

PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN AGENCY
CITY OF ST. LOUIS

• MEMORANDUM •

To: City of St. Louis Planning Commission

From: Don Roe, Director

Subject: Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Plan -- Presentation and Public Hearing

Date: July 28, 2017

A Presentation and Public Hearing for the Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Urban Design and Development Plan will be held at our August 2, 2017 meeting. We will not vote on the adoption of the Neighborhood Plan at this meeting.

Presentations will be made by PDA staff and Brandon Sterling, Executive Director of the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC), the neighborhood's community development corporation. Following the presentation, the Planning Commission will conduct a Public Hearing. The Public Hearing will follow our standard rules and regulations requiring speakers to sign in and limit their comments to a designated time period.

The public review period will extend beyond the Presentation and Public Hearing at the August 2, 2017 Planning Commission meeting until August 7, 2017. At the September 6, 2017 Planning Commission meeting, a review of the public comments, along with staff recommendations regarding the Neighborhood Plan, will be presented and discussed, and a vote will be taken on the Adoption of the Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Urban Design and Development Plan.

The Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Urban Design and Development Plan was completed in October 2014 and slightly modified in May 2017. The study area generally includes the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood, which is bounded by Delmar Blvd., DeBaliviere Ave., Lindell Blvd. and the City Limits, and very small portions of the adjacent West End and DeBaliviere Place neighborhoods. (A small portion of the City of University City was also included in the study area, but it will not be considered for Adoption.) The Neighborhood Plan was prepared for the SDCC by H3 Studio, a consulting firm.

The Neighborhood Plan was approved shortly after its completion by the SDCC's Board of Directors in October 2014. But, due to a number of factors, the process to adopt the Neighborhood Plan by the City of St. Louis was delayed. As a result, a "refresher" meeting was held by SDCC in June 2016 (attended by about 70 residents and the two alderpersons), to ensure that the Neighborhood Plan was still supported by the neighborhood.

Attached are the following two documents:

- “Proposed Adoption of Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Urban Design and Development Plan as a Neighborhood Plan”, prepared by PDA staff, which provides background information on the Neighborhood Plan and the Adoption process.
- “Addendum to Skinker DeBaliviere Master Plan”, prepared by Brandon Sterling, Executive Director of the SDCC, which provides additional information regarding the Adoption process and how the SDCC will use the Neighborhood Plan as a guide in its efforts to improve the neighborhood.

Due to the size and cost of making color copies of the Neighborhood Plan (309 pages), only a few hard copies were made. We are asking you to review the Neighborhood Plan online at PDA’s webpage: <http://www.stlouis-mo.gov/planning>. (Look under “Proposed Plans”.) However, if you prefer a hard copy, please let us know and a copy will be provided to you.

Copies of the Neighborhood Plan and the two related documents listed above are available for public review at three locations and PDA’s webpage:

- Charing Cross Branch Library, 356 N. Skinker Blvd.
- City of St. Louis Planning and Urban Design Agency (PDA), 1520 Market St., Suite 2000
- Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC), 6008 Kingsbury Ave.
- <http://www.stlouis-mo.gov/planning>

Proposed Adoption of Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Urban Design and Development Plan as a Neighborhood Plan

The City of St. Louis Planning Commission will be considering whether to adopt the Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Urban Design and Development Plan as a Neighborhood Plan.

The Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Urban Design and Development Plan was completed in October 2014 and slightly modified in May 2017. The study area generally includes the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood, which is bounded by Delmar Blvd., DeBaliviere Ave., Lindell Blvd. and the City Limits, and very small portions of the adjacent West End and DeBaliviere Place neighborhoods. (A small portion of the City of University City was also included in the study area, but it will not be considered for Adoption.) The Neighborhood Plan was prepared for the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC), the neighborhood's community development corporation, by H3 Studio, a consulting firm.

