsistent

16

1 sections in the site specifics; one that had  
2 already been cleaned up or had an ordinance  
3 associated with it back in 2003, and another  
4 that had a block and lot that didn't even  
5 exist.

6 So that's all we're doing is, we're going  
7 through the Code right now, just trying to  
8 clean up some sections. What we found is,  
9 1981, a two-story multi-family structure was  
10 built in that triangular area. So now it kind  
11 of makes that -- this site specific somewhat  
12 inconsistent. So we're just trying to bring it  
13 in with the existing zoning district. That's  
14 all.

15 MR. BEHAR: But just for your information,  
16 it's going to be limited to two-story, 25 feet,  
17 that's it, nothing more.

18 MR. MENENDEZ: Well, just to clear that up,  
19 through the Chairman, you mentioned 25 to 30  
20 feet. What was the --

21 MR. SOUTHERN: So in the MF1 zoning  
22 district, if you're not abutting --

23 MR. BEHAR: A single-family --

24 MR. SOUTHERN: -- a single-family, then --

25 MR. BEHAR: But in this case, you're

17

1 MR. PARDO: And by way, just for  
2 clarification and so you understand -- so just  
3 for clarification, when the cottage ordinance  
4 was written to be able to promote new cottages,  
5 it was defined, et cetera. They did research,  
6 and then they wrote it and crafted it around  
7 that. And then the cottages is probably  
8 another example, very, very different type of  
9 animal, but I would leave it up to Historic to  
10 be able to do it.

11 And cottages, by the way, are everywhere,  
12 in California, here, everywhere, and they have  
13 very specific characteristics and they do  
14 exist.

15 MR. SOUTHERN: So if that's the direction  
16 of the Board, we can work with the City  
17 Architect and, you know, the Historic  
18 Preservation to come up with a definition.

19 MR. MENENDEZ: Again, I only bring it up  
20 because it's a term that was -- is used.

21 MR. BEHAR: But I think it's a good idea.  
22 It will be good to have something.

23 So with no time limit for you to do it, but  
24 look into it and come back to us.

25 MR. MENENDEZ: Thank you.

19

1 abutting single-family. You can't go any more  
2 than 25.

3 MR. MENENDEZ: And one more question. You  
4 mentioned to my colleague that bungalow isn't  
5 defined in the Code.

6 MR. SOUTHERN: That's correct.

7 MR. MENENDEZ: Should we define it?

8 MR. SOUTHERN: If that is the direction --

9 MR. BEHAR: That's for another time.

10 MR. MENENDEZ: Would it be prudent to? I  
11 mean, he's stating that there are -- there are  
12 examples of bungalows in Coral Gables.

13 MR. PARDO: On the corner of Milan and  
14 Madrid there is a perfect classic example of  
15 one of the few bungalows.

16 MR. BEHAR: And I think the Board will  
17 instruct you to do that, look into it --

18 MR. SOUTHERN: Okay.

19 MR. BEHAR: -- and come back at some point  
20 with a definition.

21 MR. MENENDEZ: I'm just saying, because,  
22 you know, it's a term apparently that is used.

23 MR. SOUTHERN: It is, yeah.

24 MR. MENENDEZ: And so I think it should be  
25 defined.

18

1 MR. ALVAREZ: So do we have to vote on  
2 something to tell him to do it?

3 MR. SOUTHERN: No.

4 MR. BEHAR: I think this is -- you know  
5 what the intent of the Board, the wish of the  
6 Board, so you could do it at some point.

7 MR. SOUTHERN: We can bring it back, yeah.

8 MR. BEHAR: Thank you.

9 Jill, anybody else in Chambers?

10 THE SECRETARY: No.

11 MR. BEHAR: Anybody on Zoom?

12 THE SECRETARY: No.

13 MR. BEHAR: Anybody on the phone?

14 THE SECRETARY: No.

15 MR. BEHAR: So then we're going to close  
16 the public comments and we're going to bring it  
17 back to the Board.

18 Mr. Sanabria, do you want to start Board  
19 discussions, if any?

20 MR. SANABRIA: I have no comments right  
21 now.

22 MR. BEHAR: Okay. Alex?

23 MR. BUCELO: I think this clarifies the  
24 Code. I'm in favor of Staff recommendation.

25 MR. BEHAR: Ignacio?

20

1 MR. ALVAREZ: No comments.  
 2 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Pardo?  
 3 MR. PARDO: The only thing is, I hope it  
 4 doesn't just turn out into another row  
 5 townhouse type of effect from one side of the  
 6 street to the other. Sometimes they're kind of  
 7 monotonous.  
 8 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Menendez.  
 9 MR. MENENDEZ: No comments. Clarification  
 10 is good.  
 11 MR. BEHAR: Okay. Do we have a motion?  
 12 I have no comments. I'm perfectly fine  
 13 with it.  
 14 Do we have a motion?  
 15 MR. BUCELO: I'll move.  
 16 MR. MENENDEZ: I'll second.  
 17 MR. BEHAR: Jill -- and a second. We have  
 18 a motion and a second.  
 19 THE SECRETARY: Nestor Menendez?  
 20 MR. MENENDEZ: Yes.  
 21 THE SECRETARY: Felix Pardo?  
 22 MR. PARDO: Yes.  
 23 THE SECRETARY: Gonzalo Sanabria?  
 24 MR. SANABRIA: Yes.  
 25 THE SECRETARY: Ignacio Alvarez?

1 MR. ALVAREZ: Yes.  
 2 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?  
 3 MR. BEHAR: Yes.  
 4 \* \* \* \* \*  
 5 (Thereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05  
 6 p.m.)  
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1 C E R T I F I C A T E  
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 3 STATE OF FLORIDA:  
 4 SS.  
 5 COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE:  
 6  
 7  
 8  
 9 I, NIEVES SANCHEZ, Court Reporter, and a Notary  
 10 Public for the State of Florida at Large, do hereby  
 11 certify that I was authorized to and did  
 12 stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and  
 13 that the transcript is a true and complete record of my  
 14 stenographic notes.  
 15  
 16 DATED this 13th day of February, 2026.  
 17  
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 19   
 20 -----NIEVES SANCHEZ-----  
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