

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT:** REMOTE PARKING REQUEST FOR 2520 CHAMBERLAIN STREET

**BACKGROUND:**

A request to provide remote parking has been submitted for the property at 2520 Chamberlain Street to allow for the 4,500 square foot property to be developed with a five-story mixed use building. The building will include approximately 3,500 square feet of commercial uses, as well as eight apartment units with a total of 40 bedrooms above. **Due to the small size of the lot, the applicant is proposing to locate all eight required parking spaces off site within a parking lot located north (across the street) of this site at 2515 Chamberlain Street and 133 Welch Avenue. The applicant is asking Council to approve a remote parking agreement and easement for this purpose.**

**Project Analysis:**

The proposed mixed use project is a Minor Site Development Plan application for the property at 2520 Chamberlain Street, owned by the Randall Corporation. The site is located in the Campustown Service Center District at the intersection of an alley named Chamberlain Place and a public street named Chamberlain Street. (See Attachment A)

The proposal replaces a former wood frame residence with a five-story mixed use building. The project has a commercial entrance at ground level for access to Chamberlain Street. It also has two separate means of access to the residential entry located on the west side of the building and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. There are stairs leading to Chamberlain Street and an accessible ramp accessed from Chamberlain Place.

**No parking is required for the proposed commercial space on the first floor. The required minimum parking for the residential use is one parking space per residential unit regardless of the number of bedrooms. Therefore, a total of 8 parking spaces is required. Of those 8 required spaces, one must be designed and installed as a van accessible space to meet accessibility requirements.** As the building is currently designed, there are no proposed parking spaces being provided on the site. Ames *Municipal Code* Section 29.406(18) allows for remote parking to satisfy required parking needed in the Campustown Service Center district subject to City Council approval if it is within 300 feet of the subject site.

Randall Corporation also owns property at 2515 Chamberlain Street and 133 Welch Avenue, located north of the subject site across Chamberlain Street. The property owner is seeking approval of a Remote Parking Easement to use spaces from the 2515 Chamberlain Street and 133 Welch commercial sites to meet the parking requirement for the new building at 2520 Chamberlain Street. (See Attachment A, Location Map and

Attachment B, Walking Route to Accessible Entrance) The proposed parking location is 75 feet from the new building site. However, and is approximately 470 feet of walking distance following the route going to the Welch corner for crossing the street and reaching the access point to the accessible ramp off Chamberlain Place.

The proposed parking location is a shared parking lot between two properties. The properties have single-story commercial buildings with no residential units; therefore, no parking is required by the Zoning Code for the commercial uses. Staff visited the site and noted the following existing conditions for the parking lot. It contains a total of 12 parking spaces with 6 spaces on each lot. There are no existing accessible parking spaces in the parking lot. The parking lot has frontage landscape planters that are sparsely vegetated. The parking lot contains an existing private utility box for a private gate located within the entrance drive of the parking lot, narrowing the drive aisle width to only one-way circulation. Additionally, the parking lot is only illuminated by two wall pack fixtures located on the west building and by street lights located in the right-of-way on the south side of Chamberlain Street. There is a pedestrian walkway connection to the street along the east edge of the parking lot. If the parking location is approved, it would likely have a total of 11 parking spaces after reconfiguring to include a van accessible parking space. With regards to the site's condition, appropriate enhancements would include restriping of spaces to include a van accessible parking space, removing the utility box for better access, providing better lighting, and refurbishing the landscape planters with new shrubs and groundcover.

**Providing for accessible parking space is required by the Zoning Code any time parking is provided. However, there is no requirement to place an accessible parking space on the same site as a development.** When parking is required, the first designated accessible parking space must be a van accessible space that also includes a striped loading area. **The Zoning Code Section 29.406(15)(e) does state that a van accessible space requires that accessible parking spaces serving a particular building be located on the shortest accessible route of travel from adjacent parking to an accessible entrance.**

In this case, the residential component of the building is accessed by means of a ramp from the south side of the new building, not from the north front facade abutting Chamberlain Street. (See Attachment C, Proposed Site Development Plan) The shortest route of travel totals approximately 470 feet as shown in Attachment B. The street crossing at Welch is not ideal as it creates a point of pedestrian safety conflict with vehicles, but that concern is minimized as it is a controlled four-way stop intersection. **The primary concern for ease of access and safety is the location of an accessible ramp off of Chamberlain Place, which is a substandard right-of-way used as an alley without separate pedestrian improvements.**

Although Chamberlain Place is classified as a public two-way street, it is only improved to the width of a typical alley (16 feet) with no right-of-way width for separate pedestrian movements. It is considered a street by classification due to the addressing and frontage of one property on Chamberlain Place. From strictly a design standard,

however, it functions as an alley.

