

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item E-3 & E-4 are related
March 10, 2026
Public Safety Building, CMR
2151 Salzedo Street, 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)

Roberta Neway
Kim Ogren

Agenda Item E-3 [Start: 11:35 a.m.]

E-3: An Ordinance of the City Commission approving amendments to the text and maps of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to small-scale amendment procedures (Section 163.3187, Florida Statutes), and Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-213, “Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments,” to 1) modify the required Multi-Family densities and height to allow higher intensity within the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay,” and to allow Multi-Family High Density within the Mixd-Use Overlay Districts located within the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay,” 2) include additional properties (6100 Caballero Blvd.) within the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay” for Lots 1 & 2, Block 5 and Lots 1 thru 3, Block 6, Riviera Waterways Section, Track “K” Addition to Riviera Waterways Section and Lot 8, Block 208, Riviera Section 14, from “Multi Family Duplex Density” to Multi Family Low Density” for Lot 5 and the southern portion of Lot 5, Block 6, Singer Subdivision; from Commercial Low-Rise Intensity” to “Multi Family Medium Density” to “Multi

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Family Medium Density” for Lot 5-A and the northern portion of Lot 5, Block 6, Singer Subdivision; providing for a repealer provision, providing for a severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (Legal description on file) (02 11 26 PZB recommended approval, Vote 5-0)

E-4: An Ordinance of the City Commission providing for map and text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-212, “Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments,” by 1) amending Article 2, “Zoning Districts,” Section 2-408, “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay” to a) include requirements for multi-family development and provide regulations for modification and development agreements within the district; b) add additional properties (6100 Caballero Boulevard) to the boundary of the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay”, 2) amending Appendix A, “Site Specific Zoning Regulations,” to remove inconsistent Site Specifics, 3) amending Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-204, “Transfer of Development Rights,” to expand Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) receiving sites within the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay,” and 4) amend the Zoning Map from “Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)” to “Multi Family 4 (MF4)”, for Lots 1&2, Block 5 and Lots 1 thru 3, Block 6, Riviera Waterways Section, Track “K”, Addition to Riviera Waterways Section, and Lot 8, Block 208, Riviera Section 14, from “Multi Family 3 (MF3)” to “Multi Family 4 (MF4)” for Lots 3&4, Block 5, Riviera Waterways Section; from” Multi Family 1 (MF1)” to “Multi Family 3 (MF3)” for Lot 5, Block 5 and the southern portion of Lot 5, Block 6, Singer Subdivision; from” Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)” to “Multi Family 2 (MF2)” for Lot 4, Block 6, Riviera Waterways Section; and from “Multi Family 1 (MF1)” to “Multi Family 2 (MF2)” for Lot 5-A and the northern portion of Lot 5, Block 6, Singer Subdivision; providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date. (Legal description on file) (02 11 26 PZB recommended approval, Vote: 5-0)
Lobbyist: Mario Garcia-Serra.

Mayor Lago: Okay, moving on to the next item, item E-3.

City Attorney Suarez: Mayor, item E-3 and E-4 are related. I'll read them both into the record so we can consolidate for purposes of the public hearing. E-3 is an ordinance of the City Commission approving amendments to the text and maps of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to small scale amendment procedures and zoning code article 14 process section 14-213, comprehensive plan text and map amendments to one modify that required multifamily densities and height to allow higher intensity within the university station rapid transit district overlay and to allow multifamily high density within the mixed use overlay districts located within the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay to include additional properties within the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay on the mixed use overlay districts map and three, amend the future land use map from commercial low rise intensity to multifamily high density for lots one and two, Block 5 and Lots 1 through 3, Block 6, Riviera Waterway Section, Track K, Addition to Riviera Waterway Section and Lot 8, Block 208 Riviera Section 14 from multifamily

