



Metropolitan Planning Commission

Shreveport | Caddo Parish

MPC PUBLIC HEARING – UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE – SEPTEMBER 29, 2016

Below are the list of concerns and comments submitted by citizens stakeholders, elected officials, and MPC Board Members during the September 29th MPC Public Hearing on the Unified Development Code. If you have any questions regarding the list of items below, please contact Adam Bailey, Special Projects Planner at (318) 673-6465.

Mr. Tom Arceneaux, Attorney

- Mapping of Highland and Fairfield historic districts as it pertains to the proposed zoning.
The MPC will study the boundaries of both districts and will be addressing this issue on the Proposed Zoning Map.

Mr. Andy Craig, Civil Engineer, Mohr & Associates Inc

- Architects were not included in this document with regard to landscape plan submittal.
The word 'architect' has been added to the UDC to include:
Landscape plans must prepared by a landscape architect, architect or civil engineer licensed in Louisiana. (page 10-1)
- He is not opposed to tree preservation but feels that on properties on "the outskirts of town", it will be onerous for developers to have to pay a surveyor to do tree mapping.
The tree removal checklist would procedurally require the identification of significant trees to be removed (8" DBH or greater) and trees to be retained, all of which may be shown on an aerial photograph by clouding and labeling the areas where the trees are located. No extensive tree survey would be required. (page 10-6)
- Developers have a problem filling flood plains for development & if they can't remove trees, this makes it an even bigger problem.
The UDC does not prevent engineers/developers from removing trees from a floodplain. All the UDC requires is that the applicant show which trees need to be removed for filling on a tree removal plan, which can be submitted on an aerial photograph. (page 10-6)

Mr. Bill Wiener, Architect

- Would like to see better protection provided for our historic districts.
This issue will be addressed on Proposed Zoning Map.
- Feels that the 25% windows requirement "is ridiculous" because of the western sun.
A minimum 25% window/door requirement, for the front façade only, is a national average that many progressive cities require. Cities like Austin, San Antonio, Richmond, and San Francisco require far greater percentages. The 25% requirement does not apply to all zoning districts. (pages 4-13, 4-20)



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- Reconsider the use of building materials.
The idea behind the 'limited' use of certain building materials is to make the street facing facade of such buildings more attractive, such as creating stucco exteriors or building a facade designed of stone or sculpted construction blocks (instead of a 100% corrugated metal façade).
- Encourage recycling buildings over demolition and promote infill development.
New zoning districts and design standards have been created to help encourage infill development and redevelopment of older structures.
- Digital signs need to be addressed.
This issue is addressed under electronic message sign (pages 9-3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 18, 19)

Mr. Mack Smalley, Jr, Citizen

- Had concerns & questions about the use & placement of pre-built structures on property.
This would be determined by the City or Parish adopted Building Code.

Mr. Jeff Everson, City Councilman, Council District B

- Parking requirements for the Highland area needs further refinement to address commercial redevelopment opportunities. (page 8-18)
MPC recommends the following changes:

Existing non-residential structures **that are 60 years of age or older** as of the effective date of this Code that currently do not provide **the required amount of** parking on the lot are exempt from all off-street vehicle parking requirements regardless of any change in use or intensity of use. Such non-residential structures may expand their footprint or gross floor area so long as the expansion is on the same lot and no additional lot area is added. Once the principal building is demolished, this exemption is no longer valid. In addition, if the lot area is expanded (e.g., the adjoining lot is purchased or leased), this exemption is no longer valid.

Mr. James Flurry, City Councilman, Council District E

- Commented on requirements regarding cemeteries & mausoleums.
These 'uses' are very specific to certain zoning districts (R-A, R-E, OS). The MPC feels that they are identified correctly in the Use Matrix.
- Asked how the downtown landscaping requirements had changed.
All commercial and industrial properties would require landscaping; no district is exempt, nor are the landscaping requirements onerous and far reaching. Investment in landscape and streetscape improvements in the urban environment can provide myriad benefits to a community and its residents. Numerous studies have shown that street trees and landscaping provide not only aesthetic and environmental benefits, but social and economic benefits as well (i.e. increased property values and higher rental revenues).



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- The new Zoning Map is too hard to read; need street names for reference.
A new, more-readable zoning map has been uploaded to the UDC website (on October 11th) which showcases all street names and all zoning districts.
- Disagrees with having to provide botanical names of plants.
Common names are not universal. Many regions and locales have their own colloquial names for certain plants that mean nothing in another part of the country. Botanical names are better when discussing plant selections with nurseries in order to get the exact plant species that you are asking for.
For example, American hornbeam (the “accepted” common name for *Carpinus caroliniana*) is alternatively known as blue beech, ironwood and musclewood, depending on where you find it growing. In some areas hostas are known as plantain lilies, astlibes are called false spirea, caragana is known as peashrub, arborvitae is white cedar, and potentilla is cinquefoil. There is simply no “universal standard” for these names. In general, landscape contractors and nurseries prefer botanical names over common names.
- Feels that a 3-car garage facing the street prohibition will not be well accepted by residents or builders
There is NO LANGAUGE in the UDC that says that a 3-car garage facing the street is prohibited. The language says that a front-loaded attached garage is limited to 50% of the width of the front building line or 22’, whichever is greater. Therefore, if the front building line is 60’, the garage can be up to 30’ (or 3-car garage).
- Expressed concern for the poured slab requirement for manufactured homes.
These requirements are intended to meet the minimum standards of the Permanent Foundations Guide for Manufactured Housing, HUD Publication HUD-7584, which must be met for a home to qualify for FHA financing.

