



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

BUILDING | HISTORIC PRESERVATION | PLANNING & ZONING

PLANNING & ZONING BOARD STAFF REPORT

Adaptive Reuse of Places of Worship in Community Facilities (CF) Zoning

Meeting	File No.	Application Type
January 27, 2025	2025-066-LDR	Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment
Owner	Applicant	Agent
200 SE 7 th Avenue, LLC	200 SE 7 th Avenue, LLC	Jeffrey Costello, AICP, FRA-RP JC Planning Solutions

Request

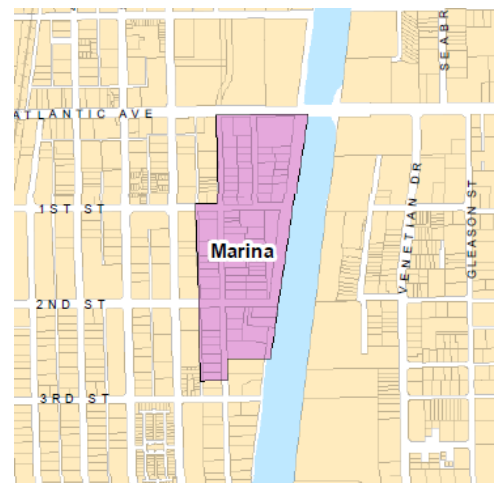
Provide a recommendation to the City Commission on Ordinance No. 07-25, a privately initiated amendment to Section 4.4.21, "Community Facilities (CF) Zone District" of the Land Development Regulations to allow adaptive reuse of historic places of worship as a residential use by establishing it as a principal use category and to adopt regulations for the use, and by amending Appendix A – "Definitions" to adopt definitions for "Places of Worship" and "Historic Places of Worship."

Background Information

The subject request relates to a contributing historic structure on a 0.5021-acre property located at 200 SE 7th Avenue on the southeast corner of SE 2nd Street and SE 7th Avenue. The property has Community Facility (CF) land use and Community Facilities (CF) zoning, and is located within the Locally and Nationally Designated Marina Historic District (district boundary map below).

The Marina Historic District was developed between the 1920s and 1940s with a mix of architectural styles, including Mediterranean Revival, Mission Revival, Monterey, Minimal Traditional, and Art Moderne. The neighborhood consists primarily of one and two-story single-family homes and several multi-family dwellings. The district contains six commercial buildings fronting East Atlantic Avenue, and one church (200 SE 7th Avenue), which contains one of two colonial revival-style buildings among the 58 contributing (historic) structures within the historic district. According to the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) Form, 200 SE 7th Avenue is an "excellent example of the classical revival style."

In 2024, the property owner requested a Land Use Map Amendment (LUMA) from Community Facility (CF) to Low Density (LD) a rezoning from Community Facilities (CF) to Single Family Residential (R-1-AA), to allow for the adaptive reuse as a single-family residence. The current CF land use designation is intended to *provide a full range of local or regional community-based uses primarily intended to serve the public*. Similarly, the CF zoning district is intended for *locations at which facilities are provided to serve public, semi-public, and private purposes. Such purposes include governmental, religious, educational, health care, social service, and special facilities*. Single-family residential uses are not contemplated or allowed by either the CF land use or CF zoning.



The request was denied by the City Commission directed staff to evaluate alternative options to facilitate the desired adaptive reuse. The subject request to amend the LDR to allow residential adaptive reuse conversions of historic places of worship in CF zoning was submitted in November 2024, along with a companion application to amend the Comprehensive Plan in support of adaptive reuse of historic places of worship as a residential use.

A detailed timeline of the property's history is outlined below:

- **1942.** The church sanctuary was originally constructed on the Boca Raton Air Force Base.
- **1947.** The church sanctuary was moved to the current site at 200 SE 7th Avenue and operated as the First Church of Christ, Scientist from 1947 to 2019.
- **1947.** Adjacent property to the north, across SE 2nd Street – A Sunday School/administrative office building was built. At the time, the lots on which the sanctuary was located (south of SE 2nd Street) was zoned R-1-AA, while the lot with the Sunday School building (north of SE 2nd Street) was zoned RM-10. Both uses were conditional uses within their respective zoning districts.
- **1949.** Additions were made to the church including a new portico to the front of the structure and porches on either side. These were designed by Samuel Ogren, Sr., Delray Beach's first architect.
- **December 1988.** A Site Plan Modification and Conditional Use were approved by the City Commission for demolition of an existing structure, conversion of the site to a once-a-week parking area, addition of a Sunday School and offices to the existing church, and creation of grass parking lot adjacent to the church (no longer associated with 200 SE 7th Avenue).
- **1991.** An addition was constructed to the south side of the church and still exists today.
- **1993.** The property was rezoned from R-1-AA to CF.
- **December 2019.** A Zoning Certificate of Use was approved for a change of use from a church to a museum when the congregation occupying the property vacated it, and sold the property to its current owner.

