

CITY OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-__

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA PROVIDING FOR TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES OFFICIAL ZONING CODE BY AMENDING ARTICLE 5, "ARCHITECTURE," SECTION 5-500, "ROOFS," TO CLARIFY ROOF DESIGN STANDARDS BY INCORPORATING A COMBINATION OF PITCHED AND FLAT ROOF FORMS AND TO ESTABLISH THAT ROOF DESIGNS PROPOSED AS ENTIRELY FLAT REQUIRE REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY THE FULL BOARD OF ARCHITECTS; TO REMOVE SECTIONS 5-503 AND 5-504 AND RENUMBER SUBSEQUENT SECTIONS; TO DELETE OUTDATED PARAPET HEIGHT PROVISIONS IN FLOOD HAZARD DISTRICTS; AND PROVIDING FOR A REPEALER PROVISION, SEVERABILITY CLAUSE, CODIFICATION, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the 1925 Coral Gables Building Code required all pitched roofs to be of tile, and all buildings with other roof types to have coverings of approved standard quality, such as brick, concrete, tile, slate, highest grade of tin roofing, or built-up roofing; and

WHEREAS, the original 1929 Warranty Deed Book 1304 and the 1930 Zoning Code required that all buildings except within the themed villages and non-residential areas, to be of Spanish, Venetian, Moorish, Italian, or other similarly harmonious types of architecture and that all pitched roofs to be of tile; and

WHEREAS, the 1946 Zoning Code prohibited flat roofs on single-family and duplexes, except within the McFarlane Homestead and Golden Gate subdivisions and districts where modern style architecture was allowed; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 1051 in 1957 allowed use of flat roofs on single-family and duplexes; and

WHEREAS, until the adoption of the 2007 Zoning Code Rewrite, most residential homes were required to be built in a harmonious style to the Mediterranean architectural style and therefore inherently included pitched roofs; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 2007-01 removed the requirement of most buildings to be designed harmoniously with Mediterranean architecture, and instead allowed any identifiable architectural style to be built, including modern style architecture, however, did not update the requirements for pitch and flat roofs; and

WHEREAS, Section 5-500 of the Zoning Code requires a combination of pitch and flat roofs, however, pitch roofs on modern style architecture may not be appropriate; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds that certain roof design requirements adopted prior to the 2007 Zoning Code Rewrite, including requirements for combined roof types and allowances for painting cement tile roofs are outdated, inconsistent with contemporary architectural practices, and unnecessarily restrictive of identifiable architectural styles; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission further finds that roof design is an integral component of overall building design and plays an essential role in establishing architectural character and ensuring visual compatibility with surrounding structures and neighborhood context, independent of structural and safety standards regulated by the Florida Building Code; and

WHEREAS, Staff has drafted Zoning Code text amendments to clarify roof design standards, including the intent to incorporate a combination of pitched and flat roof forms; to establish that roof designs proposed as entirely flat require review and approval by the full Board of Architects; to clarify that high-quality roof materials not expressly listed in the Code may be approved by the City Architect and, where applicable, approval by the full Board of Architects; and to delete outdated building height provisions related to parapets in flood hazard districts; and

WHEREAS, after notice was duly published, a public hearing was held before the Planning and Zoning Board on April 15, 2026, at which hearing all interested parties were afforded the opportunity to be heard; and

WHEREAS, the Planning and Zoning Board was presented with text amendments to the Official Zoning Code, and after due consideration, recommended approval/denial (vote: _ to _) of the text amendment; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission held a public hearing on ____, 2026 at which hearing all interested persons were afforded an opportunity to be heard, and the item was approved on first reading (vote: _ to _); and,

WHEREAS, after notice was duly published, a public hearing for Second Reading was held before the City Commission, at which hearing all interested parties were afforded the opportunity to be heard, and the item was approved on second reading.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES THAT:

SECTION 1. The foregoing “**WHEREAS**” clauses are hereby ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of this Ordinance upon adoption hereof.

SECTION 2. The Official Zoning Code of the City of Coral Gables is hereby amended to read as follows¹:

ARTICLE 5. ARCHITECTURE

Section 5-500. Roofs

Section 5-501. Roofs; general.

Except as provided for in this Section, all roofs for single-family residences, townhouses, duplexes, overnight accommodations and uses in a Special Use District shall be constructed of tile, ~~coral rock slabs~~, slate or copper in its natural state and allowed to oxidize and patina, or other high-quality materials subject to review and approval by the City Architect and, where applicable, approval by the full Board of Architects, as determined appropriate based on the building’s architectural style, neighborhood context, and sound structural principles.

The intent of this section is to ensure visual compatibility with surrounding structures and neighborhood context. A contextual architectural analysis shall be submitted by an applicant in support of any proposed roofing material, architectural character which shall include such drawings, specifications, and supporting documentation as may be required by the City Architect or the Board of Architects. The analysis shall clearly identify and describe the specific neighborhood or defined surrounding built environment to which the proposed structure relates and shall evaluate compatibility with the established architectural character, massing, scale, the predominate roof slope of the neighborhood and the existing materials of that community.

