

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager
DATE: July 31, 2019

SUBJECT: REFERRAL TO THE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY COMMITTEE - DISCUSSION PERTAINING TO AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY CODE REGARDING POTENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGHER ELEVATION FOR NEW COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION THAT IS VULNERABLE TO FLOODING.

RECOMMENDATION

The administration recommends that the City Commission refer the item to the Sustainability and Resiliency Committee for discussion and recommendation.

ANALYSIS

Under the current city code, the first level of new construction containing non-residential floors is not required to meet the minimum flood elevation requirement of base flood elevation plus minimum freeboard (BFE +1'). In order for commercial floors to be located below this minimum threshold of BFE +1', the property owner must provide a flood panel system along the entire perimeter of the building containing storefront glass and door openings.

While such a system may work in concept, in reality, installing such a system with relatively short notice, is challenging at best. The city code was amended in 2015 to require that new commercial construction provide adequate interior floor to ceiling height to accommodate the future raising of adjacent streets and sidewalks. While this will allow for the interiors of floors of new buildings to be raised at some point in the future, concurrent with the raising of the adjacent street and sidewalk, it does not address the current potential of flooding from extreme rain events and tropical systems.

In order to address the issue of new commercial construction at sidewalk level, the administration is proposing that an amendment to chapter 54 of the city code be considered, to require that all new non-residential construction be built at a minimum of base flood elevation, plus one foot of freeboard.

CONCLUSION

The administration recommends that the City Commission refer the item to the Sustainability and Resiliency Committee for discussion and recommendation.

Legislative Tracking

Planning

Sponsor

Commissioner Aleman