

BRAINERD PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP

Wednesday, January 21, 2015

4:30 p.m.

City Hall – 2nd Floor Conference Room

Agenda

1. Off-Street Parking Requirements
2. Zoning along South 6th Street

Any individual needing special accommodations please call 218/828-2309

MEMO

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Mark Ostgarden, City Planner 

DATE: January 13, 2015

RE: Off Street Parking and South 6th Street Zoning

Off Street Parking

The 1st workshop item will be a discussion about our current off-street parking requirements. The impact of the requirements came up during the Dunkin Donuts variance review. Our requirements were revised during the 2009 Zoning Ordinance review. Our consultant recommended the various standards as typical for the various use classifications. The concern is the impacts these requirements have on redevelopment (and development) in the city. The Planning Commission discussion is whether it desires to recommend a different method of addressing off-street parking. The Planning Department has been doing research on alternatives that may exist around the country. There is some information about how cities that have a developed mass transit systems are requiring less parking, however, information to guide our process is difficult to find. We have contacted the Urban Land Institute and it is compiling information that may be useful. Commissioner Hayden Shaw has provided the attached list of reasons why in her opinion the requirements should be changed.

Eliminating off-street parking or even to revise our requirements will be a significant change in our land use policy, one that will require the Planning Commission and City Council to have similar goals on the issue, if this is to be possible. After the Planning Commission has some initial discussion, it may want to meet with the City Council to discuss the issue. There would seem to be no reason for the Planning Commission to spend time on this issue if the City Council does not have the same goal.

Current Options to Reduce or Eliminate Off Street Parking

There are several Zoning Ordinance options available to reduce or eliminate off-parking requirements:

1. Locate Downtown. The B-3 (Central Business) District has no off-street parking requirements.
2. Incentives for Additional Green Space. In addition to the fifteen (15) percent minimum green space requirement, incentives are available for creating additional green space and/or adding landscaping to the site. For every five (5) percent increase in green space area, off-street parking requirements can be reduced by ten (10) percent. Thirty (30) percent or greater green space provisions will allow up to a thirty (30) percent reduction in total parking spaces required.

3. **Parking Deferment.** The Planning Commission may allow a reduction in the number of required parking stalls for commercial, industrial, and public/semi-public uses provided that prescribed conditions are met.
4. **Joint Facilities.** Required parking facilities serving two or more uses may be located on the same lot or in the same structure provided that the total number of parking spaces furnished shall be not less than the sum of the separate requirements for each use, during any peak hour parking period when the parking facility is utilized at the same time by two (2) or more uses.
5. **Off-Site Parking.** Parking within a certain distance of a use can be used to meet off-street requirements provided prescribed conditions are met.

Other Cities

1. Portland, Oregon removed parking minimums for sites well served by transit back in the 1980's. A controversial change in 2013 reinstated residential parking minimums for apartment buildings larger than thirty (30) units. Minimums are still absent for non-residential uses in transit areas. Even in zones where minimums are mandated the requirements are low. For example, retail requirements are one (1) space per five hundred (500) square feet with a maximum of one (1) space per one hundred ninety-six (196) square feet.
2. Milwaukee, Wisconsin has no minimum parking requirement for single family dwellings and duplexes. Parking minimums are quite low throughout the city with retail uses required to provide a minimum of one (1) space per one thousand (1,000) square feet and a maximum of three and a half (3.5) spaces per one thousand (1,000) square feet. The number of spaces may be reduced further through a variety of conditions including a twenty-five (25) percent reduction if the property is within one thousand (1,000) feet of a regularly scheduled bus stop.
3. Pequot Lakes, Minnesota requires one (1) parking space per four hundred (400) square feet of retail in the Downtown Mixed Use district but this only pertains to properties that are over three thousand (3,000) square ft. Civic and residential uses also have designated minimums. The DMU has a parking maximum that states that surface parking cannot exceed one hundred twenty five (125) percent of the minimum.
4. Spokane, Washington requires retail establishments to have one (1) space per three hundred thirty (330) square feet minimum and one (1) space per two hundred (200) square feet maximum. Buildings smaller than three thousand (3,000) square feet within the center, corridor and downtown districts are exempt from the minimums.
5. Minneapolis, Minnesota's new parking standards include a citywide parking maximum of one (1) space per two hundred (200) square feet, for most uses. Minimums have been relaxed and most facilities under one thousand (1,000) square feet are exempt from the minimum standard. Buildings over one thousand (1,000) square feet must meet the standards or provide no less than four (4) spaces. However, these standards are

superseded in the downtown and overlay districts that have lower minimums and maximums.

