

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Rickelle Williams, Interim City Manager

DATE: July 24, 2024 10:25 a.m. Second Reading Public Hearing

TITLE: HEIGHT LIMITS FOR MAIN USE PARKING GARAGES - TERMINAL ISLAND
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, AT CHAPTER 5, "OFF-STREET PARKING," ARTICLE III, "DESIGN STANDARDS," AT DIVISION 10, "PARKING GARAGE DESIGN STANDARDS," SECTION 5.3.10(A), "GENERAL STANDARDS," AND CHAPTER 7, "ZONING DISTRICTS AND REGULATIONS," ARTICLE I, "GENERAL TO ALL ZONING DISTRICTS," AT DIVISION 6, "PARKING SCREENING STANDARDS," SECTION 7.1.6.2, "STANDARDS," TO ALLOW FOR ADDITIONAL HEIGHT AND MODIFY PARKING SCREENING STANDARDS FOR MAIN USE PARKING GARAGES LOCATED ON TERMINAL ISLAND; 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 September 29, 2023, the applicant, Fisher Island Community Association, Inc. submitted a private application to the Planning Department for an amendment to the Land Development Regulations of the City Code (LDRs). Specifically, the application is to increase the maximum allowable building height for main use parking structures in the I-1 zoning district on Terminal Island.

The item was scheduled to be considered by the Planning Board (PB) on December 19, 2023, but the meeting was canceled due to a lack of quorum. On January 30, 2024, the Planning Board continued the item to the February 27, 2024 hearing at the request of the applicant. On February 27, 2024, the Planning Board continued the item to the March 26, 2024 meeting, also at the request of the applicant.

The existing parking garage on the east side of Terminal Island, which provides parking for employees of Fisher Island, previously obtained the following development approvals:

- On April 30, 2013, the PB issued a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the new construction of a parking garage at the subject property, which is over 50,000 square feet (PB File No. 2100).
- On June 4, 2013, the Design Review Board (DRB) approved the construction of the parking garage in connection with a commercial ferry service terminal to and from Fisher Island (DRB File No. 22974).
- On December 17, 2013, the PB approved a Modification to the Conditional Use Permit office space on the north end of the fourth floor of the Parking Garage (PB File No. 2100).

- On January 10, 2014, the Board of Adjustment (BOA) approved a variance to waive the requirement to incorporate residential or commercial uses at the first level, a variance to waive the requirement to incorporate residential or commercial uses at every level facing a waterway, and a variance to exceed the maximum permitted building height (BOA File No. 3677). The variance allows the garage to be 43 feet, which is 3 feet above the permitted height in the LDRs.

ANALYSIS

The proposed ordinance would allow for a main use parking structure located within the I-1 zoning district, only on Terminal Island, to have a maximum building height of 75 feet. Currently the maximum height limit is 40 feet for main use parking structures in the I-1 district. For comparison purposes, under the provisions of section 5.3.10 of the LDRs, main use parking structures located in the Commercial High Intensity (CD-3) district have a maximum height limit of 75 feet.

The subject proposal would allow for new parking levels to be added to the existing parking structure on the east side of Terminal Island. The subject garage serves the Fisher Island employee ferry terminal; residents of Fisher Island use the ferry terminal on the west side of Terminal Island.

The ferry terminal currently experiences significant queuing due to high usage from employees and construction vehicles. These queues have caused back-ups off the garage property and onto the Terminal Island access road. Sometimes this impedes access to the U.S. Coast Guard Base Miami and the City of Miami Beach Facilities and Fleet Management Department vehicle maintenance facility and Public Works Sanitation Division offices during morning peak hours.

According to the traffic analysis prepared by the applicant, and reviewed by the Planning Board, the proposed increase in parking spaces that will result from the increase in allowable building height is not expected to result in an increase in vehicle trips and congestion within Terminal Island. The Transportation and Mobility Department has reviewed the applicants' analysis and agrees with its conclusions. In this regard, the additional parking will be for employees who currently take their vehicles onto the ferry and park on Fisher Island. With an increase in parking spaces on Terminal Island, these same vehicles would park in the garage, allowing employees to walk onto the ferry, thereby minimizing the vehicle queue to get on the ferry.

Staff does have concerns with the queuing that would take place during the future construction of the additional levels proposed for the garage, as it is likely that portions of the existing garage would have to close for the construction to take place safely. To this end, the applicant has indicated that satellite parking spaces will be leased in downtown Miami or Miami Beach, and employees would be brought to the ferry via shuttle vans.

If the proposed amendment is adopted by the City Commission, subsequent applications to the Design Review Board and Planning Board would be required for approval of the proposed vertical expansion of the existing garage. The Planning Board would have to approve a modification to the garage's Conditional Use Permit and the details of the satellite parking plan could be refined as part of the CUP process. It is anticipated that operating conditions will be incorporated into the CUP to minimize traffic impacts to the MacArthur Causeway during peak hours.

From a design perspective, the proposal would allow main use garages to have a height limit that is equivalent to the allowable height for commercial and office buildings on Terminal Island. There is an approved development on the adjacent site to the west that is similar in scale. Staff does have concerns with the aesthetics of the existing garage and the visual impact to surrounding areas due to the minimal architectural screening. Since a modification to the structure would require the review and approval of the DRB, there will be an opportunity to improve the architectural screening on the garage and upgrade its aesthetics.

PLANNING BOARD REVIEW

On March 26, 2024, the Planning Board held a public hearing and transmitted the proposed ordinance to the City Commission with a favorable recommendation (5-1).

UPDATE

The subject ordinance was approved at First Reading on May 15, 2024 by the City Commission.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate? No
(FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

The Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on 7/5/2024. See BIE at:
<https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notice/>

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

N/A

CONCLUSION

The Administration recommends that the City Commission adopt the ordinance.

Applicable Area

South Beach

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)

Private Applicant

Co-sponsor(s)

Condensed Title

10:25 a.m. 2nd Rdg, Height Limits for Main Use Parking Garages - Terminal Island. (Private Applicant) PL