



City of Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Staff Report

Applicant: City of Coral Gables
Application: Zoning Code Text Amendments – Section 5-500 Roofs
Public Hearing: Planning and Zoning Board
Date & Time: February 11, 2026; 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Location: City Commission Chambers, City Hall
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

1. APPLICATION REQUEST

The City of Coral Gables is requesting review and consideration of the following:

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code by amending Article 5, "Architecture," Section 5-500, "Roofs," to clarify roof design standards including the intent to incorporate a combination of pitched and flat roof forms and to establish that roof designs proposed as entirely flat require review and approval by the Full Board of Architects; to remove Sections 5-503 and 5-504 and renumber subsequent sections; to delete outdated parapet height provisions in flood hazard districts; and providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date.

The request requires three public hearings, including review and recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Board, and 1st and 2nd Reading before the City Commission.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The proposed ordinance updates the City's roof design regulations to improve clarity, remove outdated provisions and better align the Zoning Code with contemporary architectural practices and the City's current architectural review process. Historically, Coral Gables' building and zoning regulations required roof forms and materials consistent with Mediterranean and similarly harmonious architectural styles, including pitched tile roofs and limited material options. Although flat roofs were gradually permitted over time and modern architectural styles were allowed following the 2007 Zoning Code Rewrite, certain roof design requirements were not comprehensively updated to reflect that policy shift. As a result, portions of the current roof regulations are outdated when applied to contemporary and modern architectural styles.

The proposed text amendments address these issues by clarifying that high-quality roof materials not expressly listed in the Code may be approved by the City Architect and where applicable, the full Board of Architects, based on architectural style, neighborhood context and sound structural principles, and by clarifying parapet standards for flat roofs, including the requirement that roof designs proposed as entirely flat be subject to review and approval by the full Board of Architects. Roof design remains an essential component of overall building design and visual compatibility with surrounding development. These proposed text amendments maintain the City's architectural standards while providing clearer,

more consistent guidance for property owners, design professionals and reviewing bodies.

These proposed text amendments were discussed at the Board of Architects (BOA) meeting held on Thursday, January 29, 2026, with participation from the Board of Architects, the City Architect and Planning and Zoning staff. Following the discussion, the BOA expressed support and recommended approval of the proposed text amendments.

3. PROPOSED ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENT

The proposed Zoning Code text amendment is provided in ~~strike through~~/underline format.

Section 5-500. Roofs

Section 5-501. Roofs; general.

Except as provided for in this Section, all roofs for single-family residences, townhouses, duplexes, overnight accommodations and uses in a Special Use District shall be constructed of tile, ~~coral rock slabs~~, slate or copper in its natural state and allowed to oxidize and patina, or other high-quality materials subject to review and approval by the City Architect and, where applicable, the full Board of Architects, as determined appropriate based on the building's architectural style, neighborhood context, and sound structural principles.

Section 5-502. Flat roofs ~~without a parapet~~.

Flat roofs shall have a parapet with a minimum thickness of eight (8) inches and a minimum height of twelve (12) inches above the roof deck, unless otherwise expressly permitted in the Section or as otherwise approved by the Board of Architects. Roof designs are intended to incorporate a combination of pitched and flat roof forms. Roof designs proposed as entirely flat, without any pitched or sloped roof components, shall require review and approval by the full Board of Architects and shall not be approved administratively. Except on Lots 1 through 18, inclusive, Block 89, Lots 20 through 36, inclusive, Block 91, Riviera Section Part Three and Lots 1, 2, 3 and Lots 5 through 12, inclusive, Block 4 and Lots 11 through 16, Block 6, French Village, flat roofs without a parapet shall be permitted upon buildings subject to the following restrictions noted hereinafter.

- A. Above porch or room additions within the L, T or U of a residential building having all tile roofs provided:
 - 1. A tile roof is not practical, as shall be determined by the Board of Architects.
 - 2. The flat roof portion shall not exceed fifteen (15%) percent of the ground area of the building.
 - 3. The flat roof portion is not visible from the front elevation of the building on an inside lot or is not visible from the front or side street elevations on a corner lot.
- B. Above one-story rooms in the rear of a two-story residence, duplex or apartment on inside lots, or over one-story rooms in the rear of a two-story residence, duplex or apartment where the room is not visible from the front or side street elevation on corner lots, providing in all cases some type of metal or masonry railing, as shall be approved by the Board of Architects is installed upon such flat roof.
- C. The Design & Innovation District Overlay where the roof is constructed entirely of non-combustible materials.
- D. On boathouses, provided some ornamental railing, design or other treatment, as shall be approved by the Board of Architects, is placed upon such flat roof.
- E. Above meter rooms, elevator towers, elevator machinery and equipment rooms, stair towers, and air-conditioning rooms in MX Districts where the roof is constructed entirely of non-combustible materials.

