

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item E-2
February 24, 2026
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)

Agenda Item E-2 [Start: 10:37 a.m.]

An Ordinance of the City Commission providing for a text amendment to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code by amending Appendix A, “Site Specific Zoning Regulations Section,” to amend Section A-36, “Crafts Section,” to modify building height standards for bungalow-type duplexes by removing the one-story limitation and providing that the maximum building height shall be consistent with the underlying zoning district; providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date . (02 11 26 PZB recommended approval, Vote: 6-0)

Mayor Lago: E-2. Items on first reading.

City Attorney Suarez: E-2 is an ordinance of the City Commission providing for a tax amendment to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code by amending Appendix A, “Site-Specific Zoning Regulations Section” to amend Section A-36, Craft Section, to modify building height standards for bungalow-type duplexes by removing the one-story limitation, providing that the maximum

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building height shall be consistent with the underlying zoning district, providing for repealer provisions of severability clause, codification and providing for an effective date.

Mayor Lago: Madam Director.

Planning and Zoning Director: Good morning again. I have – yes, there we go. So, there are eight properties that are facing Santander and University that are currently zoned duplex. The site specifics of our zoning code limit these duplexes to be one-story instead of the standard two-story duplex. They're abutting a single family, which is, of course, allowed to go up to two stories as well. We are proposing to eliminate that height restriction to be one – sorry, to be two stories instead of one story. And that's it.

Mayor Lago: Do I have a motion?

Commissioner Lara: I'll move it.

Mayor Lago: Second?

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes. No, I'll second.

Mayor Lago: Okay, for public comment. Mr. Clerk, do we have any public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: No public comment, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Does the Commission have anything they'd like to add?

Commissioner Fernandez: Through the Mayor. Can you pull the map up again? I just wanted to –

Planning and Zoning Director: Yes. I think I pulled up the map. Yes.

Commissioner Fernandez: All right. So, the current designation for these eight properties is one-story?

Planning and Zoning Director: Yes, MF1 duplex.

Commissioner Fernandez: Okay. And we would be changing it to?

Planning and Zoning Director: Sorry, so right now it's MF2 – sorry, MF1 duplex. Duplex citywide is allowed to go two stories. For these eight, there's a site specific that caps that height to be one story. So, we're eliminating that one-story cap so it could be two stories, just like all the duplexes in the city.

Commissioner Fernandez: Okay. I'm going to be a no. We just had a comment on this, and I committed not to changing the zoning code south of University. So, I'm not supportive of this measure.

Mayor Lago: Madam Vice Mayor?

Vice Mayor Anderson: I have some questions. Okay. As read, the underlying zoning is two stories?

Planning and Zoning Director: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay. So, this is consistent with the underlying zoning?

Planning and Zoning Director: Correct.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay. So, we're not upzoning anything?

Planning and Zoning Director: Correct.

Vice Mayor Anderson: We're just correcting some text?

Planning and Zoning Director: Yes.

Mayor Lago: So, I just want to be clear on that. So, let's repeat that one more time because I want to make sure, we get that for social media.

Planning and Zoning Director: So, yes. Right now, MF1 is a duplex zoning. So, citywide, you're allowed to have two stories, just like you are for a single family. You're just allowed to have two units instead of one unit for a single family. There are two other areas in our city that cap that height. We're not touching those. Those are near University, RTZ area, as well as in the area next to Lee Lincoln on Ponce de Leon. We're not touching those. But these eight properties, there's at least one property that currently is built as two stories. It's not complying with the underlying site specifics of one-story cap. So, removing that one story cap so they can do two stories, just like most other duplexes in the city.

Mayor Lago: But the underlying zoning allows for two stories, correct?

Planning and Zoning Director: Correct. Yes.

Mayor Lago: We're not changing the height, correct?

Planning and Zoning Director: No. We're allowing to have two stories, just like any other duplex in the city.

Mayor Lago: But the height remains the same?

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Planning and Zoning Director: As a duplex of two stories, yes.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Fernandez: Through the Mayor. But underlying may be two stories, but at the present moment, you cannot build a two-story. You're limited to a one-story.

Planning and Zoning Director: Correct...

Commissioner Fernandez: So, we are changing the ability to build a two-story here versus currently only being allowed to build a one-story in a neighborhood where you may have a couple of two-story homes maybe on the corners, on Ponce, but most of the homes in that specific part of the neighborhood are one-story homes. They are a little bit elevated because you do have the cross space in most of them. But I'm just not supportive. I understand, you know, that there's an understanding that you would be able to if this restriction wasn't there. I'm not in favor of lifting this restriction.

Mayor Lago: I'll make it easy for everybody. I'm going to defer the item even though I'm not a sponsor. I'm going to request that the Manager defer the item. And we'll bring it back and we'll have a conversation on it. And one of the items I'd like to see is, I'm not aware of how many one or two-story buildings are around these eight. Maybe you can get me that information.

Planning and Zoning Director: Okay. We can do that.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, we deferred. Thank you.