Section 5-502. Flat roofs ~~without a parapet.~~

Flat roofs shall have a parapet with a minimum thickness of eight (8) inches and a minimum height of twelve (12) inches above the roof deck, unless otherwise expressly permitted in this Section or as otherwise approved by the Board of Architects. Roof designs are intended to incorporate a combination of pitched and flat roof forms. Roof designs proposed as entirely flat, without any pitched or sloped roof components, shall require review and approval by the full Board of Architects and shall not be approved administratively. Except on Lots 1 through 18, inclusive, Block 89, Lots 20 through 36, inclusive, Block 91, Riviera Section Part Three and Lots 1, 2, 3 and Lots 5 through 12, inclusive, Block 4 and Lots 11 through 16, Block 6, French Village, flat roofs without a parapet shall be permitted upon buildings subject to the following restrictions noted hereinafter.

¹ Deletions are indicated by ~~strike through~~. Insertions are indicated by underline.

- A. Above porch or room additions within the L, T or U of a residential building having all tile roofs provided:
 - 1. A tile roof is not practical, as shall be determined by the Board of Architects.
 - 2. The flat roof portion shall not exceed fifteen (15%) percent of the ground area of the building.
 - 3. The flat roof portion is not visible from the front elevation of the building on an inside lot, or is not visible from the front or side street elevations on a corner lot.
- B. Above one-story rooms in the rear of a two-story residence, duplex or apartment on inside lots, or over one-story rooms in the rear of a two-story residence, duplex or apartment where the room is not visible from the front or side street elevation on corner lots, providing in all cases some type of metal or masonry railing, as shall be approved by the Board of Architects is installed upon such flat roof.
- C. The Design & Innovation District Overlay where the roof is constructed entirely of non-combustible materials.
- D. On boathouses, provided some ornamental railing, design or other treatment, as shall be approved by the Board of Architects, is placed upon such flat roof.
- E. Above meter rooms, elevator towers, elevator machinery and equipment rooms, stair towers, and air-conditioning rooms in MX Districts where the roof is constructed entirely of non-combustible materials.
- ~~F. Above one (1) story areas of a two (2) story building, or as a balcony, tower or other feature used to enhance the architecture of a building (as with the Colonial or Mediterranean style), provided that if located on an elevation visible to the street, the flat roof portions visible to the street shall not constitute more than twenty (20%) percent of the building's total roof area and a metal or masonry railing is installed on such flat roof.~~
- ~~G. Above two (2) story areas of a two (2) story building, or as a balcony, tower or other feature used to enhance the architecture of a building (as with the Colonial or Mediterranean style), provided that if located on an elevation visible to the street, the flat roof portions visible to the street shall not constitute more than twenty (20%) percent of the building's total roof area and that said flat roof shall not exceed the maximum allowable height above established grade.~~

Section 5-503. Flat roofs with a parapet.

Except on Lots 1 through 18, inclusive, Block 89, Lots 20 through 36, inclusive, Block 91, Riviera Section Part Three, and Lots 1, 2, 3 and Lots 5 through 12, inclusive, Block 4 and Lots 11 through 16, Block 6, French Village, flat roofs with a parapet (minimum eight (8) inches thick) shall be permitted upon single family residences and accessory buildings and structures subject to restrictions noted hereinafter:

- ~~A. The residence has a flat roof with a parapet and with a pitched roof area that is lesser in size and proportion to the flat roof area. The roof deck of the flat roof with a maximum thirty (30) inch high parapet shall not exceed twenty four (24) feet above established grade and the top of the parapet shall not exceed twenty six (26) feet and six (6) inches above established grade. For residences in flood hazard districts with a~~

~~maximum height of thirty nine (39) feet above established grade, the roof deck of the flat roof with a maximum thirty (30) inch high parapet shall not exceed thirty four (34) feet above established grade and the top of the parapet shall not exceed thirty six (36) feet and six (6) inches above established grade. The roof shall be pitched in accordance with the provisions of the Florida Building Code.~~

~~B. The residence has a flat roof with a parapet with and a pitched roof area that is greater in size and proportion to the flat roof area. The roof deck of the flat roof with a maximum thirty (30) inch high parapet shall not exceed twenty four (24) feet above established grade and the top of the parapet shall not exceed twenty six (26) feet and six (6) inches above established grade. For residences in flood hazard districts with a maximum height of thirty nine (39) feet above established grade, the roof deck of the flat roof with a maximum thirty (30) inch high parapet shall not exceed thirty four (34) feet above established grade and the top of the parapet shall not exceed thirty six (36) feet and six (6) inches above established grade. The roof shall be pitched in accordance with the provisions of the Florida Building Code.~~

~~C. Over boat houses.~~

~~D. Upon buildings designed and devoted to MF2, MFSA, C, and I Districts.~~

Section 5-504. Roofs for commercial buildings.

~~Except for motels, and mixed-use buildings shall be permitted to have flat roofs with a parapet (minimum eight (8) inches thick and eighteen (18) inches above the roof at all points, provided, however, that where the height of the building and other attendant and connected circumstances and features of said building justify a lesser height, such parapet wall may be as low as six (6) inches at any point above the roof) where the roof is constructed entirely of non-combustible materials.~~

Section 5-5053. Pitched roofs, material.

