

Long-Term Solutions Rejected by the Steering Committee

40. Redevelop Small Buildings on Grand – Add Parking in Rear Yards

The small-scaled residential building types fronting Grand that have been converted to permanent business use should be designated for a large-scale redevelopment project. These buildings are grouped together at 3159, 3163, 3165, 3167, and 3169 South Grand. This will be a long-term district objective, as property assembly will probably take many years to come under a single ownership interested in redevelopment of a larger scaled mixed-use project. The adaptive reuse of these homes has worked well for the early development of the Business District. As the Business District grows in economic success, a new commercial building will be able to create a much more efficient use of these properties when they are combined into a single large parcel. Redevelopment of this large project should include ground floor retail with a second floor for parking and a possible third floor for parking, office or residential use.

The Steering Committee stated: It is inappropriate to demolish these buildings, as they are some of the original and oldest buildings on Grand.

The short-term parking solution drawings show how a 68-car parking lot can be created behind these buildings with only the demolition of the existing garages located in the back yards. This redevelopment will require remarkable cooperation of these individual property owners, or the eventual ownership of these properties by a single developer. Note that this idea was more favorably viewed by the Steering Committee.



Existing view of these rear yards, mostly underutilized for parking.

The evolution of this site over the long-term shows the construction of a 5,500 square foot per floor building that replaces the two duplexes at 3167 & 3169 Grand and the one newer, non-historic Lucas Optometry building at 3165 Grand. The larger redevelopment scenario described above may be possible if there are better architectural aesthetic guidelines to assure that quality buildings replace the existing buildings. The Steering Committee opposed designing a larger development on this site to include the CBGB and St. Louis Wok buildings. Currently, this group of buildings appears to under perform the local business district standard, and presents a clear redevelopment opportunity for the long-term benefit of the district, including coordinated parking. Multiple owners of these buildings may not have the income stream from the building rents to implement the large, coordinated parking lot design shown in the drawings. If building demolition is

considered not desirable, perhaps relocating the smaller residential buildings to a vacant residential lot nearby would make this solution more tenable. See House Moving at solution #39.

41. Structured Parking in Rear Yards

Multiple residential properties that are directly adjacent to the Business District, which have been assembled for redevelopment, and have been designated with the Transitional Business District Zoning, should be allowed to build structured parking in the rear yards of these properties. One possible example of this project type would be in City Block 1484 between Juniata and Connecticut. Combining addresses 3530 to 3540 Juniata (3 buildings, one is a multi-family building) and 3529 to 3541 Connecticut. Most of these buildings are rental property. With these properties combined, a three level structured parking garage could be built that could contain about 180 cars. This could include some hourly public parking, and could provide parking for Jay's International and a new high density mixed use building built on the lot at the corner of Juniata and Grand (now a surface parking lot). The existing building code will effectively regulate as to what uses can still be implemented directly adjacent to a parking structure. Maximum height of the top parapet should be no greater than the heights of the existing building parapets on the property. It is likely that at least one building would need to be demolished to allow for the existing alley to be turned out toward a side street, and the existing alley would need to be vacated between these properties. In fact, in downtown Memphis, new residential apartments have been built to wrap around structure parking garages. This unique project was recently completed near the Memphis Redbird's new Auto Zone Ballpark. This is a complex solution which could be implemented in a variety of sites in the parking study area. This solution will be more easily understood in graphic form produced in the next phase of this parking study. (Not drawn due to dislike of this solution as proposed.)

The Steering Committee stated: The buildings mentioned above (3530 – 3540 Juniata and 3529 – 3541 Connecticut) are inappropriate to demolish. They are in reasonably good shape and occupied. Additionally, one of the buildings on Juniata, a six-family flat, was recently acquired by DeSales Community Housing Corporation and is being rehabbed into three or four town houses.

This solution does not propose any building demolitions, but instead proposes the construction of new parking structures behind existing buildings facing side streets (if they are changed to an office use, and incorporated as part of the redevelopment plan area). This location was used as an example due to the long-term development potential of the properties nearby, and since many of these homes already face the Commerce Bank site.

