



# CITY OF DELRAY BEACH

## DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

100 N.W. 1<sup>ST</sup> AVENUE • DELRAY BEACH • FLORIDA 33444 • (561) 243-7040



### HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD STAFF REPORT

#### Adaptive Reuse of Historic Places of Worship

Meeting	File No.	Application Type
July 2, 2025	2025-067-PCA	Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan
Applicant	Owner	Authorized Agent
200 SE 7 <sup>th</sup> Ave, LLC	200 SE 7 <sup>th</sup> Ave, LLC	Jeffrey A. Costello, AICP, FRA-RA

#### Request

Provide a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Board on Ordinance No. 08-25, a privately initiated amendment to the Always Delray Comprehensive Plan, by adopting a text amendment to the Historic Preservation Element and Neighborhoods, Districts, and Corridors Element to support adaptive reuse of historic places of worship as a residential use.

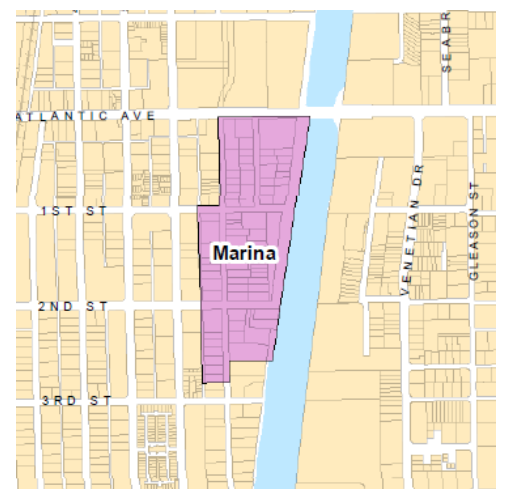
#### Background Information

The subject request relates to a contributing historic structure on a 0.5021-acre property located at 200 SE 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the southeast corner of SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and SE 7<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 Comprehensive Plan in support of adaptive reuse of historic places



of worship as a residential use was submitted in November 2024, along with a request to amend the LDR to allow residential adaptive reuse conversions of historic places of worship in CF zoning.

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 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and operated as the First Church of Christ, Scientist from 1947 to 2019.
- **1947.** Adjacent property to the north, across SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street – A Sunday School/administrative office building was built. At the time, the lots on which the sanctuary was located (south of SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street) was zoned R-1-AA, while the lot with the Sunday School building (north of SE 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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

The following policy changes are proposed:

### Historic Preservation Element

#### **Objective HPE 1.5 Historic Places of Worship [NEW OBJECTIVE]**

Maintain the community benefit of historic places of worship revered as community landmarks through historic preservation and adaptive reuse.

#### **Policy HPE 1.5.1 [NEW POLICY]**

Support the preservation of historic places of worship by allowing contextually appropriate adaptive reuse in consideration of the surrounding neighborhood.

#### **Policy HPE 1.5.2 [NEW POLICY]**

Adopt Land Development Regulations that advance the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic places of worship.

### Neighborhoods, Districts, and Corridors Element

#### **Policy NDC 1.1.15 [NEW POLICY]**

Support the preservation of historic places of worship within all land use designations where such structures exist by allowing contextually appropriate adaptive reuse in consideration of the surrounding neighborhood.

#### **Objective NDC 1.6 Community Facility Land Use Designation [AMENDED OBJECTIVE]**

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 1.6.4 [NEW POLICY]**

Allow the Community Facility land use designation to continue to provide a community benefit by accommodating the preservation of historic places of worship through adaptive reuse to a use appropriate for the context of the neighborhood.

The Data, Inventory, and Analysis (DIA) of each element is provided as an attachment for reference, and the full text of the Goals, Objectives, and Policies (GOPs) of the Historic Preservation Element and the Neighborhoods, Districts and Corridors Element is attached as exhibits to Ordinance No. 08-25.

It should also 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 2.4.5(A), Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan**

*Amendments must follow the procedures outlined in the Florida Statutes.* The LUM is adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, the LUMA is being processed as a small-scale Comprehensive Plan amendment pursuant to Florida Statutes, F.S. 163.3184 through F.S. 163.3253.

### **LDR Section 3.1.1, Required Findings**

*Prior to the approval of development applications, certain findings must be made.* These findings relate to the Land Use Map, concurrency, consistency, and compliance with the Land Development Regulations.

**(A) Land Use Map:** *The resulting use of land or structures must be allowed in the zoning district within which the land is situated and said zoning must be consistent with the applicable land use designation as shown on the Land Use Map.*

The proposed amendment to the comprehensive plan is being reviewed in companion with an amendment to the LDR to allow historic places of worship to be used as a residential use (Ordinance No. 07-25). The amendments together will provide consistency.

**(B) Concurrency:** *Concurrency as defined by Objective NDC 3.1 of the Neighborhoods, Districts, and Corridors Element of the adopted Comprehensive Plan must be met and a determination made that the public facility needs, including public schools, of the requested land use and/or development application will not exceed the ability of the City and The School District of Palm Beach County to fund and provide, or to require the provision of, needed capital improvements in order to maintain the Levels of Service Standards established in Table CIE-2, Level of Service Standards, of the Capital Improvements Element of the adopted Comprehensive Plan of the City of Delray Beach.*

Not applicable.

