

REPORT TO THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

DATE: May 14, 2026

SUBJECT: Case #251189 – 7Brew Coffee Shop – 604 West Poplar Avenue – Request approval of encroachment into required 40-foot front landscape buffer for a 510-square foot a coffee shop

INTRODUCTION:

- CEI Engineering Associates, Inc. (Erin Dudley), representing 7 Brew Drive-Thru Coffee, is requesting approval of encroachment into the required 40-foot front landscape buffer.
- The owner of the property is Turner Wingo and is leasing the 0.81-acre tract to 7 Brew Drive-Thru Coffee.
- The 0.81-acre tract, known as 604 West Poplar Avenue, is part of the City Center Shopping Center located on the north side of Poplar Avenue, East of US Highway 72 and West of Maynard Way.

BACKGROUND:

- The use of this building has changed over time. First, it was a bank, then an urgent care center and in May 2025, an application for a Final Site Plan was submitted to redevelop the site into a new drive-thru coffee shop. The urgent care ceased operation over 30-months ago.
- The property is zoned SCC: Shopping Center Commercial. Although the use has changed, the zoning has remained SCC, and it is not within a Planned Development (PD).
- While this property has a separate parcel ID number, there are no records of this lot being subdivided from the City Center Shopping Center and it is still considered part of the larger campus. A Final Subdivision Plat would need to be submitted and approved by the Town to change the 0.80-tract into a legal lot.
- The current building on the lot built in 1965, which is about 4,000 square feet, will be demolished and replaced with two new structures; the main building is 510 square feet and the outdoor freezer 240 square feet.
- There will be 4 parking spots on the property (the maximum allowed) and there may be shared parking with the shopping mall to the west.
- This is a drive-thru only coffee shop with no walk-up counter or on-site parking or seating provided for customers.

KEY POINTS:

1. The applicant proposes a front yard landscape buffer along Poplar Avenue with varying widths below the 4-foot requirement (see Exhibits 2 & 3).

- The proposed site plan includes a 5-foot encroachment into the west side front yard buffer, aligning with a cross-connection within the shopping center to the west, with a buffer width of approximately 33 feet. On the east side, a similar encroachment of about 6 feet is proposed, corresponding to an area approximately 37 feet wide.
- The Design Guidelines require a 40-foot front yard landscape buffer along arterial roads (see Exhibit 5).
- The applicant states the lot has unique spacing constraints require relief from the requested front

yard landscape buffer.

- The leased tract is approximately 150 feet wide, with existing encroachments totaling about 70 feet of the parcel's width.
- Additional greenspace in the right-of-way will make the buffer yard look slightly larger than it is.

2. The applicant's request is based on their intent to comply with traffic recommendations from the Town's Traffic Engineer aimed at providing efficient traffic flow and preventing cars from stacking onto Poplar Avenue (see Exhibit 4).

- The applicant states a 34-foot buffer is needed (instead of 40 feet) to accommodate the Town's Traffic Engineer's request to align the shared entrance with the shopping center to the west and to incorporate a third queue lane, ensuring traffic does not spill out on Poplar Avenue.
- This requirement is based on observations made at the other 7 Brews in the Memphis Metro area, which the applicants states are the busiest in the region.

3. The deviation is the bare minimum required to enable the acceptable usage of the leased area for a drive-through coffee shop while minimize traffic impacts to the greatest extend possible.

- The subject property is considered an "Aging Non-Residential Development" by the Design Guidelines, and the current lot is part of a larger existing nonconforming property. The property satisfactorily addresses the "Test" for granting a deviation from the Design Guidelines in such circumstances (see Exhibit 5).
- While the remainder of City Center has portions of its site in compliance with the 40-foot buffer yard requirement, the portion of the site immediately adjacent (to the west) of the 0.80-acre leased area has a substandard front yard buffer width.
- The 0.80-acre leased area is constrained by existing lot to the west infrastructure; therefore, the applicant states it is not feasible to meet the minimum front yard landscape buffer while aligning the shared entrance with the shopping center to the west and incorporating a third queue lane to prevent traffic overflow.
- The requirements upon which the request relies would typically not apply to "greenfield" sites of a comparable land use category.
- The deviation is the bare minimum required to enable the acceptable usage of the leased area for a drive-through coffee shop while minimize traffic impacts to the greatest extend possible. The approval of the deviation will not harm neighboring properties or improvements in the area where the property is located, nor will it be detrimental to the general welfare.

4. There are currently 4 existing trees to remain. A condition in the Development Agreement will require enhanced landscaping (i.e. evergreen shrubs) within the front yard buffer to screen the stacking lanes from view.

NEXT STEPS:

- **Board of Alderman and Mayor (BMA):** The BMA will tentatively consider this request on June 8, 2026, at 6:00 pm at Town Hall along with the Final Site Plan and Development Agreement. The BMA will consider the waiver request as part of the approval of the Development Agreement.
- **Permits:** A demolition permit is required before the site is demolished. The Final Site Plan and Development Agreement must be approved by the BMA before building permits are issued.

ATTACHMENTS:

[Exhibit 1 - Vicinity Map and Contact Information 5.6.26 .pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2 - Applicants' Cover Letters to DRC 03.27.26.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3 - DRT Consolidated Comments 03.18.26.pdf](#)
[Exhibit 4 - Minimum Front Yard Open Space.pdf](#)
[Exhibit 5 - Aging Nonresidential Development .pdf](#)
[Exhibit 6 - Final Site and Landscaping Plan 04.15.26.pdf](#)

PROPOSED MOTION:

To recommend approval of the encroachment into required 40-foot front yard landscape buffer along Poplar Avenue.