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low density to multifamily high density for Lots 3 and 4 Block 5 Riviera Waterway Section for multifamily duplex density to multifamily low density for Lot 5 Block 5 and the Southern portion of Lot 5 Block 6 Singer Subdivision from commercial low rise intensity to multifamily medium density for Lot 4 Block 6 Riviera Waterway Section and from multifamily duplex density to multifamily medium density for Lot 5-A and the Northern portion of Lot 5 Block 6 Singer Subdivision providing for repeater provision providing for severability clause and providing for an effective date. E-4 is an Ordinance to the City Commission providing for map and text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code pursuant to zoning code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-212 Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments by 1) amending Article 2, "Zoning District," Section 2-408, University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay to a) include requirements for multifamily development and provide regulations for modification and development agreements within the district, b) add additional properties to the boundary of the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay, and 2) amending Appendix A, "Site Specific Zoning Regulations," to remove inconsistency specifics, 3) amending Article 14, "Process," Section 14-204 Transfer of Development Rights to expand transfer of development rights receiving sites within the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay, and 4) amend the zoning map for Mixed-Use 1 to Multi Family 4 for Lots 1 and 2 Block 5 and Lots 1 through 3 Block 6 Riviera Waterway Section Track K Addition to Riviera Waterway Section and Lot 8 Block 208 Riviera Section 14 for Multi Family 3 to Multi Family 4 for Lots 3 and 4 Block 5 Riviera Waterway Section for Multi Family 1 to Multi Family 3 for Lot 5 Block 5 and the Southern portion of Lot 5 Block 6 Singer Subdivision from Mixed-Use 1 to Multi Family 2 for Lot 4 Block 6 Riviera Waterway Section and for Multi Family to Multi Family 2 Multi Family 1 to Multi Family 2 for Lot 5-A and the northern portion of Lot 5 Block 6 Singer Subdivision providing repeal your provision severability clause codification and providing for an effective date this is a quasi-judicial item so I'd ask the clerk to please swear and anyone who'll be testifying today.

City Clerk Urquia: Those who will be speaking on this item please stand and raise your right hand.

Mayor Lago: If you will be speaking on these items either E-3 and E-4 please rise.

City Clerk Urquia: Do you swear or affirm the testimony you'll provide today will be the truth and nothing but the truth. Thank you.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor and Commissioners as you all know we this is the RTZ zone for the University of Miami Substation. We started quickly on the MX portion of this overlay which was for the Mark. The Mark was a project that was moving very quickly, and we went with an overlay

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on mixed use, MX overlay. That was quickly done because the Mark project was proceeding much faster than the Waterway project which is what this is for. This is what we are creating now is an MX zoning that we created for the Mark and this is MF Zoning Overlay. These two overlays will encompass the RTZ zone and can be you can be extended through that RTZ zone if the county extends it or if this sub zone is extended north. It's very important from our perspective because we feel this is what works similarly to the MX portion which is for the Mark and the idea is to keep the projects in Coral Gables and not have basically county projects in Coral Gables which is what the RTZ will create, and so, now we have a MX overlay, a mixed-use overlay and we have an MF overlay, a multi-family overlay that we are able to use effectively and I believe that the County Commissioners, whoever and there may be a change there's certainly going to be a change in November because I believe that the County Commissioner in this area is termed out, so whoever comes in will, we have a process that that is fast and that is effective for this area and hopefully it would deter the county from going through the RTZ process for any of the areas within our RTZ zone.

Mayor Lago: Madam Director.

Planning and Zoning Director: Good morning, Jennifer Garcia, Planning and Zoning Director. I have a brief PowerPoint with some maps to go through. As you are aware, we are changing the Comprehensive Plan Text and Map, as well as the Zoning Code Text and Map as well. So, we're looking at the location of extending this existing adopted as of January of this year by this Commission, the Rapid Transit Overlay District south to include what's known as the Gables Waterway property, which extending from Caballero down past Mahi Canal where it reaches US-1, all the way down to South Alhambra. You can see that in yellow is the property that we're adding into the Rapid Transit Overlay District. So, currently today the future land use map has commercial low rise intensity multi-family low density and multi-family duplex on that property. The zoning map mirrors that land use destinations with MX1, MF3 and MF1, which is duplex. So, I just said, the Comprehensive Plan Text Map Amendments, Zoning Map Amendments and text limits. So, to propose to you today is changing those designations to be multi-family high density, along US-1, transitioning down to multi-family medium density, on the south part next to South Alhambra and then multi-family low density abutting the single-family and duplex areas south side. The mixed-use overlay district map would be amended to add in this property as part of the whole University Rapid Transit Overlay District and the Comprehensive Plan would be amended to allow for the maximum density of 125 units an acre to be consistent with the county's RTZ sub zone. So, the map of the zoning code map is about to be amended to be MF4, along that dark brown area along US-1 and then transitioning to MF2, which allows for a maximum height 97 feet and then MF3 which would be a south side to allow maximum height of 45 feet. Your Exhibit B includes all the text amendments to the zoning code as it relates to multi-family development. The MF4 is