Mr. Jimmy Couvillion, Citizen

- Expressed concern & asked that we reconsider the “P”, uses permitted by right & “S”, special uses requiring a public hearing, designations list. He submitted his list of specific uses for which he has concerns.
The use ‘Educational Facility-Primary or Secondary’ will be changed to “S” in some of the lower density single-family residential districts (R-1-12, R-1-7, and R-1-5). These updates will be reflected in the Use Matrix.

Mr. John Hubbard, SWEPCO

- Mr. Hubbard asked that we include the following as an addition to the UDC:
“All electric transmission and distribution lines, wires, poles, along with any and all related facilities, including electric substations, in any way necessary for service by an electric public utility subject to the jurisdiction of the LA Public Service Commission, shall be exempt from all of the limitations and requirements of this Unified Development Code, including but not limited to the restrictions on vegetation management contained in Article 10 and the limitations on right of way contained in Article 12.”
The MPC is working with SWEPCO to adopt common language addressing tree preservation that is agreeable to both parties.



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- Constitutionally, electric utilities are under the jurisdiction of the LA Public Service Commission. They have stringent service quality standards.
The MPC is working with SWEPCO to adopt common language addressing that is agreeable to both parties.

Mr. Johnny Williamson, Citizen

- I-49 is coming through this area & this corridor will provide access to the interstate. His property is currently commercial but under the UDC, will become residential. This needs to be left a commercial corridor because of the I-49 issue.
The MPC feels that the proposed zoning along Pierre Avenue, a mix of C-1, C-2, C-UC, and R-UC adequately addresses the need for neighborhood commercial needs. However, should a property owner ever want to re-zone their property, they can submit an application to do so.

Ms. Jessica Ray, Citizen

- She wants to be able to pick whatever type of tree she wants to plant in her yard without restrictions. If it dies, then she'll try something else but she finds the requirements for homeowners too restrictive in the UDC.
The MPC has no jurisdiction over trees/plants planted on private property within single-family residential districts.

Mr. Willie Bradford, City Councilman, Council District A

- Doesn't want to create unreasonable expectations on some of our older neighborhoods – i.e., one size doesn't fit all.
Federal and state laws require that all zoning classifications be equally applied to all properties irrespective of its location within the City and Parish.

Mr. Ronnie Remedies, MPC Board Member

- Said the prohibition of clear cutting needs to be addressed clearly.
New language to include:
No clear cutting of land is allowed, **unless specifically authorized by an approved tree removal plan.** (page 10-6)
- Is concerned that we might be creating a Czar to approve more things than we should – that is why we have the Board.
The UDC does make provisions for appeals of the decisions of the Executive Director where appropriate.
- If he pays for a (privacy) fence, then he wants to look at the “good” side – not be required to have the good side facing the neighbors
It's common practice, not to mention etiquette, to put the finished side of a fence facing the street for the public good. Currently, most homebuilders already follow this rule. If desired, a property owner can always finish both sides.



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- Mechanics are required to work on cars in a fully enclosed building. Some people can't afford to take their cars to a shop

Current Language:

Q. Gas Station

4. All repair work must be conducted entirely within an enclosed structure. Storage of all merchandise, auto parts, and supplies must be within an enclosed structure.

Proposed language:

Q. Gas Station

4. Repair of vehicles shall not take place within the building front or side yard portions of the property. Storage of all merchandise, auto parts, and supplies must be within an enclosed structure. All outdoor repairs are only allowed in the rear yard and must be screened by a solid fence or masonry wall no less than six feet and no more than eight feet in height.

- Sometimes there is a need for the use of barbed wire in a non-industrial area. *(page 7-10)*
MPC recommends the following changes:

Old language:

Barbed wire, razor wire, or fences of similar material are permitted only on a lot used for a utility in any district or for a heavy industrial use in the I-2 District.

Proposed language:

Barbed wire, razor wire, **spiked posts**, or similar fencing material **shall only be permitted in the R-A, C-4, I-MU, I-1, and I-2 districts.**

- It is over-reaching to limit the way auto dealerships stage cars for sale.
The UDC allows for the outdoor display of cars, but the display of vehicles on hydraulic lifts, manufactured ramps, or similar mechanisms is prohibited, as these mechanisms add to visual clutter and can create sight obstruction near public right-of-ways. Earthen berm ramps, or other permanent display methods, are allowed.
- It is over-reaching to require an enclosed area for bicycles
Bicycle storage is more than just for parking bicycles. For security and safety concerns, some uses (multi-family, institution, educational, office) the UDC requires minimal storage areas. Fortunately, there are space-saving bike storage solutions that require minimal space. A bicycle storage area for a multi-family use is only little larger than a storage closet. It not only allows tenants/employees to securely and safely store in a controlled space, it also frees up valuable floor space in an efficiency or studio apartments.



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- The requirement for screened loading areas is too much
The requirement for screening came about as a request from a MPC Board Member who was concerned that loading facilities needed to be screened, which would be a benefit to the public, as well as the adjacent property owners. (page 8-13)