MEETING MINUTES
PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, July 12, 2017
7:00 P.M.
Evanston Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, James C. Lytle Council Chambers

Members Present: Jim Ford (Chair), Simon Belisle, Terri Dubin, Carol Goddard, Peter Isaac, Andrew Pigozzi, Jolene Saul

Members Absent: Patrick Brown, Colby Lewis

Associate Members Present: none

Associate Members Absent: Scott Peters

Staff Present: Meagan Jones, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner
Scott Mangum, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Presiding Member: Jim Ford, Chairman

1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Ford called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: May 10, 2017

Commissioner Belisle made a motion to approve the minutes from May 10, 2017. Commissioner Goddard seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved, 6-0, with one Commissioner not yet present.

3. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Ford proposed that the order of agenda items be changed to accommodate the consultants present for the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Parking Requirements. The Commission agreed.

A. TEXT AMENDMENT 17PLND-0068

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Parking Requirements
A Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment pursuant to City Code Title 6, Zoning,
Ms. Jones provided a brief presentation on the TOD parking study, giving a history of the process beginning with the receipt of a grant through the RTA in 2015 and the consultant team which consisted of Sam Schwartz Engineering, Duncan Associates, and Center for Neighborhood Technologies. The Study did an analysis of current parking regulations, data from City parking garages, parking rates for recent developments, and a peer city comparison. The findings showed that the current parking requirements are well suited for developments further away from transit oriented development areas but lead to underutilized parking within the TOD areas.

The Study provided major recommendations which included what would be a text amendment to reduce the amount of required parking for residential developments that are located within TOD areas (either .55 parking spaces per bedroom or 1 space per dwelling unit). Additional recommendations included requiring developments to provide supplementary parking demand studies, vehicle ownership data, and possibly implementing an impact fee or fee-in-lieu of parking spaces for incoming developments among other items.

Ms. Jones then stated that the original study was presented to the Parking & Transportation Committee in August of 2016 during which the Committee provided feedback and concerns. The revised study takes those comments into consideration. She then clarified that staff is first seeking feedback on the proposed text amendment then also on the TOD Parking Study itself.

Chair Ford opened the hearing to Commissioner questions and comments. Questions and comments included:

- Clarification on requiring developments over 100 units to provide a Transit Demand Management Plan. Ms. Kelly Conolly, Sam Schwartz Engineering, provided more detail on what the plan would likely include. Ms. Jones added that this would make the items within the plan a requirement instead of a suggestion or recommendation from staff.
- How to show that the items within the TDM plan are actually implemented. Mr. Mangum clarified that for larger developments, requirements could be added into the approved ordinance.
- Clarification on how the reduced parking utilization rates arise, by low vehicle ownership versus occupancy rates within that building. The numbers could be a combination of the two items. City-wide vehicle occupancy is based on census tract information.
- Would the reduced number of car share companies would have any effects on the requirements. Staff did not anticipate this would have any effect.
• Request for information regarding whether or not recently approved developments would have complied with the proposed parking reduction. It was shown that most developments would still have needed a development allowance for reduced parking.
• Suggestion that the argument for the text amendment include the fact that current parking is underutilized and the number of required parking spaces for recently approved developments have been below current requirements. This would show that the text amendment would change the code to match current utilization and trends.
• Discussion about how other developer requests might be altered with a reduced parking requirement (taller buildings, denser development, etc.).
• Reminding Commissioners that recent planned developments have included a provision which prohibited that development's residents from obtaining on street parking permits.
• Editing the TDM requirement for developments over 100 units to be for planned developments over 100 units.
• Discussion on the necessity of the fee-in-lieu recommendation of the Study. Some concern was expressed that having that option would lead to “buying out” of the parking requirements.
• If consideration of changes to retail demand was a part of the study and if that could be considered in the future. The Study only address residential parking but a longer term parking study could address retail/commercial parking demand.
• Discussion on why .55 parking spaces per bedroom would be chosen versus 1 parking space per unit and the pros and cons of each option.

Chair Ford asked if members of the public present had any comment. One member spoke asking for clarification on where the text amendment would apply. Ms. Jones responded that the proposed amendment applies only to TOD areas, which are considered to be 1/8 of a mile to ¼ of a mile away from transit stations, and would not go into lower density areas away from transit. Existing parking requirements would apply outside of TOD areas.

The Commissioners then discussed clarification on what would be approved by text amendment (number of required parking spaces) versus what would be done administratively (recommendations made within the parking study).

Commissioner Isaac moved to recommend approval of the text amendment to reduce required residential parking in TOD areas to .55 per bedroom. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pigozzi. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was approved unanimously 7-0.
Ayes: Commissioners Belisle, Dubin, Goddard, Isaac, Pigozzi, Saul and Chairman Ford.

Nays: none

Commissioner Saul then moved to remove the point referring to creating a fee-in-lieu of parking from the Commission’s recommendation. Commissioner Dubin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was approved 5-2.

Ayes: Commissioners Belisle, Dubin, Goddard, Pigozzi, and Chairman Ford.

Nays: Commissioners Isaac and Saul

B. TEXT AMENDMENT 17PLND-0030
   Determination of the Front Yard
   A Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment pursuant to City Code Title 6, Zoning to codify staff authority to determine the front lot line of a corner lot.

Ms. Jones provided a brief overview of the revised proposed text amendment, explaining that the original proposed language was thought to be too broad and did not provide enough guidelines for how the front lot line would be determined. Staff conducted additional research of similar communities and through the American Planning Association, in addition to consulting with the City’s Legal Department to create more detailed standards to guide the determination of the front lot line. The standards included location of existing structures on the property, proportions of the lot line dimensions, pattern of existing development within the neighborhood and the property owner’s expressed desire.

Chair Ford opened the hearing to Commissioner questions and comments. Questions and comments included:

- Clarification on what the definition of the front lot line would be versus where guidelines in determining the location in certain cases (such as corner lots) would be located within the Zoning Code.
- Possibility of including illustrations within the code to help show how various regulations would apply for a parcel.
- Clarification on what properties this text amendment would apply to. Staff stated that the amendment would apply to all corner lot properties and, in cases where the lot is already improved, give considerations to existing structures on the lot if applicable.
- Providing certainty in determining the front lot line on vacant lots. Staff stated that the text amendment is an attempt to provide guidance to property owners and
developers prior to development of a lot. A zoning analysis of proposed plans would provide certainty. If there either is no discussion prior to plans being submitted or the owner is adamant about a particular site layout, there is a variance process that the owner can pursue (which may or may not be approved).

Commissioner Goddard made a motion to recommend approval of the text amendment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Belisle. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was approved, 5-2.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jones provided updates on the status of the proposed planned development at 1454-1508 Sherman stating that the project would be before the Commission in either August or September.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Dubin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Saul seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved by voice call 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Meagan Jones
Neighborhood and Land Use Planner
Community Development Department