



# City of Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Staff Report

Applicant: City of Coral Gables

Application: **Zoning Code Text Amendment –Giralda Plaza Television Screens**

Public Hearing: Planning and Zoning Board

Date & Time: **October 11, 2023; 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, Article 2, "Zoning Districts," Section 2-403, "Giralda Plaza District Overlay," by allowing a television screen on the inside of a window on the pedestrian street of Giralda Plaza; providing for severability, repealer, codification, and 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

In the last decade, the City of Coral Gables has taken initiatives to improve the streetscape of Miracle Mile and Giralda Avenue with the intention of enhancing the City's downtown infrastructure and pedestrian character. The 100 Block of Giralda Avenue is known as "Restaurant Row," containing a plethora of restaurant options within Downtown Coral Gables. In October of 2017, the construction of the streetscape project was completed, referred to as "Giralda Plaza." This project transformed the streetscape into a charming pedestrian walkway where residents and visitors can now enjoy local dining, outdoor seating, shopping, bands, drinks, and civic events, such as "Giralda Under the Stars" and "Umbrella Sky Project."

Ordinance No. 2018-22 established the current Zoning Code's provisions for Giralda Plaza on the 100 block of Giralda Avenue, which promotes the pedestrian-oriented and low-rise character of "Restaurant Row." As directed by a member of the Commission, Staff has prepared a Zoning Code text amendment for the Giralda Plaza District Overlay to allow a television screen on the inside of a window on the pedestrian street of Giralda Plaza.

Section 2-201(D)(9)(g) of the Zoning Code currently states that a minimum of 60% and a maximum of 90% of the ground floor shall be transparent. Materials that obstruct visibility into the interior of the ground level space are not permitted. The proposed text amendment allows television screens to be located inside the storefront, oriented towards pedestrians. A business that has an active sidewalk café permit will be allowed to place a limit of 1 television screen per 25 feet of Giralda street frontage. If the Applicant seeks

a shorter distance, the Application will need review and approval from the Development Review Official (DRO) to ensure it is compatible with the adjacent businesses. The television screen must not exceed the width of the window and must not exceed 50% of the total window area.

The text amendment was presented at City Commission for first reading on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and approved on First Reading with a vote of 5 to 0.

### 3. PROPOSED ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENT

The proposed Zoning Code text amendments are provided below in ~~striketrough~~/underline format.

#### Article 2. Zoning Districts

Section 2-403. Giralda Plaza District Overlay.

##### A. Purpose and applicability.

1. The purpose of the Giralda Plaza District Overlay is to promote the goals, objectives, and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan in accordance with a set of comprehensive standards to be approved for those properties facing Giralda Plaza between Ponce de Leon Boulevard and Galiano Street. These standards are provided for the continuance and enhancement of Restaurant Row as a pedestrian-friendly area, well-suited for restaurants and similar compatible uses.
2. The district is established in order to maintain the following objectives:
  - i. Maintain the human scale and pedestrian-oriented character of Restaurant Row.
  - ii. Limit building height, bulk, mass, and intensity of large scale developments to promote compatibility with the existing low-rise scale of development as it presently exists for those properties facing Giralda Plaza.
  - iii. The Giralda Plaza District Overlay applies to the 100 Block of Giralda Plaza, the area legally described as Lots 21-37, Block 29, and Lots 3-24, Block 33, Section L.
  - iv. Unless otherwise provided in this section, all provisions of applicable underlying zoning district designations affecting individual property in this district shall control use and development.

##### B. Regulations.

1. Maximum site area: Ten-thousand (10,000) square feet.
2. Maximum height: Three (3) stories and forty-five (45) feet.
3. A minimum of ninety (90%) percent of the lot front facing Giralda Plaza, at ground level, shall be storefronts limited to retail, restaurant, art galleries, personal services, courtyards, and building entrances.
4. Except for pedestrian building entrances and courtyards there shall be a mandatory zero (0) foot setback along the Giralda Plaza frontage and there shall be no side setbacks along Giralda Plaza to ensure a continuous pedestrian scale façade.
5. All uses provided for in the underlying MX District shall be permitted. In addition, residential, boutique hotel (10 – 30 rooms), restaurant, retail, or office shall be permitted above the ground floor.

