



**TOWN OF PALM BEACH**  
Planning, Zoning & Building Department  
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PLANNING, ZONING, & BUILDING DEPARTMENT  
PZ&B Staff Memorandum: Town Council Development Review

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Wayne Bergman, MCP, LEED-AP  
Director PZ&B

SUBJECT: ZON-22-145 (ARC-22-211) 375 S OCEAN BLVD—MIDTOWN SEAWALL  
(COMBO)

MEETING: DECEMBER 14, 2022

**ZON-22-145 (ARC-22-211) 375 S OCEAN BLVD—MID TOWN SEAWALL (COMBO).  
SITE PLAN REVIEW AND VARIANCE.** The applicant, the Town of Palm Beach (Public Works Department), has filed an application requesting Town Council review and approval for Site Plan Review for construction of a new 2,715 linear feet Mid-Town seawall along South Ocean Boulevard from south of Gulfstream Road to north of Royal Palm Way and for a variance (1) to construct a new seawall 2,715 linear feet directly adjacent but varying 42" to 78" eastward of the existing beach wall and east of the Town of Palm Beach's Bulkhead Line. The Architectural Commission will perform design review of the application.

**ARCOM NOTICE:**

**ARC-22-211 (ZON-22-145) 375 S OCEAN BLVD—MIDTOWN SEAWALL (COMBO).** The applicant, the Town of Palm Beach (Public Works Department), has filed an application requesting Architectural Commission review and approval for the construction of a new 2,715 linear feet Mid-Town seawall along South Ocean Boulevard from south of Gulfstream Road to north of Royal Palm Way and design modifications to the Clock Tower and proposed new overlook and demolition and replacement of existing knee walls, gates and wood beach access stairs and ramps, including a setback variance from the bulkhead line. This is a combination project that shall also be reviewed by Town Council as it pertains to the Site Plan Review and Variance relief for approval.

Applicant: Town of Palm Beach  
Professional: Bridges, Marsh & Associates; Engineer – GHD, Inc

**THE PROJECT:**

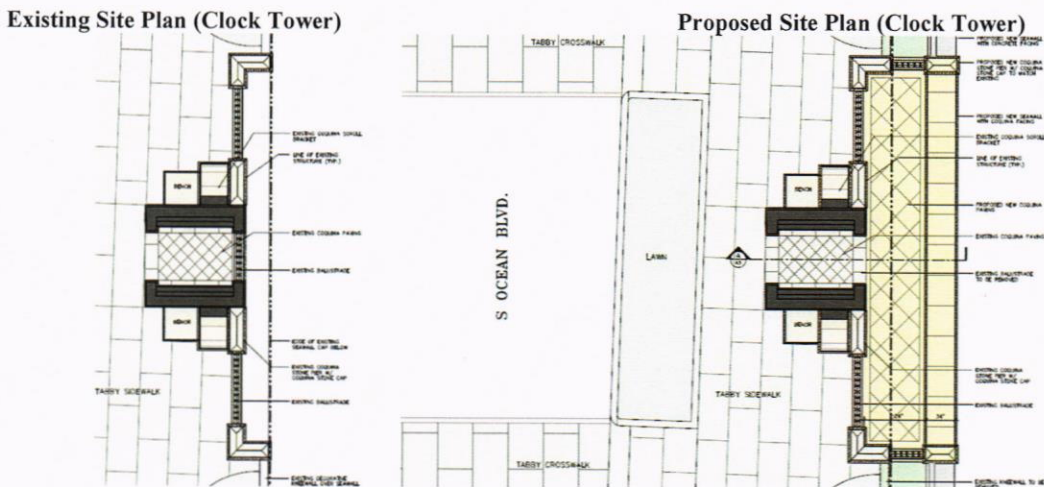
The applicant has submitted plans, entitled "Town of Palm Beach Midtown Seawall Replacement", as prepared by **Bridges, Marsh & Associates**, dated September 26, 2022.

The following is the scope of work:

- A proposed new 2,715-foot-long Midtown Municipal Beach seawall extending north of Royal Palm Way to south of Gulfstream Road.
- The existing seawall (knee-wall), gates, wood stairs and ramps will be removed and replaced in kind.

The scope of work predominantly involves of the replacement of the existing “seawall” along with the MidTown area extending from south of Gulfstream Road to just north of Royal Palm Way. Over 2,700 linear feet of parapet wall will be hardened in the Town’s greatest resiliency effort to date. The existing seawall was initially constructed in the 1920’s and has met its intended service life. A replacement seawall has been designed consistent with the Town Council-adopted long term Coastal Management Plan and the Level-Up Palm Beach Coastal Resilience Implementation Plan. A Coastal Construction Control Line Permit Application has been submitted to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for this eligible coastal armoring project.

