

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item E-2
September 13, 2016
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada
Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Historic Preservation Officer, Dona Spain

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item E-2 [10:11:50 a.m.]

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 3, "Development Review," Division 11, "Historic Preservation: Designations and Certificates of Appropriateness," Article 5, "Development Standards," Division 24, "Walls and fences," and Article 8, "Definitions" amending criteria for designating historic landmarks and districts, clarifying wood fence requirements and adding a definition for historic integrity, providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date. (01.11.16 HPB recommended approval; Vote 8-0) (07.13.16 PZB recommended approval; Vote 7-0).

Mayor Cason: Ordinances on First Reading, E-2.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, Item E-2 is an Ordinance on First Reading; it's a Zoning Code Text Amendment. It's An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing

for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, Article 3, “Development Review,” Division 11, “Historic Preservation: Designations and Certificates of Appropriateness,” Article 5, “Development Standards,” Division 24, “Walls and fences,” and Article 8, “Definitions” amending criteria for designating historic landmarks and districts, clarifying wood fence requirements and adding a definition for historic integrity, providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date. This is a public hearing item.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Good morning, for the record Dona Spain, Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Director. This comes to you as a recommendation from the Historic Preservation Board and the Planning and Zoning Board, both Boards voted unanimously in favor of these Zoning Code Text Amendments. I’m just going to read them into the record. The first one deals with historic designation criteria and it is district sites, buildings, structures, and objects of national, state, and local importance are of historic significance if they possess integrity of location, design, settings, materials, workmanship, or association, and that’s being added to the designation criteria. This wording was in the original preservation ordinance that the City passed in 1973, but it was removed at a later date, it is in the national criteria, so we’d like it to come back; and hand-in-hand with that we are adding the definition of historic integrity for the definition portion of the Zoning Code, and that is, historic integrity is the authenticity of a property’s historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property’s prehistoric or historic period. Historic integrity enables a property to illustrate significant aspects of its past. Not only must a property resemble its historic appearance, but it must also retain physical materials, design features, and aspects of construction dating from the period when it obtained significance. The integrity of archeological resources is generally based on the degree to which remaining evidence can provide important information. All six qualities, integrity of location, design, settings, materials, workmanship or association do not need to be present for eligibility as long as the overall sense of past time and place is evident. When we run across issues, for instance, the Charade Restaurant site, the building is no longer there, that doesn’t have integrity of site, so that should not be designated. Occasionally people will come to us and say, this important event in the past happened in this location, but the building is no longer there, it’s a new building, and so we thought it was important to put this back into the Code.

Mayor Cason: It used to be there?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: It used to be there, originally in 1973, it was there, and it still is in the national criteria.

Mayor Cason: OK. So if it's not there, it's not historic; if there is not a historic building was there 18 years ago...

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Exactly, it's just not historic. It used to have that sense of place that it had when it attained significance. So that's the first change; and then the demolition. Right now if a property owner wants to demolish the property, I issue a Historic Significance Determination, any demolition permit comes through my office, and that determination right now is only six months, and that's really not enough time, because in six months' time typically they don't pull a permit for demolition, so then I have to reissue it. So this just extends that time to 18 months.

Mayor Cason: So it's a benefit to the homeowner.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Absolutely. Yes, so they don't have to keep reapplying again.

Mayor Cason: Coming back and paying.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Yes. And then the last one is just really a clarification of the Code. Santa Maria Street is one of two areas of the City that allows wood fences, but that portion of the Zoning Code doesn't talk about the height of those fences, that in another location of the Code and its confusing. So this is just adding that wood fences can be no more than four feet high and it also clarifies it if you are building, you are recreating historic detail of the fence that you can do that. You don't have to go by the exact specifications of the wood fences that they have in the Code.

Commissioner Keon: Does it have to be replaced with wood?

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: That's actually on a case-by-case basis. There is a fence on Santa Maria Street that is not wood you can't tell.

Commissioner Keon: I know, that's why I wondered.

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: That goes to the Board of Architects for material, we've done that in the past, this doesn't change that.

Commissioner Keon: OK. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Do we have any speaker cards?

City Clerk Foeman: No Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Cason: So we'll close the public hearing – any discussion?- motion?

Commissioner Lago: So moved.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Lago makes the motion, second?

Commissioner Keon: I'll second it.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon – City Clerk.

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 4-0)

(Vice Mayor Quesada: Absent)

Historic Preservation Officer Spain: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you Dona.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

[End: 10:16:58 a.m.]