South 6th Street Zoning

Should the Planning Commission recommendation to rezone the single parcel on South 6th Street from B-4 (General Commercial) District to R-2 (Medium Family Residential) District be approved by City Council, it understood that the zoning for a larger South 6th Street area should be reviewed. The City Council approved the rezoning on January 5, 2015. A suggestion has been made that a new zoning classification may be needed for the corridor.

The South 6th Street corridor received considerable attention during the comprehensive city wide Zoning Map review in 2010 and 2011. During that review, the Planning Commission recorded and the City Council agreed to some major zoning changes along and around the corridor. It was understood that the new commercial zoning would create many nonconforming situations however, zoning for the corridor was based on what is most appropriate for its future. Should a change be considered, the basis for it should be on whether the new zoning was a mistake and whether or not it should be reconsidered. That mistake should not be based on creating nonconformities. There is State Statute language that grants nonconformities rights to continue. Nor should the mistake be based on perceived property values effect on the ability to sell a property.

Prior to Wednesday's meeting, the following maps of the corridor and the area identifying will be e-mailed to the Planning Commission.

- Existing Land Use
- Future Land Use
- Existing Zoning
- Zoning Prior to 2011
- Owner Occupied/Rental Property

This information should be used as a part of a decision about the appropriate zoning.

The question is:

"Based on what we know and anticipate occurring in the future what is the most appropriate zoning for the corridor and the area."

Current Zoning Ordinance Option

The B-1 (Residential Office) District is a zoning option that provides the ability for office and residential in the same area. Following is the B-1 District Purpose and Intent and uses listed in the District:

515-60-1: Purpose and Intent. *This district allows single family uses and office space uses. This district serves as a transitional district between residential neighborhoods and commercial uses in areas where redevelopment is anticipated. The district includes uses that will not disrupt nearby, low-density land uses through high traffic generation, noise, or other nuisances.*

515-60-2: Permitted Uses.

- A. Government and public buildings, utilities, and/or structures.
- B. Office Businesses-Clinic. Out-patient health services limited to general medical clinics, mental health providers, physical therapy, chiropractors, dentists, orthodontia, oral surgeons, and opticians.
- C. Office Businesses-General. Professional administrative or clerical service operations limited to attorneys, financial advisors, insurance, travel and real estate.
- D. Single family dwellings.
- E. Essential services as regulated by Section 36 of this Ordinance.

515-60-3: Accessory Uses.

- A. Private garages and off-street parking...
- B. Off-street loading as regulated in Section 23 of this Ordinance.
- C. Tool houses and sheds... Fences as regulated in Section 19 of this Ordinance.
- D. Signs as regulated in Section 37 of this Ordinance.
- E. Radio and television receiving antennas,...
- F. In home day care...
- G. Home Businesses as regulated by Section 26 of this Ordinance.

515-60-4: Uses by Administrative Permit.

Personal wireless service antennas as regulated by Section 35 of this Ordinance.

515-60-5: Interim Uses.

None

515-60-6: Conditional Uses.

- A. Funeral homes and mortuaries provided that:
- B. Parking and stacking areas...
- C. Studios limited to art, dance, music, ...
- D. Places of worship and related buildings provided that:...
- E. Bed and breakfast subject to the provisions of Section 31 of this Ordinance.
- F. Planned Unit Developments as regulated by Section 11 of this Ordinance.

Hairbrush Microphone

Sunday, January 11, 2015

Ten reasons your city should DITCH minimum parking requirements

The top ten reasons your city should DITCH minimum parking requirements:

