



**To:** City of St. Louis Planning Commission

**From:** Don Roe, Director

**Subject:** Chapter 99 Blighting Study and Redevelopment Plan  
 (5510-26 Pershing Ave. Redevelopment Area)  
 LCRA Plan #2023

**Date:** October 2, 2015

**Summary**

**Submittal:** Chapter 99 Blighting Study and Redevelopment Plan for Planning Commission review and recommendation.

**Site:** Approximately 1.37-acre area -- consisting of a single parcel -- located in the 5500 block of Pershing Ave., between Clara Ave. and Belt Ave., in the DeBaliviere Place neighborhood. The site is also located in the Central West End Certified Local Historic District.

**Existing Use:** A large surface parking lot.

**Proposal:** Construction of a \$29 million, seven-story mixed-use building, consisting of approximately 165 apartments, one commercial space and approximately 177 parking spaces.

**Prospective Developer:** Kilimanjaro Inc. – 5510-5526 Pershing (Victor Alston).

**Eminent Domain:** Does not provide for eminent domain.

**Support Letter:** Submitted by Alderman Frank Williamson (26th Ward).



**Recommended Action**

That the Planning Commission finds the Chapter 99 Blighting Study and Redevelopment Plan for the 5510-26 Pershing Ave. Redevelopment Area to be recommended declared as blighted and the proposed Redevelopment Plan to be in conformity with the City’s Strategic Land Use Plan and **recommends approval** to the City’s Board of Aldermen.

