

**City of Coral Gables**  
**Local Planning Agency (LPA)/Planning and Zoning Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday, October 19, 2011, 6:01 p.m.**  
**Coral Gables City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida**

MEMBERS	D9	J12	F9	M9	A27	M11	J8	J22	O12	O19	APPOINTMENT
	'10	'11	'11	'11	'11	'11	'11	'11	'11	'11	
<b>Eibi Aizenstat - Chair</b>	C	C	P	C	P	C	P	P	P	P	City Manager Patrick Salerno
<b>Robert Behar</b>	C	C	P	C	P	C	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Rafael Cabrera, Jr.
<b>Jeffrey Flanagan - Vice Chair</b>	C	C	P	C	P	C	P	P	P	E	Commissioner Maria Anderson
<b>Julio Grabiell</b>	-	-	-	-	-	C	P	P	P	P	Mayor Jim Cason
<b>Pat Keon</b>	C	C	P	C	P	C	P	P	E	P	Planning and Zoning Board
<b>Vince Lago</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	Commissioner Frank C. Quesada
<b>Javier Salman</b>	C	C	P	C	P	C	P	P	P	E	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.

**P = Present**  
**E = Excused**  
**C = Meeting Cancelled**

**City Staff and Consultants:**

Eric Riel, Jr., Planning Director  
 Scot Bolyard, Principal Planner  
 Jill Menendez, Administrative Assistant  
 Craig E. Leen, City Attorney  
 Dona Spain, Historical Resources Director  
 Cynthia Birdsill, Economic Sustainability Director  
 Jane Tompkins, Development Services Director

**Court Reporter:**

Joan Bailey

**Also present:** Patrick G. Salerno, City Manager

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CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA)/  
PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING  
VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT  
CORAL GABLES CITY HALL  
405 BILTMORE WAY, COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2011, COMMENCING AT 6:01 P.M.

Board Members Present:

- Eibi Aizenstat, Chairman
- Robert Behar
- Julio Grabiell
- Pat Keon
- Vincent Lago

City Staff and Consultants:

- Eric Riel, Jr., Planning Director
- Craig E. Leen, City Attorney
- Scot Bolyard, Planner
- Jill Menendez, Administrative Assistant
- Dona Spain, Historic Preservation Officer
- Cynthia Birdsill, Economic Sustainability Director
- Jane Tompkins, Development Services Director
- Patrick G. Salerno, City Manager

Also Present:


- Laura Russo, Esq.

Excerpts of Planning & Zoning Board Meeting Minutes held on Oct. 19, 2011.

1 Is there a provision that will encourage that  
 2 interaction, as opposed to them, you know,  
 3 sealing off the windows or making them blank  
 4 walls, so as you walk down the street, what you  
 5 have is wall after wall after wall, as opposed  
 6 to that experience of --  
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Glass.  
 8 MS. KEON: -- you know, being able to see  
 9 or -- It is animation. So how do we protect  
 10 the animation and allow for offices to be  
 11 there?  
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Eric, is there  
 13 anything in our Building Code?  
 14 MR. RIEL: There's nothing in the Code that  
 15 prevents someone from closing off, you know,  
 16 visually, a window. We don't have provisions  
 17 that deal with that.  
 18 MS. KEON: No.  
 19 MR. RIEL: We just don't.  
 20 MS. KEON: Right.  
 21 MR. RIEL: We did discuss this at the time  
 22 we did discuss the update of the sign code, in  
 23 terms of coverage of windows, but there's no --  
 24 MS. KEON: There isn't, and I think that's  
 25 really a very -- I mean, not directed at that

1 MR. BEHAR: So I'd like --  
 2 MS. KEON: Okay, then, I have no problem  
 3 with it, as long as you -- as long as you  
 4 will --  
 5 MR. BEHAR: Any others?  
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any others? No other  
 7 discussion?  
 8 MR. BEHAR: I would make an amendment to my  
 9 motion or make a motion that we accept with the  
 10 condition that the Staff looks into a --  
 11 MR. RIEL: Let's do a separate motion.  
 12 Don't mix these issues up.  
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, agreed.  
 14 MR. BEHAR: Then I make a motion to  
 15 approve.  
 16 MR. GRABIEL: Second.  
 17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: First and second. Any  
 18 discussion?  
 19 Call the roll, please.  
 20 MS. MENENDEZ: Pat Keon?  
 21 MS. KEON: Yes.  
 22 MS. MENENDEZ: Vince Lago?  
 23 MR. LAGO: Yes.  
 24 MS. MENENDEZ: Robert Behar?  
 25 MR. BEHAR: Yes.