6. Required parking. Properties that develop pursuant to these regulations shall be exempt from parking requirements.
7. Building design. Mediterranean Architectural Design Level 2 is required in accordance with Section 5- 200 of the Zoning Code, for aesthetic review only. No additional height or floor area ratio (FAR) will be applied.
8. Curb cuts. No curb cuts shall be permitted on Giralda Plaza from Ponce de Leon Boulevard to Galiano Street.
9. Television screens. A business with an approved open-air dining permit may place a maximum of one (1) television screen per twenty-five (25) feet of Giralda street frontage on the inside of a ground floor window. A shorter distance may be reviewed and approved by the Development Review Official (DRO) for compatibility with the adjacent businesses. The television screen shall not exceed the width of the window and the size shall not exceed fifty (50%) percent of the total window area. The hours of operation and noise levels shall comply with Section E.1 of the Zoning Code.
10. Where the designated site or project is subject to multiple ownership as part of the application for site plan review, the City Commission may allow the Owners of the property to submit a Covenant in Lieu of Unity of Title in accordance with the provisions of Section 14-205.

Alterations, expansions, renovations, and similar improvements of existing structures shall, to the extent feasible, conform to the requirements of this section and other applicable provisions of these regulations.

#### 4. REVIEW TIMELINE / PUBLIC NOTICE

##### City Review Timeline

The submitted applications have undergone the following City reviews:

REVIEW COMMITTEES AND BOARDS	DATE
City Commission 1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	09.26.23
Planning and Zoning Board	10.11.23
City Commission 2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	TBD

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

PUBLIC NOTICE	DATE
Legal advertisement	09.29.23
Posted agenda and Staff report on City web page/City Hall	10.06.23

#### 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 Zoning Code unless the text amendment:

Standard	Staff Evaluation
a. Promotes public health, safety, and welfare.	The intent of the proposed amendment is to allow a television screen on the inside of a window on the pedestrian street of Giralda Plaza. This amendment is beneficial for businesses who want to attract pedestrians to their business. Pedestrians who are dining outside will enjoy sports, news, entertainment, or any other channel of the retailer's choosing. For instance, television screens displaying live sports channels will welcome the general public and attract more customers to the restaurant and Giralda Plaza. More pedestrians will gather to enjoy live sports on the television as another source of entertainment while dining. As a result, small businesses on Giralda Plaza will profit from the television screens that serve as amenities, thereby supporting the local economy.
b. Does not permit uses the Comprehensive Plan prohibits in the area affected by the text amendment.	The proposed amendment does not affect any uses permitted in the Comprehensive Plan.
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 amendment does not allow densities or intensities in excess of what are permitted by the future land uses.
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.	The proposed text amendment will not affect the level of service for public infrastructure.
e. Does not directly conflict with any objective or policy of the Comprehensive Plan.	The proposed amendment does not directly conflict with any objective or policy of the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed amendments meets Policy FLU-1.9.1. and Policy DES-1.1.2.

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

### Consistency Evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan (CP) Goals, Objectives and Policies

The Planning and Zoning Division has reviewed the CP and finds the following CP Goals, Objectives and Policies are applicable. Consistent CP Goals & Objectives and Policies are as follows:

Ref. No.	CP Goal, Objective and Policy	Basis for Consistency
1.	<b>Policy FLU 1.9.1.</b> Encourage balanced mixed use development in the central business district and adjoining commercial areas to promote pedestrian activity and provide for specific commitments to design excellence and long term economic and cultural vitality.	Complies

Ref. No.	CP Goal, Objective and Policy	Basis for Consistency
2.	<b>Policy DES-1.1.2.</b> Provide for rigorous design guidelines, standards, and review processes via the City’s Zoning Code that ensure high quality design of buildings and spaces.	Complies

The proposed text amendment to Section 6-103.6. of the Zoning Code will allow a television screen on the inside of a window on the pedestrian street of Giralda Plaza. This is “consistent” with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan.

This amendment fulfills Policy FLU-1.9.1. Television screens playing live sports, news, or other sources of entertainment can attract more pedestrian activity and outdoor dining opportunities for restaurants and stores on Giralda Plaza. Television screens will serve as another pedestrian amenity on Giralda Plaza, making the area a more alluring place to visit in Downtown Coral Gables and contributing to the economic vitality of the City.

Per Policy DES-1.1.2., the City will “Provide for rigorous design guidelines, standards, and review processes via the City’s Zoning Code that ensure high quality design of buildings and spaces.” As written in the text amendment, shorter distances will be reviewed and approved by the Development Review Official (DRO). The DRO will ensure that the television screen is compatible with neighboring businesses and ensure the screen does not exceed the width of the window. The administrative review and approval process ensures that the City is taking the appropriate measures and following rigorous design guidelines, standards, and review processes, ensuring that Giralda Plaza maintains its high-quality design as a public space.

