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Staff Analysis and Recommendation

To: Honorable Chair and Members of the Local Planning Agency
From: Darby P. Delsalle, AICP, Planning Director
Subject: Architectural Design Review
Date: October 24, 2017

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, RELATING TO ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STANDARDS; AMENDING CHAPTER 13, LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; OF ARTICLE III, WORKFORCE HOUSING; AMENDING SECTION 13-304(H) AND CREATING SECTION 13-311, ENTITLED, "DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS," TO ESTABLISH DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW STANDARDS FOR MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL AND NONRESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION INTO THE CODE; PROVIDING FOR ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT, SEVERABILITY, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
(Ceasar Mestre)

A. BACKGROUND

At the February 7, 2017, Town Council meeting, Councilperson Mestre introduced an item on New Business which sought to address aesthetic standards of development. After some discussion, the Town Council directed the Town Manager to explore and possibly prepare an ordinance that would address design standards for new development within the Town. The request followed in the wake of an active development cycle that brought to light concerns over quality design and compatibility of development. The Council's direction was to identify codifiable design standards that would provide staff the needed tools to promote quality design without interrupting the timeliness of the development review process. The Council's directive included holding a workshop to discuss staff recommendation. The Council also specifically excluded single family residential development from such a review requirement.

The Council's desire was not to undertake the implementation of a full-scale design review manual, rather it was to focus on broader architectural principals. As such, the proposed ordinance focuses on the established of recognized architectural styles, and to address building scale and massing, façade treatments and material, pedestrian scale (windows, doors,

entrances, and parking), and other ancillary design features intended to screen exterior mechanical equipment and attachments. The proposed aesthetic standards are to be integrated into the existing site plan review procedures and identified with their own criteria. Professional staff review would be required for all multifamily, commercial and industrial projects. Council shall retain final authority for those requests requiring public hearing. The proposed ordinance also provides for an appeal procedure.

On October 12, 2017, at a publicly advertised workshop, staff presented its recommendation to the Town Council regarding implementation of standards identified at the preceding paragraph. After some discussion, the Council reached consensus regarding the desired elements to be incorporated into the Land Development Code (LDC). The attached ordinance is reflective of that consensus.

B. PROPOSED CHANGES

The following described elements are presented in the same order that they appear in the proposed ordinance.

Review procedure. The first proposed adjustment relates to Section 13-304, Site Plan Approval. The previous provisions relied upon a concept of general compatibility, however they provide little guidance as to how that objective was to be achieved. This amendment reorders a small portion the section to provide for a more logical sequencing, and includes a reference to the newly prescribed architectural standards Section at 13-311. By doing this, such desire criteria become standard as part of the site plan review procedure.

Recognized Architectural Styles. The adopted standards at Section 13-311 do not try to dictate a particular genre of architecture, rather it seeks to prohibit kitsch architecture. Hence it avoids a building that may look like a giant pineapple.

Building Scale and Massing. This portion of the amendment seeks to guide the over sizing of a building relative to its siting on the lot and its adjacency to nearby development. It seeks to achieve proportionality in the context of the area that it is built. Other elements include breaking up the façade of the building, inclusion of architectural elements, variation of height, and texturing to create visual interest. Residential properties are encouraged to provide for definition of space, whereas commercial properties are encouraged to provide for plazas and courtyards.

Façade treatments and materials. This element seeks to achieve consistency of architectural design throughout the project. Thought is to be given to fenestration (windows and glazing), molding, materials textures, and colors. Pedestrian scale is the theme so that large blank walls are avoided.

Windows and Doors. Windows and doors should be properly addressed with details such as frames, sills, or shutters. Residential and commercial building shall provide for 25% fenestration along all facades.

Building Entrance and Parking. The push here to emphasize pedestrian scale by articulation of entryways and other features to help guide individuals to identifiable entrances. Garage parking at the ground level shall not be visible from the street.

Ancillary Design Regulations. This section deals with mechanical equipment such as air conditioners or other attachments such as down spouts. The idea is to screen from view those elements. It also addresses dumpster location and landscape design to address overall aesthetic qualities.

Prohibited Feature. These standards prohibit uninterrupted banding of windows and exterior walkways. This also includes any uninterrupted expressions of horizontal floor slabs.

C. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the analysis provided below and other factors contained in this report, Staff recommends approval of the ordinance amending the site plan review procedures and creating an architectural design review.