1 particular merchant, but I think it's a shame  
 2 that that has happened in that place.  
 3 MR. BEHAR: You're right, but that's  
 4 typically happened on a retail space --  
 5 MS. KEON: Right.  
 6 MR. BEHAR: -- where they need blank walls.  
 7 MS. KEON: Right.  
 8 MR. BEHAR: You know, they do it. In an  
 9 office, where you want -- The reason we do it  
 10 is to bring the natural light in, I don't want  
 11 to close it off. So --  
 12 MS. KEON: But is there verbiage that you  
 13 can -- you know, you can put in here that  
 14 preserves the, you know, animation?  
 15 MR. RIEL: That's certainly something we  
 16 can do, but I -- you know, we would need to do  
 17 that analysis. I would not suggest that you  
 18 put it as part of this.  
 19 MS. KEON: Okay. All right, then, I would  
 20 ask that you would do that.  
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: But we can suggest or  
 22 the Board can ask for you to look into that.  
 23 MR. RIEL: We can certainly look at that.  
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: All right, we can do  
 25 that.

1 MS. MENENDEZ: Julio Grabiell?  
 2 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.  
 3 MS. MENENDEZ: Eibi Aizenstat?  
 4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.  
 5 MS. KEON: Okay, so, at this point, can we  
 6 make a request in how --  
 7 MR. RIEL: Basically, you were asking Staff  
 8 to look at the coverage of windows.  
 9 MS. KEON: We would like to look at --  
 10 MR. RIEL: Coverage.  
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: On the ground floor.  
 12 MR. RIEL: Ground floor coverage.  
 13 MS. KEON: On the ground floor, that  
 14 preserves the animation.  
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And the interaction  
 16 between the street --  
 17 MS. KEON: Okay, thank you.  
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you   
 19 The next item is an Ordinance of the City  
 20 Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, providing  
 21 for a text amendment to the City of Coral  
 22 Gables Official Zoning Code, Article 4, "Zoning  
 23 Districts," Division 2, "Overlay and Special  
 24 Purposes" -- "Special Purpose Districts,"  
 25 Section 4-201, "Mixed Use District," amending

1 the residential unit density for MXD projects;  
2 and providing for severability, repealer,  
3 codification, and an effective date.

4 Eric?

5 MR. RIEL: Again, I just have a very brief  
6 PowerPoint, and Scot, maybe -- because it will  
7 probably be easier to see.

8 This is an amendment to remove the  
9 residential density limitation in the north and  
10 south industrial mixed use district, as well as  
11 the CBD. We're not proposing any change in the  
12 performance standards in terms of the floor  
13 area ratio, the permitted building height, and  
14 the setbacks.

15 Basically, what this is, is to remove --  
16 Right now, there's a density limitation of 125  
17 units an acre in the mixed use district, which  
18 is shown up on the screen. And we're also  
19 suggesting that the density limitations be  
20 lifted, as well, in the CBD, and again, this is  
21 for mixed use projects only, that will come  
22 through this Board for review, as well as the  
23 City Commission, and this was basically an  
24 issue that was discussed as a part of the  
25 Zoning Code rewrite, as well as the

1 Comprehensive Plan, and let me just go to --

2 As a part of the Zoning Code text  
3 amendment -- and this kind of goes through a  
4 time line. On the previous or the archived  
5 Zoning Code, the City regulated by floor area  
6 ratio, floors, height, which is basically feet,  
7 residential density, and parking, which is kind  
8 of a silent regulator.

9 As a part of the rewrite of the Code, what  
10 we did is, we removed the floor limitation, and  
11 that was specifically done to allow -- because  
12 the floor-to-floor height was much less, to  
13 allow the opportunity to provide additional  
14 residential, and encouraged it in the mixed use  
15 areas, as well as the Central Business  
16 District.

17 The result of this request here would  
18 remove the residential density limitation, so  
19 basically there would be the regulation on the  
20 FAR, the height in feet, and then parking.  
21 There's no -- again, no increase in height.  
22 This does not increase the mass or bulk of the  
23 building. It's basically going to a form-based  
24 Code. And again, this is the Zoning Code  
25 amendment, kind of the time line from the

1 archived Code to the current Code.

2 As a part of the Comp Plan changes which we  
3 just adopted in 2010, we did the same thing.  
4 We removed the floor limitation, which was in  
5 actually each of the categories, and actually,  
6 when we did the Code rewrite at that time, we  
7 removed the density, the maximum density  
8 limitation in the mixed use area, as well.

9 So, if you look at kind of both of these  
10 charts, and I'll go back, basically where we're  
11 landing on both the Zoning Code and the  
12 Comprehensive Plan is consistent regulating by  
13 FAR, the height, and then, you know, the  
14 silent -- you know, parking generator.

15 So Staff did a lot of research in terms of  
16 other communities, and you'll see in the  
17 report, across the United States a lot of  
18 communities are removing their residential  
19 density limitations near the core of downtown.  
20 Tampa, for example, has had that in existence  
21 for some time, San Francisco, and also there's  
22 other cities out west, as well as in the east.

23 Again, this is basically a form-based Code,  
24 and there was actually a provision or objective  
25 put in the Comprehensive Plan that kind of

1 forecasted that. Obviously, we want to try to  
2 encourage residential in the CBD area, as well  
3 as the mixed use area, the reason being because  
4 we have the trolley, successful trolley, as  
5 well as the Metrorail, which has regional  
6 transportation connections.

