

St. Charles Parish

Department of Planning & Zoning

Land Use Report PZO-2018-04

Introduced by Mary Keller Clulee, Councilwoman District II

To add professional and sub-professional offices to the MS Zoning District

Background

In the late 20s/early 30s when zoning was being adopted nationwide, communities used medical zoning districts to isolate disease and separate certain people from the general population in institutions. A medical or institutional zoning district would be on the outskirts of town, or across the lake and the ordinance would include terms like infirm, insane, and incurable. Finding new uses for these isolated institutions is challenging.

By the 1980s, when St. Charles Parish adopted the current zoning ordinance, isolated medical services districts were no longer necessary to prevent the spread of disease. However, many medical services, in-patient, long-term, and emergency care, for example, were still being provided in large medical buildings that operate 24-hours per day and require loud mechanical equipment, abundant parking, and 24-hour deliveries. The Parish's MS zoning district is designed to mitigate impacts of these institutional uses to residential and commercial areas.

Healthcare today is offered more and more in smaller clinics and offices that can be permitted in the C-2 and C-3 zoning district. As the C-2 and C-3 zoning district offers office space that is better connected to communities and more accessible for residents and works for many medical service providers, large-scale facilities like Riverview Medical Center/Ochsner Health Center-Destrehan still require MS zoning. The result is a large building that has taken professional/sub-professional office tenants from non-medical fields and still has office space available.

Planning and Zoning context

The addition of professional and sub-professional offices to the MS, Medical Services Zoning District would bring existing non-medical professional and sub-professional offices located within medical complexes into compliance and allow for greater flexibility in occupying these larger buildings.

Potential outcomes

Higher occupancy rates in the large complexes in the MS zoning district.