D. ANALYSIS

The Land Development Code provides that all proposed amendments to the LDC shall be evaluated by the Administrative Official, the Local Planning Agency and the Town Council, and that, in evaluating the proposed amendment, the criteria in Subsection 13-306(b) shall be considered. All portions of this report are hereby incorporated into all portions of this analysis. The following is a staff analysis of the criteria as applied to this ordinance.

1. Whether the proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including the adopted infrastructure minimum levels of service standards and the concurrency management program.

Analysis: See Section “A”, Background and Section “B”, Proposed Changes of this report. As presented in Sections “A” and “B”, the proposed ordinance provides a design review procedure to be implemented for multifamily, commercial, and industrial buildings. The program, as proposed conforms to the following policy of CDMP below:

Policy 1.3.2: Prepare a Miami Lakes Design Plan to enhance such design features as entry identification statements, transportation corridors, bike and pedestrian ways, waterway vistas, public buildings, commercial and industrial districts, open space and parks, and signage.

Finding: Complies

2. Whether the proposal is in conformance with all applicable requirements of this Code of Ordinances, including this chapter.

Analysis: The proposed ordinance conforms with the Town’s LDC’s. A review of the LDC’s found no conflicts.

Finding: Complies.

3. Whether, and the extent to which, land use and development conditions have changed since the effective date of the existing regulations, and whether such changes support or work against the proposed change in land use policy.

Analysis: See Section “A”, Background and Section “B”, Proposed Changes of this report. The proposed amendment follows in the wake of an active development cycle that brought to light concerns over quality design and compatibility of development. The Council wanted codifiable aesthetic standards that would provide staff the tools to promote quality design without interrupting the timeliness of the development review process. The proposed changes are consistent with that land use policy sought by the Council.

Finding: Complies.

4. **Whether, and the extent to which, the proposal would result in any incompatible land uses, considering the type and location of uses involved, the impact on adjacent or neighboring properties, consistency with existing development, as well as compatibility with existing and proposed land use.**

Analysis: The proposed ordinance does not change the permitted use of land or the underlying development regulations of each zoning district.

Finding: Complies.

5. **Whether, and the extent to which, the proposal would result in demands on transportation systems, public facilities and services, exceeding the capacity of such facilities and services, existing or programmed, including schools, transportation, water and wastewater services, solid waste disposal, drainage, water supply, recreation, education, emergency services, and similar necessary facilities and services.**

Analysis: The proposed ordinance does not impact the above systems.

Finding: Complies.

6. **Whether, and the extent to which, the proposal would result in adverse impacts on the natural environment, including consideration of wetland protection, preservation of any groundwater aquifers, wildlife habitats, and vegetative communities.**

Analysis: The proposed ordinance does not impact the above systems.

Finding: Complies.

7. **Whether, and the extent to which, the proposal would adversely affect the property values in the affected area, or adversely affect the general welfare.**

Analysis: See Section “A”, Background and Section “B”, Proposed Changes of this report. The scope of the proposed ordinance is designed to accommodate existing development regulations while also providing for architectural aesthetic standards that allow for greater compatibility with the existing built environment. The net effect is a greater protection of property values for the surrounding neighbor, which in turn contribute positively to the general welfare of the community.

Finding: Complies.

- 8. Whether the proposal would result in an orderly and compatible land use pattern. Any positive and negative effects on such pattern shall be identified.**

Analysis: See Section “A”, Background, Section “B”, Proposed Changes, and Criterion 7 of this report. The ordinance does not change permitted uses or modify the underlying development standards of the applicable zoning district. It does provide for greater compatibility of new development with the surrounding community.

Finding: Complies.

- 9. Whether the proposal would be in conflict with the public interest, and whether it is in harmony with the purpose and intent of this chapter.**

Analysis: See Section “A”, Background, Section “B”, Proposed Changes, and Criteria 1, 3, and 7 of this report. No portion of the proposed amendment is in conflict with the existing regulations of the LDC. The proposed ordinance provides an opportunity for architectural aesthetic standards.

Finding: Complies.

- 10. Other matters which the Local Planning Agency or the Town Council, in its legislative discretion, may deem appropriate.**

Analysis: See Summary Section and all portions of this analysis. The Local Planning Agency and the Town Council may consider other appropriate factors to determine whether the proposed FLUM amendment is appropriate and consistent with the public interest. The Analysis Section addressed the conditions suggested by the Planning and Zoning Board.

Finding: As determined by the Town Council.