## 6. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

## 7. ATTACHMENTS

### A. Mail Notice and Legal advertisement

Please visit the City’s webpage at [www.coralgables.com](http://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  
City Planner  
City of Coral Gables, Florida

## MIAMI-DADE

STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE:

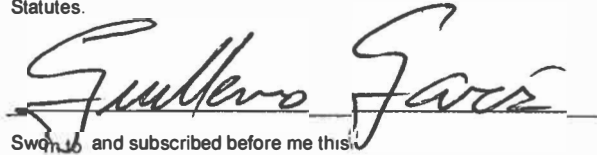
Before the undersigned authority personally appeared GUILLERMO GARCIA, who on oath says that he or she is the DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, Legal Notices of the Miami Daily Business Review f/k/a Miami Review, of Miami-Dade County, Florida; that the attached copy of advertisement, being a Legal Advertisement of Notice in the matter of

CITY OF CORAL GABLES - PUBLIC HEARING - LOCAL  
PLANNING AGENCY / PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD - OCT.  
11, 2023

in the XXXX Court,  
was published in a newspaper by print in the issues of Miami  
Daily Business Review f/k/a Miami Review on

09/29/2023

Affiant further says that the newspaper complies with all  
legal requirements for publication in chapter 50, Florida  
Statutes.

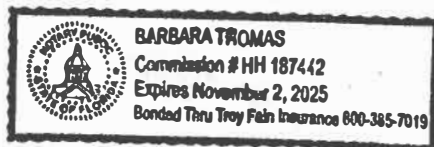



Sworn to and subscribed before me this  
29 day of SEPTEMBER, A.D. 2023



(SEAL)

GUILLERMO GARCIA personally known to me

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
HYBRID MEETING ON ZOOM PLATFORM**

<b>City Public Hearing Dates/Times</b>	<b>Local Planning Agency / Planning and Zoning Board Wednesday, October 11, 2023, 6:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>City Commission Chamber, City Hall 405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL 33134</b>

**PUBLIC NOTICE** is hereby given that the City of Coral Gables, Florida, Local Planning Agency (LPA)/ Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) will conduct Public Hearing on the following:

1. An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for a text amendment to Article 2 "Zoning Districts," Section 2-405 "Residential Infill Regulations Overlay District (RIR)" of the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code to provide a maximum building length of three hundred feet for all properties seeking approval pursuant to the Residential Infill Regulations; providing for severability, repealer, codification, and an effective date. (07 12 23 PZB meeting - deferred by Applicant; 09 21 23 PZB meeting - deferred by PZB)
2. A Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida granting conditional use approval pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-203, "Conditional Uses" for a School on a property zoned as Mixed- Use-1 (MX1) located at 141 Grand Avenue, Coral Gables, Florida; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and an effective date.

10/11/2023

3. An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code (Zoning Code), amending Article 10, "Parking and Access," Section 10-112 "Miscellaneous Parking Standards," creating provisions for considering reduction of parking requirements for affordable housing located near a major transit stop as required by the Live Local Act, Ch. 2023-17, Laws of Florida; providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date.
4. An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, Article 6, "Landscape," by amending the utilization of artificial turf on open joints of pavement; and Article 10, "Parking and Access," by providing review of materials in pavement joints; and providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and an effective date.
5. An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, Article 2, "Zoning districts," Section 2-403, "Giralda Plaza District Overlay," by allowing a television screen on the inside of a window on the pedestrian street of Giralda Plaza; providing for severability, repealer, codification, and for an effective date.

The Planning and Zoning Board will be holding its board meeting on Wednesday, October 11, 2023, commencing at 6:00 p.m. Pursuant to Resolution No. 2021-116, the City of Coral Gables has returned to traditional in-person meetings. However, the City Commission has established the ability for the public to virtually provide sworn testimony or public comments (non-sworn and without evidentiary value). Any individual who wishes to provide sworn testimony virtually must have their video on and must be sworn in.

Members of the public may join the meeting via Zoom at (<https://zoom.us/j/83768709513>). In addition, a dedicated phone line will be available so that any individual who does not wish (or is unable) to use Zoom may listen to and participate in the meeting by dialing: (305) 461-6769 Meeting ID: 837 8870 9513. The public may comment on an item using the City's E-Comment function which may be found on the City's website at: (<https://coralgables.granicusideas.com/meetings>) once the meeting's agenda is published, or by sending an email to [planning@coralgables.com](mailto:planning@coralgables.com) prior to the meeting.

The meeting will also be broadcasted live for members of the public to view on the City's website ([www.coralgables.com/cgtv](http://www.coralgables.com/cgtv)) as well as Channel 77 on Comcast.

Sincerely,  
City of Coral Gables, Florida  
9/29

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