Description of Proposal

Section 4.4.21, Community Facilities (CF) District

- (A) **Purpose and Intent**. The existing language is refined to define the purpose and intent of CF as “a special purpose zone district primarily intended for uses providing a community service or benefit.”
- (B) **Principal Uses and Structures Allowed**.
- “Single-family detached residence resulting from adaptive reuse of a historic place of worship” is added as a principal use.
 - The Medical Arts Overlay district uses are relocated into this section, rather than in the Supplemental District Regulations (G). This is appropriate, because use regulations belong in this subsection, but also because it makes the proposed to Subsection (G) as part of the subject request easier to follow.
- (F) **Development Standards**
- Language is proposed to establish development standards for the R-1-A zoning district as applicable to site modifications for single-family detached residences resulting from adaptive reuse of a historic place of worship.
- (G) **Supplemental District Regulations**
- Language is proposed to specify that a single-family detached residence resulting from adaptive reuse of a historic place of worship is subject to the supplemental development standards applicable to single-family detached residences within an R-1-A zoning district.
- (H) **Special Regulations**
- Language is proposed that specifies that the Special Regulations required for CF zoned properties do not apply to properties when a historically designated place of worship is approved for adaptive reuse as a single-family detached residence.

- A contextually appropriate historic marker is required. This requirement was added after Historic Preservation Board, as a result of a positive recommendation by the Board in response to staff recommendation.

Appendix A, “Definitions”

The following new definitions are proposed:

HISTORIC PLACE OF WORSHIP. A building, structure, or site, that is historically designated or classified as contributing within an historic district, that is historically recognized as being built or used for the purpose of worship.

PLACE OF WORSHIP. A specially designed structure or space used by a bona fide religious group primarily or exclusively for religious worship and related religious services. The use may include accessory buildings or uses such as social gathering spaces, administrative offices, classrooms, or playground facilities.

The full draft of Ordinance No. 07-25 is attached for Board review.

It should be noted that any proposed development or site modification within an historic district or on a property designated as historic requires a Certificate of Appropriateness application and potentially such will require review by the Historic Preservation Board. As such, proposed site plans are subject to all applicable provisions and requirements of the LDRs, most significantly with **LDR Section 4.5.1**, which contains the Visual Compatibility Standards for properties that are contributing (historic), non-contributing (non-historic), and/or new construction.

Review and Analysis

LDR Section 1.1.6, Amendments

The text of these Land Development Regulations may from time to time be amended, changed, supplemented, or repealed. No such action however, shall be taken until a recommendation is obtained from the Planning and Zoning Board and until a public hearing has been held by the City Commission.

The recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Board will be provided to the City Commission, where the amendment will be reviewed at two public meetings.

LDR Section 2.4.7(A)

Amendments to the Land Development Regulations may be initiated by the City Commission, City Administration, or by a member of the public.

The proposed amendment is privately initiated.

LDR Section 2.4.7(A)(5), Findings

For any approval, the City Commission must make a finding that the text amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and that the amendment furthers the implementation of an adopted neighborhood plan, if applicable.

No neighborhood plans apply.

The proposed amendment to the LDR is being processed concurrently to an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan in support of adaptive reuse of historic places of worship. If both are approved, the requested LDR amendment would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The findings relative to Comprehensive Plan consistency are outlined below, with changes proposed via Ordinance No. 08-25 noted in strikethrough and underline text.

Neighborhoods, Districts, and Corridors Element

Objective NDC 1.6. Community Facility land use designation *Provide a full range of local or regional community-based uses primarily intended to serve and/or benefit the public by appropriately applying the Community ~~Facilities~~ Facility land use designation.*

Policy NDC 1.6.2 *Use the Community Facility land use designation for current and future school sites, public buildings, public facilities, and buildings that serve the community and are not commercial in nature, such as places of worship.*

Policy NDC 3.4.2 *Use the development review process to determine development, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse is consistent with and complementary to adjacent development, regardless of the implementing zoning designations for each land use designation (See Table NDC-1).*

Policy NDC 3.5.5 *Continue to develop new land use and zoning incentives for eligible and historic resources within the Land Development Regulations, such as encouraging the adaptive reuse of historic structures within mixed-use zoning districts and providing parking relief strategies.*

Policy NDC 3.5.8 *Evaluate and, where necessary, amend the Land Development Regulations to ensure the protection of historic resources. [Complete by 2025]*

While historic places of worship serve the community from a functional perspective, the structures themselves bring a benefit to the community regardless of the use because of the story they tell about the history of a community. Adopting regulations to allow residential conversion of a place of worship carries the story of the community forward in a palpable way, whether out of necessity due to changes in community practices or behavior, or a desire to reinvent a space. The Comprehensive Plan supports adaptive reuse in general, and the proposed amendment supports it specifically by broadening the intent of the Community Facility land use designation to include uses that benefit the public, and adopting specific policies that expand opportunities for adaptive reuse.

