



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

BUILDING | HISTORIC PRESERVATION | PLANNING & ZONING

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD STAFF REPORT

Masonry Modern and Art Deco Architectural Style Review Process

Meeting	File No.	Application Type
March 16, 2026	PZ-000513-2026	Amendment to the Land Development Regulations
Applicant	Agent	Property Owner
City of Delray Beach	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

Request

Provide a recommendation to the City Commission on Ordinance No. 26-26, a City-initiated request to amend Section 2.1.5, "Planning and Zoning Board" and Section 2.1.6, "Site Plan Review and Appearance Board" to give the authority to approve the Masonry Modern or Art Deco architectural style for site plans the Board has the final authority to approve, and amend Section 4.4.13(F), "Architectural standards" of the Land Development Regulations to eliminate City Commission approval and to add determination by the Planning and Zoning Board, Site Plan Review and Appearance Board, or Historic Preservation Board prior to site plan consideration that the Masonry Modern or Art Deco Architectural Style is appropriate for the location and meets adopted architectural design guidelines in the Central Business (CBD) District.

Background Information

During a City Commission Workshop on February 21, 2023, Staff was directed to modify the review and approval procedures related to the use of Masonry Modern or Art Deco architectural styles in the Central Business (CBD) District. The overuse of these two styles resulted in their proliferation in the CBD and raised community concerns that they are changing the Village by the Sea character. In response, on May 16, 2023, the City Commission adopted Ordinance No. 12-23, to require the City Commission approve a proposed the use of the Masonry Modern or Art Deco architectural styles, via recommendation by the applicable board (Planning and Zoning Board (PZB), Site Plan Review and Appearance Board (SPRAB), or Historic Preservation Board (HPB)). Following City Commission approval of the architectural style, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review continues, and ultimately, the site plan by is reviewed by the appropriate board(s) for action.

The procedural change to the review process was intended to encourage the use of other five architectural styles allowed by The Delray Beach Architectural Design Guidelines; to allow more opportunity for the general public to participate; and, to elevate the quality of development proposals using Masonry Modern and Art Deco architecture. However, the City Commission has expressed a desire to return design review to the advisory boards, as they are comprised of design professionals.

The proposed change will (1) eliminate the requirement for the Commission to review Masonry Modern and Art Deco proposals during the review process; (2) clarify the timeframe for architectural review should occur in concert with the second submittal for TAC review to provide sufficient time to adjust the architecture; and, (3) provide the criteria for determining whether to approve the use of the style. Following a decision by the board, the project will adjust the architecture if necessary, during the TAC review, returning to the appropriate board process for action on the full site plan application.

Description of Proposal

The proposed ordinance updates Section 4.4.13, "Central Business (CBD) District," Subsection (F), "Architectural standards," (3), "Appropriate Architectural Styles" as follows:

- (c) Corrects inadvertent omission of PZB as a reviewing body for alternative architectural styles, and eliminates redundant board references.

- (d) Corrects inadvertent omission of PZB as a reviewing body for requests to use eclectic architectural styles.
- (e) Amends process regulations governing the use of Masonry Modern and Art Deco:

The use of Masonry Modern or Art Deco architectural styles requires City Commission review and determination by the PZB, SPRAB, or HPB, as applicable, that (1) the style is appropriate for the location; and (2) the design execution meets the architecture design guidelines approval, via recommendation by SPRAB or HPB, as applicable. City Commission approval is required prior to consideration of the site plan by SPRAB or HPB. Board review shall occur prior to or at the time of the second review by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). By opting to use Masonry Modern or Art Deco, the applicant acknowledges that new comments may result that must be resolved prior to consideration for final site plan approval. Applicants shall provide an explanation, including graphics, demonstrating how the proposed building design implements the selected style.

An update is also proposed to Section 2.1.5, "Planning and Zoning Board" and Section 2.1.6, "Site Plan Review and Appearance Board" to give the authority to approve the Masonry Modern or Art Deco architectural style for site plans that will ultimately be approved by the Board.

Ordinance No. 26-26 is provided as an attachment.

Review and Analysis

LDR Section 1.1.6(A), 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. Any such change shall be made by ordinance, pursuant to procedures found in LDR Section 2.4.5(M).

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

LDR Section 2.4.7(A)

Amendments to the LDR may be initiated by the City Commission, City administration, or by a member of the public.

The proposed amendment is City-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.

The Always Delray Comprehensive Plan does not contain Goals, Objectives, or Policies specific to the proposed amendment. However, the following Goals and Objective generally support the intent of the proposed language.

Neighborhoods, Districts, and Corridors Element

GOAL NDC 1 NEIGHBORHOODS, DISTRICTS, AND CORRIDORS *Enhance the quality and character of the City's neighborhoods, districts, and corridors to continue to provide a sustainable community in which to live, work, play, and grow.*

GOAL NDC 2 QUALITY OF LIFE AND URBAN FORM *Provide a high quality of life for all residents, encourage a mix of building types and uses, diverse housing, and transportation options, and use meaningful community engagement to transform underutilized and blighted areas into attractive and thriving neighborhoods, districts, and corridors.*

Objective NDC 2.2 Downtown and Surrounding Neighborhoods *Protect and enhance the "Village by the Sea" character of the downtown and neighborhoods located east of I-95.*

Objective NDC 3.5, Update Land Development Regulations *Regularly review and update the Land Development Regulations to provide timely, equitable and streamlined processes including, but not limited to, building permit processes for residential developments and to accommodate mixed-use developments, address market changes and development trends, and other innovative development practices.*

The adopted Comprehensive Plan places a high value on quality development and neighborhood character, and the preservation of the historic character of the downtown and the “Village by the Sea”. The proposed amendment to the LDR revises the process adopted in 2023 to continue to provide the City with a mechanism to review the architecture of development proposals, while refining the process to eliminate redundancies.

Review By Others

City Commission review is anticipated in April 2026 and May 2026.

Options for Board Action

- A. Recommend **approval** to the City Commission of Ordinance No. 26-26, amending Section 4.4.13(F), “Architectural standards” of the Land Development Regulations to eliminate City Commission approval and to add determination by the Planning and Zoning Board, Site Plan Review and Appearance Board, or Historic Preservation Board prior to site plan consideration that the Masonry Modern or Art Deco Architectural Style is appropriate for the location and meets adopted architectural design guidelines in the Central Business (CBD) District, 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. Recommend **approval** to the City Commission of Ordinance No. 26-26, **as amended**, amending Section 4.4.13(F), “Architectural standards” of the Land Development Regulations to eliminate City Commission approval and to add determination by the Planning and Zoning Board, Site Plan Review and Appearance Board, or Historic Preservation Board prior to site plan consideration that the Masonry Modern or Art Deco Architectural Style is appropriate for the location and meets adopted architectural design guidelines in the Central Business (CBD) District, by finding that the amendment as amended and approval thereof is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and meets the criteria set forth in Land Development Regulations.
- C. Recommend **denial** to the City Commission of Ordinance No. 26-26, amending Section 4.4.13(F), “Architectural standards” of the Land Development Regulations to eliminate City Commission approval and to add determination by the Planning and Zoning Board, Site Plan Review and Appearance Board, or Historic Preservation Board prior to site plan consideration that the Masonry Modern or Art Deco Architectural Style is appropriate for the location and meets adopted architectural design guidelines, 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.

Public and Courtesy Notices

☒ Courtesy Notices are not applicable to this request

N/A Public Notices are not required for this request.