

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item E-5**  
**October 14, 2025**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**  
**Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson**  
**Commissioner Melissa Castro**  
**Commissioner Ariel Fernandez**  
**Commissioner Richard D. Lara**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez**  
**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**  
**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**  
**Planning and Zoning Director, Jennifer Garcia**

**Public Speaker(s)**

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Agenda Item E-5 [Start: 11:34 a.m.]

An Ordinance of the City Commission amending Article 16, "Definitions," City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, by amending the definition of freeboard to modify minimum and maximum freeboard requirements within special flood hazard areas; amending Section 2-101, "Single-family residential (SFR) District, "Subsection (b), "Height," to incorporate required freeboard and floodplain management standards for residences in flood hazard areas; and adding garage floor elevation standards that align with flood-resistant construction requirements; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and an effective date. (09 17 25 PZB recommended approval, Vote 6-0)

Mayor Lago: Moving on to E-5.

City Attorney Suarez: E-5 is an ordinance of the City Commission amending Article 16 definition, City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code by amending the definition of freeboard to modify minimum and maximum freeboard requirements within special flood hazard areas, amending

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Section 2-101, Single Family Residential District, subsection B, height to incorporate required freeboard and floodplain management standards for residences and flood hazard areas and adding garage floor elevation standards that align with flood resistant construction requirements, providing for repeated provisions, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date.

Planning and Zoning Director: So, as you may know, Jennifer Garcia, Planning and Zoning Director, we do have a blanket allowance for freeboard. Freeboard is that space between the finish, sorry, not finish floor, the base flood elevation of a property, your grade, and where your first floor can start. So, we allow three feet maximum throughout the entire city, whether you're on Mahi Canal or whether you're along Key Biscayne, it's the same. So, what's proposed for you today is that if you are in an AE and VE flood zone, which are the more vulnerable parts of our city, for FEMA, you are allowed to have five feet maximum. And that's mostly, there's a map contained in the staff report, that's mostly contained east of Old Cutler. And that's it.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the mayor?

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, Commissioners, the AE and VE flood zones are wave zones. So, what happens is you have a splash component when the wave hits the wall. And so that's what the freeboard is there to contain so it doesn't get to the finish floor. But this adds, in VE, an AE zone, and an additional two feet for a building without encroaching on the overall height of the structure to further protect these homes in that wave zone.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Excellent.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, do you have any public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: No, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: All right, I'll entertain a motion.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll move it.

Commissioner Fernandez: Second.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lara: Yes.

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Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes. Thank you.