

Melanie Hnot  
2690 Key Largo Lane  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312

June 14, 2024

City Commission  
City of Fort Lauderdale  
1 East Broward Blvd, Suite 444  
Fort Lauderdale, FL33301

**RE: Proposed 35 Ft Residential Building Height in Lauderdale Isles**

**Dear City Commission Members:**

This commentary is in response to Mr. Earl Prizlee's attached letter of 5/29/24 responding to a letter written by my elderly mother. I am the owner of the 2690 Key Largo Lane home. I request the City Commission of Fort Lauderdale to raise the Residential Building Height in Lauderdale Isles from 20 feet to 35 feet as the City of Fort Lauderdale has proposed. Barring some compelling reason for the Building Height to remain at 20 feet, raising the Building Height in Lauderdale Isles to 35 feet would be consistent with other Building Heights in Fort Lauderdale. In addition, it would help raise our property values, which helps everyone in the community.

As the city is aware, there are already homes within Lauderdale Isles that are over 20 feet. As I understand at the LICIA meeting, the willingness to increase to 25 feet is to accommodate one new proposed structure and is what propelled the city to offer the new 35 feet Building Height to be consistent with the rest of Fort Lauderdale. It would make the most sense to change the Building Height to a consistent 35 feet.

To address Mr. Prizlee's letter:

1. Only 70 residents were at the meeting. Not all were paid members of LICIA, which is made clear in his letter. 70 residents (paid and unpaid) is less than 10% of the 776 total homes in Lauderdale Isles.
2. I am a paid member of LICIA. On such an important matter affecting property values in this community, it should not matter if residents are paid members of LICIA or not to vote on this issue. As stated in his letter, LICIA did allow



people who were not members to vote, but they marked those votes as "non-member" to be included in the vote summary. The idea that this even had to be included in his letter makes it appear as though non-member's voices are less important.

3. Mr. Prizlee stated in his letter, "The majority of the LICIA Board supported the increase to the 25' height, which would provide relief to residents who would like to redevelop their property while being compatible with the majority of residences that are one-story ranch style homes". Respectfully, increasing the building height to 35 feet would provide more options for redeveloping properties, thus increasing property values. There are many areas in this country and Fort Lauderdale with one-story and three-story homes within the same neighborhood. This provides flexibility to home buyers and residents.
4. The LICIA letter states that if attendees felt they were not being represented, they were welcome to reach out to the City's Urban Design and Planning Division or their elected officials. I asked my mother to write the letter that I would like the Building Height to be 35 feet. I had no idea that letter would be provided to LICIA and Mr. Prizlee. Reading Mr. Prizlee's denigrating letter about my elderly mother, shows his hostility toward anyone with a different view from his own. My elderly mother texted him that she did not believe that LICIA had authority to impose limits on the homeowners of Lauderdale Isles and that he needs to back off. There was no threat to person or property in the text that she sent him, and I would truly appreciate if Mr. Prizlee would cease and desist from defaming my mother.
5. Mr. Prizlee does not speak on my behalf. LICIA, is not a homeowner's association. It is a civic improvement association that you can voluntarily pay to be a member. Most people within Lauderdale Isles are not paid members of LICIA, and it was even mentioned in his letter that the ballots of unpaid members were marked as such. Why? On such an important vote affecting the property values of this community, it should not be left up to a civic association with a small paid membership that does not represent the majority in Lauderdale Isles.

Given Mr. Prizlee's false accusation of my elderly mother threatening him, and his poor treatment of her in his letter, how do you think other members of the community feel speaking up to him, or at an LICIA meeting, when there is police presence? Why was police presence needed at a small community meeting? That

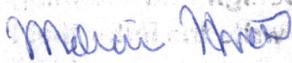


would make me very uncomfortable from speaking freely in front of the community that Mr. Prizlee claims to represent. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the meeting due to my work schedule, and I sent my elderly mother as my legal representative who witnessed these events with other neighbors.

All that said, the real issue is whether the City will have continuity in zoning throughout and that is up to the City Commission and not Mr. Prizlee or the small group of LICIA paid members, which do not represent all members of our community. Having consistency in zoning throughout the city, avoids allegations of discrimination, provides protection against unnecessary litigation, and wasting time of city staff, etc.

I would like to thank everyone for their time and consideration and wish you well in your decision. I truly appreciate Karlanne Devonish from the City describing the proposal to increase the height restriction to 35 feet.