Pitched roofs shall be constructed of:

- A. Vitrified clay tile.
- B. White concrete tile. The finished surface for white concrete tile shall be a mixture of one (1) part Portland white cement to three (3) parts white silica sand, together with a waterproofing and plasticizer ad-mix. These ingredients shall be mixed with water to a consistency equal to that of a finishing coat of plaster. The mix thus obtained shall be pressure troweled onto the surface of the freshly extruded tile at the time of manufacture.
- C. Colored cement tile, provided the tile is color saturated with the same color intensity throughout and the color is not surface applied, and provided the color meets with approval of the Board of Architects, taken in conjunction with the surrounding areas. Tiles shall not be painted or otherwise altered on the surface after installation to change their color. ~~Such colored cement tile roofs, which have been installed according to approved plans may be painted or repainted a different color from the original color of the installed tile subject to approval of the application and the paint specifications by the Board of Architects.~~

- ~~D.~~ -Coral rock slabs laid shingle fashion.
- ~~E~~D. Thick butt variegated colored slate as approved by the Board of Architects.
- ~~F~~E. White Bermuda roof, with a minimum pitch of not less than five (5) inches in twelve (12) inches.
- ~~G~~F. Where there exists a pitched roof of other material that was permitted at the time of the original construction, additions to or replacements to said building may use the same material.
- ~~H~~G. Roofs on accessory buildings shall conform to the roof requirements for the principal building provided, ~~that bomb shelters and/or fallout shelters may be constructed with a flat roof that the maximum height of such shall not exceed four (4) feet above grade.~~
- ~~H~~H. Roof tiles with surfaces applied glaze under the manufacturer's process, provided, that the color meets with the approval of the Board of Architects taken in conjunction with the surrounding area and provided further that the tile shall not be painted or repainted.
- ~~J~~I. Copper in its natural state and allowed to oxidize and patina may be used as a roofing material for residential uses subject to approval of design, manner of installation, and conformity with the architectural design, style and composition of the proposed residential structure as shall be approved by the Board of Architects. An approved copper roof must remain in its natural state as a metal, thereby prohibiting painting, coating, surface application, or any other fabrication or manufacturing process that alters its natural metallic state.
- ~~K~~J. Barrel Tile, provided that the tile is three (3) inches in ~~depth~~ height and fire clay material or as otherwise approved by the Board of Architects.
- ~~L~~K. Standing seam metal may be used on single-family homes with the approval of the full Board of Architects as deemed appropriate for the architectural style and neighborhood character. Metal roofs are prohibited within Historic Districts and shall require the additional approval from the Historic Preservation Board for locally designated and historically significant homes (as determined by the Historic Preservation Officer). Metal roofs shall not imitate other materials and not be painted after installation.
- ~~M~~L. Specific exceptions include: Golden Gate, MacFarlane Homestead and St. Alban's Park, Coconut Grove Warehouse Center, the Design & Innovation District Overlay and/or Mixed-Use District abutting South Dixie Highway, ~~and where plastic or glass translucent material is used as~~ or only as expressly permitted elsewhere in this article.-

Section 5-5064. Flat roofs, material.

All flat roofs shall have coverings of approved standard quality, such as concrete, gypsum, tile, built-up roofing of tar and paper, or tar paper and gravel, ~~asbestos roofing,~~ or of like grade, which would rank as Class A or B fire-resistance rating as determined by the recognized testing standards. ~~under test specifications of the National Board of Fire Underwriters.~~

Section 5-5075. ~~Plastic, f~~Fiberglass, glass and aluminum roofs.

Any ~~plastic or~~ glass translucent material or flat aluminum material, as approved by the Board of Architects may be used as a roof covering on screened enclosures or screened porches of residences providing it does not extend out from the outside wall of the

building more than six (6) feet including any existing roof overhang and further provided it is not visible from the street.

Section 5-5086. Skylights.

Section 5-5097. Roof projections.

Section 5-51008. Roof trusses.

SECTION 3. All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent or in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4. If any section, part of section, paragraph, clause, phrase or word of this Ordinance is declared invalid, the remaining provisions of this Ordinance shall not be affected.

SECTION 5. It is the intention of the Commission of the City of Coral Gables, Florida, that the provisions of this Ordinance shall become and be made part of the Code of the City of Coral Gables, Florida; and that the sections of this “ordinance” may be changed to “section”, “article”, or such other appropriate word or phrase in order to accomplish such intentions.

SECTION 6. If the Code of the City of Coral Gables Tables of Contents or other reference portions is affected by these provisions, then changes are approved as a part of this Ordinance.

SECTION 7. This Ordinance shall become effective upon the date of its passage and adoption herein.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS ____ OF ____, A.D., 2026.

APPROVED:

VINCE LAGO
MAYOR

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM

AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

BILLY Y. URQUIA
CITY CLERK

CRISTINA SUAREZ
CITY ATTORNEY