The application is before Town Council for review and approval of Site Plan Review and a variance. A formal survey was not provided, but the Town bulkhead line is shown on the site plan. The seawall has elements that are tied to important existing structures, such as the Worth Avenue Clock Tower and the lifeguard/restroom facility. These features, and others, have been carefully considered by Town staff and the Town's consultants to enhance storm protection and resiliency for years to come with a new seawall, while maintaining the same visually unique qualities of the existing seawall. The new seawall is proposed to be installed easterly of the existing parapet wall. The existing decorative wave pattern is proposed to be replicated on the proposed new seawall.



The most significant aspect of the project from the design perspective is the new overlook proposed for the Clock Tower area. The new overlook provides a new area east of the Clock Tower from a new opening measuring approximately 6'-2" deep and nearly 40'-0" in length. Portions of the balustrade to the north and south of the entrance 'through' the Clock Tower will remain, while the new barrier eastward will be the new seawall and the central balustrade railing element will be removed. This aspect of the combo project has been vetted for design review by ARCOM.

A preliminary review of the project indicates that the application, as proposed, appears to be inconsistent with the following sections of the Town zoning code:

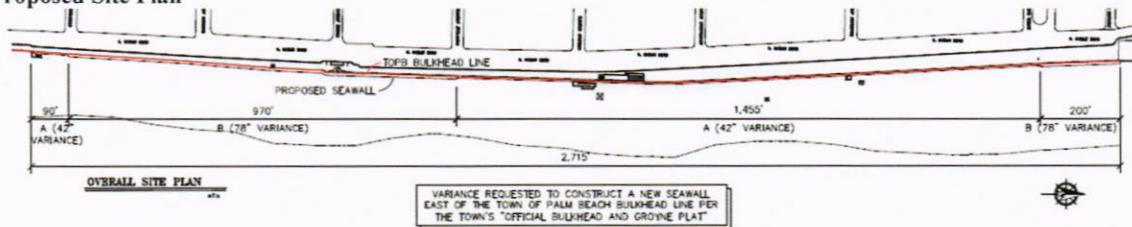
- Variance Requests to both Chapter 134, Sec. 134-1701 and Chapter 62, Sec. 62-37: Request for a variance for a new seawall, which shall be constructed varying 42" to 78" east of Town's bulkhead line.



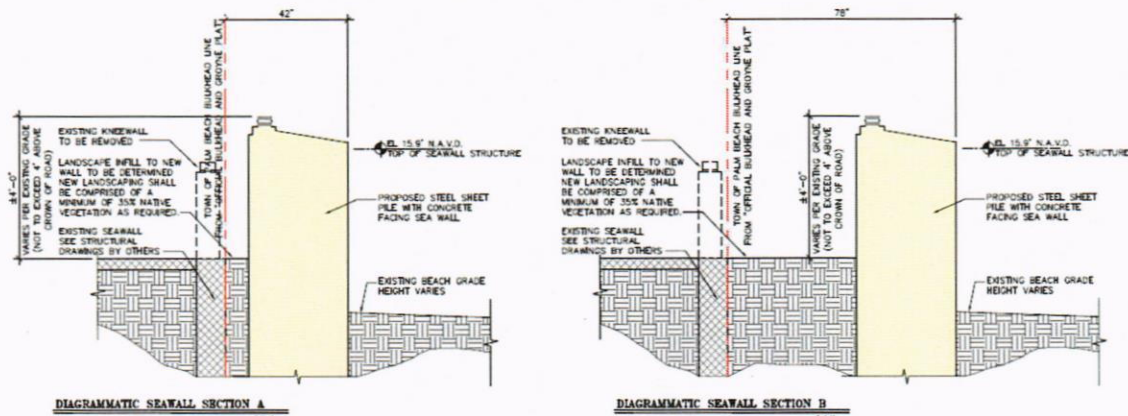
- “Chapter 134, Zoning, Sec. 134-1701. - Structures east of ocean bulkhead line. No structure shall be erected in the town east of the town's bulkhead line along the ocean front except erosion control devices such as jetties or groins.”
- “Chapter 62, Marine Structures, Sec. 62-37. - Bulkheads, groins to accord with plat; variances. All bulkheads shall be erected along the Official Ocean Bulkhead and Groin Plat of the Town of Palm Beach, Florida, except where the proposed bulkhead is to be located landward of the bulkhead line or except where the proposed bulkhead is no further than 12 inches seaward of the existing bulkhead. In cases where the proposed bulkhead is further than 12 inches seaward of the existing bulkhead, a variance shall be required pursuant to [section 134-201](#). In such case, application shall be made to the town council setting forth the reason and justification, based on the variance criteria identified in [section 134-201](#), why a variance should be granted; and, in such case, the determination of the town council shall be final.”

As it pertains to the variance request, the new fortified seawall is proposed easterly of the existing parapet wall condition at a distance varying 42” to 78” east of Town’s bulkhead line. The existing seawall was initially constructed in the 1920’s. Along the length of the proposed siteplan the distance changes to reflect the existing built conditions of the Town’s current wall form.

Proposed Site Plan



Typical Seawall Sections



The new seawall is proposed to be 2'-10" thick and constructed at 4' in height at the most extreme condition for the length of the 2,715 feet seawall construction plan.

WRB:JGM