



City of Coral Gables  
CITY COMMISSION MEETING  
December 13, 2022

**ITEM TITLE:**

**Ordinance on Second Reading. Zoning Code Text Amendment.** An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, amending the City of Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 6, "Landscape", Section 6-104, "Landscape Requirements for Public Rights-of-Way" to amend planting height and various other provisions; providing for severability, repealer, codification, and for an effective date (Sponsored by Commissioner Anderson)

**DEPARTMENT HEAD RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval.

**PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD RECOMMENDATION:**

The Planning and Zoning Board at their 11.01.22 meeting recommended approval with conditions to incorporate provisions for consideration of street aesthetics and minimum clear trunk distance (vote: 4-2).

**BRIEF HISTORY:**

No changes have been made to the proposed text amendment since the July 25, 2022, meeting.

As requested by the City Commission, Zoning Code text amendments are proposed to give the Greenspace Management Division discretion to allow trees of a lower height at planting provided they meet life safety requirements and contribute to that diversity. The text amendments also clarify a few other provisions regarding planting in the rights-of-way, including provisions regarding the percentage of palms to be planted in the rights-of-way. The proposed text amendments are to incentivize diversity in the urban canopy.

**November Planning & Zoning Board Meeting**

The Planning & Zoning Board reviewed the proposed text amendment again at their November 1, 2022, meeting. The excerpt from the meeting minutes is provided as Exhibit C. The Board discussed their concerns about a variety of tree species lining the city's streets and the visual impact of neighborhoods. After a tie vote, the Board then recommended approval (vote: 4-2) with the following changes for the City Commission to consider including:

1. Consideration should be given to the unique aesthetic of certain streets where a species and heights predominate; and
2. A minimum of 8 feet clear trunk shall be provided at time of planting.

### **October Landscape & Beautification Advisory Board**

On October 13, 2022, the Landscape Advisory Board discussed the proposed text amendments of the intent to provide a variety of street tree species within the same block. At the beginning of the discussion, the Board was divided with multiple opinions. Some members believed that providing a variety of tree species added to the interest and beauty of any street block, while others reported that George Merrick had master planned the city's tree canopy to deliberately be coordinated like the symbolic live oaks on Coral Way as seen on maps dating back to the 1910's. Staff brought up the 2014 Neighborhood Tree Succession and Initiation Plan that included extensive color-coded mapping of almost each block and a recommendation to strive for species diversification. The board agreed that they support diversity if master-planned and well-thought out, as planting trees haphazardly would not be appropriate for the city.

### **September Planning & Zoning Board Meeting**

The Planning & Zoning Board reviewed the proposed text amendment at their September 14, 2022, meeting. The Board understood the need to allow shorter trees, but expressed concern for encouraging a variety of tree species within the same block as not being consistent with the original identity of Coral Gables. After a lengthy discussion, the Board deferred the request to hear the review of additional advisory boards, such as the Landscape & Beautification Advisory Board.

The draft Ordinance of the Zoning Code text amendments is provided as Exhibit A.

### **OTHER ADVISORY BOARD/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION(S):**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Board/Committee</b>	<b>Comments (if any)</b>
10.13.22	Landscape & Beautification Advisory Board	The Board supports diversity of tree species if master-planned

### **PUBLIC NOTIFICATION(S):**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Form of Notification</b>
07.19.22	City Commission First Reading meeting agenda posted on City webpage.
09.02.22	Planning & Zoning Board Legal Advertisement.
09.09.22	Posted agenda and Staff report on City web page/City Hall
10.21.22	Planning & Zoning Board Legal Advertisement.
10.28.22	Posted agenda and Staff report on City web page/City Hall
12.02.22	City Commission Legal Advertisement.
12.06.22	City Commission meeting agenda posted on City webpage.

### **EXHIBIT(S):**

- A. Draft Ordinance.
- B. 11.01.22 PZB Staff Report with attachments.
- C. Excerpts from 11.01.22 PZB Meeting Minutes.