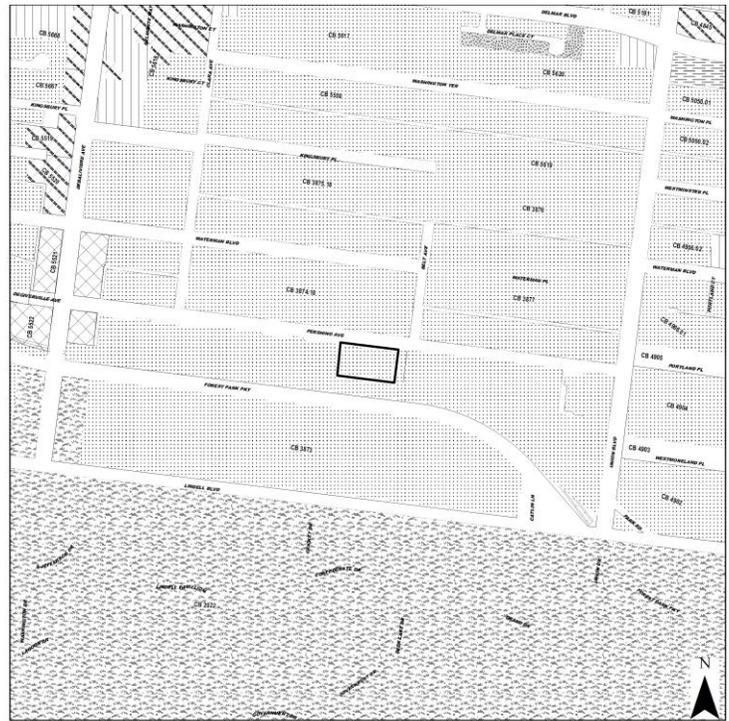
## 1.0 Background

- The 5510-26 Pershing Ave. Redevelopment Area consists of a single parcel -- 5510-26 Pershing Ave. The approximately 1.37-acre Redevelopment Area is located in the 5500 block of Pershing Ave., between Clara Ave. and Belt Ave. -- and adjacent to the MetroLink right-of-way for the Red and Blue Lines and Forest Park Pkwy. -- in the DeBaliviere Place neighborhood. The site is also located in the Central West End Certified Local Historic District. The LCRA Fact Sheet summarizes this proposed Chapter 99 Blighting Study and Redevelopment Plan. (See Exhibit "A".)
- The existing use is a large surface parking lot. Photos of the Redevelopment Area are included in Exhibit "G".
- Based on PDA staff's visual survey, the Redevelopment Area is in fair condition, with a few signs of deferred maintenance. The Redevelopment Area is also under-utilized in its current state -- a large surface parking lot in a desirable, densely-populated area. The Redevelopment Area is in fair condition, according to the Redevelopment Plan. (See Exhibit "B".) The attached Blighting Report (see Exhibit "C"), which was prepared by St. Louis Development Corporation (SLDC) staff, reports the following:
  - "Dilapidated surfaces and overgrowth."
- The Redevelopment Area's adjacent properties primarily include medium- and high-density residential buildings, with a few commercial uses. Many of the residential buildings were rehabilitated by Pantheon Corp. during the 1980's as part of a large-scale redevelopment of the DeBaliviere Place neighborhood. Most commercial uses are found near the nearby Forest Park-DeBaliviere MetroLink station -- which serves both the Red and Blue Lines -- including two commercial buildings at the northeast corner of Pershing Ave. and Clara Ave. A new five-story apartment building was recently constructed near the intersection of Pershing Ave. and Union Blvd. by Village Green, a suburban Detroit developer, as part of its large Central West End City Apartments complex. Photos of adjacent properties are included in Exhibit "G".
- The prospective developer is Kilimanjaro Inc. -- 5510-5526 Pershing. Victor Alston is a principal of the firm. The firm is proposing the construction of a \$29 million, seven-story mixed-use building, consisting of approximately 165 apartments, one commercial space and approximately 177 parking spaces. The commercial space would be occupied by the development and management company's offices. A streetscape rendering of the proposed development project is included as Exhibit "E". Two related firms (both of which include Victor Alston as a principal) recently purchased and are in the process of rehabilitating four adjacent five- and six-story residential buildings at 5528 and 5560 Pershing Ave.
- The Redevelopment Plan's Sustainability Impact Statement reports that this development project will meet 25 objectives of the Sustainability Plan. (See Exhibit "D".)
- The Redevelopment Plan does not provide for the use of eminent domain. It does provide for the use of 10-year tax abatement, although Alderman Williamson has requested 20-year tax abatement.
- The Redevelopment Plan is supported by Alderman Frank Williamson (26th Ward). See the attached support letter in Exhibit "F".

## 2.0 Comments

The City's Strategic Land Use Plan designates the entire Redevelopment Area -- as well as much of the adjacent area -- as a Neighborhood Preservation Area (NPA).

The NPA Strategic Land Use Category is defined as: *"Areas where the existing housing and corner commercial building stock will be preserved and augmented with infill residential and corner commercial development physically integrated with, and primarily serving the immediate neighborhood. These areas generally consist of stable residential areas of the City, including but not limited to historic districts, where the character of the neighborhood is currently well preserved with relatively few vacant lots and abandoned buildings. The Plan contemplates continued preservation and improvement, with quality rehabilitation and infill new construction that is sensitive to the character of existing residences. Commercial and institutional uses catering to the immediate needs of the neighborhood are acceptable and reflect the traditional role such activity has played in the history of the City."*



### Strategic Land Use Categories

	Neighborhood Preservation Area		Business/Industrial Preservation Area
	Neighborhood Development Area		Business/Industrial Development Area
	Neighborhood Commercial Area		Institutional Preservation and Development Area
	Regional Commercial Area		Specialty Mixed Use Area
	Recreational and Open Space Preservation		Opportunity Area

The proposed development project -- a seven-story mixed-use building, consisting of approximately 165 apartments, one commercial space and approximately 177 parking spaces -- matches the intent of the NPA Special Use Category, which calls for "continued preservation and improvement, with quality rehabilitation and infill new construction that is sensitive to the character of existing residences." The approval of the preliminary review of the proposed building by the City's Preservation Board will ensure that the proposed development project will enhance the DeBaliviere Place neighborhood and this portion of the Central West End Certified Local Historic District. Thus, the proposed Redevelopment Plan is in conformity with the Neighborhood Preservation Area.

## 2.1 Public Input

The Board of Alderman's Neighborhood Development Committee recommended approval of the Redevelopment Plan at its September 22, 2015 meeting.

At its July 27, 2015 meeting, the Preservation Board granted approval of the preliminary review of the proposed new construction, with the condition that final drawings and exterior materials will be submitted to the Cultural Resources Office for review and approval.

## 2.2 Previous Commission Action

None.

## 2.3 Requested Action

City of St. Louis Ordinance #64687, Section 8, Sub-Paragraphs 6 and 8 require that all Chapter 99, 100 and 353 Blighting Studies and Redevelopment Plans be submitted to the Planning Commission for its recommendation as to conformity with the City's Comprehensive Plan and any applicable Neighborhood Plan.