Housing Element

Policy HOU 1.1.3 *Foster neighborhood identity and pride by recognizing that every neighborhood has assets that identify that neighborhood and contribute to the well-being of the residents who live there. Understand what those are and look for opportunities to enhance them and leverage them for neighborhood improvement. Assets include trees, historic resources, schools, community gardens, architectural features and the residents.*

Policy HOU 1.6.1 *Promote historic preservation as an avenue to improve the quality of life of qualifying structures and neighborhoods, with revitalization efforts, infill and redevelopment programs, and new development providing sensitivity to the character of historic neighborhoods and structures.*

Policy HOU 4.2.7 *Support historic preservation efforts by maintaining and rehabilitating structures of historic value for residential use.*

Places of worship have historically functioned as community assets. Broadened policies to support the continued use of historic places of worship as a residential use supports the preservation of community landmarks by providing an additional avenue for a use that supports the preservation of an historic structure.

Historic Preservation Element

GOAL HPE 1 PRESERVE, PROTECT, ENHANCE AND SUPPORT *Secure for future generations the opportunity to share in the unique heritage of Delray Beach, and promote the preservation of historic archeological and cultural resources, through purposeful identification, protections and continued use of buildings, structures and districts, which exhibit significant architectural qualities or are associated with important cultural events and/or people in the city's history.*

Policy HPE 1.3.3 *Evaluate and, where necessary, amend the Land Development Regulations to ensure the protection of historic resources.*

GOAL HPE 2 HISTORIC PRESERVATION INCENTIVES *Support and expand the City's historic preservation program through financial incentives, adaptive reuse, and promotional programs.*

Policy HPE 2.2.3 *Continue to develop new land use and zoning incentives for eligible and historic resources within the Land Development Regulations, such as encouraging the adaptive reuse of historic structures within mixed-use zoning districts and providing parking relief strategies.*

GOAL HPE 4 RECOGNITION *Celebrate and recognize historic and cultural resources to increase the prestige of ownership and community pride.*

Historic places of worship are *cultural resources* that often *exhibit significant architectural qualities*. The preservation of such structures occurs *through purposeful identification, protections and continued use of buildings, structures and districts*. The proposed amendment provides additional options for the continued use of historic places of worship.

Private Property Rights Element

Objective PPR 1.1 Private Property Rights *Respect judicially acknowledged and constitutionally protected private property rights in local decision-making.*

Policy PPR 1.1.1 *Consider the right of a private property owner to:*

- *Physically possess and control interests in their own property, including easements, leases, or mineral rights.*
- *Use, maintain, develop, and improve property for their own personal use or for the use of any other person, subject to state law and local ordinances.*
- *Maintain privacy and exclude others from the property to protect the owner's possessions and property.*
- *Dispose of their own property through sale or gift.*

Allowing the adaptive reuse of historic structures, whose original intended use may be obsolete no longer feasible, allows for property owners to contribute to the historical fabric of the City while maintaining the value of their real estate and cultural asset.

Review By Others

Historic Preservation Board. July 2, 2025. The Board recommended approval 5-0.

Planning and Zoning Board. July 21, 2025

City Commission. August 12, 2025 (anticipated, 1st Reading), and 2nd Reading concurrent with 2nd Reading / Adoption of Ordinance No. 08-25 (subsequent to receipt of comments from State reviewing agencies for the companion Comprehensive Plan amendment).

Options for Board Action

- Move a recommendation of **approval** of Ordinance No. 07-25, a privately initiated amendment to Section 4.4.21, "Community Facilities (CF) Zone District" of the Land Development Regulations to allow adaptive reuse of historic places of worship as a residential use by establishing it as a principal use category and to adopt regulations for the use, and to adopt definitions Places of Worship and Historic Places of Worship in Appendix A – "Definitions."
- Move a recommendation of **approval** of Ordinance No. 07-25, **as amended**, a privately initiated amendment to Section 4.4.21, "Community Facilities (CF) Zone District" of the Land Development Regulations to allow adaptive reuse of historic places of worship as a residential use by establishing it as a principal use category and to adopt regulations for the use, and to adopt definitions Places of Worship and Historic Places of Worship in Appendix A – "Definitions."
- Move a recommendation of **denial** of Ordinance No. 07-25, a privately initiated amendment to Section 4.4.21, "Community Facilities (CF) Zone District" of the Land Development Regulations to allow adaptive reuse of historic places of worship as a residential use by establishing it as a principal use category and to adopt regulations for the use, and to adopt definitions Places of Worship and Historic Places of Worship in Appendix A – "Definitions."
- Continue With Direction.

Public and Courtesy Notices

☒ Courtesy Notices are not applicable to this request.

☒ Public Notice was published in the Sun Sentinel 10 calendar days prior to the meeting.

☒ Public Notice was posted to the City's website 10 calendar days prior to the meeting.

☒ Public Notice was posted in the main lobby at City Hall 10 working days prior to the meeting.

☒ Agenda was posted at least 5 working days prior to meeting.