

**Linden Hills Small Area Plan:
Addressing requests and conditions from the December 2nd Planning
Commission meeting**

December 5, 2013
Prepared by CPED
Staff: Brian Schaffer

In their December 2, 2013 meeting the Planning Commission recommended approval of the Linden Hills Small Area Plan with three conditions. One of the conditions directed staff to revise the plan language with regard to building articulation.

In addition the Planning Commission, during its deliberation and discussion, asked staff for a review of past small area plans that addressed building height in terms of feet.

The following document addresses these two items.

1. Summary of Past Small Area Plans’ Definitions of Building Height

The following is a summary of several past small area plans in the City of Minneapolis and how building height is addressed. Of the plans reviewed only two specifically deal with feet to address height: Historic Mills District Master Plan and Uptown Small Area Plan (see highlighted in orange below). The Historic Mills District Master Plan includes a height in feet that does not correspond directly to how the zoning code definition of a story would equate to a maximum building height. For example, the Zoning Code defines a 4 story building as 56 feet or less. And 56 feet is equal to 14 feet multiplied by 4 stories.

Project Name	Neighborhood	Year Completed	Height in Feet other than standard story
City Wide & Multi-Sector			
Above the Falls Master Plan Update	Multi-Sector	2013	No
Midtown Greenway Land Use and Development Plan	Multi-Sector	2007	No, just states height in stories
Downtown Sector Plans			
Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan	North Loop, Downtown East	2003	No, just states height in stories
Elliot Park Neighborhood Master Plan	Elliot Park	2003	No, just states height in stories

Historic Mills District Master Plan and Update	Downtown East	2001	Includes feet and height. Page 14-height in feet does not correspond to Zoning Code 14ft tall story height. 4 or 5 stories at 63 feet (4.5 stories) In Zoning Code Four stories = 56 ft & 6 = 70 ft
North Loop Plan Update	North Loop		No, just states height in stories
North Sector Plans			
West Broadway Alive! Plan	Near North, Willard Hay, Jordan, Hawthorne	2008	No, just states height in stories
East Sector Plans			
15th Avenue SE Urban Design Plan	Marcy-Holmes	2009	No, just states height in stories
Stadium Village University Avenue Station Area Plan	Prospect Park	2012	No
South Sector Plans			
38th Street and Chicago Avenue Small Area/Corridor Framework Plan	Central, Bryant, Powderhorn Park, and Bancroft	2008	No, just states stories
Chicago Avenue Corridor Plan	Ventura Village, Phillips West, Midtown Phillips	2012	No

Southwest Sector Plans			
Lyn-Lake Small Area Plan	Lowry Hill East, Whittier, C.A.R.A.G., Lyndale	2009	No, discusses height in stories and corresponding feet
South Lyndale Corridor Plan	Kenny, Lynnhurst, Tangletown, Windom	2006	No, just states stories
Uptown Small Area Plan	East Calhoun (ECCO), C.A.R.A.G., Lowry Hill East and East Isles	2008	List height in feet purposefully over stories, but foot recommendations equate to Zoning Code Definitions of stories. Use 35 feet equates to 2.5 stories. Demonstrates 4 and 5 stories are possible within 56 feet. See pages 74 and 78.

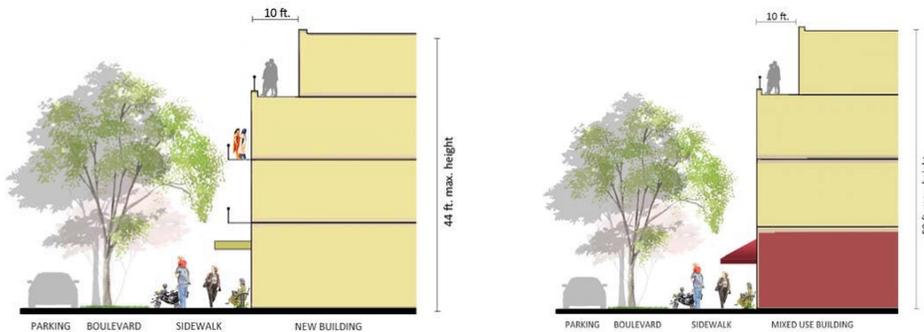


Figure 1. Images from page 47 of Linden Hills Small Area Plan

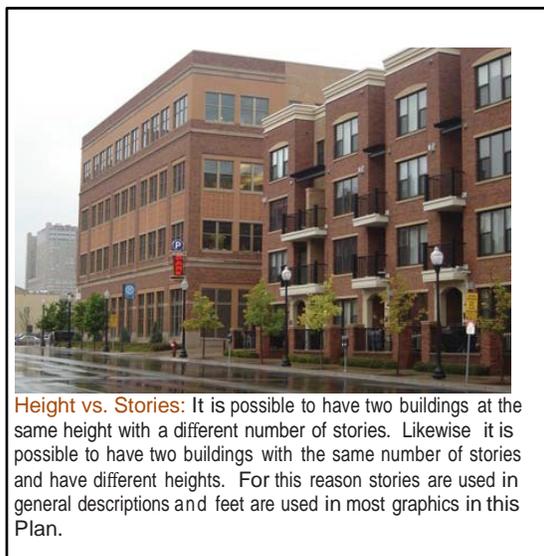


Figure 2 Graphic from Uptown Small Area Plan regarding building height

2. Addressing Condition # 3 from the Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission Condition # 3 reads: “In the modulation section, suggest staff use a range of feet or describe it in words that reference existing context, but remove exact feet from the definition. Better explain the term and concept of modulation. “

CPED staff is proposing the following language in response to the CPC direction:

Modified the Specific Implementation Recommendations (from page 46 of the plan) to replace the term “modules” with “massing” and provide more descriptive information followed by ranges of length versus a specific length.

- Developments should be divided into separate buildings or individual buildings should be articulated through their massing to reflect the architectural context of the neighborhood.
 - Within the 43rd & Upton and 44th & Beard Neighborhood Commercial Nodes building massing should be articulated to reflect (1) the commercial character and (2) the fine grained architectural massing of the existing collection of buildings and range between approximately 40 and 60 feet in length along the street.
 - Within the 44th & France Neighborhood Commercial Node building massing should be articulated should be articulated to reflect a traditional urban form and range between approximately 60 and 80 feet in length along the street.
 - Along the France Avenue and 44th Street Community Corridors, multifamily building massing should be articulated into to reflect (1) the residential character and (2) the fine grained architectural massing of the existing collection of buildings and range between approximately 40 and 60 feet in length along the street.
- The massing of a building should be defined by articulation that has a depth of at least 3 to 4 feet.

Modify the explanatory language (from page 48 of the plan) to replace the term “modules” with the term “massing”

Building length and articulation is the other key component of character that this plan focuses on. The plan recognizes that building length and building height together significantly contribute to the character of the existing development patterns for in Linden Hills. Breaking up larger buildings into more authentic **massing** that reflect the existing development patterns is paramount to context sensitive infill development. It is recognized that due to development constraints new developments cannot always be broken up into separate buildings. In contemporary designs, building articulation to break up a building’s massing is common place. However, this articulation is often made through shallow changes in the plane of the building wall and through material changes that rarely result in the building reading as separate buildings that relate to the surrounding context and as a result does not meet the intent of the guidance in this plan. To ensure that the context sensitive building design desired in Linden Hills the delineation of the building **massing** must be clearly defined through significant building wall articulation.