To improve Chamberlain Place to include a pedestrian walk to current SUDAS standards would require that there be at least 2 feet of separation from the closest point of the vehicular lane at all times, with a minimum 4 foot travel surface for pedestrians. In this case, that means a total of 6 feet would be required within Chamberlain Place for a pedestrian walk, leaving only 10 feet for a driving lane. A 10-foot driving lane falls below the recommended 12-foot standard for a lane of travel. Changing the physical width of the roadway for any pedestrian improvements would also require Council to designate the traffic as one way rather than two way. **Staff feels there is not enough space on an already narrow two-way street right-of-way to ensure safety of pedestrians if they were to share the same space with vehicular traffic on Chamberlain Place.**

If the mixing of vehicles and pedestrians along Chamberlain Place is a substantial concern, an alternative that would still allow for off-site parking would be to have the property owner reduce the building size and place an accessible route on site to the accessible ramp. This would require a redesign of the project by the applicant.

Should the City Council approve of the concept of a proposed offsite parking location, a remote parking easement and agreement formalizing the property restriction and terms of the agreement should be drafted. The administrative approval of the Minor Site Development Plan would not be completed until the easement and agreement are in place to ensure the availability of the spaces for their intended use.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The City Council can approve the use of Remote Parking for 2520 Chamberlain Street and direct staff to draft a remote parking agreement and easement with the following conditions:
  - a. Applicant modifies the building design to provide an accessible route on the site along Chamberlain Place to the rear accessible ramp or modifies the design of the building to provide an accessible route for residential access from Chamberlain Street.
  - b. The remote parking site is modified by the applicant so that the following occurs:
    - i. The existing utility box is relocated to meet the minimum two-way drive aisle dimension at the entrance of the parking lot;
    - ii. Additional wall pack lighting is installed by the applicant to eliminate a safety concern for residential parking; and
    - iii. The applicant replants appropriate shrub and groundcover within existing planters.
2. The City Council can approve the use of Remote Parking for 2520 Chamberlain and direct staff to draft a remote parking agreement and easement with modified or additional conditions.

3. The City Council can approve the use of Remote Parking for 2520 Chamberlain Street and direct staff to draft a remote parking agreement and easement as proposed by the applicant.
4. The City Council can deny the attached Remote Parking Easement for 2520 Chamberlain.
5. The City Council can refer this item to staff or the applicant for further information.

#### **MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

For a Minor Site Development Plan to be approved, parking must be provided that meets minimum City requirements. Remote parking is permitted under the Zoning Code, and the location of such spaces must meet the 300-foot minimum distance requirement for the remote location at the discretion of the City Council. **Council should understand that there are no additional criteria for review and approval of a remote parking agreement. However, in this case the City Council may be concerned about other issues related to access to the site and parking lot improvements and may want to address those in your decision.**

These concerns include the adequacy of access to the rear accessible entrance on the site from the remote location, the remote lot's driveway width, and the safety lighting for the remote parking location. If the City Council wishes to address these concerns, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative #1, thereby approving the use of remote parking, and directing staff to draft a remote parking agreement and easement for 2520 Chamberlain, with the following additional conditions:

- a. Applicant modifies the building design to provide an accessible route on the site along Chamberlain Place to the rear accessible ramp or modifies the design of the building to provide an accessible route for residential access from Chamberlain Street;
- b. The remote parking site is modified by the applicant so that the following occurs:
  - i. The existing utility box is relocated to meet the minimum two-way drive aisle dimension at the entrance of the parking lot;
  - ii. Additional wall pack lighting is installed by the applicant to eliminate a safety concern for residential parking; and
  - iii. The applicant replants appropriate shrub and groundcover within existing planters.

However, if City Council does want to exercise its discretion and require modifications to the site or the remote parking lot as specified in Alternative #1, then it is the

recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #2 or Alternative #3.

