

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: TEXT AMENDMENT OPTIONS FOR CHANGES TO CAMPUSTOWN SERVICE CENTER (CSC) ZONING DISTRICT 50% CLAY BRICK BUILDING FACADE MATERIAL STANDARD

BACKGROUND:

At the May 10, 2022 meeting, City Council discussed a request from a property owner to initiate a Zoning Text Amendment regarding the placement of clay brick on new buildings in Campustown. The property owner, F F & F of Ames, LLC, has submitted a Minor Site Development Plan application for a two-story bar and restaurant to be constructed at 2516 Lincoln Way. The project proposes to have a zero-lot line condition along its east property line. The applicant has submitted a letter describing their issues with construction of a zero-lot line building and use of clay brick without securing construction easements or changing construction methods (Attachment A).

The City Council directed staff to initiate a zoning text amendment to modify the 50% clay brick per façade requirement for zero lot line buildings. In addition, Council directed staff to consider design concerns regarding visibility of and quality of materials on facades that do not have brick.

As part of the text amendment process, staff presented options to the Planning & Zoning Commission at its May 18 meeting. The Commission reviewed three options:

1. Changing the clay brick percentage requirement for all buildings,
2. Creating an exception related to zero lot line buildings, or
3. Allowing for substitute materials to be used.

The Planning & Zoning Commission voted 6-0 to support the second option that allows for an exception related to zero lot line buildings. The P&Z recommendation is consistent with the proposed amendment within this Staff Report.

Subsequent to the P&Z recommendation, staff presented options to City Council at its May 24 meeting to obtain feedback regarding the preferred choice. Staff felt this was an appropriate step in this instance to ensure that the proposed text would meet City Council's interests before drafting formal text language. **City Council directed staff to continue with the text amendment and to include draft language that would incorporate three adjustments that would:**

1. **Allow a non-clay brick façade only when the building is placed at a zero-lot line interior setback,**
2. **Allow a non-clay brick façade when the overall building would meet the 50% requirement with priority placement of clay brick in highly visible locations, and**
3. **Add a material requirement that side walls would be higher quality materials than plain unfinished concrete masonry units.**

The Draft Ordinance based upon Council's direction is attached to the report.

The use of the "clay brick" terminology was an evolution of the building material standard away from generically referring to "masonry." Prior to 2017, the City did not specify that each façade must contain clay brick, just that clay brick must be the primary material on a building. To clarify the intent that the majority of each building façade contain clay brick, the standard was changed to the current language requiring 50% clay brick on each façade.

The proposed amendment would apply to all properties in the Campustown Service Center (CSC) zoning district. Future redevelopment projects would likely also have zero lot conditions, meaning this is not a unique situation related to the Brother's request. A new building in Campustown could present a zero-lot line situation in many future redevelopment projects in the CSC district, as lots are smaller and the City's intent of the district is to create a dense urban environment. Zoning standards such as the required minimum floor area ratio (FAR) along with a 25-foot minimum height encourages buildings to be built up to the property lines.

The draft language addresses City's Council direction by establishing exceptions to the standard's 50% clay brick per façade requirement. With the exception standard, the building must still meet a 50% overall clay brick requirement and have brick located in prominent locations. The exception also states that if available wall area is less than the calculated brick requirement, no brick is required on zero lot line walls. Materials on a zero side lot line are required to be compatible with other masonry materials in texture and integral color.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve on first reading the proposed text amendment to Table 29.803(3) creating an exception for zero lot line interior setback walls to the 50% per façade clay brick requirement subject to meeting 50% clay brick overall, placement of brick in prominent locations, and use of compatible materials on zero lot line walls in texture and integral color.

Note, the requestor is interested in City Council waiving the rules and complete all three readings of the ordinance on June 28th to allow them to proceed with their Site Development Plan review.

2. Refer this item back to staff for further information.
3. Do not approve the proposed text amendment.

CITY MANAGER’S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The requested zoning text amendment relates to a development condition of building at a zero-side lot line. The developer does not believe they can set the building back to allow construction of clay brick clad wall and still have a viable project. They believe they can deliver a better project by using the same amount of brick overall but placing it on the higher profile facades of the building.

Staff believes one of the principle identifying traits of Campustown is the predominance of brick as building material. Clay brick is a time-tested material for aesthetic quality and durability. Staff believes with an emphasis on concerns about aesthetics that extend beyond just placement of clay brick, Alternative #1 meets the intent of the request but also adds some additional design review requirements that may help blend sidewalls of a building into the surrounding through color treatments.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative #1.