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## **Requested Recommendation**

That the Planning Commission finds the Chapter 99 Blighting Study and Redevelopment Plan for the 5510-26 Pershing Ave. Redevelopment Area to be recommended declared as blighted and the proposed Redevelopment Plan to be in conformity with the City's Strategic Land Use Plan and **recommends approval** to the City's Board of Aldermen.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS PLANNING COMMISSION AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Chapter 99 Blighting Study and Redevelopment Plan for the 5510-26 Pershing Ave. Redevelopment Area is hereby found to be recommended declared as blighted and the proposed Redevelopment Plan is in conformity with the City's Strategic Land Use Plan and is recommended for approval to the City's Board of Aldermen.
2. The Director of the Planning and Urban Design Agency is hereby directed to notify the Board of Aldermen of its recommendation.

# EXHIBIT A

## FACT SHEET

**Property Address:** 5510-26 Pershing Ave.

**Alderman:** Frank Williamson

**Ward:** 26th

**Neighborhood:** DeBaliviere Place

**Prospective Developer:** Kilimanjaro Inc. – 5510-5526 Pershing (Victor Alston)

**Property Is:**  occupied  unoccupied

**Eminent Domain:**  was requested  was not requested

**Current Assessed Value of Property:** \$57,300

Other Comments: The area consists of a vacant parking lot. The redeveloper purchased the property for \$1 million. The redeveloper plans to construct a new mixed-use property at an approximate cost of \$25-28 million. There will be one commercial space and 157 market rate apartments with two parking decks at 177 stalls. The redeveloper estimates that approximately 50 new full-time jobs would be created through the development. Alderman Williamson wishes to support this project with 20-year tax abatement but the staff recommends 10-year tax abatement based on comparable incentives given to projects in this immediate vicinity.



**Exhibit B**  
**Project Area Plan**  
 5510 Pershing Ave.

**Existing Uses and Conditions**

-  Vacant Lot, Fair Condition
-  Project Area Boundary
-  Buildings
-  City Block Number



# EXHIBIT C

## Blighting Report for the 5510 Pershing Ave. Redevelopment Area

As outlined below, the Area suffers from a multitude of physical and economic deficiencies including defective and inadequate streets, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration or inadequate site improvements, improper subdivision or absolute platting and conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes.

As a result of these factors the preponderance of the property in the Area is an economic liability for the City, its residents and the taxing districts that depend upon it as a revenue source, as well as a sound, health safety liability. It, therefore, qualifies as a "blighted area" as such time is defined in Section 99.320(3) of the Missouri Revised Statute (2000) as amended.

**Subject Property is:**  vacant land  unoccupied residential  
 unoccupied/occupied commercial/industrial

**Subject Property is:**  secured  unsecured

The subject property  has  has not a predominance of defective or inadequate streets  
If answer is yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

The subject property  has  has not unsanitary or unsafe conditions  
If answer is yes, explain: The property is a vacant lot. As such, it is subject to illegal dumping, rat infestation, and use by transients. It is also a fire hazard.

The subject property  has  has not deterioration of site conditions  
If answer is yes, explain: Dilapidated surfaces and overgrowth

The subject property  has  has not improper subdivision or absolute platting  
If answer is yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

The subject property  has  has not conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other cause.  
If answer is yes, explain: The property is a vacant lot, consequently it is subject to illegal dumping and use by transients, which combine to make it a significant fire risk.

The subject property  does  does not retard the provision of housing accommodations  
If answer is yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

The subject property  does  does not constitute an economic liability  
If answer is yes, explain: The property is a vacant lot and significantly deteriorated. It drags down the value of surrounding properties and would take significant investment to bring up to code.

The subject property  does  does not constitute a social liability  
If answer is yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

The subject property  is  is not a menace to the public health, safety, morals or welfare in its present condition and use. If answer is yes, explain: The property is a vacant lot and subject illegal dumping, rat infestation, and fire.

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The subject property  is  is not detrimental because of dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence. If answer is yes, explain: The vacant lot is significantly deteriorated, with the deteriorated site conditions listed above.

The subject property  is  is not detrimental because of lack of air sanitation or open space. If answer is yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

The subject property  is  is not detrimental because of high density of population. If answer is yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

The subject property  is  is not detrimental because of overcrowding of buildings, overcrowding of land. If answer is yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

The subject property  has  has not a combination of factors that are conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and \_\_\_\_\_. If answer is yes, explain: The vacant lot is subject to illegal dumping and rat infestation. It is also subject to use by transients and as an unsafe play areas by neighborhood children.