7 So Staff recommends approval of this. We  
8 wholeheartedly support this, and we hope -- and  
9 I forgot to mention, also, there is a minimum  
10 size of 575 square feet per unit, which has  
11 been in the Code for some time. So this will  
12 allow the flexibility of, you know, encouraging  
13 residential in the downtown, as well as the  
14 mixed use areas. It's just another provision,  
15 again, to try to meet, you know, the market  
16 demands and the flexibility of the development  
17 community, to, again, encourage residential,  
18 which is something we've been striving for in  
19 the downtown for a number of years.

20 MR. GRABIEL: I think anything that we can  
21 do to add more residential in the core area is  
22 laudable, and I support it.

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Any other comments?

24 MS. KEON: I just have a question about the  
25 parking, and I know we talked about this.

1 What -- what is the parking requirement now per  
 2 unit? Is it one, one and a half?  
 3 MR. BEHAR: 1.75 space per unit for a  
 4 one --  
 5 MS. KEON: What is it?  
 6 MR. BEHAR: 1.75 for one or two bedroom,  
 7 two parking spaces for a three bedroom  
 8 apartment.  
 9 MS. KEON: Okay, so when you have a studio,  
 10 what's that?  
 11 MR. BEHAR: 1.75 per --  
 12 MS. KEON: It's still 1.75?  
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: It doesn't change.  
 14 MS. KEON: I just want to make sure that  
 15 that's --  
 16 MR. BEHAR: I think this is a great idea.  
 17 Like Julio was saying, this is a wonderful  
 18 idea. I think it's --  
 19 MS. KEON: It is a wonderful idea. I just  
 20 don't want to eliminate the parking. Right.  
 21 MR. BEHAR: This is how you -- you know,  
 22 you encourage and improve quality of life, when  
 23 you have, you know, density, more density, in  
 24 the Central Business District and the mixed  
 25 uses. I totally support it and --

1 MS. KEON: But you can also require the  
 2 smaller the unit -- and you can have more units  
 3 in a building because they're smaller, and I  
 4 don't have a problem with that, but you're  
 5 going to increase, then, the number of parking  
 6 places that are required, which is fine.  
 7 MR. BEHAR: But you still have to contain  
 8 it within your project.  
 9 MS. KEON: That's right. No, I don't have  
 10 a --  
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Within your project,  
 12 and it's not very viable to go ahead and do  
 13 that many.  
 14 MS. KEON: No, all I just want to make sure  
 15 that the parking isn't --  
 16 MR. BEHAR: You know, there's a big  
 17 tendency nationally to reduce the size of the  
 18 unit. You know, we do a lot of multi-family  
 19 residential projects, and the tendency is to  
 20 reduce it. You know, this really doesn't  
 21 affect -- because the 575 is still the minimum.  
 22 MS. KEON: Right.  
 23 MR. BEHAR: You know, what it will do is  
 24 allow, you know, the flexibility to have a  
 25 little bit more. We're not talking that you

1 can fit, you know, twice as many more, because  
 2 you're given --  
 3 MS. KEON: No, I understand that, right,  
 4 but the parking remains -- I just want to make  
 5 sure the parking remains the same.  
 6 MR. RIEL: No, there's no change in  
 7 parking.  
 8 MS. KEON: Okay.  
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: There's no changes  
 10 anywhere else?  
 11 MR. RIEL: No other performance standards.  
 12 MS. KEON: That's fine.  
 13 MR. RIEL: The only change is this --  
 14 MR. BEHAR: I'll --  
 15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Before you do that,  
 16 any input from the public? Seeing as there's  
 17 none, let's close.  
 18 Any other discussion? Is there a motion?  
 19 MR. BEHAR: I'll make a motion to approve.  
 20 MR. LAGO: Second the motion.  
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Second the motion.  
 22 Any discussion? No?  
 23 Call the roll, please.  
 24 MS. MENENDEZ: Vince Lago?  
 25 MR. LAGO: Yes.

1 MS. MENENDEZ: Robert Behar?  
 2 MR. BEHAR: Yes.  
 3 MS. MENENDEZ: Julio Grabiell?  
 4 MR. GRABIEL: Yes.  
 5 MS. MENENDEZ: Pat Keon?  
 6 MS. KEON: Yes.  
 7 MS. MENENDEZ: Eibi Aizenstat?  
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.  
 9 MR. BEHAR: Are we adjourned?  
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Seeing that there's no  
 11 other items -- Any new business or anything,  
 12 Eric?  
 13 MR. RIEL: No, nothing else. Thank you.  
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Then we're adjourned.  
 15 MR. BEHAR: Thank you.  
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.  
 17 MR. LAGO: Thank you.  
 18 (Thereupon, the meeting was adjourned at  
 19 7:18 p.m.)  
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