



January 10th, 2025

Via Email

Planning Board
City of Key West
1300 White Street
Key West, FL 33040

RE: Public Comments for January 13th Special Planning Board Meeting

Dear Planning Board Members,

Last Stand of the Florida Keys, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the natural environment and quality of life in the Florida Keys, respectfully submits our comments regarding the proposed changes to the City of Key West's Land Development Regulations (LDR). These changes, aimed at incorporating elements of the Florida Live Local Act (LLA) into the City's zoning code, raise serious concerns due to their potential far-reaching and negative impacts on our island community.

The proposal by Attorney Smith to expand the Live Local Act (LLA) into our LDRs threatens to erode the protections that safeguard Key West residents and neighborhoods. Such changes compromise the values that ensure our community's health, sustainability, and unique character.

We strongly oppose these amendments, which prioritize developer interests over the well-being of residents and the environment. Key provisions of concern include:

- Reduction of Setback Requirements
- Increased Height Limits
- Elimination of Performance Standards (Density and Parking Reductions)

- Elimination of Public Hearings

A particularly troubling aspect is the proposed redefinition of height measurement. The City Charter clearly sets a height limit of 40 feet, which was reaffirmed by Key West voters. However, the proposed changes redefine height measurement in a manner that could result in taller buildings. Additionally, site development standards would be removed, allowing larger, taller, and denser buildings to be integrated into residential single-family districts.

These changes contradict the guiding principles established under the Area of Critical State Concern (Section 29-36.003[9]). These principles emphasize the need to balance development with protecting the environment, historic character, and unique resources of the community. The amendments not only disregard these standards but also pose a direct threat to the island's sustainability and quality of life.

While developers may benefit financially from these proposals, the consequences for our community are detrimental. We urge the Planning Board to reject these amendments and take the necessary time to carefully evaluate their long-term implications.

We greatly appreciate the Planning Department's leadership in addressing these critical issues and remain committed to supporting efforts that ensure a sustainable and thriving future for Key West.

Respectfully,
The Last Stand Board

Last Stand is a nonprofit organization of volunteer citizens committed to preserving the Florida Keys' unique quality of life and fragile, beautiful natural environment. Since 1987, we have worked tirelessly to protect Key West and the Florida Keys.

Last Stand
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