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a summary we're looking at right now. The summary is that MF4 building height would be capped at 125, sorry 120 feet to be consistent with the mixed-use portion of this overlay district. The Commission could approve to be 150 feet if the MF4 property is providing 10 percent additional open space. The maximum density would be 125 units per acre for MF4 and MF2. There would be a mandatory 10-foot setback along waterway for all buildings regardless of the zoning, it would be an MF or MX. The upper story step back for properties across the waterway from single-family would be 25 feet, so you would be 10 feet it would go up 20 feet and then 25 feet would be the upper story step back if you are adjacent or across the waterway from single family zoning. There will be a requirement of 50 feet setback when you're abutting single-family or duplex, 50 feet is our standard for width of a single-family lot. The reduced interior setbacks would occur along US-1 to create that continuous urban edge along US-1. There will be deviations for a setback in habitable space of the ground floor when they're adjacent or across the street from mixed-use districts and then a minor amendments including architectural changes or landscape would have to be approved by the City Manager Development Agreement if the applicant would so choose, would be reviewed by staff and then go straight to the Commission. There's also some various clarifications that I propose to you, again, in Exhibit B that's in your packet for today. The University Station Overlay District will be designated as a TDR receiving area and then there's also some removal of all those inconsistent site specifics that we have in our code today that was proposed to be removed to be consistent with what's proposed to you today. This is a comparison of the RTZ subzone, which is on the left side; the middle column is the overlay mixed-use zoning, which you adopted in January of this year and the on the right side is the proposed overlay for multi-family zoning. So, the x-ray review is similar as far as city staff and City Commission, and the height was also dissimilar, 125, sorry 120 feet and 150 feet with an additional 10 percent open space. The density would be consistent with the subzone of the county which all be 125 units an acre. The FAR would be limited at 3.5 with the ability to do TDRs for maximum 4.375 when the county of course as we know has no limitation on FAR. The requirement would remain the same to be 25 percent of the property has to be dedicated towards open space. The setbacks would remain the same as 20 feet on US-1, with no interior setbacks when you're abutting US-1 and then 10 feet along the front and along the waterway as well, with 50 foot landscape requirement a setback when you're abutting single-family or duplex; and the step back would be 25, like I said, with your across the waterway from a single family or duplex. As far as uses go, the multi-family zoning would only allow for multi-family residential use. It wouldn't provide for commercial uses, or you know, any other uses that you're thinking of or mixed use. Design would be required to be Mediterranean, impact fees would obviously remain the city, as well as Art in Public Places. This is a comparison of what we're trying to avoid, which on the left side is the county RTZ project near the Deco Station. On the right side is what we're trying to promote, which is more Mediterranean human skill design. The board recommended approval, Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval last month in February, we're here for a first reading. It'll come back for second reading

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with approved on first reading today. We did mail property owners a notice twice, property was posted twice, website was posted, as well as we were asked other advertisements. This was a map of the area that was mailed to and separate one's approval as it is consistent with the idea of having more density along multi-family target along transit zones and transit corridors. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Does the Commission have any comments in regard to the matter.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, this is not something that we need to do because you know it's desirous on behalf of the city to really do this. This is something that we must do because the county is already made the rapid transit zone and our best option is to have it within our control, to be able to do the type of traffic calming for the neighborhood on Nate on Manatee Street, to be able to control the uses and the height and have an MF zoning area where you have a greater setback. I have told residents sometimes it's best that we have projects come through our city and use our zoning code rather than developers making choices, like they did here to expand other types of zoning, such as the county RTZ or Live Local Act projects where we lose control and we cannot limit, you know, what is happening or steer what's on the project to make it a much nicer, less impactful project for their neighborhood. This is unfortunately the best we can do. Times have changed since I first ran for office. Many things have happened since I first ran for office, including, Live Local Act was non-existent when I first ran for office, the RTZ zone in this area was non-existent when I first ran for office. It's unfortunate sometimes when people push so hard to stop certain developments what happens is the polar opposite. We end up with something much more massive and less sensitive to the neighborhood and my hat's off to the City Manager for the hard work that he's done in trying to bring these items back and under our zoning code, to where the projects can be under our control. So, I appreciate your time and your effort and your dedication to bring this one back in. So, thank you.