- 10) Minimum parking requirements raise the cost of entry for a business to move to your city. Adding parking spaces is expensive. First you have to acquire the land, then you have to pay to have it appropriately cleared, surfaced, and marked... then of course maintenance. If a business owner does not feel he or she needs this parking, this is a huge unnecessary cost that will deter some businesses.
- 9) Younger generations are becoming less dependent on cars. Car ownership decreases every year. We simply need less and will continue to need even less parking. Despite this, many cities have parking standards that have not changed for decades.
- 8) Excess parking is an economic drain. An unused parking space is a lost opportunity for economic activity in a city.
- 7) Business that serve a neighborhood often need very little parking.
- 6) If minimum parking requirements are eliminated, existing businesses with more parking spaces than they need could use that space for more productive purposes.
- 5) A city block with many empty parking lots and spaces lacks vitality. Conversely, a city block that is packed full of businesses and recreational space is an inviting and desirable space. People who occasionally have to walk an extra block to get to their destination will generally be glad to do so, for the pleasure of visiting a bustling, vibrant district.
- 4) The often-cited fears of not enough parking are unfounded. Your city probably has too much parking already. Look around your city at the busiest time of day. How much unused parking do you see?
- 3) Historic neighborhoods are not designed for massive amounts of parking spaces. The redevelopment of historic commercial neighborhoods to meet minimum parking requirements forces removal of buildings and/or green space-an extremely undesirable outcome for a historic city.
- 2) Minimum parking requirements drive businesses to the exurbs. These requirements can be difficult or impossible to meet within an existing city space, especially city centers where space is a premium. It is often just easier and less expensive to locate a business elsewhere. This is the last thing a city that is trying to promote economic growth and a solid tax base should be doing.

And the number one reason to ditch minimum parking requirements is...

- 1) You don't have to be a complete free-market capitalist to believe that a business owner is a better judge of how much parking is needed for his or her operation than the city.

-Sarah Hayden

Shaw

About Me

Sarah Warrior Princess

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Ten reasons your city should DITCH minimum parking...



Posted by Sarah Warrior Princess at 7:15 PM No comments:



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CITYFIXER

Just Because You Can't Find a Place to Park Doesn't Mean There Aren't Way Too Many Parking Spots

A new analysis of 27 mixed-use areas finds that parking in U.S. metro areas is, on average, oversupplied by 65 percent.

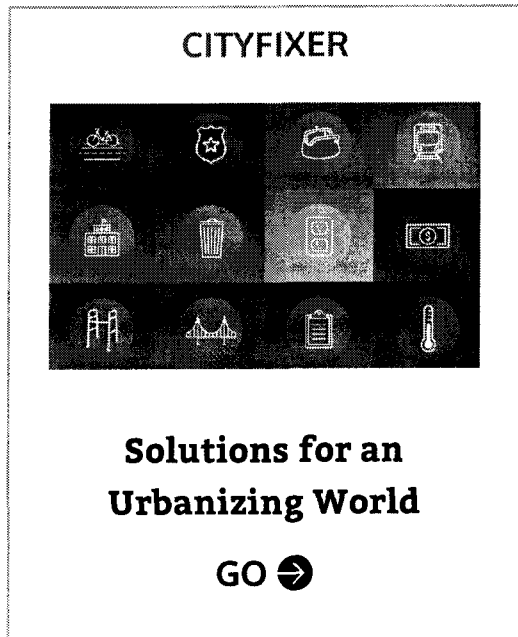
ERIC JAFFE |  @e_jaffe | Jan 14, 2015 |  24 Comments



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When we say we can't find anywhere to park, what we usually mean is we can't find a free or insanely cheap parking spot within spitting distance of our destination. As a nation of parkers we're all home run hitters who've forgotten what it's like to knock a single—or, as a closer metaphor, to draw a walk. The

result is a misperception that parking is scarce despite the great deal of lots, street spaces, or garages that might exist a block or two away.



Some new research reminds us just how oversupplied parking really tends to be in American metro areas: in a word, enormously. Rachel Weinberger and Joshua Karlin-Resnick of Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates analyzed parking studies of 27 mixed-use districts across the United States and found "parking was universally oversupplied, in many cases quite significantly." On average across the cases, parking supply exceeded demand by 65 percent.

"You see a huge amount of land dedicated to parking," said Karlin-Resnick, who presented the work Tuesday at the 94th annual meeting of the Transportation Research Board. "That land, particularly in downtowns, could really be dedicated to more active uses, economic generators, and by extension tax generators."

In nine mixed-use areas that had believed parking to be scarce, the oversupply ranged from 6 percent to 82 percent.