Sincerely,



Melanie Hnot

**CC: Mr. Chris Cooper, Development Services Department Director**

**Mayor Dean J Trantalis**

**Vice Mayor Steven Glassman**

**Commissioner Warren Sturman**

**Commissioner Pamela Beasley-Pittman**

**Commissioner John C. Herbst**

**Walter R. Hnot Jr. JD, PhD**









**LAUDERDALE ISLES  
CIVIC IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, Inc.**

PO Box 121255, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312  
www.ourlicia.com

Nonprofit  
Organization  
Since 1959

May 29, 2024

Chris Cooper,  
Development Services Department Director  
700 NW 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

RECEIVED  
CITY COMMISSION

MAY 3 2024

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mr. Cooper,

Thank you for reaching out to the Lauderdale Isles Civic Improvement Association (LICIA) as part of the City of Fort Lauderdale's effort for community outreach to the annexed areas with regards to the zoning change of the building height requirements. Ella Parker and Karlanne Devonish from the Urban Design and Planning Division contacted LICIA to request input with the issue of increasing the current Riverland Road annexed area maximum height of 20' to 35' to be consistent with the overall City of Fort Lauderdale code for residential areas.

On March 21, 2024, the LICIA Board of Directors met to review the City's presentation on "Height Amendments in the Annexed Areas." The presentation included the proposed maximum height of 35' in the residential districts of the annexed areas including Chula Vista Isles, Melrose Park, Lauderdale Isles, Riverland Manors, Riverland Village and Riverland Woods. The Board reviewed the materials and felt it was very important to get input from the neighborhood. Consensus was to include an advertisement in the next LICIA newsletter and invite the City to the upcoming General Meeting in May. The front page of the newsletter included a brief narrative of the proposed code change and was hand delivered to all of the residents of Lauderdale Isles.

On May 16, 2024, LICIA conducted its quarterly General Membership Meeting at the Grace Alone Ministries Church. The attendance was standing room only with over 70 residents in attendance and included a presentation from Karlanne Devonish from the City that described the proposal to increase the height restriction to 35'. After the presentation, Eric Silva (a resident of Lauderdale Isles) provided a presentation that showed his efforts to rebuild his home and the difficulty of the current 20' restriction and supported an increase to 25'.

After the presentations, the floor was open for discussion for questions before the vote was collected. As with all associations, there are some residents who don't want to pay the \$20 annual dues, but still want a vote and enjoy all the benefits of the association membership. To diffuse this issue, as the President, I made an exception to provide ballots to non-members with a note of non-member to be included in the vote summary. Attendees on all sides of the issue were provided an opportunity to speak including two people who were proponents of the increase in height to 35'. In addition, the attendees were informed that this was an association meeting and that if they felt they were not being represented, they were welcome to reach out to the City's Urban Design and Planning Division or their elected officials.



The votes were cast by the attendees with the rules of one vote per household. The summary of the votes cast is the following; 17% to keep the 20' height, 55% to increase to 25' height, 23% to increase to the 35' height and 5% other. The majority of the LICIA Board supported the increase to the 25' height which would provide relief to residents who would like to redevelop their property while being compatible with the majority of residences that are one-story ranch style homes.

LICIA was provided with a letter sent to the City Commission dated May 20, 2024, by a Lauderdale Isles resident Shelly Hnot. We appreciate and encourage Mrs. Hnot's communication with the City Commission, but I would like to clarify a few items. First, LICIA is very proud to have diffused a few attendees that refuse to pay the minimal \$20 dues and still count their vote. Other associations are very strict that you must be a member in good standing to vote...period. Second, there was standing room only and several board members sorted the ballots. Third, Mrs. Hnot is not the owner of the residence at 2690 Key Largo Lane, and Lastly, Mrs. Hnot sent me a threatening text message prior to the May meeting stating I had no authority and to "Back-Off."

In summary, by combining the numbers, 72% of the attendees favored the height of the homes to be within the 20' - 25' maximum height and 23% favored the maximum height to 35'. Thank you for your commitment to public service and please accept the results of our Civic Association Poll. If you feel this poll was not representative of the neighborhood, the City is welcome to conduct additional meetings.



Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Handwritten signature of Earl Prizlee in black ink.

Earl Prizlee, P.E. President  
Lauderdale Isles Civic Improvement Association (LICIA)

CC: Mayor Dean J. Trantalis  
Vice Mayor Steven Glassman  
Commissioner Warren Sturman  
Commissioner Pamela Beasley-Pittman  
Commissioner John C. Herbst  
Lauderdale Isles Resident - Shelly Hnot