Mayor Lago: Any further comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Lara: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Lara: Right. So echoing the Vice Mayor, you know, this is something that is needed because where we are today with the Planning and Zoning Board voting unanimously for this is representative of Coral Gables trying to keep Coral Gables looking as much as possible like Coral Gable should be, and while it isn't exactly what we would have wanted, it is a testament to you City Manager and through the rest of your team to have negotiated this outcome in a way that

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brings it back as close as practical to our zoning and the photos that you had in your presentation that showed what it could have looked like and had it been more county oriented compared to Coral Gables oriented is stark, you know, the difference you know like a picture speaks a thousand words, right. So, I'm glad that we are, in my view, in the right direction for the first time in some time, we have to get out in front of this, like the Vice Mayor said, RTZ, Live Local that didn't exist a few years ago, right. So, we have to be strategic, we have to be thinking several steps ahead, because these decisions that we make at this point affect us for decades to come and the residents that live in the immediate area. So, hats off to you and to everybody associated with getting this to where it is right now, the corrective moves that we've made recently. Thanks.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Yes sir.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, I agree Madam Vice Mayor, this is something that even when I was on the ballot two and a half years ago, we did not have Live Local, we did not have the RTZ and you know, if you look at it from a perspective of your walking your legs are just being pulled out from under you, because you are no longer able to decide what you want in your own city and by doing things like these we can at least have some control of the process and I think we're seeing that with the Mark where the developer is at the table, is working with us on not going as far as they could, but working with the community and we've seen it in other projects as well where Live Local was an option, the project on Almeria they could have gone Live Local. We were able to get them to reduce the height and give us a much better quality product, same with the one that we just approved in the in the north of the Flagler section, another project that residents have been advocating against for many years but the developer really sat down at the table and tried to find a happy medium where they were still going to put together a project that was going to improve the community and bring some benefits to the community as well. So, we really are in a place today that three years ago we could have just said, you know, this is what you can do you know deal with it can't do that anymore. That power has been taken away from us at two different levels. What I would ask if we can between first and second reading is, if we can maybe have a community meeting to explain to the residents in the area what exactly has brought us to this point and why we are pursuing this, why we're making these changes, how these changes would differentiate from the county RTZ, what powers the city would have with this proposal versus with the RTZ where we don't have any, the benefits that we'll have from the fees. I think all that's important for residents to understand and I think if we have a community meeting in the area explaining it to them we're being proactive about what's taking place, what has put us in this situation, and how we are being proactive on finding a solution instead of sitting back and just, you know, taking whatever the county or the state approves in these projects.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner.

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Vice Mayor Anderson: You have any comments?

Commissioner Castro: I'll vote and I'll say my comments.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, through the Mayor one last comment I'm going to make. Gables Good Government it's a great group, we did do a presentation and I mean we; it wasn't just me; it was a bunch of folks to explain the differences in all these types of zoning and the limitations that we have right now in our choices. So, I'm not on the board of Gables Good Government, it's a non-partisan type of group that just tries to educate folks, so I'd urge folks to go to some of their sessions, because there's always something new that you can learn. I think the last session was on transportation. I wasn't able to attend. I was out of town, but there's a lot you can learn there. So, if you had attended the Gables Good Government session and it was about, I think six months ago, we covered this topic and it was covered by multiple individuals that explained the impact on the community. I think it would bear repeating and take a look at the folks that were on the panel then, including our Jennifer Garcia did an excellent job of explaining these differences and you know we invite more of the community in and perhaps record these things, so people missed it they can click on it and see it at their leisure.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, we have, Commissioners, we have a lot of information on our website, including two videos one on Live Local and one on RTZ and I think one of the key issues too is, if it goes RTZ then the uses and signage will also be by Dade County, so we would not control the usage and we would not control the signage on these projects. So, this would essentially not only be bigger projects with less setbacks, unlimited FAR, 150 feet, but there would be projects that would be controlled by Dade County for use, they could have a bar, they could have other things that we don't have in our uses and also signage would be through Dade County. So, we will essentially have county projects within our city and what this does it keeps these projects within our, as much as we can within our control. We also would lose impact fees; all the impact fees, parks impact fees, mobility impact fees, police and fire impact fees, our Art in Public Places fees, our Building Department fees, all those fees would now be Dade County, would now go to Dade County. We would get none of those fees either. So, it is a big issue keeping these projects within the city to have the most control that we can possibly have on the projects. If we could put that picture again it's certainly the difference between what's happening on county projects and what we are and what we can do. The county RTZ project versus what we're trying to accomplish in Coral Gables, the difference is tremendous and that's why we move very, very quickly to try to keep these projects within the city. So, there's a huge, quite a number of reasons why it benefits us to keep these projects within our city and unfortunately this is as the Commission has said, this is

the RTZ process is outside of our control, it's implemented by Dade County, and it's implemented along the rapid transit zone.