# EXHIBIT D

5510 Pershing Ave. (2023)

## SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The St. Louis Planning Commission adopted a Sustainability Plan on January 9, 2013. The following chart shows how the objectives of this Redevelopment Plan relates to selected Functional Categories and development related Objectives of the City's Sustainability Plan. The Mayor has issued a Sustainable Action Agenda (SAA). The following chart also shows items that may relate to development projects.

		Applicable	Not Applicable
<b>I. URBAN CHARACTER, VITALITY AND ECOLOGY</b>			
A1	Reinforce the City's Central Corridor as the dynamic "heart" of the region	X	
A3	Develop designated areas via incentives for "green" and technical industries		X
A4	Increase riverfront development and provide safe public access and associated recreational activity		X
A5	Provide development incentives to encourage transit-oriented development	X	
B1	Prioritize infill development to develop thriving compact communities/vibrant mixed-use main streets	X	
SAA2	Make LRA land available at no cost for smart, productive, creative re-use of the land.		X
B2	Update local street design standards and implement the Complete Streets Ordinance		X
B3	Create Citywide, and multiple neighborhood-scale mobility plans	X	
B4	Discourage development that reduces transit, bike and pedestrian activities	X	
C1	Design public spaces and neighborhood streets as gathering spaces for people		X
C5	Maintain public spaces and neighborhood streets		X
D7*	Expand the City's urban tree canopy	X	
SAA4	Increase the Number of Trees Planted by 16,000 or 15%	X	
E1	Celebrate and increase activity along the Mississippi River		X
E2	Remove/change infrastructure to improve riverfront access		X
F1	Preserve and reuse buildings as a means of achieving sustainability		X
F2	Continue to integrate preservation into the planning and building approval process		X
F4	Protect historic properties vulnerable to foreclosure, tax forfeiture, or demolition		X
F5	Promote the redevelopment of historic homes and commercial properties		X
G1	Develop affordable homes in concert with long-range transit and development planning		X
G2	Encourage mixed-use affordable housing in high amenity neighborhoods		X
G4	Integrate low income housing into market-rate and mixed-use development		X
G6	Experiment with new ways to create partnerships to build sustainable and affordable housing		X
G8	Offer housing that is energy efficient and environmentally sustainable	X	
H4	Continue to remove site contamination and promote brownfields redevelopment	X	
I4	Ensure urban agriculture is a profitable, viable enterprise		X

J4	Preserve neighborhood residential areas/commercial and mixed-uses on corners/major corridors		X
J5	Increase the effectiveness of major commercial corridors	X	
J8	Incorporate sustainability in economic development programs	X	
<b>II. ARTS, CULTURE AND INNOVATION</b>			
A4	Encourage the development of affordable artist housing, studios and ventures		X
A5	Diversify the City's range of arts, creative and innovative industries		X
SAA6	Build Phase II of CORTEX bioscience and technology research district		X
C2	Facilitate development of arts, culture and innovative TODs		X
C5	Target developing arts and cultural districts for streetscape and public space improvements		X
E1	Use distinctive public art, architecture, landscape to build City and neighborhood identity		X
F1	Revitalize existing and develop new arts and cultural facilities		X
<b>III. EMPOWERMENT, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY</b>			
E4	Expand the capacity to create additional affordable housing units		X
E5	Create pathways for qualified low-income families to become homeowners		X
SAA10	Implement Board Bill 297 pertaining to workforce inclusion		X
F1	Address blighting and environmental health hazards		X
F6	Ensure the application of universal design and accessibility codes	X	
<b>IV. HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND SAFETY</b>			
A5	Plan and design buildings, spaces and environments for safety	X	
B5	Reduce exposure of lead-paint poisoning		X
C1	Eliminate food deserts and improve access to fresh produce		X
C3	Support urban agriculture opportunities in the City		X
SAA14	End chronic Homelessness		X
D4	Design buildings to encourage physical activity	X	
<b>V. INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION</b>			
A1	Advance the City as a transportation hub		X
A2	Encourage transit oriented development	X	
SAA18	Increase bike racks by 150%	X	
E3	Use pilot projects to explore ways to achieve net zero storm water discharge	X	
G2	Strive for the highest levels of energy efficiency and maximize clean energy in buildings		X
G3	Ensure building and site development integrated with natural site ecology		X
G4	Advance the use of high-efficiency building related water systems and technologies	X	
G5	Encourage re-use of materials and divert waste from land-fills		X
G6	Provide healthy interior environments in commercial buildings	X	