## ATTACHMENT A Location Map



**Location Map**  
**Subject Site : 2520 Chamberlain Street**  
**Remote Parking : 2515 Chamberlain Street/133 Welch Ave.**



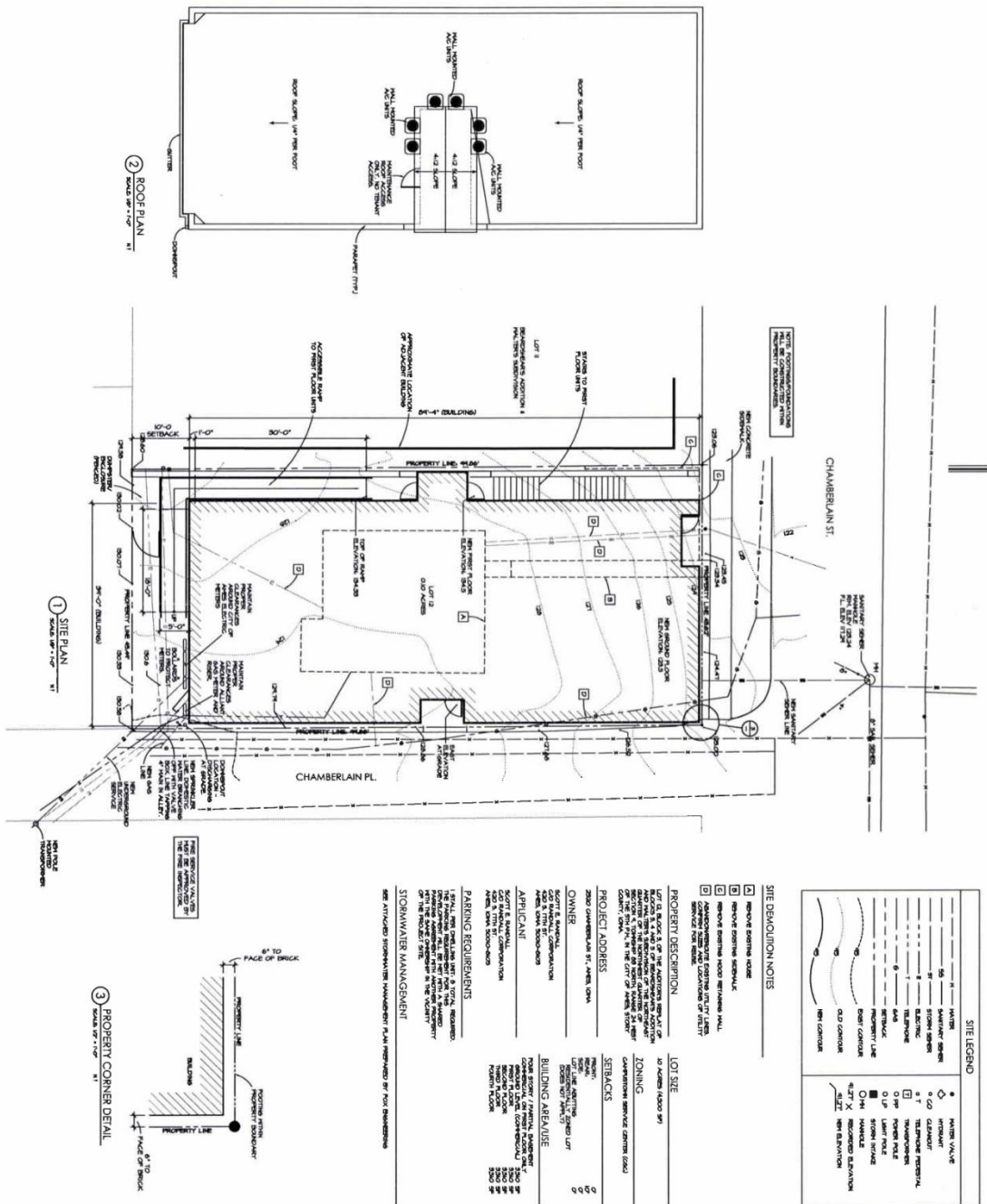


**ATTACHMENT B**  
**Walking Route to Accessible Entrance**



**Remote Parking Map**  
**Subject Site : 2520 Chamberlain Street**  
**Remote Parking : 2515 Chamberlain Street/133 Welch Ave.**



[illegible]

RECEIVED  
OCT 31 2013  
CITY OF AMES, IOWA  
DEPT. OF PLANNING & HOUSING