Commissioner Lara: Briefly through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

Commissioner Lara: So to put a finer point on it, to me, right support for this particular ordinance is support for keeping as much as practical Coral Gables looking like Coral Gables, because from Tallahassee comes to Live Local, from Tallahassee comes the RTZ and from Tallahassee home erosion, Home Rule erosion is leading the way we nearly found ourselves with a monstrosity, if I could be so colorful, of where the Mark is versus what we were looking at, at one point before the derailment and the unnecessary delay at the PNZ and I think that as was stated earlier, it was the polar opposite effect if someone was trying to limit development to delay and delay and delay because the developers, God bless them, right, they're all about profit but they would like to work with us first in my experience, but when we can't or won't work with them they will go to where they are going to find what they're looking for, and that would be the county, so we have to be strategic and we are the guardians of what Coral Gables should look like and we're the ones who should be leading the way, always providing our residents with sufficient information and input regarding the properties that affect them the most since they live the closest that would be the most impacted by any such changes, but what we're trying to do here and this is my point, I will urge all of the Commissioners today to support this ordinance because in my view not supporting this ordinance is in fact supporting out of control developer rights.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, Mr. Commissioner. Do we have a motion?

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll move it.

Commissioner Lara: Second it.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clergy any public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

City Clerk Urquia: First speaker Denise Carbine.

Mayor Lago: We'll move on to the next speaker. We'll come back.

City Clerk Urquia: So, the next speaker, Mr. Mayor, is going to be on Zoom.

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Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: And I am going to ask Miss Roberta Neway to go ahead, oh sorry ma'am, I'm going to ask Miss Roberta Neway to turn on her video so that we can ask her to swear and take an oath, so Miss Neway, if you could please turn on your video and raise your right hand

Ms. Neway: Okay, now you can see me okay ready.

City Clerk Urquia: Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you'll provide today will be the truth and nothing but the truth ma'am.

Ms. Neway: Yes, I do.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Ms. Neway: Okay. Good morning, everybody, I'm Roberta Neway, 1236 South Alhambra Circle, 33146. I'm right down the street from the overlay. I'm 100 percent for it. I think it's the right thing for the city to do. I would just like to ask that the city prioritize in our areas traffic calming and do all you can to enable people to be able to walk, bike, use micro mobility to get places, because we are a 15 minute area and the South Alhambra side is definitely a 15 area, 5 minute area of the city, Caballero maybe a 20 minute area. We need to be able to get places safely and quickly walking, biking, micro mobility, golf carts. Thank you for your time and have a great day.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, ma'am. Mr. Mayor, next speaker is going to be Kim Ogren.

Mayor Lago: Good morning.

Ms. Ogren: Good morning, thank you Commission and staff for what is obviously a lot of thoughtful hard work and a great pivot from the unfortunate delay that got us here, but I'm grateful for the effort and a hundred percent agreement with support for this ordinance, so thank you, thank you. I wanted to add two thoughts, same as the woman who just spoke, Roberta, if the future conversations whether they're informal and community meetings or formal and public hearings could put a pin in explaining to the citizens how the city will approach the commiserate bike ped safety access to that overpass that would be great. So that's really important since most of how we get around within this zone is on our bike and walking and secondly, I'm curious, can it be discussed another time? If any consideration 1205 Mariposa Villa Capri properties were given to be included in the zone, we are closer than the Caballero Waterway property. So those are my two comments. So, thank you very much.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. Mr. Manager, will you do me a favor and the two comments that she has can we respond accordingly.

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City Manager Iglesias: Yes. Yes, we can, yes, we can mayor. On the multifamily what we're doing is we're looking at the at the properties that are involved in this particular project and within the RTZ zone. So, we can certainly respond to and happy to meet with all the residents to further explain the situation.

