



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
700 NW 19 AVENUE, FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33311  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 2024 – 6:00 P.M.**

<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Michael Weymouth, Chair	P	2	0
Brad Cohen, Vice Chair	A	1	1
John Barranco	P	2	0
Brian Donaldson	P	2	0
Steve Ganon	P	2	0
Marilyn Mammano	P	2	0
Shari McCartney	P	2	0
Patrick McTigue	A	1	1
Jay Shechtman	A	1	1

**Staff**

D'Wayne Spence, Deputy City Attorney  
Jim Hetzel, Principal Urban Planner  
Karlanne Devonish, Principal Urban Planner  
Nicholas Kalargyros, Urban Planner  
Tyler Laforme, Urban Planner  
Michael Ferrera, Urban Planner  
L. Harmon, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.

**Communication to City Commission**

None.

**I. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Weymouth called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The Chair introduced the Board members present.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES / DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

**Motion** made by Ms. McCartney, seconded by Mr. Donaldson, to approve the June minutes. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

**IV. PUBLIC SIGN-IN / SWEARING-IN**

Any members of the public wishing to speak at tonight's meeting were sworn in at this time.

~~5. CASE: UDP T24005~~

~~REQUEST: \* Amend City of Fort Lauderdale Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR); Section 47-24.5. Subdivision Regulations~~

~~APPLICANT: City of Fort Lauderdale~~

~~GENERAL LOCATION: City Wide~~

~~COMMISSION DISTRICT: City Wide~~

~~CASE PLANNER: Yvonne Redding~~

~~This Item was deferred to the September 18, 2024 Board meeting.~~

6. CASE: UDP-T24008

REQUEST: \* Amend City of Fort Lauderdale Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR); Section 47-20.2, Parking and Loading Zone Requirements Section 47-35, Definitions, to Revise Medical Office Parking Requirements

APPLICANT: City of Fort Lauderdale

GENERAL LOCATION: City-Wide

COMMISSION DISTRICT: City-Wide

CASE PLANNER: Karlanne Devonish

Ms. Devonish stated that this Item is an amendment to ULDR Sections 47-20.2 and 47-35 which would revise parking requirements for medical offices. It is brought forward as a result of a request by the Planning and Zoning Board. The City Commission asked Staff to explore a text amendment for medical and dental offices, which currently require one parking space for every 150 sq. ft. of gross floor area. Staff proposes amending these uses to be parked at one space for every 250 sq. ft. of gross floor area.

Medical clinics would continue to be parked at one space for 150 ft., as they often have walk-in patients and it can be difficult to estimate how many would be seen in a given day. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) supports maintaining a slightly higher parking rate for medical clinics. The amendment also includes updates to the definitions of medical office and medical clinic to show the distinction between these uses.

At this time Vice Chair Cohen opened the public hearing.

Courtney Crush, private citizen, stated that in her capacity as a land use attorney, she receives requests from doctors and psychiatrists seeking to move into office buildings which are parked as professional offices. They typically seek legal representation to request parking reductions, which requires taking these requests before the City's DRC and Planning and Zoning Board as well as hiring a traffic engineer to perform an analysis. She concluded that it is financially unfortunate that medical and professional offices, which have less intensity than medical clinics, carry this high-cost burden.

Bill Rotella, private citizen, advised that as a commercial broker, he has represented many doctors' and dentists' offices which have ultimately taken these uses to other cities. He pointed out that telemedicine and other technological advances have changed the

amount of traffic going to these offices, some of which see only a handful of patients in a given day. He was in favor of the proposed change, which he felt would attract more professionals to Fort Lauderdale.

Tarlan Mamedov, private citizen, explained that he was affected by this policy, as he had purchased an office building with which he is experiencing difficulty bringing tenants due to the building's parking requirements. He felt the proposed amendment would help him to lease this space, which has been empty for four years.

As there were no other individuals wishing to speak on the Item, the Vice Chair closed the public hearing and brought the discussion back to the Board.

Ms. Mammano requested clarification of the difference between a professional office building and a medical office. Ms. Devonish replied that if the proposed amendment is passed, these two uses would be parked at the same rate of one space per 250 sq. ft. of gross area.

Mr. Barranco addressed the distinction between medical office and medical clinic use, pointing out that medical clinics often include but are not limited to services such as laboratory facilities and supporting pharmacies. He added that while these uses are distinguished from medical offices, the definition does not explain the distinction, and expressed concern that the proposed amendment could affect this use.