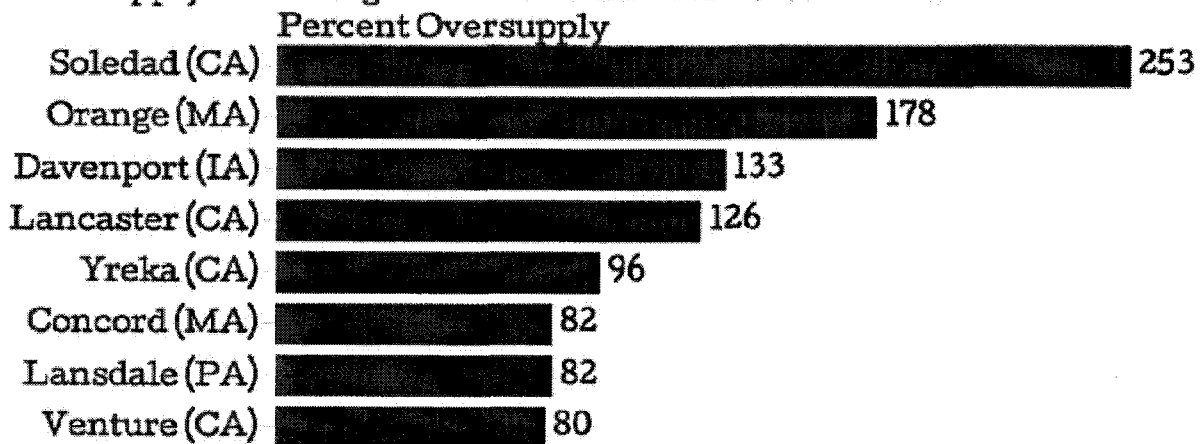
The researchers focused on districts with both residential and retail developments in a variety of settings—17 suburbs, 6 cities, and 4 towns—mostly in New England or California. (Interestingly, a third of the areas were documented as having the impression that local parking was scarce.) By looking at previous parking studies in these areas, as well as satellite imagery

via Google Earth, they identified existing parking supplies and peak weekday and weekend demands.

Critically, the researchers also took into account the accepted practice of supplying 15 percent more spaces than necessary—a sort of buffer zone that reduces the congestion caused by drivers circling for spaces.

In all 27 districts, spanning places with 420 spaces to those with 6,600 spaces, Weinberger and Karlin-Resnick found an oversupply of parking over and above the buffer zone. The oversupply ranged from 6 percent up to 253 percent across the study areas (below, the highest over-suppliers). And in the nine areas that had believed parking to be scarce, the oversupply ranged from 6 percent to 82 percent.

Oversupply of Parking in Select Mixed-Use U.S. Districts



SOURCE: Weinberger & Karlin-Resnick, "Parking in Mixed-Use Districts"

CityLab

Surprisingly, Weinberger and Karlin-Resnick found no connection between parking oversupply and several local factors that might explain the trend, such as region, area type, commute mode, and parking cost. Instead they found oversupply to be the norm in West Coast areas designed with cars in mind as well as in East Coast districts designed around transit, and in suburbs with higher driving shares as well as in cities with lower ones. They also found that the oversupply trend held true in mixed-use districts with paid parking as well as in places where parking was free.

In other words, the tendency to supply too much parking seems to rest above the shifting winds of local behavior. Here's Weinberger and Karlin-Resnick in a write-up of the research:

Though it would be appealing to have a "scientific" or "engineering" basis for determining appropriate parking supply, the evidence here suggests that levels of parking provision are unmoored from demand, travel behavior, pricing or other dimensions where theory suggests there would be a relationship.

As for why parking supply tends to outpace demand so dramatically, a number of reasons might apply. Planners have been known to copy parking codes from other nearby cities rather than identifying specific local needs. And business owners retain the (often outdated) mindset that their sales depend on an abundance of adjacent parking. Mandatory parking minimums for developers no doubt play a role, too.

"The costs of oversupply really aren't felt."

Weinberger and Karlin-Resnick suspect another major factor is risk-aversion. Public officials (and, by extension, the planning staffs they assemble) might view any undersupply of parking as such a political risk that they compensate by providing way too much. And since the costs of providing parking are distributed widely among taxpayers or businesses, or hidden in the decision not to build a mixed-use development at all, officials are inoculated from the consequences.

"The costs of oversupply really aren't felt," said Karlin-Resnick. "That's perhaps what drives the picture we're seeing in a lot of these places."

And of course the flawed belief, felt most acutely as we circle for a homerun spot, that oversupply doesn't really exist.

About the Author



Eric Jaffe is a senior associate editor at CityLab. He writes about transportation as well as behavior, crime, and history, and has a general interest in the science of city life. He's the author of *A Curious Madness* (2014) and *The King's Best Highway* (2010), and lives in New York.

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