F. Above one (1) story areas of a two (2) story building, or as a balcony, tower or other feature used to enhance the architecture of a building (as with the Colonial or Mediterranean style), provided that if located on an elevation visible to the street, the flat roof portions visible to the street shall not constitute more than twenty (20%) percent of the building's total roof area and a metal or masonry railing is installed on such flat roof.

G. Above two (2) story areas of a two (2) story building, or as a balcony, tower or other feature used to enhance the architecture of a building (as with the Colonial or Mediterranean style), provided that if located on an elevation visible to the street, the flat roof portions visible to the street shall not constitute more than twenty (20%) percent of the building's total roof area and that said flat roof shall not exceed the maximum allowable height above established grade.

Section 5-503. Flat roofs with a parapet.

~~Except on Lots 1 through 18, inclusive, Block 89, Lots 20 through 36, inclusive, Block 91, Riviera Section Part Three, and Lots 1, 2, 3 and Lots 5 through 12, inclusive, Block 4 and Lots 11 through 16, Block 6, French Village, flat roofs with a parapet (minimum eight (8) inches thick) shall be permitted upon single-family residences and accessory buildings and structures subject to restrictions noted hereinafter:~~

~~A. The residence has a flat roof with a parapet and with a pitched roof area that is lesser in size and proportion to the flat roof area. The roof deck of the flat roof with a maximum thirty (30) inch high parapet shall not exceed twenty four (24) feet above established grade and the top of the parapet shall not exceed twenty six (26) feet and six (6) inches above established grade. For residences in flood hazard districts with a maximum height of thirty nine (39) feet above established grade, the roof deck of the flat roof with a maximum thirty (30) inch high parapet shall not exceed thirty four (34) feet above established grade and the top of the parapet shall not exceed thirty six (36) feet and six (6) inches above established grade. The roof shall be pitched in accordance with the provisions of the Florida Building Code.~~

~~B. The residence has a flat roof with a parapet with and a pitched roof area that is greater in size and proportion to the flat roof area. The roof deck of the flat roof with a maximum thirty (30) inch high parapet shall not exceed twenty four (24) feet above established grade and the top of the parapet shall not exceed twenty six (26) feet and six (6) inches above established grade. For residences in flood hazard districts with a maximum height of thirty nine (39) feet above established grade, the roof deck of the flat roof with a maximum thirty (30) inch high parapet shall not exceed thirty four (34) feet above established grade and the top of the parapet shall not exceed thirty six (36) feet and six (6) inches above established grade. The roof shall be pitched in accordance with the provisions of the Florida Building Code.~~

~~C. Over boat houses.~~

~~D. Upon buildings designed and devoted to MF2, MFSA, C, and I Districts.~~

Section 5-504. Roofs for commercial buildings.

~~Except for motels, and mixed use buildings shall be permitted to have flat roofs with a parapet (minimum eight (8) inches thick and eighteen (18) inches above the roof at all points, provided, however, that where the height of the building and other attendant and connected circumstances and features of said building justify a lesser height, such parapet wall may be as low as six (6) inches at any point above the roof) where the roof is constructed entirely of non-combustible materials.~~

Section 5-5053. Pitched roofs, material.

Pitched roofs shall be constructed of:

A. Vitrified clay tile.

B. White concrete tile. The finished surface for white concrete tile shall be a mixture of one (1) part Portland white cement to three (3) parts white silica sand, together with a waterproofing and plasticizer ad-mix. These ingredients shall be mixed with water to a consistency equal to that of a finishing coat of plaster. The mix thus obtained shall be pressure troweled onto the surface of the freshly extruded tile at the time of manufacture.

C. Colored cement tile, provided the tile is color saturated with the same color intensity throughout and the color is not surface applied, and provided the color meets with approval of the Board of Architects, taken in conjunction with the surrounding areas. ~~Such colored cement tile roofs, which have been installed according to approved plans may be painted or repainted a different color from the original color of the installed tile subject to approval of the application and the paint specifications by the Board of Architects.~~

~~D. Coral rock slabs laid shingle fashion.~~

~~E.~~ Thick butt variegated colored slate as approved by the Board of Architects.

~~F.~~ White Bermuda roof, with a minimum pitch of not less than five (5) inches in twelve (12) inches.

~~G.~~ Where there exists a pitched roof of other material that was permitted at the time of the original construction, additions to or replacements to said building may use the same material.

