



City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
August 26, 2025

ITEM TITLE:

Ordinance on First Reading. Zoning Code Text Amendment.

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for text amendments to the City Of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, Article 2, “Zoning Districts”, Section 2-101, “Single-Family Residential (SFR) District,” and Section 2-102 “Multi-Family 1 Duplex (MF1) District,” and Article 16, “Definitions,” to provide exception to the separation of accessory structures from the main structure under certain requirements and provide for open-air accessory structures with ground area coverage requirements; providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and an effective date.

DEPARTMENT HEAD RECOMMENDATION:

Approval.

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning and Zoning Board at their 03.12.25 meeting recommended approval with conditions of the proposed zoning code text amendment (vote: 4-3).

BRIEF HISTORY:

As requested by a City Commissioner with discussions from residents, staff has studied the current ground coverage provisions of the Zoning Code to analyze the building types being constructed with the existing limitations. Various scenarios were studied, including small lots, setbacks, and architectural forms, to better understand their impact on new residences. Based on this analysis, staff has drafted Zoning Code text amendments to refine the performance standards for ground area coverage requirements to allow open-air structures to be attached to a residence.

The current ground coverage regulations allow the residence to have 35% ground coverage, and an additional 10% for accessory buildings or structures. The proposed amendments allow open-air accessory buildings or structures to be attached to the principal structure while requiring enclosed accessory buildings or structures to maintain a minimum five-foot separation. This modification ensures that the total cumulative ground area coverage, including accessory structures, remains within the existing forty-five percent (45%) limit in Single-Family Residential (SFR) and Multi-Family 1 (MF1) districts, while also encouraging open-air structures and features, and covered access to detached garages.

Planning & Zoning Board

At the March 12, 2025 Planning & Zoning Board meeting, the Board reviewed and discussed the proposed zoning text amendment related to ground coverage and accessory structures. Board members expressed support for the amendment’s potential to promote diverse architectural typologies, encourage

thoughtful design elements, and enhance courtyard layouts and overall environmental quality. The discussion also acknowledged the challenges faced by smaller lots under the current code, particularly in providing functional open-air connections. Some Board members raised concerns that, if not carefully designed, the proposed flexibility could lead to increased massing of structures. To address this, the Board recommended approval of the amendment with a condition that any attached open-air accessory structure must remain open on at least two sides.

Following the Planning & Zoning Board meeting, the sponsoring Commissioner was able to discuss the negative implications of requiring two sides to be open with concerned architects, buildings, and other professionals. As such, the proposed text amendments do not incorporate the Board’s conditions.

The draft Ordinance for the Zoning Code text amendment is provided as Exhibit A.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

Date:	Resolution/Ordinance No.	Comments

OTHER ADVISORY BOARD/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION(S):

Date	Board/Committee	Comments (if any)
02.20.25	Board of Architects	Encourage attached loggias of courtyards

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION(S):

Date	Form of Notification
02.28.25	PZB Legal Advertisement.
03.07.25	Planning and Zoning Board staff report, legal notice and all attachments posted on City web page.
08.20.25	City Commission meeting agenda posted on City webpage.

EXHIBIT(S):

- A. Draft Ordinance.
- B. 03.12.25 Planning & Zoning Board Staff Report with attachments.
- C. Excerpt from 03.12.25 PZB meeting minutes.
- D. PowerPoint Presentation.