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DESIGN REVIEW TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
March 30, 2015
4:00 P.M.
Blairs Ferry Conference Room
City Hall
101 First Street SE

AGENDA

Action/Discussion Items

1. Discuss proposed updates to overlay district standards

Czech Bohemia Overlay District

The Czech Bohemia Overlay District standards shall be used to guide future development within the district.

The Czech Bohemia Overlay District Standards and Guidelines shall apply to new construction, additions to existing buildings and/or the exterior rehabilitation of buildings located within the boundaries of the CB-O District.

The District Standards and Guidelines shall not apply to single-family and two-family dwellings.

The Standards and Guidelines found within this document shall apply as follows:

Czech Bohemia Overlay District Standards – Shall apply to new construction, additions to existing buildings and/or the exterior rehabilitation of buildings located within the boundaries of the CB-O District. The Zoning Administrator may waive certain standards which may not be applicable to certain projects due to scope of work. For example, specific façade requirements may be waived for rehabilitation work on existing structures.

Design Recommendations – Should be considered as part of the development of site plans and the design of buildings within the district. These recommendations include best practices along with suggested strategies to meet district standards and other aspects of the zoning ordinance. These recommendations may be included in recommendations made by the Design Review Committee and may be considered by approval bodies such as the City Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment or City Council

Section A: Building Massing, Orientation and Site Design

CZECH BOHEMIA OVERLAY DISTRICT STANDARDS
1) Commercial buildings shall be constructed to the edge of the sidewalk with zero setbacks.
2) Multi-family buildings shall be constructed with setbacks that lie within the established setback range of the block.
3) Buildings shall be placed close the street (or the build-to line, if required), drives and other buildings. Pedestrians shall be able to easily travel between buildings on clearly defined pedestrian paths, not parking lot driveways.
4) Service/loading areas should not be located near primary entrances to buildings.
5) Building shall be oriented towards the street with a pedestrian entrance facing the street encouraged.
6) Building scale and massing shall maintain a relationship with adjacent structures to create building street walls along streets, drives and sidewalks where possible. Building massing shall be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and may use the Czech Village/New Bohemia Main Street District Strategic Revitalization Plan as a reference.
7) Proposed facades wider than the established historic range of the block upon which the proposed development is to be located may be permitted, but design features shall be included to mimic traditional building widths of 50 feet or less. Changes in façade material, building height, window style or architectural detail are examples of techniques that may be permitted to break up a façade.
8) Multi-story buildings are encouraged. Single-story commercial buildings shall be at least 22 feet in height. These should be constructed with high ceilings or parapet walls to create a greater feeling of enclosure along the street and to compliment horizontal elements of adjacent buildings.
9) Buildings shall hold the corners of intersections where possible to enhance the sense of enclosure and pedestrian-orientation of the commercial area. Building heights at the corners of intersections may exceed the those of the surrounding block.
10) The required screening of mechanical, loading, trash, and utilities shall complement materials used on the adjacent building. Brick or decorative stone in combination with decorative fencing and landscaping is preferred.
11) Sharing of loading, trash and utility areas among business is encouraged
12) Site plans should conform to the Pedestrian Friendly Site Design standards of the Commercial and Office Building Placement Guidelines section of the ordinance.
13) Parking should be located behind buildings when feasible. Parking lots adjacent to sidewalks are discouraged. Additional landscaping and architectural elements may be required for parking lots adjacent to sidewalks to help contribute to an attractive streetscape.
14) Where feasible, parking lots shall be linked between sites to reduce the need for district visitors to drive between adjacent stores and services. Shared parking between parcels is encouraged, and parking should be coordinated and signed appropriately to avoid user confusion

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Any mechanical equipment, whether on rooftops or in service/loading areas, should be consolidated if possible and screened from view.
- Screening should be at least as high as the equipment it is supposed to hide and should be of a color and material that matches or is compatible with the dominant colors and materials found on the building. Chain link fencing, with or without slats, is prohibited.
- Loading, trash, and utility areas adjacent to a building should be designed as an integral component of the building. Outside storage of materials, equipment, or trucks should be kept to a minimum and in areas screened from view.
- Parking and service areas should incorporate attractive materials to minimize the "hard" appearance of driveways and surface parking lots. Decorative paving should be used to delineate pedestrian crossings, parking aisles, and entrances within parking lots.
- Parking and service areas, including alleys, should be well lit with glare on surrounding properties minimized
- All parking and service areas should be designed to accommodate efficient snow removal and storage.
- Parking and service areas should be located and designed to minimize interference with pedestrian circulation and sidewalk connections to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Parking areas should be buffered with landscaping, fencing, and or architectural elements to help contribute to an attractive streetscape

Section B: Building Design

New and reconstructed elevations within the Czech Bohemia Overlay District shall comply with the requirements of this section. Provisions may be waived for existing structures if necessary to preserve the historic character of the building.

A high quality of design is expected of all new construction within the District. Criteria may vary whether an elevation is facing a street frontage, interior portions of a property, or are places close to a property line. The diagram and tables below shall be used to guide the application of Building Design requirements in the Overlay District.

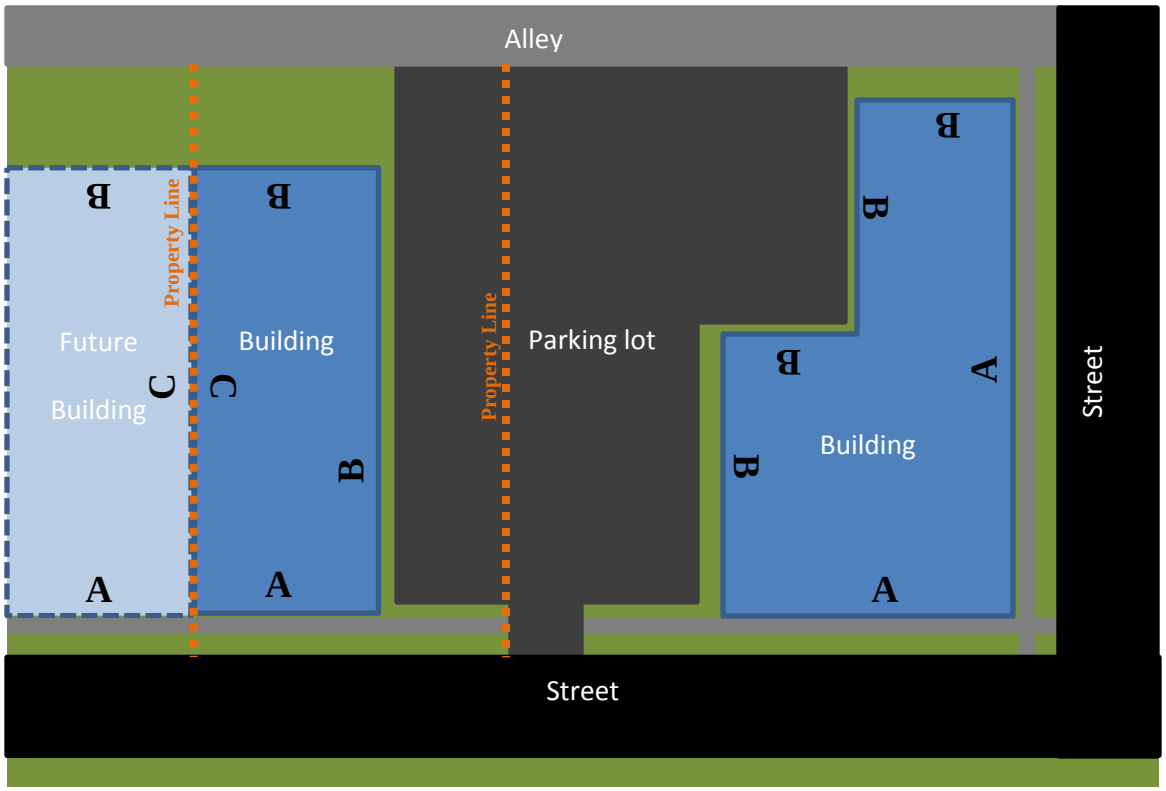

Diagram Reference	Location	Description
A	Street elevation	Elevations along street frontages
B	Interior elevation	Elevations interior to the parcel which are visible to the street
C	Lot line elevation	Elevations **without a public entrance** which are located within 7' of a rear or side yard parcel boundary which may be obscured by future construction.

Symbol	Description
●	All new or reconstructed elevations must comply with this requirement.
◊	All new or reconstructed elevations are encouraged to comply with this requirement.
×	This requirement is not applicable to the elevation

CZECH BOHEMIA OVERLAY DISTRICT STANDARDS	Street Frontages	Interior	Lot line
1) Building design and architectural style create and enhance the character of the Czech Bohemia Overlay District for pedestrians and motorists. A range of architectural styles is preferred. However, all buildings should be designed with common elements:			
o Open glass storefronts (where retail is provided) or public entrances (other non-residential development)	●	◊	×
o Clearly defined entrances to ground and upper floors (if applicable);	●	●	×
o Sign bands and awnings incorporated into the design and scale of the buildings;	●	●	◊
o Upper floor windows	●	●	×
2) Variations in rooflines are encouraged add interest to buildings and reduce the massive scale of large buildings. Buildings which are taller than adjacent structures by more than 1 story should consider the use of upper-floor setbacks, dormers or other architectural features to soften the transition between structures.	●	◊	◊
3) The top edge of the building shall be defined by a cornice line or similar articulation.	●	●	◊
4) Windows and doors shall be located, spaced and aligned on the building facade in a manner consistent with the established context of the block.			
5) The sizes of windows and doors shall be consistent with the proportions of historic buildings in the District.			
6) Highly reflective, opaque or darkly tinted glass shall not be used for windows or doors.	●	●	×
7) Rear building entrances and facades shall be designed in a manner consistent with the front and a side facade, especially when parking is behind buildings.	×	●	◊
8) Entrances into commercial buildings should not be recessed more than five feet from the exterior building wall.	●	●	×
9) Buildings shall primarily be constructed of high-quality materials such as brick, stone, split face block masonry, architectural paneling, and glass. The use of natural indigenous materials, such as limestone, is strongly encouraged. Exterior finish insulation systems (EFIS) and vinyl may be used on upper floors but use should be limited on the ground level. Concrete block, metal or plywood should not be used on building facades or on walls that are visible from streets, driveways, sidewalks or parking areas. Stucco is allowed but should be limited on any building façade to a maximum of 10% of the	●	●	◊

façade.			
10) At a minimum, 60% of the building elevation dedicated to non-residential uses should be windows, doors, and fenestration.	●	◊	×

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Interesting architectural details and features are preferred to provide layers of interest and variety for pedestrians and motorists.
- Whenever possible, adjacent buildings should have component parts in good proportion with one another. Similar design linkages include placing window lines, belt courses, and other horizontal elements in a pattern that is harmonious and reflects the same elements on neighboring buildings.
- Solid windowless walls are discouraged unless necessary to the function of the building. These should be avoided along building elevations which face the right-of-way or interior elevations which are visible from the right-of-way. In such a case, a solid, windowless wall should incorporate material and color variations, arches, piers, columns, murals, high quality graphics, landscaping and other elements that reduce building scale and add visual interest.
- Building entrances should be designed so that doorways and vestibules are easily seen by shoppers and visitors, easily distinguished by tenant and use, and open and visible from the sidewalk. Entrances should provide a sense of welcoming hospitality.
- Architectural design should articulate and enhance buildings, especially those at street corners because of their prominence and visibility.
- Buildings that attempt to use the building itself as “advertising” are discouraged, particularly where the proposed architecture is a corporate or franchise style.
- Building projections, such as awnings, window bays, and terraces should be pedestrian scale, proportional to the building façade, and proportional to adjacent structures.
- Building entrances should be visible from the street, well-lit, and easily accessible. Architectural elements, canopies, and/or lighting are preferred to identify entrances, not screen them. If vehicular canopies are provided, provide adequate lighting – either natural or artificial – to avoid dark or unsafe conditions.
- Main commercial building entrances should be emphasized with larger door/window combinations, overhangs, slight recesses, unique roof forms, arches, accent colors, or architectural details.
- Building-mounted lighting should be carefully integrated into the design of the building and streetscape.
- The number of materials on an exterior building face should not exceed five to prevent visual clutter.

Section C: Site Furnishings and Landcaping

CZECH BOHEMIA OVERLAY DISTRICT STANDARDS
1) Visual continuity within the district is important. Site furnishings and other amenities significantly contribute to the overall image of any district. These elements include approved benches, waste receptacles, planters, railings, bollards, bike racks, and tree grates
2) Site furnishings are encouraged to be provided in pedestrian spaces such as building entrances, along walkways and in pedestrian plazas and seating areas.
3) Fencing shall be constructed of compatible materials that complement adjacent structures. The use of chain link fencing is not permitted within the Overlay District.

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Visual continuity within the district is important. Site furnishings and other amenities significantly contribute to the overall image of any district.
- The elements should include approved benches, waste receptacles, planters, railings, bollards, bike racks, and tree grates.
- Benches should be provided near drop-off areas and entryways to major buildings, at key locations along pedestrian ways, and at bus stops and plazas.
- Planters should be provided in plaza areas, building entry areas, and other paved open spaces to provide green space and sense of scale to pedestrian spaces.
- Waste and recycling receptacles should be provided at building entry ways, public plazas, bus stops, and near benches.
- Bike racks should be provided at public plaza spaces and major building entryways.
- Tree grates should be provided in paved plazas and pedestrian ways to protect tree roots from compaction.
- Plants installed to satisfy the requirements of this section should meet or exceed the standards of the most recent edition of the American Standard for Nursery Stock, published by the American Association of Nurserymen. Plants should be capable of withstanding the extremes of individual microclimtates, be nursery-grown, and be balled and burlapped (when applicable).
- Landscape treatment should be provided to enhance architectural features, strengthen vistas, and provide shade.
- Plant materials should be selected for structure, texture, color and for ultimate growth potential. Plants that are indigenous to the area and that will be hardy, harmonious to the design, and attractive (including seasonal interest) should be used.
- In locations where plants will be susceptible to injury by pedestrian or vehicular traffic, they should be protected by appropriate curbs, tree guards or other devices.
- Trees should be installed consistently along all sidewalks and pedestrian paths in parks/plazas.

- New plantings and color pockets should be added along the street where space allows. Raised beds, moveable planters, flower boxes, and hanging baskets are favored and provide seasonal interest, enhance the pedestrian experience, and reinforce an areas character.
- Along wider sidewalks, raised landscape planters may be used to break up large paved areas, add visual interest to the street, and separate pedestrians from traffic.
- All parking lots should be designed with perimeter and island landscaping. Such planting areas should be sufficient in size to provide visual breaks in parking areas and to allow for plant materials to grow. Sidewalks provided in parking lots to direct pedestrians to commercial frontages and storefronts should also include edge landscaping.
- Plant materials in islands, excluding shade trees, should not exceed a height of 36" at maturity.
- Vacant lots should be maintained with sod and low-level plantings until developed with new buildings.
- In areas where general planting will not prosper, other materials, such as fences, walls and pavers should be sued. Carefully selected plants should be combined with such materials where possible.
- Where a building does not form the street edge, landscaping should be used to delineate that separation.
- All required landscaping areas not dedicated to trees, shrubs, or preservation of existing vegetation should be landscaped with grass, ground cover, or other landscape treatment, not including sand, rock or pavement.
- For each plant type associated with the landscaping requirements of this section, no single plant species should represent more than 40% of the total plantings.
- Plant material should be installed so it related to the natural environment and habitat in which it is placed.
- The scale and nature of landscape material should be appropriate to the site and structures. For example, large-scale buildings should be complemented by large-scale plant material. Plant material should be selected for its form, texture, color and concern for its ultimate growth.

Section D: Signage

CZECH BOHEMIA OVERLAY DISTRICT STANDARDS
1) New signage shall respect the size, scale, and design of the building to which it is attached, and the buildings of the surrounding District. New signage shall not obscure significant architectural details of a historic structure.
2) All freestanding signs shall be low in height and placed within planting areas that are coordinated with the overall design of the site. Small directional signs under 6 square feet are not required to be in planting areas.
3) Public art, sculpture, murals, etc. are encouraged in the Czech Bohemia Overlay District.
4) Acceptable forms of signage include signs integrated into or affixed flat against a building facade, wall signs, projecting signs and monument signs. Other types of signage, including pole signs, may be considered if compatible with the unique character of the District.

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Signs should be constructed of high-quality, solid, and durable materials.
- Sign colors and materials should be consistent with the colors and materials of the associated building.
- Sign lighting should be carefully considered in the building design. Back-lit panel signs are discouraged. Back-lit lettered signs are appropriate. If direct lighting is used, glare, brightness, visible hardware, and maintenance issues must be addressed. Strategically placed lamp fixtures that are compatible with the sign design and building architecture should be used for illuminated signs.
- All signs placed on a site be designed as part of a coordinated signage theme.
- Text on signs should be simple and easy to read.
- To avoid visual clutter, redundant signage or multiple external signs should not be used.