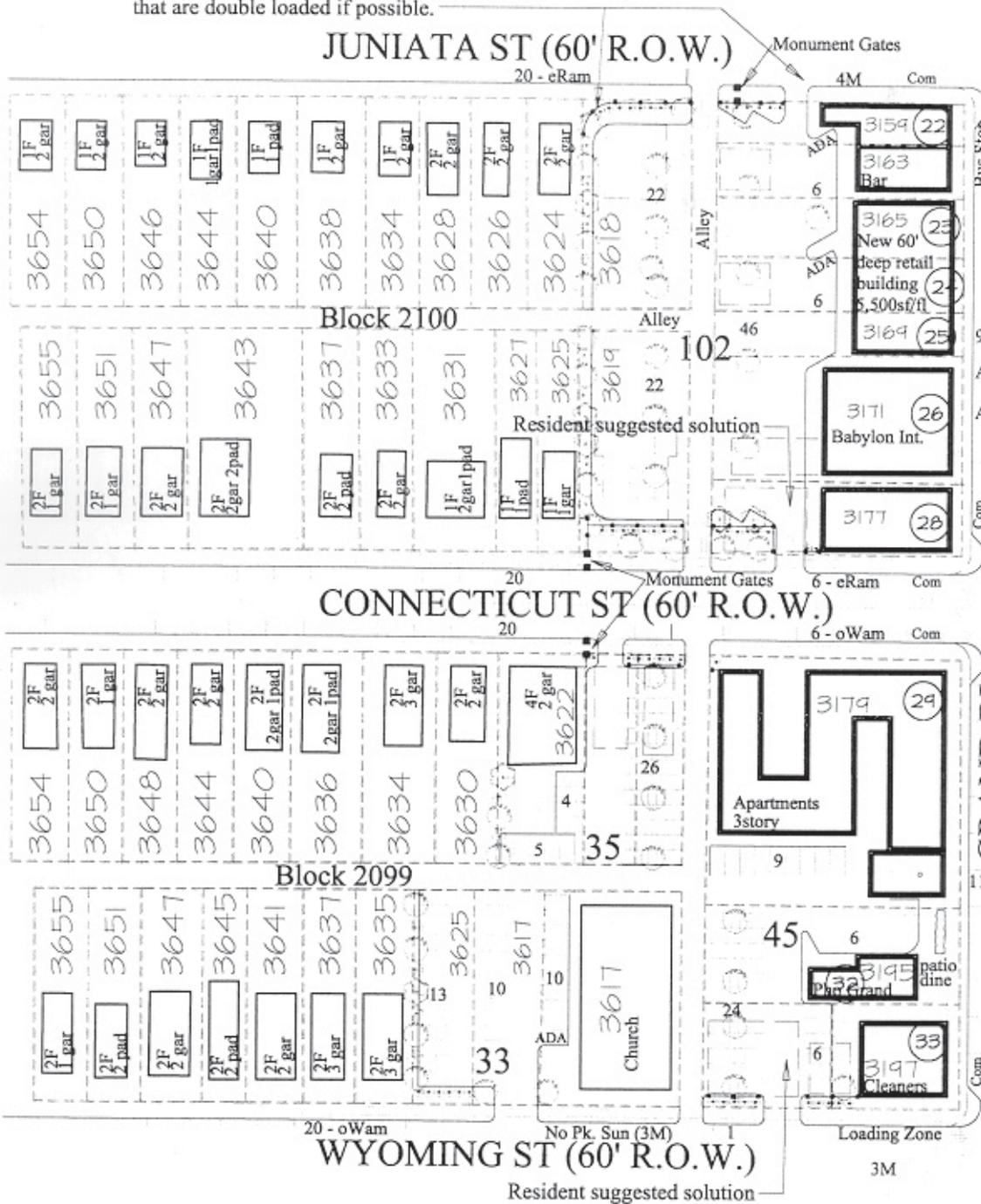
42. Structured Parking with New, 20' Deep Occupied Office or Other Use on Street Front

As a further evolution of the above redevelopment scenario, Transitional Business District Zoned properties should be allowed to be redeveloped with the demolition of the buildings fronting one side street with the replacement structure being built in accordance with detailed architectural design guidelines as noted elsewhere in this document. Additionally, the front of the new parking structure must be designed with at least a 20' deep space usable as office, residence, art studio, or other use determined suitable for the Transitional Zoning category. This frontage will assure an active and interesting streetscape rather than the less attractive, inactive façade of a parking structure.

The Steering Committee stated:

The Steering Committee would prefer the City's conditional use or Board of Adjustment process to creating a whole new process. According to Susan Anderson (S. Grand CID), the redevelopment plan's architectural design guidelines already mandate that new parking structures must be designed with street level commercial.

This block illustrates good potential to implement solution #41 and #42. These solutions proposed building a parking garage behind the existing buildings. Where the new garage would have side street frontage, the solutions proposed that the 20' wide frontage be occupied space (per approved uses) and detailed to match the existing historic architecture. Key to this solution is having a wide enough parcel of land to allow at least 2 drive aisles that are double loaded if possible.



These two blocks show part of a development scenario suggested in resident comments. The comments suggest that adequate parking could be supplied by keeping all demolitions to the east of the alley that runs parallel to Grand.

This would be possible to test as new parking is added incrementally behind the existing businesses up to the alley as shown. If this was found to be inadequate, the next step would be to use the proposed "parking in rear yards" concept suggested in the solutions.

