

Sustainable Development Plan & Code
Central West End Midtown Development
City of St. Louis, Missouri

Public Meeting #1
June 27, 2009

Study Objective

The objective of the Sustainable Development Plan & Code is to develop a plan that guides the future growth of the study area in an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable manner and is supported by the residents of the area and the City of St. Louis.

Summary of Analysis: Issues

- Conflicts between the intent of the Strategic Land Use Plan (2005) and the Zoning Code (1947)
- Standards for demolition review vary according to regulatory authority (local, state or federal)
- Different guidelines for new construction according to the location of the site within the study area
- A fixed building envelope cannot be determined since the code is written as a series of relationships
- The building envelope (height, mass, bulk) limits depend on uses
- In most areas within the study area, the height of the building envelope is determined by the amount of land that can be assembled (i.e. height is not necessarily limited and therefore in some cases the subdivision regulation is critical in determining the overall height and bulk of the building)
- The “seams” between the various building envelopes and key existing structures are not necessarily contextual
- There is no one agreed-upon guiding document and regulatory authority for development
- A sense of uncertainty and suspicion exists from both the development community and the public as a result of exception variances.
- No comprehensive vision

Draft Design & Development Principles

- Create an urban community that encourages sustainability, livability and walkability
- Preserve the historic integrity of the district while increasing the density of people, activities & buildings
- Require new development that contributes to the diversity, urban character and high quality of the architecture
- Enhance the walkability of the neighborhood by diversity in uses, building types and heights.
- Create active commercial neighborhood streets with continuous street fronts
- Clarify the regulatory/development processes by creating a single document for guidance
- The vision for the area should be forward thinking and guide development for at least 20 years
- The process should determine focus zones where development has the most ability to positively impact the neighborhood

Option A: Modified Existing Envelope

- Builds upon the Strategic Land Use Plan & Zoning by emphasizing new development in the Development Areas, with similarly scaled development in the core of the Preservation Area
- Introduces the idea of restrictive height ranges (maximum and minimum) for development that provides flexibility for the developer to respond to market pressures and creates an incrementally varied skyline
- Introduces the idea of stepping down the height toward the core of the Preservation Area
- Builds upon the retention of historic assets in the core of the neighborhood
- Responds to the civic building character of Grand Center along Lindell Boulevard and Vandeventer Avenue
- Encourages new development along the length of Forest Park Avenue (6-16 stories plus)
- Encourages higher infill development along Lindell Boulevard (6-16 stories plus)
- Restricts unlimited height to Kingshighway Boulevard
- Refines the boundary of the Preservation Areas west of Taylor Avenue, along West Pine Boulevard at Taylor Avenue and along Forest Park Avenue
- Over the long term, permits the removal of some isolated historic structures (approx. 10)
- Assumes all new development is urban in character and of high architectural quality

Option B: Contextual Envelope

- Builds upon the existing heights of historic structures, sites and districts
- Introduces a system of nine height zones for infill development to ensure balance between a varied skyline and the integration of existing protected structures
- All protected structures are retained
- A minimum height of three stories for new buildings
- Provides for the highest building envelopes along Kingshighway Boulevard (8-16 stories)
- Retains the historic area along Forest Park Avenue and encourages adjacent compatible infill development
- Typically keeps and expands the boundaries of the Preservation Areas
- Overall, a lower and smaller-scaled development strategy
- A more particular and specific regulatory approach
- Assumes all new development is urban in character and of high architectural quality