~~H.~~ Roofs on accessory buildings shall conform to the roof requirements for the principal building provided, ~~that bomb shelters and/or fallout shelters may be constructed with a flat roof that the maximum height of such shall not exceed four (4) feet above grade.~~

~~I.~~ Roof tiles with surfaces applied glaze under the manufacturer's process, provided, that the color meets with the approval of the Board of Architects taken in conjunction with the surrounding area and provided further that the tile shall not be painted or repainted.

~~J.~~ Copper in its natural state and allowed to oxidize and patina may be used as a roofing material for residential uses subject to approval of design, manner of installation, and conformity with the architectural design, style and composition of the proposed residential structure as shall be approved by the Board of Architects. An approved copper roof must remain in its natural state as a metal, thereby prohibiting painting, coating, surface application, or any other fabrication or manufacturing process that alters its natural metallic state.

~~K.~~ Barrel Tile, provided that the tile is three (3) inches in depth and fire clay material.

~~L.~~ Standing seam metal may be used on single-family homes with the approval of the full Board of Architects as deemed appropriate for the architectural style and neighborhood character. Metal roofs are prohibited within Historic Districts and shall require the additional approval from the Historic Preservation Board for locally designated and historically significant homes (as determined by the Historic Preservation Officer). Metal roofs shall not imitate other materials and not be painted after installation.

~~M.~~ Specific exceptions include: Golden Gate, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Alban's Park, Coconut Grove Warehouse Center, the Design & Innovation District Overlay and/or Mixed-Use District abutting South Dixie Highway, ~~and where plastic or glass translucent material is used as~~ or only as expressly permitted elsewhere in this article.

Section 5-5064. Flat roofs, material.

All flat roofs shall have coverings of approved standard quality, such as concrete, gypsum, tile, built-up roofing of tar and paper, or tar paper and gravel, ~~asbestos roofing,~~ or of like grade, which would rank as Class A or B fire-resistance rating as determined by the recognized testing standards. ~~under test~~

~~specifications of the National Board of Fire Underwriters.~~

Section 5-5075. Plastic, fiberglass, glass and aluminum roofs.

Any plastic or glass translucent material or flat aluminum material, as approved by the Board of Architects may be used as a roof covering on screened enclosures or screened porches of residences providing it does not extend out from the outside wall of the building more than six (6) feet including any existing roof overhang and further provided it is not visible from the street.

Section 5-5086. Skylights.

Section 5-5097. Roof projections.

Section 5-51008. Roof trusses.

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4. REVIEW TIMELINE / PUBLIC NOTICE

City Review Timeline

The submitted applications have undergone the following City reviews:

REVIEW COMMITTEES AND BOARDS	DATE
Board of Architects	01.29.26
Planning and Zoning Board	02.11.26
City Commission – 1 st Reading	TBD
City Commission – 2 nd Reading	TBD

The following has been completed to solicit input and provide notice of the Application:

PUBLIC NOTICE	DATE
Legal advertisement	01.30.26
Posted agenda and Staff report on City web page/City Hall	02.06.26

5. FINDINGS OF FACT

In accordance with Section 14-212.5 of the Zoning Code, the Planning and Zoning Board shall not recommend adoption of, and the City Commission shall not adopt, text amendments to these land development regulations of the Zoning Code unless the text amendment:

Standard	Staff Evaluation
a. Promotes the public health, safety, and welfare.	The proposed text amendments clarify roof design and material standards, supporting sound construction practices, consistent architectural review and long-term building

	durability.
b. Does not permit uses the Comprehensive Plan prohibits in the area affected by the text amendment.	The proposed text amendments address architectural design standards only and do not introduce or modify land uses in any zoning district.
c. Does not allow densities or intensities in excess of the densities and intensities which are permitted by the future land use categories of the affected property.	The proposed text amendments do not affect allowable density, intensity, height or floor area and are limited to design-related provisions.
d. Will not cause a decline in the level of service for public infrastructure which is the subject of a concurrency requirement to a level of service which is less than the minimum requirements of the Comprehensive Plan.	These proposed text amendments do not generate any additional development or population and therefore do not impact public infrastructure or concurrency levels of service.
e. Does not directly conflict with any objective or policy of the Comprehensive Plan.	The proposed amendments are consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies supporting high-quality design, neighborhood compatibility and effective architectural review.

Staff finds that all five of these criteria are **satisfied**.

6. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Zoning Division recommends **approval**.

Please visit the City's webpage at www.coralgables.com to view all Application plans and materials, notices, applicable public comments, minutes, etc. The complete Application and all background information also is on file and available for examination during business hours at the Planning and Zoning Division, 427 Biltmore Way, Suite 201, Coral Gables, Florida 33134.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Garcia, AICP, CNU-A

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for Planning and Zoning

City of Coral Gables, Florida