Should this still not provide adequate parking, selective demolitions might be necessary up to the maximum boundary line shown on the larger drawings. This "Line of Demarcation" should be determined after a historic building survey is completed to make adjustments for any significant homes that should be preserved at all costs. See page 51 for additional text.

This development shows an expanded, interconnected parking lot behind Pho Grand on Block 2099. This solution adds 14 additional parking spaces with the demolition of the small garage building behind the cleaners and the apartment building next to the alley. Beyond the resident suggestion, this design shows 35 spaces created with the demolition of 2 homes at 3618 & 3620 Connecticut.

See Resident comments on page 46, Phase One at bottom of the page and page 47, Phase Two, #4 & #5 for additional description regarding some of these alternative development scenarios.

Solution #40 Redevelop Behind Small Buildings & #25 Parking Synergy

South Grand Commercial District Parking Study

including parts of the Tower Grove Heights & Tower Grove East Neighborhoods

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Sheet 37.1
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Scale: 1" = 100'-0"

Resident Comments: *No. The suggestion here is that the Transitional Zone eventually becomes a Business Zone, or in other words, in time, a policy of demolishing homes is put in place*

These (both #36 & #37) make me really uncomfortable. It's not just because they talk about demolition; I know that they're "long-term" solutions. It's because I've never once seen a developer follow "architectural design guidelines" or build a new building that looked even half as good as one torn down. Usually, they end up slapping an "historic looking" detail or two on the building and calling it done. The Cultural Resources Office often lacks the intestinal fortitude to enforce its own rules. Without enforcement, any guidelines are pretty useless.

The parking solution drawings do not show any of this type of large-scale development of parking structures for the short-term planning view. The long-term solution drawings show one high density parking structure in City Block 2102, in the north half of the block behind the Dickman Building. This long-term redevelopment project is described below in solution #42.

The public comments for this proposed solution suggest that it would be in the Business District's benefit to adopt more detailed architectural design standards that mandate more interesting infill architecture. This would help provide guarantees to the residents of the area that demolition of historic buildings will not be done in vain, with new infill buildings being unadorned and uninteresting architecture. This is the general criticism of the Streetside/Bread Company retail complex. If the Business District is in the pursuit of high quality tenants, high quality architecture should benefit the overall development direction desired for the South Grand Business District. This policy change could help ease the conflict that will always remain regarding demolition of existing buildings to provide more parking or new infill buildings.

43. Structured Parking for City Block with Highest Density

Designate a large-scale project site for 3612, 3614, 3618, 3622, 3624, and 3628 Arsenal. This property has a frontage that has the potential for commercial use due to the proximity to the intersection of Arsenal and Grand. Arsenal has about 5,000 vehicles per day passing by in each direction (total of 10,000 per day). This site has the key position for redevelopment as ground floor commercial and retail use with the second and third floors used as structure parking to serve this development and the existing high density development at the eastern end of City Block 2102 (The Dickman Building). The property for this project could be usefully assembled over time if the Transitional Zoning policy, conditional use, or expansion of the Redevelopment Plan is implemented (this policy allows the developer to pave the back yard of existing residential buildings for more parking, and to lease these residential buildings for a variety of allowed uses).

The Steering Committee disagreed with this solution, based on the following comments:

Business Owner Comment: *No. This would be an inappropriate use of property immediately across from (historic) Tower Grove Park. Could be appropriate to acquire one or two structures for combo commercial/residential use with rear surface parking.)*

Resident Comments: *NO...it is taking away historic buildings to create parking. The objective is to preserve homes*

We found it quite disturbing that some of the long-term planning (#24) involved going through the process of converting existing homes into commercial buildings that would have the option of paving the back yards to function as parking lots. While this parking plan option may pass within the neighborhood with restricted use, we found it quite deceiving that by agreeing to this (#24) the neighborhood would make it easier to later tear down these same previous residential lots (see #43) in order to build a parking structure. As a resident of the 3600 block of Arsenal we were particular upset by Proposal #43 where such deceit is clearly spelled out. In this

case the first six homes which are a combination of owner occupied and rental units, are listed as the site for a possible demolition and reconstruction into a parking/commercial structure. This is a backhanded way of handling rezoning and demolition in the city (#4 and #30) both of which this neighborhood has had negative experiences with in the recent history. It is extremely deceiving to present proposal #24 in such high regards only to mention in proposal #43 that this previous proposal opens the door to demolition. It is critical to present short-term and long-term plans together otherwise people are going to feel deceived by the whole process. In this current format this is not accomplished and would not be acceptable to many in the neighborhood. In addition:

This location would serve only the northern end of the Grand Business District. Since it is apparent that people with a suburban mindset do not like to walk more than a half of block to their destination this would not service the majority of the district. Tower Grove Park, in combination with the historical homes that surround it, is one of the draws to the neighborhood and the business district. With the exception of the building that houses Streetside Records/Kinkos/Bread Co./Hollywood Video the other two buildings have been maintained or restored to their original splendor. Demolishing historically intact and many recently renovated homes in order to build a commercial/parking structure is not an acceptable solution.

