

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: February 3, 2025 9:35 a.m. Second Reading Public Hearing

TITLE: VISIBILITY TRIANGLE REQUIREMENTS FOR OCEANFRONT PROPERTIES – LDR AMENDMENT
AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE RESILIENCY CODE OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, BY AMENDING CHAPTER 7, ENTITLED “ZONING DISTRICTS AND REGULATIONS,” ARTICLE III, ENTITLED “OVERLAY DISTRICTS,” DIVISION 1, ENTITLED “DUNE PRESERVATION AND OCEANFRONT OVERLAYS,” SECTION 7.3.1.2, ENTITLED “OCEANFRONT,” BY REFERENCING COMPLIANCE WITH NEWLY CREATED SECTION 14-1 OF THE MIAMI BEACH CODE, ENTITLED “BEACHWALK ACCESS AND VISIBILITY,” AND ADOPTING CORRESPONDING AMENDMENTS TO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; AND PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, REPEALER, SEVERABILITY, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

RECOMMENDATION

The Administration recommends that the Mayor and City Commission (City Commission) adopt the ordinance.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

On May 15, 2024, at the request of Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt, the City Commission referred an item pertaining to visibility sight lines from private property and street ends entering the beach walk (C4 AE) to the Land Use and Sustainability Committee (LUSC) and the Planning Board. On July 9, 2024 the LUSC discussed and continued the item to the September 5, 2024 LUSC meeting with direction to the Administration to develop options for addressing safety and visibility at access points to the beach walk.

September 5, 2024, the LUSC discussed and continued the item to the October 14, 2024 meeting with direction to the Administration to prepare graphics and amend the text of the proposed code section to better reflect a visibility triangle. On October 14, 2024, the LUSC recommended that the City Commission approve the proposed amendment to Chapter 14 of the General Ordinances of the City Code (City Code), with the following modifications:

1. The 10-foot visibility triangle shall apply to properties with at least 100 feet of frontage on the beach walk.
2. The 6-foot visibility triangle shall apply to properties with less than 100 feet of frontage on the beach walk.
3. The measurement of the visibility triangle shall be taken from the western edge of the beach walk.
4. The regulations shall also apply to future sections of the bay walk and cut walk, as well as city owned properties.

The LUSC also recommended that the Planning Board transmit a companion amendment to the Land Development Regulations of the City Code (LDRs), amending the Oceanfront Overlay regulations to reference compliance with Chapter 14 of the City Code.

ANALYSIS

Currently, fences and gates located in the rear of oceanfront properties are limited to a maximum height of seven (7') feet if they are setback at least four feet from the property line. If placed along a property line, the maximum height cannot exceed five (5') feet. All fences and gates require certificate of appropriateness or design review, depending on the location of the property, as part of the permit process and are generally required to consist of an open design, such as aluminum picket.

Regarding shrubbery and hedges, pursuant to section 7.5.3.2 of the LDRs, there is no height limitation for hedge material located within a required yard in any district. However, since new development along the ocean requires either Design Review Board (DRB) or Historic Preservation Board (HPB) approval, these boards have the latitude to regulate the dimensions and design (including overall height) of all landscape material.

A separate amendment to Chapter 14 of the City Code has been proposed, which would establish regulations for structures and landscape within 6-10 feet (depending on beach frontage) of a street-end or public access point to the beach walk. The purpose of these regulations is to ensure pedestrian visibility between a height of 2 feet and 10 feet above the adjacent grade.

To ensure that future development projects are consistent with the standards and regulations contained in Chapter 14, the attached amendment to Section 7.3.1.2 of the LDRs, which provides a reference to the applicable requirements of Chapter 14 in the development regulations of the Oceanfront Overlay, is also proposed.

PLANNING BOARD REVIEW

On November 26, 2024, the Planning Board held a public hearing and transmitted the proposed ordinance to the City Commission with a favorable recommendation (6-0).

UPDATE

The subject ordinance was approved by the City Commission at First Reading on December 11, 2024, with no changes.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

No Fiscal Impact Expected

Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate? Yes
(FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

If applicable, the Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on: 1/6/2025
See BIE at: <https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notice/>

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Not Applicable

CONCLUSION

The Administration recommends the City Commission adopt the ordinance.

Applicable Area

Citywide

Is this a "Residents Right to Know" item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-17?

Yes

Is this item related to a G.O. Bond Project?

No

Was this Agenda Item initially requested by a lobbyist which, as defined in Code Sec. 2-481, includes a principal engaged in lobbying? No

If so, specify the name of lobbyist(s) and principal(s):

Department

Planning

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt

Co-sponsor(s)

Condensed Title

9:35 a.m. 2nd Rdg, Visibility Triangle Requirements for Oceanfront Properties-LDR Amendment. (Bhatt) PL 5/7