Attorney Spence advised that the first two sentences of the amendment are intended to serve as the general definition for medical clinics, referring to any facility that is providing limited diagnostic and outpatient care as well as urgent care facilities. There are also more descriptive terms which help the zoning administrator with interpretation. He concluded that he was open to modifying the amendment's language before it is adopted.

Ms. McCartney observed that by stating a medical clinic commonly includes but is not limited to other uses such as lab facilities, the definition supports the argument that a clinic is busier than a doctor's office. Ms. Devonish confirmed that this was the intent of the amendment. She also noted that a clinic may include multiple doctors.

Mr. Barranco pointed out that some doctors' offices also include lab facilities and other features such as x-ray machines. Ms. McCartney suggested that the statement defining a medical clinic and including examples could be deleted.

Mr. Barranco asked if one distinction between a doctor's office and a medical clinic is that patients do not need appointments for medical clinics. Attorney Spence advised that medical clinics have greater parking requirements because the services they provide are more intense.

Mr. Donaldson stated that his interpretation of the amendment was that a medical clinic would serve a greater number of patients coming to or from the site than a doctor's office.

He noted that physicians seeking to rent office buildings typically have a calendar with appointments, do not provide walk-in services, and may close in the evening, while clinics providing after-hours services are more likely to need the ratio of one space per 150 sq. ft. of gross floor area.

Ms. McCartney again proposed defining the uses with the first two sentences of the amendment and without including examples. There was consensus from the Board members that this change would address their concerns.

Attorney Spence advised that the definition used for medical office seemed to mirror the definition of medical clinic. Ms. Devonish added that some of the definition came from the ITE in order to ensure alignment with that manual, although this is not a requirement. Jim Hetzel, Principal Urban Planner, further clarified that consistency with the ITE manual would provide additional justification for the amendment; however, the City is not required to use the definition as stated from the ITE.

Mr. Hetzel read the proposed language which would define a medical clinic as “any facility used to provide limited diagnostics and outpatient care and does not provide prolonged in-house medical and surgical care, and that is primarily operated as a walk-in on an as-needed basis.” There was Board consensus to proceed with this language change.

It was further clarified that the language on Exhibit 1, p.9 would be amended as shown above.

**Motion** made by Ms. Mammano, seconded by Mr. Donaldson, to recommend approval of Case Number UDP-T24008, and the Board hereby finds the text amendments to the ULDR consistent with the Comprehensive Plan with the following correction in the definition: that “medical clinic” will now be defined as “any facility used to provide limited diagnostic and outpatient care, and does not provide prolonged or in-house medical and surgical care, and that is primarily operated as a walk-in on a needed basis; urgent care facility is a commonly used term to describe this type of facility.”

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously (6-0).

## ~~V. COMMUNICATION TO THE CITY COMMISSION~~

~~Ms. Mammano observed that the Board has recently addressed parking requirements for certain projects, including why some requirements are different from the ITE standards. She asked if Staff saw this difference as a significant problem which should be considered holistically rather than on a case by case basis, possibly requiring the attention of the City Commission.~~

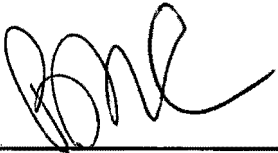
~~Mr. Hetzel replied that the City Commission did not wish to undertake a full study on parking ratios in Code using the ITE manual. At present, Code is structured to provide a parking reduction option for which the ITE manual is used to verify applicants' proposed~~

~~Mr. Barranco commented that the greatest difference between the Northwest and South RACs is that the Northwest RAC has its own zoning districts which can be applied to the land use, while the South RAC does not currently have this Code. Creating this Code would require looking at the different areas of the South RAC and determining whether or not they may need separate zoning districts.~~

~~Mr. Barranco continued that the Northwest RAC may also need separate zoning districts that are consistent with trends of development and/or the surrounding major corridors. He warned that continuing to rezone the Northwest RAC in a piecemeal manner could lessen its diversity, and suggested that a study could be done in the future to consider planning throughout the area, with greater intensity along the major corridors.~~

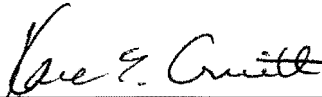
There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.



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Chair



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Prototype

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]