VI. PROSPERITY, OPPORTUNITY AND EMPLOYMENT			
SAA26	Require a sustainability impact statement for all new City development	X	
B1	Increase the inventory and availability of business and industrial real estate through environmental clean-up and land assembly		X
B2	Encourage small scale redevelopment with economic incentives		X
B4	Leverage the Mississippi River as an inexpensive transportation, drinking water and recreational resource		X
C3	Focus on small and local businesses as a key part of the City economy		X
C4	Re-use existing buildings for inexpensive incubation of entrepreneurial ideas		X
D1	Pursue transit oriented development at MetroLink stations and major bus nodes to encourage more walking/fewer carbon emissions	X	
D5	Market and encourage living in the City to recent college graduates	X	
E3	Promote flexible development approaches by developers, land owners and business firms	X	
E4	Direct new commercial and mixed-use development to designated corridors and districts that demonstrate market support	X	
SAA27	Create at least 8,500 new jobs at Ballpark Village, CORTEX, Carondelet Coke, St. Louis Army Ammunition Plant and North Riverfront		X
G3	Foster innovation		X
SAA28	Remediate and prepare at least 40 vacant properties for redevelopment	X	
SAA	<i>Please comment in what ways you believe the Mayor's Sustainability Action Agenda overlaps with your successes on your project.</i>		



# EXHIBIT E



**KWA**  
Kaiser-Watt Architects, Inc.

FUJI APARTMENTS ON FISHING  
12/2016



## EXHIBIT F

Frank A. Williamson  
Alderman, 26th Ward

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN**  
CITY OF SAINT LOUIS  
MISSOURI

*COMMITTEES*  
Intergovernmental Matters  
Parks & Environmental Matters  
Personnel & Administration  
Streets, Traffic & Refuse  
Ways & Means

February 9, 2015

Mr. Dale Ruthsatz  
Director, Commercial Development  
St. Louis Development Corporation  
1520 Market Street, Suite 2000  
St. Louis, MO 63103

*Re: Kilimanjaro IV-5510 Pershing Avenue*

Dear Dale,

Kilimanjaro IV, LLC is working to improve the Skinker-Debaliviere neighborhood. They are proposing to develop the parking lot at 5510 Pershing into 140-160 new market rate apartment units. They require financing assistance with financing assistance from the City of St. Louis.

To assist their efforts, I am requesting that St. Louis Development Corporation and the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority prepare a blighting study and redevelopment plan for 5510 Pershing Avenue.

I support the creation of a Chapter 99 redevelopment area providing for (20) twenty year tax abatement, without the use of eminent domain.

If you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Frank Williamson  
Alderman, 26<sup>th</sup> Ward

Cc: Michael Criffin, St. Louis Development Corporation  
Vic Alston

Exhibit "G"

Photos of  
5510-26 Pershing Ave. Redevelopment Area



**1) Redevelopment Area  
Parking lot, 5510-26 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking westward)**



**2) Redevelopment Area  
Parking lot, 5510-26 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking westward)**



**3) Redevelopment Area  
Parking lot, 5510-26 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking southward)**



**4) Redevelopment Area  
Parking lot, 5510-26 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking eastward)**

Exhibit "G"

Photos of  
5510-26 Pershing Ave. Redevelopment Area



**5) Adjacent properties  
3 apartment buildings, 5528-40 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking westward)**



**6) Adjacent properties  
Apartment building, 5528 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking southwestward)**



**7) Adjacent properties  
Deteriorated recreational complex, 5539  
Pershing Ave.  
(Looking northwestward)**



**8) Adjacent properties  
2 apartment buildings, 5529-31 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking northwestward)**

Exhibit "G"

Photos of  
5510-26 Pershing Ave. Redevelopment Area



**9) Adjacent properties  
2 apartment buildings, 5517-23 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking northward)**



**10) Adjacent properties  
Mixed-use building, 5501 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking northwestward)**



**11) Adjacent properties  
Apartment building, 5500 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking northward)**



**12) Adjacent properties  
Apartment building, 5500 Pershing Ave.  
(Looking eastward)**