The Neighborhood Plan was approved shortly after its completion by the SDCC's Board of Directors in October 2014. But, due to a number of factors, the process to adopt the Neighborhood Plan by the City of St. Louis was delayed. As a result, a "refresher" meeting was held by SDCC in June 2016 (attended by about 70 residents and the two alderpersons), to ensure that the Neighborhood Plan was still supported by the neighborhood.

Additional information regarding the Adoption process and how the SDCC will use the Neighborhood Plan as a guide in its efforts to improve the neighborhood is included in an "Addendum to Skinker DeBaliviere Master Plan", prepared by Brandon Sterling, Executive Director of the SDCC.

Copies of the draft Neighborhood Plan, the "Addendum to Skinker DeBaliviere Master Plan", as well as this document, are available for public review at three locations:

- Charing Cross Branch Library, 356 N. Skinker Blvd.
- City of St. Louis Planning and Urban Design Agency (PDA), 1520 Market St., Suite 2000
- Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC), 6008 Kingsbury Ave.

In addition, copies of these three documents are available online at:
<http://www.stlouis-mo.gov/planning>.

As the first step in the Adoption process, a Presentation and Public Hearing will be held at the City of St. Louis Planning Commission meeting on Wednesday, August 2, 2017, 5.30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the City of St. Louis Planning and Urban Design Agency (PDA), 1520 Market St., Suite 2000. Presentations will be made by PDA staff and a representative(s) of the SDCC. Following the two Presentations, a Public Hearing will be conducted. Anyone interested in speaking or providing written comments in favor of or in opposition to the Adoption of the Neighborhood Plan will be given an opportunity to do so at the Public Hearing. Written comments can also be made prior to the Public Hearing in care of Roman Kordal, of PDA, via:

- E-mail: kordalr@stlouis-mo.gov
- Mail: Roman Kordal
City of St. Louis Planning and Urban Design Agency
1520 Market St.
Suite 2000
St. Louis, MO 63103
- Fax: (314) 613-7014

These written comments will be forwarded to the Planning Commission for its review.

Written comments regarding the Neighborhood Plan will also be accepted beyond the Wednesday, August 2, 2017 Public Hearing until Monday, August 7, 2017, 5:00 p.m. The public review period will end at that time.

PDA staff will then prepare a resolution (staff report) with its recommendations regarding the Adoption of the Neighborhood Plan. (Further information regarding PDA's recommendations is detailed below.) The resolution will be distributed to the Planning Commission and the SDCC on Friday, September 1, 2017.

The Planning Commission will vote on the Adoption of the Neighborhood Plan at its Wednesday, September 6, 2017, 5:30 p.m. meeting. The Planning Commission may take one of three actions: adopt the Neighborhood Plan, modify the Neighborhood Plan, or reject the Neighborhood Plan. Unlike most Planning Commission actions -- where the Planning Commission serves as an advisory body to the City's Board of Aldermen, and the ultimate decision requires the approval of an ordinance by the Board of Aldermen -- the authority to adopt a Neighborhood Plan rests with the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission will base its decision on a number of factors, including:

- A review of the Neighborhood Plan document.
- The Neighborhood Plan's compliance with the "Minimum Submittal Requirements for Neighborhood Plans", a set of requirements for Neighborhood Plans, which were adopted by the Planning Commission in 2000. (See Exhibit A.)

- The oral and written comments received during the public review period.
- The support of neighborhood residents.
- PDA's recommendations, which will be in the form of a resolution (staff report). The resolution will summarize a number of items, including the Neighborhood Plan's compliance with the "Minimum Submittal Requirements for Neighborhood Plans" and the oral and written comments received during the public review period.

For further information regarding the Neighborhood Plan adoption process, please contact Roman Kordal, of PDA, at kordalr@stlouis-mo.gov or 314 (657-3872).

Exhibit A

Minimum Submittal Requirements for Neighborhood Plans*

* [Note: Mandatory requirements are listed in **bold** type, while other items in regular non-italic type are elements that support the mandatory requirements. Text in *italic* is included for definition purposes only.]