ATTACHMENT A:



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118 E. 26th Street Suite 300 Mpls, MN 55404 P:612-879-8225 F:612-879-8152 www.tanek.com

May 4, 2022

RE: Brothers Bar & Grill – 2516 Lincoln Way

Dear Mr. Diekmann;

We are requesting an alternative proposal to meet the clay brick standard for the project as it relates to the east property line, per our earlier conference phone discussion.

To meet a number of criteria the building provides a rear easement and a non-interior design area to the west which will be a patio. Along the north, south and west faces we can construct a wall assembly that includes appropriate ratios of clay brick.

We have a zero lot line along the street frontage and the east, in part to meet a floor area ratio.

The east façade due to immediate proximity to the neighboring property is only technically feasible to be constructed as what would be considered a “single wythe masonry wall”. This can be done with concrete masonry units that can be assembled from the interior side of the building. We would be unable to construct a wall assembly of multiple layers for the technical aspects of not being able to get to the exterior finish side, or the requirement of having to scaffold upon another neighboring building.

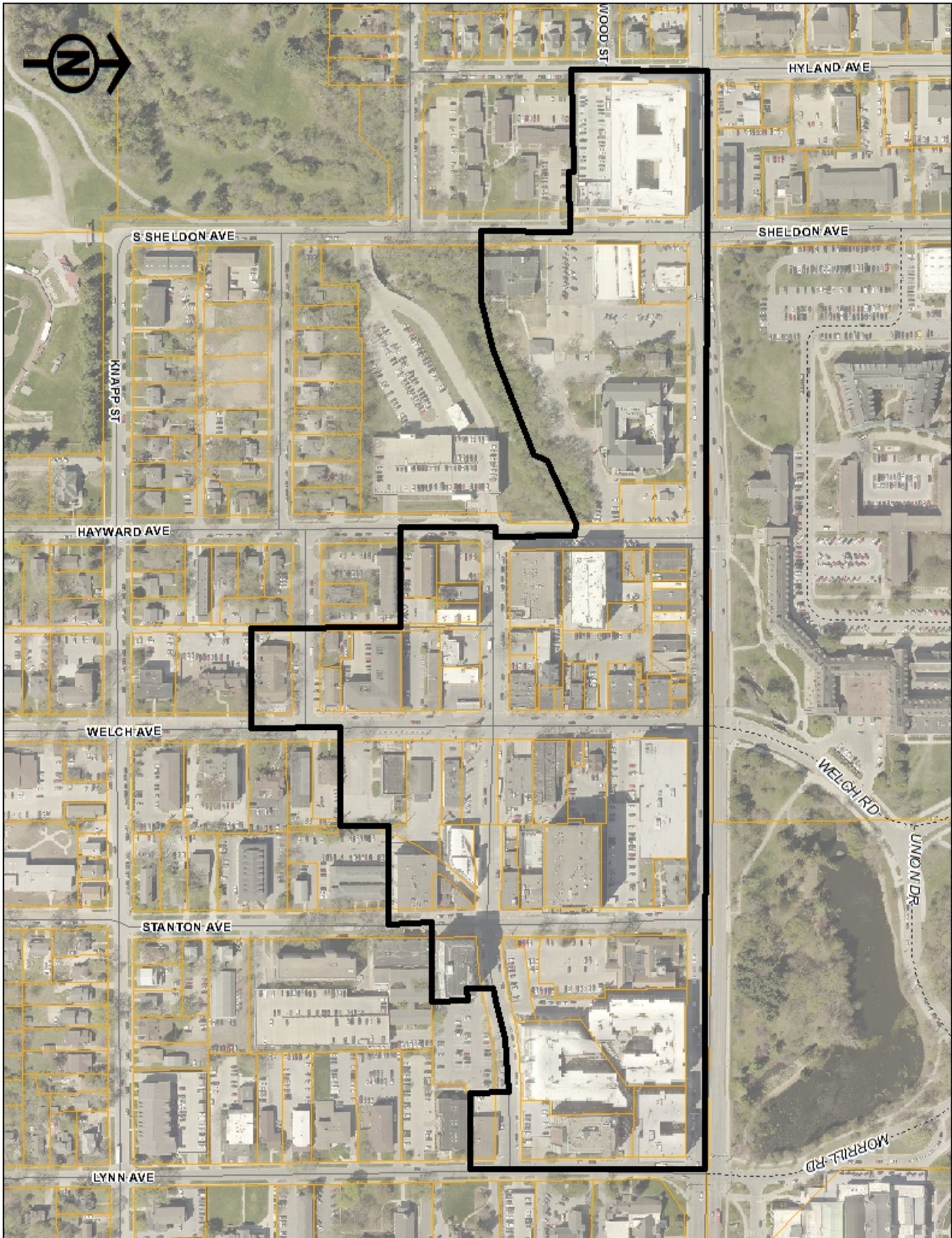
Our proposal is to meet the overall required clay brick ratio by adding the brick ratio of the east façade upon the west façade of the building.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathaniel Shea". The signature is fluid and cursive, starting with a sharp upward stroke and ending with a long, sweeping horizontal line that tapers off to the right.

