



city of **CREVE COEUR**

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MEMO TO PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Meeting Date: August 6, 2018
Subject: Neighborhood Commercial District Work Session (East Olive Corridor)
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Attachment: Table A, with proposed NC District included

The East Olive Corridor consists of a variety of land uses that include the GC, CB Commercial District, and the C Single Family Residential Districts, as well as the A Single Family District, where existing homes that front Olive Boulevard may be used commercially.



Figure 1: Image of the East Olive Corridor area with the Zoning Districts indicated. The pink is the CB District, Red is GC District, Orange is the C Single Family District, and the light yellow is the A Single Family District.

The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the challenges of East Olive that have limited the revitalization of this area. These challenges include shallow lot depths, direct adjacency to established residential neighborhoods, and existing lot constraints including topography. The zoning district requirements have been specifically mentioned as a constraint to development as well. For these reasons, the Comprehensive Plan recommends creating a unique zoning district for the East Olive Corridor, referred to as the Neighborhood Commercial District, that would establish specific uses and development standards for this area.

Staff is seeking to establish the Neighborhood Commercial District that would be specific to the needs of the East Olive Corridor. This district would largely be based upon the current General Commercial District with some modifications. The recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan will be outlined within this report with

specific questions as to the appropriate standards to implement these recommendations within the context of the Zoning Ordinance.

Setbacks

The Comprehensive Plan suggests establishing a consistent building line along Olive Boulevard per image below:



Proposed Consistent Setback and Buffer Zone Examples

- A. Existing Parcels
- B. Primary Street Consistent Setback Zone (dimension to be determined)
- C. Side Setback Zone (dimension to be determined)
- D. Buffer Zone (from adjacent residential properties; dimension to be determined)



New Building and Parking Configuration Examples

- E. Example New Buildings
- F. Example Frontage Shared Parking with cross-lot access and optional public space and landscape amenities
- G. Consistent "Second-Tier" Pedestrian Zone with cross-lot access
- H. Example Rear- and Side-Lot Shared Auxiliary Parking and service areas

Current GC General Commercial minimum setback of 50 feet, where parking is located in front of the building (with no maximum), where in the CB District the maximum setback is 80 feet along Olive Boulevard and 15 feet maximum setback on any other street. Additionally, Section 405.240: Setbacks and Building Lines attempted to create a consistent building line along Olive Boulevard, per the section below. However, the various zoning districts in the area often leads to a lack of continuity.

Additionally, Section 405.240: Setbacks and Building Lines.

B. Setback Requirements On Certain Streets And Rights-Of-Way.

1. No building or structure shall be located further from a major street or highway in the City of Creve Coeur than provided for by the standards specified below:
 - a. Arterial street or highway (Ballas Road, Lindbergh Boulevard and Olive Boulevard): Forty (40) feet setback from the centerline of said arterial street or highway plus the permitted setback distance established in the zoning district. The Planning and Zoning Commission may increase the distance measured from the centerline of an arterial street or highway to ensure a consistent right-of-way along such a thoroughfare or if a road expansion is projected in an adopted land use plan.

The discussion during the development of the Comprehensive Plan involved the desired location of parking in relation to the street. It was generally agreed upon and the Comprehensive Plan recommends that parking be allowed in front of buildings, but parking along the side and rear and with cross access and shared parking encouraged. As an example of how to implement these recommendations, the CB District requires a maximum setback from Olive Boulevard at 80 feet which allows for some parking in the front (generally, one row with parking on both sides), and with the majority of the parking to the sides and rear. The key factors in the discussion on this topic involves how to establish a consistent building setback while also accommodating parking in front of the buildings.

Key Questions:

- Should the maximum setback, or build to line be a fixed number to allow for some parking in the front, but not all of it (CB District is an example)?
- Should the majority of parking be focused to the rear and less on the front and sides, to be in keeping with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan? This would allow for a reduced side yard between buildings if parking is shared in the rear.
- Should a variation be allowed, such as 10-feet from adjacent established buildings to account for site conditions?

Building Height

Currently, the building height allowed in the GC District is a maximum of three stories or 45 feet. Where the adjacent residential zoning districts allow a height of two and one-half (2½) stories or thirty-five (35) feet, whichever is less. The Comprehensive Plan envisions this area to be a transitional district with low-medium density buildings.

Key Question:

- Should the allowable building height remain at 3-stories and if so, should additional setbacks from an adjacent residential district be required for buildings above 2 stories?

Site Coverage and Bonus Standards

The Comprehensive Plan recommends supporting sustainable development practices through zoning incentives such as site coverage and density bonuses. Sustainable development practices to be considered include permeable pavement, bio-retention, native landscaping, and energy efficient lighting.

Currently, the Core Business and General Commercial districts allow for a maximum site coverage of 63%, with a bonus coverage of up to 70%. Staff would suggest a lower base site coverage, to provide greater greenspace and greater pedestrian amenities (plazas and pedestrian pathways are not counted as coverage in non-residential development) be considered. By lowering the base coverage allowed, the City could then incentivize additional coverage to implement additional desired objectives such as pedestrian amenities and sustainable development. Staff would also like to include greater definition for bonus consideration, and the level of benefit needed to gain additional coverage.