- **Clear boundaries/geographic areas (i.e. Blocks, acres, neighborhoods)**
- History of neighborhood
- **Documentation of the planning process that was followed**
- **Substantial/broad public participation (documentation of residents and other stakeholders)**
 - Establishment/Existence of steering committee
 - Evidence of planning staff participation in planning process
 - Public Meetings
 - Preliminary discussion of proposed planning effort in neighborhood/area
 - Neighborhood/committee/subcommittee meetings
 - Final presentation of proposed plan
- **Brief summary of previous planning efforts**
- **Existing conditions**
 - Demographics (population, employment, housing, and economic characteristics, etc)
 - **Land use summary and map**
 - **Zoning summary and map**
 - Transportation and circulation map (e.g. traffic counts, barricaded streets, stop signs, one-way streets, bus routes, etc.)
 - Building conditions summary and map (detailed, building by building)
 - Community institutions and public facilities(e.g. schools, churches, recreation centers, parks, libraries, fire stations, etc.)
 - Analysis of urban design (e.g. historic preservation, park linkages, pedestrian circulation, etc.)
 - Known operating redevelopment plans (Chapter 99s, 100s, 353s) or other plans
 - Known existence of proposed expansions by business or industry
 - Infrastructure conditions and capacity (e.g. streets/alleys, water/sewers, basic utilities, lighting, telecommunications systems, etc.)
 - Capital Improvement Program
- **Neighborhood vision**

A description of the desired future of the neighborhood.

- **Goals and objectives**
Based on the neighborhood vision, a list of goals and their measurable objectives to be achieved through the plan's implementation should be established.
- **Recommended plan of action (recommendations)**
The actions that must be taken in order to actuate the new directions.
- **Demographic/economic impacts** (e.g. employment, business, population)
- **Recommended land use and zoning changes** (specific zoning recommendations preferred)
- **Infrastructure impacts/public facilities impacts**
- **Conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan**
- **Implementation schedule** (phasing of actions)
 - Overall funding of plan of action
 - Multi-year time frame defined
 - Implementation funding (proposed public- and private-sector sources, and proposed dollars amounts)
- **Environmental compatibility**

Addendum to Skinker DeBaliviere Master Plan

The Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Master Plan is meant to articulate the desired path for the continued development of the community, based on current neighborhood assets, expressed values and best or emerging practices in community development.

Internal Approval Process. In October 2014, the SDCC voted to approve the Community Urban Design Plan otherwise known as the Plan and seek its formal adoption by the City of St. Louis. It did so based on the recommendation of the planning Steering Committee, which consisted of residents, SDCC board members, institutional stakeholders, city planners and Alderperson Krewson. The motion that carried included a written intent to begin the adoption process (10/13/14 Board Minutes, Page 4). In January 11, 2016, the Board again reaffirmed its desire to work with the City of St. Louis to adopt the Plan.

Refresher Meeting. In April 2016, the City of St. Louis Planning & Urban Design Agency notified SDCC that Alderperson Lyda Krewson would require a Master Plan Refresher Meeting for the community, prior to continuing the review process and setting up a public hearing. With Krewson's input, that meeting was scheduled and held on June 23, 2016, with approximately 70 residents attending. Alderperson Krewson (28th Ward) and Alderperson Frank Williamson (26th Ward) also attended.

David Whiteman (former SDCC Executive Director) and Brandon Sterling (present SDCC Executive Director) facilitated a highlights presentation and questions segment. Elizabeth Pund (former SDCC Executive Director) was also on hand to answer questions related to the adoption timeline, which was only halted due to staff transitions at SDCC and the City level.

As a result of that meeting SDCC convened meetings with several residents and stakeholders to address any remaining questions or concerns about the Plan. These include a group of residents who have established a community garden on a vacant lot owned by the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation, the owners of Joe's Cafe, as well as questions of ambiguity related to the "greening of Des Peres". At the advice of Ms. Krewson, all references to Joe's Cafe were removed. In addition, the gardeners confirmed that their existing use agreement with the Housing Corporation was adequate and fair. Finally, SDCC confirmed with its planning consultant, H3, that the Plan included multiple options for the Des Peres greenway, rather than competing statements. (This is more clear in the revised copy of the Plan which is now available for public review.)