Nathaniel Shea, A.I.A.
Principal
Tanek, Inc.
Direct: 612-998-8200
nshea@tanek.com

ATTACHMENT B: Campustown Service Center (CSC) Zoning Boundary



ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF AMES, IOWA, BY ENACTING A NEW SECTION THEREOF, TABLE 29.809(3) THEREOF, FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING CAMPUSTOWN SERVICE CENTER ZONING DISTRICT BUILDING MATERIALS STANDARD REGARDING CLAY BRICK; REPEALING ANY AND ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT TO THE EXTENT OF SUCH CONFLICT; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ENACTED, by the City Council for the City of Ames, Iowa, that:

Section One. The Municipal Code of the City of Ames, Iowa shall be and the same is hereby amended by replacing and enacting a new Table 29.809(3) below:

“(3) Zone Development Standards. The zone development standards for the CSC Zone are set forth in Table 29.809(3) below:

**Table 29.809(3)
Campustown Service Center (CSC) Zone Development Standards**

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS	CSC ZONE
...	...
Building Materials	Clay brick shall comprise more than 50% of the exterior wall surface of each building facade. Exterior wall surface does not include windows, doors, their trim, or internal courtyards not visible from the street.
...	...

(Ord. No. 4165, 12-10-13; Ord. No. 4278, 11-15-16, Ord. 4312, 6-27-17)

(4) Standards for the Granting of Exceptions to Building Material Requirements:

(a) Exterior wall surfaces at a zero setback side interior may use alternative building materials with integral color and texture that are complimentary of other masonry building materials in the Campustown Service Area.

(i) The overall building must still comply with the 50% clay brick requirement, calculated for all visible exterior wall surfaces in total with priority placement of clay brick given to prominent visible facades viewed from public places, such as streets, plazas, and other parking lots. The amount of clay brick may be reduced on the visible portions of a zero lot line wall, if the other exterior wall surfaces are not sufficient to meet the clay brick requirement.

(b) Additions to buildings which do not have brick as an exterior material are exempt.

(5) Standards for the Granting of Exceptions to the Minimum Requirement for Two Story Buildings in the CSC (Campustown Service Center) District. Before an exception to the requirement for two-story buildings in the CSC (Campustown Service Center) can be granted, the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall establish that the following standards have been, or shall be satisfied:

(a) Standards. The Zoning Board of Adjustment shall review each application for the purpose of determining that each proposed one-story building, in the CSC zone, meets the following standards:

(i) Physical circumstances exist for the property which result in a lot with a size and shape that is not conducive to a multi-story structure, and

(ii) It can be demonstrated that there is a direct benefit to the community to have a one-story structure, at the proposed location, as opposed to a multi-story structure.

(b) Procedure. The procedure to follow for an “exception” is described in Section 29.1506(3).

(6) **Compliance.** New buildings shall be constructed in full compliance with the above standards for building design. In building additions or remodeling it is not required that the entire building be brought into full compliance with the above standards for building design. It is only required that the addition or remodeling comply. It is required that the addition or remodeling does not have the effect of increasing the level or degree of nonconformity of the building as a whole.

(Ord. No. 3872, 03-07-06; Ord. No. 4252, 4-26-16). ”

Section Two. All ordinances, or parts of ordinances, in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict, if any.

Section Three. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as required by law.

Passed this _____ day of _____ 2022.

Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

John A. Haila, Mayor