

MIAMI BEACH

City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Land Use and Sustainability Committee

FROM: Alina T. Hudak, City Manager

DATE: January 25, 2023

SUBJECT: **Discuss Possible Amendments to the Fencing Requirements for Vacant and Abandoned Properties.**

HISTORY

On November 16, 2022, at the request of Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez, the City Commission referred the subject discussion (C4 AE) to the Land Use and Sustainability Committee (LUSC).

BACKGROUND

As noted in the attached referral memo, the City Code currently requires fencing for vacant and abandoned lots pursuant to the regulations set forth in Section 142-876, which govern size (i.e., height), materials, location, construction requirements, and access. The item sponsor would like the LUSC to review these requirements and consider whether the Code should be amended to adopt stricter design standards for fencing on vacant or abandoned properties.

ANALYSIS

As noted in Sec. 142-876(a) vacant or abandoned properties, unlike construction sites, must utilize an aluminum picket fence within front yard and street side yards, as well as within rear yards facing a street or waterway. Aluminum picket is considered the gold standard for perimeter fencing, as it allows for a high level of visibility into the vacant site and consists of a very high quality and durable material. Along interior property lines, as well as rear property lines not facing a waterway or street, black or green vinyl coated chain-link fencing is currently permitted, as these portions of the lot are not visible from the public right-of-way.

Some potential options for further enhancing the aesthetics of vacant lots and lots with abandoned buildings include the following:

1. Requiring an aluminum picket fence along all sides of a property; this would ensure a higher caliber of aesthetics when viewed from neighboring properties.
2. Incorporating minimum landscape requirements for vacant lots and lots with abandoned buildings. This may include elevating the entire site to current grade, minimum sod requirements for all areas of the property that do not contain a building, driveway or walkways, and minimum requirements for hedges and other smaller plant material.

If there is consensus on these options, as well as any others that may be discussed, the Administration recommends that the LUSC send the proposal back to the City Commission for referral to the Planning Board.

CONCLUSION

The Administration recommends that the Land Use and Sustainability Committee discuss the proposal and provide any applicable recommendation to the City Commission.

RW
ATH/RW/TRM