Mayor Lago: I just want to memorialize those two questions and any other questions that come out prior to the Town Hall meeting that we'll have, we had one here yesterday. I have a Town Hall meeting twice a year. We'll have something similar for the residents in that neighborhood, we can either do it here or we can go to the neighborhood, whenever you'd like, but I want to make sure those two questions we ready to respond when we meet with them. Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes Mayor, of course.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, the last speaker appears to -- I have a card from her, but she also mentioned me on Zoom, and I can't find her in either place, so.

Mayor Lago: Okay. All right. So, we have a motion and a second.

Commissioner Lara: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes, and I just want to add a couple comments. A lot of the stuff that you were talking about traffic calming, bike ped safety, now with this back on our control, we can have conditions of approval, staff will have the traffic studies, staff will have control over that and so will the Commission, without this we won't. So yes.

Commissioner Castro: I think the Commission knows how i feel about this, but for us to have overlooked and not given importance to the traffic this corridor has, so the impact of the quality of life in this neighborhood, which I don't live far from it and i experience it every day is outrageous and speechless. I think this Commission and this leadership should have been proactive and when you say this is out of my control that's unacceptable, because if i would have had a little more information before all of this was happening, I would have fought and turned this world around for this not to happen, as how we have gone also to Tallahassee to help with Live Local and speak behalf of, now it's too late, I understand that, but we should have definitely been proactive so my vote here is no.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes. I just want to be clear we are going to do the resident meeting as well, correct.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Absolutely.

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Commissioner Fernandez: That's what we agreed to, okay.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Absolutely. I was just making a plug for GGG.

Commissioner Fernandez: Okay. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Madam Director, will you please be so kind to come up here. Thank you. When did the RTZ, when did they start discussing the RTZ?

Planning and Zoning Director: When the applicants are or when did it get adopted?

Mayor Lago: The RTZ discussion in the county.

Planning and Zoning Director: I mean since the 70s.

Mayor Lago: No, no. I'm saying but this area was being discussed.

City Attorney Suarez: For this particular property for these properties this corridor, Mayor, is that what you mean?

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Planning and Zoning Director: Well, the major changes happened in 2021, I want to say, or was 2022, they adopted the subzone in September of last year.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Thank you very much. Commissioner, these comments are directed to Commissioner Castro. You have been in public office next month for three years, the only person that should take responsibility is yourself. If we do not adopt this today, we do not adopt this today, instead of grandstanding politically and saying we should have stopped this, stop this, you will see 150 foot buildings which is allowed by the RTZ, you will see worse setbacks, you will have no design review, you do not have to go through the BOA, the Board of Architects, you will have no control over signage, you will not have any control over uses. For example, the Mark, we're talking about impact fees that are in the tune to \$6 to \$7 million dollars that our city would lose, which would not help us address roads, police, fire, art in public places. I know that it's election season and I know that everybody here is not happy with this piece of legislation. It's like basically having a cold and having to drink a medication that you're not happy with, but the only way you're going to get better is if you approve this legislation because at least here we have some semblance of control that we can rein in these projects. We have to stop politicizing and saying that we didn't do anything the fact because it's an assault on our staff that's here. Mr. Manager, how many times did we meet with county staff, with the County Mayor with the County Commissioners, with staff members, with County Attorneys to address RTZ.

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City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I've lost count of how many times we've actually met with them because we've met with so many of the staff, County Commissioners, county staff. The negotiations on the project, I think this came into play on the Commission meeting of May 20th of last year when County Commissioner Regalado came here and talked about the RTZ and what we did is move as quickly as possible to develop these overlays to try to see what we could do to bring these projects back. And so, it's been – Mayor, I know that you know how many meetings we've had on this. I've lost count honestly.

Mayor Lago: How many meetings have we had in regard to the Mark?

City Manager Iglesias: Probably at least half a dozen or more.

Mayor Lago: The reason why I bring this up and thank you Mr. Manager is because I know that election season is forthcoming and these are all great political ads to say, you know, the Mayor voted to upzone US-1, but the residents know what we're trying to do here, they understand, they understand that our hands are tied behind at our backs. They're all shaking their heads. I don't want to pass this today, but I have no choice. If I don't pass this today then the developer, like Commissioner Lara, will go on and on a path that's a lot more profitable. So, what are we offering? - We're offering an expedited review; we're offering an opportunity to gain some control. The FAR, to put it on the record, not that anybody's going to make it into the blogs anyways, but at the end of the day I think it's important to put it on the record. The FAR of the county through the RTZ is what amount?