**(C) Consistency** *A finding of overall consistency may be made even though the action will be in conflict with some individual performance standards contained within Article 3.2, provided that the approving body specifically finds that the beneficial aspects of the proposed project (hence compliance with some standards) outweighs the negative impacts of identified points of conflict.*

Per **LDR Section 3.2.1, Basis for determining consistency**, the Comprehensive Plan policies listed below provide direction on the request. The following policies from the Comprehensive Plan apply to this request:

### **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 the public by appropriately applying the Community Facilities 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.*

Objective HPE 1.4, Historic Preservation Planning *Implement appropriate and compatible design and planning strategies for historic sites and properties within historic districts.*

Policy HPE 1.4.1 *Continue to require that the Historic Preservation Board make findings that any land use or development application for a historic structure, site or within a historic district, is consistent with the provisions of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, the Land Development Regulations, and Delray Beach Historic Preservation Design Guidelines.*

Policy HPE 1.5.4 *Use historic buildings to accommodate public uses whenever feasible.*

Pursuant to LDR Section 3.2.4(E), "Standards for specific areas or purposes: Historic districts and individually designated sites listed on the Local Register of Historic Places," *proposed development shall be consistent with the purpose and provisions of LDR Section 4.5.1, Historic Preservation: Designated Districts, Sites, and Buildings, the Delray Beach Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.*



The requirements as noted in this LDR section are greatly related to site design, setting, architectural elements/design, etc. For example, below is an excerpt from the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation, one of many historic requirements applicable to alteration and modification of historic sites & structures:

Alterations and Additions for a New Use	
Designing new features (such as parking areas, access ramps, or lighting), when required by a new use, so that they are as unobtrusive as possible, retain the historic relationships between buildings and the landscape in the setting, and are compatible with the historic character of the setting.	Locating parking areas directly adjacent to historic buildings where vehicles may cause damage to buildings or landscape features or when they negatively impact the historic character of the setting if landscape features and plant materials are removed.
Designing new exterior additions to historic buildings or adjacent new construction that are compatible with the historic character of the setting that preserve the historic relationship between the buildings and the landscape.	Introducing new construction into historic districts which is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the setting, or which damages or destroys important landscape features.

Any proposed development or site modification of a historic place of worship would require 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.

**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.*

The Historic Preservation Element includes Goals, Objectives, and Policies that encourage the preservation of historic structures and places, while also taking into consideration the value of use. In general, adaptive reuse of structures is encouraged for structures throughout the city, for historic structures, the Comprehensive Plan specifies the adaptive reuse of structures within mixed-use zoning districts such as the CBD or OSSHAD. The subject property is located within the Marina Historic District and is zoned CF. Currently, the purpose of the CF zoning district is that it "is a special purpose zone district primarily, but not exclusively, 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." The former church use and existing museum use fulfill this purpose, and the sheer size of the structure allows for multiple adaptive reuse opportunities that serve the public.

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, allows for property owners to contribute to the historical fabric of the City while maintaining the value of their real estate and cultural asset.

**(D) Compliance with LDR** *Whenever an item is identified elsewhere in these Land Development Regulations (LDR), it shall specifically be addressed by the body taking final action on a land development application/request. Such items are found in Section 2.4.5 and in special regulation portions of individual zoning district regulations.*

A parallel amendment to the LDR has been submitted to allow residential uses on properties with historic houses of worship in the Community Facilities (CF) zoning district to be converted to a residential use.

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.

#### Considerations

The Board should consider the following in reviewing the subject request:

- Whether the amendment to the LDR is consistent with the applicable goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Whether the requested amendment to the LDR supports the preservation of historic resources.

#### Review By Others

Chapter 163.3184 provides the specific process to amend the City's Comprehensive Plan. The proposed amendment is processed for expedited review, which includes the following steps:

- **Historic Preservation Board.** The HPB reviews and makes recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Board on requests relevant to historic resources within the city. **HPB reviewed the amendment on July 2, 2025.**
- **Planning and Zoning Board Review.** As the Local Planning Agency (LPA), the Planning and Zoning Board will review the amendment and provide a recommendation to the City Commission. **PZB will review the amendment on July 21, 2025.**
- **City Commission Review**
  - Public Hearing No. 1, Transmittal Hearing
    - Transmittal to the State Land Planning Agency (the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)) and applicable state review agencies within ten working days of the hearing.
    - Comments returned to the City by DEO and review agencies within 30 days.
  - Public Hearing No. 2, Adoption Hearing
    - Hearing 2 must take place within 180 days of receipt of comments by reviewing agencies.
    - Transmittal of the adopted amendments to DEO and any agency that provided review comments within 10 working days of the hearing.
- **Amendment Effective Date**

If no challenge to the amendment is filed by an affected person, within 30 days of the adoption hearing, the amendment becomes effective within 31 days.

### Options for Board Action

- A.** Move a recommendation of **approval** of Ordinance No. 08-25, a privately initiated amendment to the Always Delray Comprehensive Plan, by adopting a text amendment to the Historic Preservation Element and Neighborhoods, Districts, and Corridors Element to support adaptive reuse of historic places of worship as a residential use, by finding that the amendment and approval thereof is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and meets the criteria set forth in Land Development Regulations.
- B.** Move a recommendation of **approval** of Ordinance No. 08-25, **as amended**, a privately initiated amendment to the Always Delray Comprehensive Plan, by adopting a text amendment to the Historic Preservation Element and Neighborhoods, Districts, and Corridors Element to support adaptive reuse of historic places of worship as a residential use, by finding that the amendment and approval thereof is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and meets the criteria set forth in Land Development Regulations
- C.** Move a recommendation of **denial** of Ordinance No. 08-25, a privately initiated amendment to the Always Delray Comprehensive Plan, by adopting a text amendment to the Historic Preservation Element and Neighborhoods, Districts, and Corridors Element to support adaptive reuse of historic places of worship as a residential use Continue With Direction, by finding that the amendment and approval thereof is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and does not meet the criteria set forth in Land Development Regulations.
- D.** Continue with direction.

### Public and Courtesy Notices

  X   Courtesy Notices were sent to the following:

- Marina Homeowners Association

  X   Agenda was posted on Wednesday, June 25, 2025, at least 5 working days prior to meeting.