Capital Improvement Plan. The Plan does not include a formalized Capital Improvement Plan, but it does identify possible sources of funding. Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council's (SDCC) SBD Funding Exploratory Committee just concluded a year-long study and neighborhood engagement process related to Special Business Districts. In addition, SDCC is examining the possibility of establishing ad-hoc committees to continue that work with a goal of definitively gauging neighborhood interest in an SDB by mid-2018, as well as the feasibility of

establishing a long-term investment fund that might serve as seed money for projects that require a cost-share.

In an effort to facilitate the successful implementation of the Plan, Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council has established the standing Community Development Committee, which shall

“...be responsible for maintaining and planning the neighborhood’s residential and commercial areas in accordance with the Skinker DeBaliviere Master Plan, adopted by the Board on October 13, 2014, as may be amended; and shall review proposed residential, commercial and public infrastructure development and redevelopment proposals to determine the proposal’s compliance with the Master Plan. Further, the committee shall be responsible for periodic review of the Skinker DeBaliviere Master Plan, and recommend updates and revisions to the Board...”

This Committee is also charged with assessments of residential and commercial buildings, reviewing alternatives to demolition and seeking collaborations with property owners, recommendations on planning and zoning, conditional use applications, zoning variances and other applicable work.

Information gleaned from the work of the aforementioned ad-hoc committees would be fed to the Community Development Committee and would guide SDCC’s efforts to identify potential funding sources for the development projects and planning activities. In addition, SDCC will continue to engage residents, institutional stakeholders, alderpersons and departments within the City of St. Louis to ensure success, as it did during the initial planning process. A Capital Improvement Plan would grow out of this process.

Demographics/Economic Impacts. Skinker DeBaliviere is hailed by planners and academics alike for its successful efforts to attract and sustain a culturally and economically diverse resident population. As communities grow, and property values not only stabilize, but increase, sustaining this diversity can be challenging. On page 84 the Plan is clear: “A variety of housing types allows for people of various socio-economic demographics to find affordable housing in the same neighborhood, creating a diverse and vibrant community. Good quality housing promotes personal investment in the neighborhood, creating a more engaged and empowered community.” In fact, the action items detailed on 84 go a step further in expressing a desire to “Support, attract, and develop programs that assist with home and yard maintenance with particular attention to aging and lower-income residents.”

In late 2017, SDCC will begin dialogue with existing property owners and landlords about affordable housing in the neighborhood. The desire is to develop a “community benefits agreement” that promises a quantity of below-market rate rental units, which would be available to working class families, seniors, young families and other populations, who tend to become dependable tenants when given the opportunity, as well as offer increase the neighborhood’s social capital. Also, SDCC and the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation have

expressed a desire to collaborate on grant projects that could also increase the availability of affordable homes for purchase in the future.

As for economic development, Skinker DeBaliviere has a long-standing relationship of partnership with the local business community. It's Delmar Commercial District Committee, governed by both SDCC by-laws and City Ordinance, reviews and comments on business development projects annually. This has resulted in many successful businesses moving to and prospering within the neighborhood and East Loop area.

The Delmar and DeBaliviere TOD which was developed in conjunction with the Plan is being actively used by SDCC committees involved in development work and has been referenced recently by the several developers. The Delmar DevINe project, which aims create a non-profit cortex is actively using using both the Plan and DeBaliviere TOD. Pace Properties, which is proposing to a mixed-used building with first floor pharmacy at Delmar and Skinker has already used the TOD and Plan. In addition, the Plan and the TOD have been useful in neighborhood evaluation of proposals presented by Sangita Capital Group. These examples and others illustrate that the Plan and TOD are already valuable tools for the residents of Skinker DeBaliviere as well as the developers and businesses that attracted to the area.