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, it's unlimited.

Mayor Lago: Okay. What is the if they go through our RTZ, what is what is the...

City Manager Iglesias: 3.5 with TDR's, with and the additional TDRs.

Mayor Lago: Do you understand how dangerous that is? Do you understand how dangerous that is and what we're facing when you have a Commissioner that votes no on this. You're giving a developer unlimited FAR. Mr. Manager, will you explain for those who do not understand what an FAR is.

City Manager Iglesias: FAR is floor area ratio which means that if you have an FAR 3.5, you're limited to three times the site area. If you have unlimited FAR then you can build as much as you want within that envelope. So, there's no setbacks, 150 feet, you can build a box which is what they're building along the RTZ zone, so you can go 150 feet and box it out and build as much as you want.

Mayor Lago: Taking advantage of every square inch and you end up with buildings that do not have beautiful articulation or setbacks, they're just a cereal box. So, we can continue to play the game, the politics, so the articles come out and say that you know I voted against upzoning. Yeah, you can say that, but at the end of the day I gotta do what's right by the city even if it pains me and I know that my colleagues on the Commission and I commend you for your leadership on taking this position. I know here none of you wanted to vote in favor of this, but we have no other choice. So, my vote is yes. Thank you. We're moving on to the next item.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, we also need a motion on agenda item E-4.

Mayor Lago: Can I have a motion

Commissioner Lara: I'll move it.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Second.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, we have a motion and a second.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: It's funny how easy it is to go ahead and sue the youth, but when you're here affecting the quality of life of so many residents, we don't fight against that. We just let it - it's out of our control right. Very easy to sue the Youth Center and get into legal implications with our community, but when we're here to protect people here, oh no it's out of our control, you're politicizing it. I'm sorry, you just continue to say everything you're saying. I stand with the residents, and I will continue to do so to the end of my day. No.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lara: So, a vote for this which is going to be yes by me is a vote for the residents and I said it before, before we took the vote, and I'll say it again, voting against this is a vote for out of control development and it's only voting for it are you voting for and with the residents because I'd rather see that the residents live amongst and abutting a building that's as close as practical to what the Coral Gables zoning would have it look like versus an abomination which would definitely under no circumstances be siding with the residents as an alternative so my vote is yes.

Mayor Lago: So, I echo the sentiments of Commissioner Lara, who is an attorney. Madam City Attorney, very quickly for the record, what legal actions have been taken in regard to this matter?

*City Commission Meeting
March 10, 2026*

[Date]

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Agenda Items E-3 and E-4 are related – Ordinance approving amendments to the text and maps of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to small-scale amendment procedures – University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay

City Attorney Suarez: By other cities Mayor?

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Attorney Suarez: It's my understanding that the City of Miami is involved in a lawsuit against the county regarding this matter. I don't know have a current status update on that, but I know that's been pending for some time it is my understanding though that the development under the RTZ in City of Miami has not ceased and so the projects are going up by the lawsuit proceed that's my understanding.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

City Manager Iglesias: The City of Miami did not bond it. It's incredibly expensive to do that because then you have to basically eat the project if you lose or have or have issues concerning profitability and losses. So, it's not bonded, so the projects are moving forward, and I don't think they're going to be tearing down a 40-story building.

Mayor Lago: So, if I may and I asked that question so we can put it on the record, because it's very easy to say you know lawsuits, lawsuits, lawsuits. I've spoken to multiple attorneys they told me that there's no case, there's no case. It's a preemption by the state and by the county, we have to abide by that preemption. Our zoning is not superseded by the county's zoning. So, at the end of the day this is just simple common sense, and this is what happens. I've lived my entire life almost in this city, almost. I take great pride in this city. This is what happens when you don't know really what's happening in your own city. When you're new to the city, when you don't own a business, you don't own a property, this is what happens and it's a shame, it's a shame that we have to be basically politicizing something that the residents are here saying, we don't want it but we understand that we need this to protect us. So reluctantly, like my colleagues to the left and to the right, I vote yes, but this is an effort to protect our community to the best of our ability. Yes. Moving on. Thank you very much.