

# MIAMI BEACH

## COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission  
FROM: Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez  
DATE: December 8, 2021

SUBJECT: REFERRAL TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS HEDGES AND VEGETATION ON ISLANDS AND SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS THAT HAVE NO SIDEWALKS AND DEVELOP A POLICY FOR SUCH “HERITAGE HEDGES.”

---

### **ANALYSIS**

Please place a referral to the Neighborhood and Quality of Life Committee to discuss distinguished and important hedges and vegetation located on city swales in front of single-family homes. We must develop a policy for such “heritage hedges.”

As the City of Miami Beach completes extensive infrastructure work in single-family home neighborhoods, there is a constant battle between residents and the City administration over privacy hedges and vegetation located on city swales that has been there for decades—sometimes a hedge or plants can be as old as a historic home built in the 1930’s or 1940’s! These hedges provide privacy to neighbors and contribute to the aesthetic of many important streets and islands of Miami Beach.

City swales are easy to identify when sidewalks are present, but on islands and properties with no sidewalks, the line has been blurred, many homes have hedges as old as their homes, and Miami Beach should have a special policy in place to work with homeowners, designate certain hedges “heritage hedges”, and have the City work to protect this greenery rather than eliminate it and waste time at Special Magistrate after a “heritage hedge” owner has been fined, threatened with the loss of screening privacy, their greenery, and the aesthetic of their home.

Such “heritage hedges” should be recognized as part of the City’s cultural heritage and for the major role they play in preventing soil loss, reducing pollution, and for their potential to reduce flooding.

### **SUPPORTING SURVEY DATA**

N/A

**Applicable Area**

Citywide

**Is this a "Residents Right  
to Know" item, pursuant to  
City Code Section 2-14?**

Yes

**Does this item utilize G.O.  
Bond Funds?**

No

**Legislative Tracking**

Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez