



CLIVE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

AGENDA, REGULAR MEETING

1900 NW 114th Street

December 5, 2024 5:30 PM

This meeting will be conducted in-person in the City Council Chambers and virtually via Zoom platform. To participate virtually use the following link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89178956404>

Call to Order

Roll Call

Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. Approve 11/7/2024 Meeting Minutes

Action Items

Discussion

1. Landscaping Updates
2. Parking Updates

Staff Report

Adjournment

CLIVE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Regular Session
November 7, 2024

This meeting was held in the Clive City Council Chambers and public access was provided in-person at City Hall and via Zoom. Information on how to access via Zoom was provided on the city's website and on the agenda. The recording of the meeting is available on the city's website at:

https://www.cityofclive.com/connect/boards_and_commissions/planning_and_zoning_commission.php

Call to Order/Roll Call

ALOWITZ CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: LINDSAY BRANDON, MILLY ORTIZ-PAGAN, CHRIS PANZI (via Zoom),
JEFFREY ANDERZHON, MICHAEL ALOWITZ

ABSENT: JULIE CORREA, MARCIA HUNTER

STAFF: AMANDA GRUTZMACHER, KATHRYN PURVIS, KELLY RIVERA

Action Items

1. Approve Meeting Minutes – October 3, 2024

Brandon motioned to approve the October 3, 2024 meeting minutes, seconded by Anderzhon.

Roll Call: Ayes: Brandon, Anderzhon, Panzi, Alowitz.

Abstain: Ortiz

Motion carried.

2. Site Plan Amendment – Tenant and Façade Updates – 10001 University AVE

The applicant has a purchase agreement on the former Beauty Brands building at 10001 University AVE and intends to divide the building into two tenant spaces. Staff's understanding is that there will be a retail establishment and a fast casual restaurant with drive through order pickup but no on-site drive through ordering.

The building facade will be modified with a new parapet and updated brick to modernize the design. The front façade currently has 60% brick/masonry but will have only 50% coverage with the new design due to the configuration of the façade changes. Staff's opinion is the proposed façade is in keeping with the intent of the Development Standards Manual and is a more aesthetically pleasing option than pursuing a 60% brick/masonry.

A drive through will be built to facilitate order pickup from the fast casual restaurant, but no orders will be placed through the drive through, and no menu boards are proposed. To allow for the restaurant use and provide additional flexibility on uses for the site, additional parking will be constructed in the east portion of the parking lot. The proposed

parking conforms to the parking requirement of 6 spaces per 1,000 sf for a flex space building. Because the proposed parking addition will be located over the existing property line, a final plat must be submitted and completed before Certificates of Occupancy are issued.

Site landscaping will be updated to restore the site to the originally required 16 trees, however, there is not sufficient open space to also replace the removed caliper of tree. Approximately 35" of tree caliper is being removed, and 11.5" of tree caliper is being replanted. The City will allow for payment in lieu of replacement for the remaining 23.5" of caliper of removed trees.

Full compliance with the Post-Construction Stormwater Management Manual is not required for this project, however, a contech inlet protection basket will be installed on the storm intake near the dumpster enclosure and drive through to provide additional water quality treatment and prevent solids and debris from entering the storm system.

Ortiz motioned to recommend approval of Site Plan Amendment for 10001 University AVE, seconded by Anderzhon.

Roll Call: Ayes: Ortiz, Anderzhon, Brandon, Panzi, Alowitz.

Motion carried.

3. Amendment to Zoning Ordinance – Commercial Permitted Uses (Schools)

Due to the adoption of Iowa's 2023 Students First Act and expanded funding for private education, there is interest from private schools to open in additional locations throughout the state. Staff have been approached by a Head of School interested in locating within Clive. Clive was identified as a desirable location based on a variety of community factors, including population characteristics, school district boundaries, and the academic performance of neighboring public schools. Staff inquired with City Council on their interest in considering schools in commercial zoning districts and were instructed to proceed with drafting an amendment to the zoning ordinance for consideration.

The City's current zoning regulations allow elementary and secondary schools in residential districts by a special use permit which is granted by the Board of Adjustment (BOA). If the applicant can demonstrate that they can meet the criteria identified for approval of a special use permit, then BOA must approve the permit.

The City currently has five commercial zoning districts and staff have identified that C-1, C-2, C-3 and C-4 could be appropriate districts for schools. Using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), staff recommends the following educational industry classifications be incorporated into the zoning ordinance through addition of definitions and modifications to the permitted uses table.

The proposed ordinance adds a definition for NAICS 6111 elementary and secondary schools and allows them as a special permitted use in C-1, C-2, C-3, and C-4 Zoning Districts. The Commission discussed open space/outdoor recreation needs, safety of children, the ramifications of increased traffic, and property tax impacts. Grutzmacher stated that traffic studies are already a requirement for a special use permit.

Commissioners suggested that a 10-year growth plan be added as a condition for the

Special Use Permit to ensure the proposed location will be adequate for its needs as many private schools build their programming overtime.

Staff recommended that Post-Secondary Schools be identified as a permitted use in the C-1, C-2, C-3, and C-4 zoning districts. Staff's proposed definition encompasses NAICS 6112, 6113, and 6114 and explicitly excludes student housing or dormitories, student recreational centers, athletic facilities, and similar supporting uses commonly associated with post-secondary schools. Such supporting uses would be permitted only if the underlying use is permitted within the zoning district, e.g. a student recreation center is permitted where a fitness center would be permitted.

Staff recommends a definition that identifies NAICS 6115 Technical and Trade Schools as permitted when the associated land use is allowed.

Staff recommends that the types of uses in NAICS 6116 Other Schools and Instruction and 6117 Educational Support Services are adequately addressed in the Permitted Uses table and no changes are necessary.

Anderzhon motioned to recommend approval of the proposed ordinance changes for schools, with the provision that a 10-year growth plan be required as part of the Special Use Permit for elementary and secondary schools, seconded by Brandon.

Roll Call: Ayes: Anderzhon, Ortiz, Panzi, Alowitz.

Nays: Brandon

Motion carried.

Staff Report

Adjournment at 6:44 p.m.



Staff Report

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission members

FROM:

Kathryn Purvis, Planner

DATE: December 5, 2024

RE: Landscaping Updates

At the Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting on October 3, 2024, the Commission discussed the current landscape and open space requirements and concerns about future redevelopment constraints and overall tree health. As Clive approaches build out and becomes more reliant on redevelopment and infill development, landscaping and buffering requirements should serve as betterment to the community and not as a hindrance to desirable redevelopment projects. Tree health and a well-maintained canopy is one step in making sure the city continues to emulate its core values of sustainable and resilient growth and change, while providing a nature-focused living for residents. At the last meeting, the Commission directed staff to investigate further into existing healthy buffers and discuss with landscaping professionals on possible causes and solutions to help protect the City of Clive's canopy. Since that meeting, staff have researched landscape buffer requirements for nearby communities, conducted site visits of landscape buffers in Clive and other communities, and had discussions with a local DNR District Forester. Staff asks the Commission to continue their discussion regarding landscaping at the December meeting so additional input can be incorporated into a draft ordinance. Staff anticipates setting a public hearing to consider revisions to the landscaping and open space ordinance in early 2025.

Discussions with the District Forester:

Without completing specific site visits and assessments, the DNR's District Forester did not have a definitive answer as to why we have been witnessing higher rates of tree planting failure; however, he did have the following advice:

For screening buffers you may need to think about the mature size of a full-grown tree. Many times, trees will be planted closer to provide a screen sooner, but because of competition they will have issues. These screens can either have trees spaced out to accommodate their mature size or planted closer together with the intention of removing some when they start to get crowded.

Landscape Buffer Requirements and Site Visits

The attached Summary of Landscape Buffer Requirements table includes the planting requirements for Clive and several nearby communities, as well as a column showing the number of trees required to be planted in a standardized 100 linear feet of landscape buffer. A key difference in buffer requirements is Clive requires the listed quantity of plantings per 30 linear feet of buffer, whereas most other cities base their planting requirement per 100 linear feet; Clive's planting requirements appear to be less restrictive than others until the number of required tree plantings is standardized per the same linear foot of buffer. Clive is also one of the only communities that does not have a shrub count requirement in the typical 30' or 50' wide buffers.

Staff identified areas within nearby communities that appeared to have a buffer in recent aerial imagery; staff included areas where the plantings appeared to be naturally occurring or man-made. Staff did not specifically seek out buffers that met the minimum planting requirements, but rather looked for areas that appeared to be performing well and supporting healthy trees that would be close to a mature size. Staff collected comparison measurements to aid in determining a realistic size and quantity of plant materials to create a healthy, sustainable buffer.

Urbandale

Staff visited the Walker Johnson Park and HyVee at the intersection of Douglas and NW 86th Street.

On the ground, Walker Johnson Park did not have a dense landscape buffer between the residential properties to the west; however, there was a general tree line that was observed and measurements were taken for comparison. The HyVee site contained two distinct buffer areas. The first is located west of the building and was densely planted around a drainage area. The second is located east of the building and more directly separates the residential from the commercial use. Both areas contained approximately 11 to 12 evergreen trees and 5 overstory trees. Generally, trees were planted approximately 15 feet on center. In some of the areas, particularly the denser plantings, there were some dead or declining trees.

Johnston

Staff visited the Johnston Community School District Office on NW 62nd Avenue and the multi-tenant commercial development at Northpark Drive and NW 86th Street. The school district office and surrounding trail did not have a densely defined buffer, but mature plantings were present which staff documented as having 5 overstory and 11 evergreens occupying a 100 feet by 40 feet area. Trees were planted approximately 15 feet on center.

The commercial location did have a clearly defined buffer with a berm. The buffer was unique compared to other observed buffers in that it only contained evergreen trees, with no overstory deciduous or ornamental plantings. This buffer from toe to toe of the buffer was 40' in width and contained 14 evergreens per 100 linear foot measurement. The trees were planted approximately 15 feet on center in two staggered rows. This buffer appeared to be one of the healthiest buffers staff observed.

Clive

Staff visited the Stonegate Townhomes and Stonegate Apartments. Stonegate Townhomes required a 50' landscape buffer between the residential properties to the north (located in Urbandale). The Stonegate Townhomes buffer also borders a dry detention stormwater management facility located on the south edge. The landscaped area measures approximately 70 feet deep, rather than only the 50' that is required. In the sampled area, the buffer contained 20 trees per 100 linear feet measurement. The preliminary plat landscape plan shows 187 trees within the north boundary buffer, and there are approximately 100 trees remaining today. The landscape plan shows many of the trees spaced approximately 10 feet on center.

The Stonegate Apartments required a 30' landscape buffer adjacent to Stonegate Park and along the row of garages. The sampled area within the apartment buffer contained 14 trees per 100 linear feet and was measured at approximately 35 feet wide including a berm up to the park. The 15-foot spacing for evergreens and overstory plantings was again observed at this site. The approved landscape plan shows 62 trees within the buffer, and there are approximately 45 trees remaining today. The landscape plan shows many of the trees spaced approximately 10 to 12 feet on center.

Site Visit Findings

Based on the above, staff have the following observations:

1. In practice, most buffers that contained berms required approximately 40 feet of depth to tie in to grade while keeping a 4:1 slope.
2. 15' on center seemed to be the minimum distance required between evergreen trees to reduce competition and experience mature height and circumference.
3. When trees were kept off of the steepest portions of slopes, healthier growth was visible.

Further Research

The site visits and discussions with the District Forester resulted in staff having the following additional questions:

1. Is there a companion planting compatibility issue at play with areas experiencing loss?
2. Do local soils adequately support tree health?

3. Are there changes in material, berm requirements, or dimensions of buffers that better support healthy tree spacing? Should shrubs be considered to provide the desired density in exchange for fewer trees?
4. Should the buffer area and planting requirements count toward the site open space and tree planting requirements?

Companion Planting and Soils

Soil plays an important role in tree health. Overall, Polk and Dallas Counties have loamy soils that hold nutrients, retain water long enough for roots to access it, and also allow for proper drainage. However, it's important to note that in more urbanized areas and where trees are planted isolated from open space and natural soil recharge, additional maintenance and fertilization may be necessary. The City's topsoil replacement requirements also aid in keeping the soils primed for landscape; however, additional efforts to reduce compaction within buffer areas could benefit tree health in the long term.

Looking beyond soil health at the time of initial planting, staff researched companion plants and potential negative correlations, also called allelopathy. Essentially, certain varieties of plants expel unique chemicals into the soil through roots, leaves, and trimmings that create a harsher environment for other species. A common case regionally is the Black Walnut tree, which has been shown to create substantial chemical alterations to kill off well established (10 years and older) plantings, particularly pine varieties. Specific midwest allelopathic interactions in tree canopies lacks research, and the District Forester advised that his experience on the matter was not sufficient to determine whether companion planting is a culprit in declining buffer health. While staff generally agrees there is not enough research to definitely create companion planting requirements, our findings have indicated that some popular varieties that are identified as having a "strong" allelopathic tendency (such as buckeye, sugar maple, hackberry, bayberry, red oak, post oak and American elm) are utilized on sites where tree failures of other species have been noted, particularly in tight planting scenarios such as landscape buffers. Staff also noted that the visually healthiest buffer contained one tree variety, removing the possibility for poor companion plantings in the buffer space.

Allelopathic effects can be mitigated by providing enough space that root systems have dedicated space and minimal competition for resources, and by keeping up with maintenance of fallen leaves and branches, which can increase the allelopathic effect if left to decay.

Buffer Dimensions and Minimum Planting Requirements

From staff's site observations, buffers that appeared healthy and promoted full tree maturity were approximately 40 feet in width to accommodate the berm, regardless of the written required buffer width. The planting minimums in the ANSI Horticulture Standards, DNR materials, and professional recommendation generally advise a minimum planting spacing of half the mature canopy width, which correlates to the observed minimum 15' distance between evergreens.

In response to these findings, staff looked for resources to help determine the minimum space a tree needs to thrive. The Critical Rooting Distance (CRD) is one metric utilized in determining how much of a tree's root system can overlap while still providing the needed resources for a healthy tree. The Critical Rooting Distance is the minimum diameter of a circular area that should be preserved around the tree. University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences calculates the Critical Rooting Distance of trees by estimating the tree diameter (DBH) at maturity in inches multiplied by 2.5 to arrive at the critical rooting distance in feet. Trees planted in clumps can share a CRD, with two trees requiring 60% of their combined CRD and increasing up to 5 trees require 90% of their combined CRD.

Assumed Average Tree Characteristics

	Height (ft)	Spread (ft)	Diameter (in)	CRD (ft)	Buffer Area Required (sf)
Overstory	50	40	24	60	2,826
Evergreen	50	30	24	60	2,826
Ornamental	20	20	9	22.5	397

Clive's 30 feet deep buffer requires 1 overstory, 2 evergreen, and 1 ornamental trees per 30 linear feet. The available space in the buffer area is 900 square feet. Utilizing the CRD for the minimum tree plantings results in a required 7,988 square feet of space to support the required trees through maturity.

Clive's 50 feet deep buffer requires 1 overstory, 3 evergreen, and 2 ornamental trees per 30 linear feet. The available space in the buffer area is 1,500 square feet. At maturity, the minimum trees would require 3,980 square feet of space. Utilizing the CRD for the minimum tree plantings results in a required 12,098 square feet of space to support the required trees through maturity.

The current minimum planting quantities results in trees fighting for resources, particularly in drought conditions and less than ideal maintenance conditions. The visually healthiest buffers staff visited were in Johnston, where the tree quantity required is approximately half of Clive's requirement, with the addition of shrubs to fill in the visual gaps above grade.

Maintenance

Proper and consistent maintenance is pointed to most often when identifying causes of struggling trees, regardless of variety. Knowing what is planted on a site and how to maintain it, such as the watering schedule, pruning and treatments, warranty information, suitable replacement species in the event of infestation, are all recommended in a proper maintenance plan for landscaping. Unfortunately, the owners and managers of most commercial properties are not educated in proper tree maintenance needs, so do not know when to request intervention for their trees. Further, staff already receives complaints from businesses that the operation and maintenance costs associated with required site landscaping is too high. Staff does not feel proper attention to site landscaping and maintenance is likely to increase as developments continue to age. Staff also believes requiring planting of more trees today with the expectation that the trees are selectively thinned out as the buffers mature is unrealistic to expect typical commercial property owners to manage.

Topics of Discussion

Staff findings are pointing to the following potential adjustments to the ordinance for discussion at the meeting:

- Planting requirements for buffers to be based on 100' linear feet
- Reduction to only two buffer width categories instead of the current four buffer width categories. For example, a 40 to 50 feet width buffer including a berm to separate residential and non-residential uses, and a 20 to 30 feet width buffer without a berm to separate varying intensities of residential and town center commercial uses from residential.
- Reduction in minimum required tree quantities more consistent with the nutrient needs of trees.
- Addition of minimum shrub planting quantities to provide additional screening while providing more space for trees to mature.
- Add reference to the ANSI Horticulture Standards in the Development Standards Manual.
- Require landscape maintenance plans be submitted during site plan review. Staff notes a similar effort to require long-term maintenance plans for stormwater management facilities has been challenging to implement with applicants.

- Allowing the presence of a landscape buffer to reduce the non-buffer required open space and tree planting minimums. Currently, buffers are excluded from the open space and planting calculations.
- Addition of a recommended tree species list to the Development Standards Manual.
- Staff requests each Commissioner complete the attached landscaping statements survey for discussion at the meeting.

Please feel free to contact me at 515-223-6221 or at kpurvis@cityofclive.com prior to the meeting if you have any questions or need additional information.

Attachments:

1. Summary of Landscape Buffer Requirements
2. Landscape Statements Survey

Summary of Landscape Buffer Requirements							
City	Buffer Width	Overstory Deciduous	Evergreen	Ornamental / Understory	Shrubs	Berm	Trees per 100 linear feet
Clive	30 ft	1	2	1	0	3 ft	14
	50 ft	1	3	2	0	3 ft	20
Urbandale	< 25 ft	3	0	6	9	5 ft	9
	> 25 ft	0	9	10	20	-	19
Johnston	30 ft	4	4	4	6	-	12
	50 ft	6	6	4	12	-	16
Norwalk	30 ft	2	5	2	16	3 ft	9
	50 ft	4	4	3	24	3 ft	11
Indianola	30 ft	1	2	0	6	3 ft	12
	60 ft	1	1	0	3	3 ft	8
Waukee	30 ft	2	3	2	-	3 ft	14
	40 ft	2	4	3	-	3 ft	18

Notes

1. Clive has two additional landscape buffer widths (20' and 65') that have limited applicability and have been excluded from the comparison
2. Urbandale provides alternatives for buffer requirements, rather than a different minimum buffer width and planting requirement depending on the adjacent zoning. Urbandale also provides a fence only option.
3. Staff believes the requirements for Indianola's buffers have been transposed in their ordinance; quantities are presented as written.

Thinking about landscaping and open spaces in Clive, how much do you agree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Visual screening is the most important job of a landscape buffer.					
Landscape buffers should contain a mixture of plant materials that grow at varying speeds.					
Landscape buffers should prioritize visual interest by incorporating things like colorful species.					
Landscape buffers are necessary between commercial and residential land uses.					
Landscape buffers are necessary between single-family and multi-family land uses.					
Landscape buffers are necessary between single-family and attached townhome land uses.					
Landscape buffers are necessary between single-family and detached townhome land uses.					
Landscape buffer plantings should be fast growing to provide the most visual coverage as soon as possible.					
Landscape buffer plantings should prioritize large plantings that provide maximum screening in the future, even if those plantings are slow growing.					
Species diversity should be prioritized throughout landscape buffers and site plantings.					
Landscape buffers should be a sustainable and permanent addition to Clive's tree canopy.					
Some commercial uses adjacent to residential land uses may be appropriate without a landscape buffer.					
Stopping pedestrian movement between properties is the most important job of a landscape buffer.					
Reducing required landscape buffers to provide additional space for stormwater management is acceptable.					
There is value in requiring tree removals later to achieve instant screening today in landscape buffers.					
Landscape buffers should promote long term tree health by providing space for anticipated mature tree size, even if that means less visual screening at the time of planting.					
Functional applications of landscaping (such as shade in parking lots) are the most important factor for landscape ordinances.					
Species diversity does not matter as much as overall screening in a landscape buffer.					



Staff Report

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission members

FROM:

Amanda Grutzmacher, Senior Planner

DATE: December 5, 2024

RE: Parking Updates

Staff requests that the Commissioners complete the attached parking statements survey. Depending on other discussion items at the meeting, staff and the commission may discuss the survey tonight or at a future meeting.

Attachments:

1. Parking Statements Survey

Thinking about parking and navigating parking lots in Clive, how much do you agree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I prioritize parking close to the entrance of my destination over other considerations.					
I prioritize parking in a shaded area over parking close to the entrance.					
I prioritize parking near a pedestrian path (versus walking through the vehicle drive aisle) over parking close to the entrance.					
For retail shopping, if I cannot find a convenient parking space I will leave and come back later.					
For restaurant dining, if I cannot find a convenient parking space I will leave and come back later.					
I am willing to park within 100 feet of the entrance to my destination.					
I am willing to park within 250 feet of the entrance to my destination.					
I am willing to park more than 250 feet from the entrance to my destination.					
I will circle the parking lot to find a closer spot.					
Required parking minimums should be based on the busiest day(s) of the year.					
Parking minimums should ensure a property has enough parking to support a change in use, even if the current user does not need as much parking.					
I have a comfortable amount of space to enter and exit my vehicle when parked next to others.					
Reducing parking requirements to provide additional space for stormwater management is acceptable.					
Maximizing taxable value should be prioritized when considering development applications.					
I feel more confident parking in Clive than in other communities.					
There are businesses I'd like to visit, but lack of parking keeps me away.					
Trees should be planted in parking lot islands.					
There are commercial areas in Clive that are consistently difficult to park in. (Please provide specific development names or businesses to staff)					
There are commercial areas in the west metro that are consistently difficult to park in. (Please provide specific development names or businesses to staff)					