Key Questions:

- Should the maximum site coverage be lowered in the range of 50 to 60%?
- What are the elements that should warrant a bonus coverage to the maximum amount and to what percentage of a bonus should be granted? Examples would include sustainable site features, extraordinary pedestrian amenities, public transit enhancements, and public art.
- If the development creates such a significant benefit should we allow for additional structure height in addition to site coverage? For example, this could be tied to the allowance for going up to 3-stories.
- Should the City consider a tiered system whereby additional bonuses are granted for more extensive benefits?

Currently the bonus standards in both the GC and CB District include, but not be limited to, the provisions of:

- (1) Special pedestrian facilities and features such as gardens, fountains, seating areas and outdoor recreation amenities;
- (2) Objects of art or beautification; statuary or other unique visual features;
- (3) Burial of overhead transmission lines and removal of utility poles.

Staff finds that in many of the discussions, the items for consideration for a bonus coverage do not often relate to the amount of coverage and benefit provided. For example, what types of additional features warrants a full bonus up to 70% versus a lower bonus of 65%? In addition, some development propose minimal pedestrian amenities or landscaping that only meets with the minimum standards of the Code and/or the City's Design Guidelines or barely exceeds them. Further, the burial of overhead transmission lines and removal of utility poles are generally not financially feasible on a site-by-site basis and should be removed from consideration.

Buffers

The buffering of commercial uses that are adjacent to residential districts is an important development standard. The City's planning efforts have historically emphasized the need to protect residential areas from commercial encroachment and this theme continues with the current Comprehensive Plan. The key issues are the appropriate depth and method of a buffering to facilitate development along the corridor while also protecting residential neighborhoods.

The GC District includes a buffer yard requirement of 20 feet with 5 foot increments for each acre over 2, up to a maximum of 40 feet. Due to the existing sites within the East Olive Corridor, with very few sites near 2 acres, and with the lower development regulations, and coverage, Staff recommends a simple buffer yard of 20 feet, and only to the north or south for those properties that front along Olive Boulevard. A buffer yard for adjacent properties that also front Olive but may be zoned residential, whether or not they are used as residential properties, may not require a buffer yard.

Key Questions:

- Should the buffer yards be lowered to 20-feet across the board?
- Should the buffer yard be applied to adjoining properties that also front Olive Boulevard, but are not used for residential purposes, or even if they are used for residential purposes?

Design Characteristics

Staff envisions that an update to the Design Guidelines should be done after the Zoning Ordinance is substantially underway. The updated Design Guidelines would address specific considerations for the East Olive Corridor as well as general design recommendations that would apply in all non-residential zoning districts.

Basic design considerations could be included in the Zoning Ordinance that would not be as discretionary as you would find in the Design Guidelines.

Key Questions:

- Should basic design characteristics be included such as minimum amounts of brick or stone masonry, sloped roofs, etc., that would be geared toward compatibility with the adjacent residential development and in a smaller scale of the corridor?
- Should all design considerations be left to the Design Guidelines, to be updated after the Zoning Ordinance?



Figure 2: Two Story Office Building with slopped roof line, and a larger standard office building with a flat roof.

Landscaping

The Comprehensive Plan calls for landscaped frontages throughout the commercial districts. Staff would like to incorporate additional requirements into the code that would require specific landscaping standards for the entire site, not just for parking lots and street trees. This could be addressed as part of a broader landscape code update at a later date.

Uses

Many of the same uses in the GC would carry over to the new NC District with some exceptions. Certain types of residential uses would be allowed and uses that would not be compatible in scale or with adjacent residential districts. Below are highlights of staff's suggestions:

Home Centers are listed as a conditional use. Staff has not included it in the NC District as they are larger super centers that lack the neighborhood characteristics of development, and require more land area than the area could support. A similar condition exists with respect to Supermarkets and Grocery Stores. Smaller scale specialty grocery stores are categorized as NAICS 445110 All Other Specialty Food Stores which would be allowed. Department Stores, Discount Department Stores, Warehouse Clubs and Supercenters, and Home Centers would also not be allowed within this area.

Other General Merchandise Stores (NAICS 452990) is currently listed as a conditional use in all of the commercial areas. This category includes larger stores that a variety of merchandise, apparel, hardware, auto, such as Sears, as well as smaller stores such as a Dollar Stores. Given the lower intensity of the development of the district, should this remain a conditional use?

Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores will remain as a conditional use. However, Other Gasoline Stores (Gasoline Stations without convenience store, Truck Stops, and Marine Service Stations) would not be permitted in that they are not as neighborhood oriented.

Residential uses that were previously proposed in association with the text amendment in the GC-District are carried over for inclusion in the NC District. The Comprehensive Plan supports the inclusion of certain forms of low-medium density multi-family and attached townhouses within the corridor.

Attached is the list of permitted and conditional uses for the proposed NC—Neighborhood Commercial District for discussion.

Staff looks forward to reviewing the desired components of a potential new zoning district, exclusive to East Olive with the Commission.