Reasonable Compromise

The business owners are attempting to work with the community residents in good faith and trust. Part of this trust is the fundamental assumption that the business owners are truthful in their claim for the need for additional parking in the area. The on-site parking supplied by a majority of blocks in the area is far below any standard, even when including the parallel parking on the street. Concentrations of parking deficits occur west of Grand in the northern and central portions of the district, and east of Grand in the southern portion of the district. City Block 2102 on the west side of Grand Avenue south of Arsenal clearly has the largest parking deficits of any portion of the district no matter what parking standard is utilized.

Poor parking will cause businesses in the district to lose quality tenants, dampen growth, stagnate rents, and lead to deferred maintenance and eventual decline. In the long-term, some changes along the edges of the Business District are necessary to provide the adequate parking needed to maintain the quality of the tenant mix. Decline in the Business District may well lead to decline in the residential neighborhood. Reasonable compromise will need to be made on both sides of the demolition debate.

Evolutionary Change

The parking study process has documented public support in surveys and focus group meetings for the creation of more parking for the business district if it is part of a systematic plan or set of solutions to the parking problem throughout the area. The parking solutions provide for a gradual increase of parking throughout the district (see drawings). Early phases of creating more parking around City Block 2102 include increasing the parking along Arsenal (solution #10) and creating parking behind the existing residential buildings directly adjacent to the business district (solution #24 & #29 and the short-term parking solution drawing). Where there are high concentrations of existing square feet with little or no parking, the long-term view suggests that it is wise to plan for this need by planning the construction of more urban, structured parking with ground floor retail instead of allowing massive suburban styled parking lots. Even though this parking garage/retail building requires the demolition of 4 homes, it does preserve more homes than what a surface parking lot would otherwise entail. The mixed use parking structure proposed is a very urban solution, very appropriate to this site if designed with adequate architectural detail and character fitting of the neighborhood.

The Parking Garage

City Block 2102 contains over 66,000 sf. of space, most of which is in the Dickman Building. Much of this office space remains vacant, and has been very difficult to lease due to the lack of parking. The building

owner has offered tenant parking east of Grand on City blocks 1463 (Commerce Bank lot) and 1484 (next block south). Most prospective tenants have rejected this as inadequate and gone elsewhere.

Suburban parking standards would require this group of buildings on this block to supply between 225 to 300 parking spaces. Town Center off-street parking standards used in this parking study (2 spaces/1,000 sf for office space) suggests a need for at least 130 spaces, currently 12 are provided. A surface parking lot to supply the needs of the historic commercial buildings on this block is nearly equal to the Commerce Bank parking lot. This suburban parking solution would require the demolition of the homes on half of the City Block, not an acceptable solution to maintain the existing urban character. Clearly large surface parking lots are not a sensitive solution to creating parking in an urban neighborhood.

Arsenal has about 10,000 cars per day traveling by the site proposed for the parking garage, thus ground floor retail would be possible here. Due to the offset in Grand Boulevard, this site would also have good visibility for the 15,000 cars per day traveling southbound. The regular softball leagues and the events periodically planned in Tower Grove Park would also benefit from the availability of structured parking here. The Dickman Building is the landmark building for the South Grand Business District, so a future parking garage is warranted in the location proposed in this long-term solution.

Note that the extent of this solution is scaled back from the original draft solution, requiring only 3612, 3614, 3618, and 3622 Arsenal to create a parking garage for 88 to 110 parking spaces on three floors. A fourth floor for the parking garage might be considered during the design phase of this project. The six-family building at 3624-28 is now preserved in this solution.



Back edges of the rear yards on the eastern end of City Block 2102 are substantially paved.
The proposed parking garage would not front Hartford to the left in photo.



The rear yards of the homes to the northwest of the Dickman Building are often in the shadow of this 6 story historic landmark. The parking solution drawings show a gradual testing of exactly how much parking is needed for the buildings in this block. Early steps in implementation add parking in the rear yards of the existing homes, keeping all of the homes in tact for residential or office use. The long-term scenario suggests that the best solution is to build a multi-level parking structure to create adequate parking in this block. The spreadsheet statistics show that only a parking garage will the address the large parking deficiencies for this block of highest density. The parking garage building would replace the four homes shown at right in this photo, but not the six-family building visible at the top of the photo.