

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO AMEND THE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL PARKING REQUIREMENTS TO ALLOW ON-STREET PARKING CREDIT

BACKGROUND:

At the January 24, 2017 meeting, City Council referred to staff a letter from Mr. Elliot Thompson requesting a text amendment to address the parking requirements in the (See Attachment 1) Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zoning district. The property owner seeks relief from off-street parking requirements as they apply to uses within the NC district for a project they would like pursue to re-use the Doboy Mill, at 4625 Reliable Street. The property owner has applied for a zoning text amendment to allow for on-street parking to be credited towards the off-street parking requirements for a site within the Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District. If approved, the proposed text amendment would apply to all Neighborhood Commercial zoned properties in the City.

Neighborhood Commercial sites are scattered across the city and are in existing transitional or remnant commercial sites that did not fit the other commercial zoning districts that were established by the City in 2000. These locations are in or adjacent to residential neighborhoods and intended to be smaller commercial sites that are not necessarily highway or regionally oriented for their use. There are seven areas across the City that are zoned NC at this time and they are listed below with their current on-street parking conditions:

Location	Parking Along NC Sites
Reliable Street	Yes, parking permitted
24 th Street at Grand	Yes, along Jensen Avenue
Hazel and Lincoln Way	No parking available
S 16 th Street and Creekside Drive	No parking available
North of Sixth Street adjacent to Downtown	None on 6 th Street, Yes along side streets
Sixth Street and Grand	No parking available
West Street	Yes, metered parking

The proposed text amendment would allow on-street parking that is adjacent to a site and on the same side of the street as the use to count towards parking requirements. The proposed language would add a new subsection to Section 29.801 Neighborhood Commercial Zoning Standards and read as follows:

*(5) **Parking Requirements.** All parking is required to be provided on-site as required in Table 29.405(2). However, if on-street parking is available on the street immediately adjacent to the site, those on-street stalls may be counted towards the*

required parking at 1:1 ratio for commercial uses only. For parking to be available it must be designated for on-street parking by the City.

Most streets in Ames have parking on only one side of a street. In the limited circumstances where NC zoning exists on both sides of a street, only one side typically would benefit from the proposed change. Two sided NC zoning exists only along the Reliable Street area and the 6th Street area adjacent to Downtown. The City would specify the type of parking, i.e. angled or parallel, but would not specify the number of spaces when it designates parking. Spaces would not be designated on the street for any specific property's benefit as reserved parking.

Typically, every 22 to 24 feet of street frontage would count as a parallel parking space. When calculating the number of on-street spaces, staff will have to estimate spacing of vehicles and property frontage to adjust for rounding whole vehicle parking spaces when they may straddle property lines. Staff would generally round up to a whole space when at least 16 feet (two-thirds) of the required space is available in front of the subject site before being accounted for on the adjacent property. There may be some overlap in accounting for spaces over time to ensure that some credit is given for each property. The Planning and Housing Director would make the determination of how many spaces to credit to a project.

The proposed change is a reasonable approach to encourage reuse of small commercial areas given the unique locations and in some cases lot size that exists in the NC districts. The propose change also can be found to be consistent with the purpose of the Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District described in Section 29.801(1) as, "intended for small areas in or near residential neighborhoods....Development is intended to be pedestrian-oriented and compatible with the scale of surrounding residential areas. Parking areas are strictly regulated, to promote compatibility with the character of surrounding residential development and the intended pedestrian orientation of the uses."

Due to size restrictions of buildings and site sizes within NC there should be limited impacts to parking supply and the surroundings with the proposed change. Larger sites require Zoning Board of Adjustment review of a special use permit, which could consider appropriateness of permitting on-street parking as part of the approval process.

The City has two situations that account for on-street parking as part of the off-street requirement. Village zoning (Somerset) established commercial parking rates for off-street parking with reliance on on-street parking being present as well. The only other zoning district that approaches parking requirements with support for street parking is the Research and Innovation Zoning District. Within the HUB Activity area, on-street parking of Plaza Loop may be counted towards on site requirements and was intentionally designed in a manner to provide for on-street parking with angled parking spaces.

At the meeting of April 5, 2017, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of the proposed amendments 5-0. The Commission did seek clarification regarding sites zoned Neighborhood Commercial without on-street parking. Staff

clarified that if the text amendment were approved; those sites could request that on-street parking be allowed. However, approval may be difficult given constraints of the site and physical surroundings. The applicant did speak in favor of the amendment and explained the purpose of their request. No other persons in the audience spoke in favor or in opposition.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can adopt the proposed amendment to approve the amendment to allow on street parking to count toward off-street parking requirements for commercial uses within the Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District.
2. The City Council can recommend alternative language regarding on street parking to count toward off-street parking requirements for commercial uses within the Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District
3. The City Council can decide to retain the existing language and allow on street parking to count toward off-street parking requirements for commercial uses within the Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The proposed text amendment allows for immediately adjacent on-street parking to be credited towards on-site parking requirements within the NC zoning district. The change will help to encourage the continued use and potential redevelopment of small commercial areas given the unique locations and in some cases unique lot sizes that exist in the NC districts.

Due to size restrictions of buildings and site sizes within the NC district there should be limited impacts to parking supply and the surroundings. The applicant requests for the text amendment will allow on-street parking to count towards their parking requirements for commercial uses and will aid in the potential for redevelopment of the Dobby Mill site at 4625 Reliable Street. Residential uses would not benefit from the proposed change.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopted Alternative #1 to allow on street parking to count toward off-street parking requirements for commercial uses within the Neighborhood Commercial Zoning District. It should be noted that in the future the Planning and Housing Director will make the determination as to how many spaces on a street should be credited to a project.

Addendum

Applicant's Request:

The applicant's statement has interpreted that the NC district by definition is intended to promote compatibility with surrounding residential and desired pedestrian orientation of uses. The property owners' desired reuse of the property with a small café and gallery triggers the need to construct approximately 20 parking spaces on the east side of the grain elevator to comply with zoning standards for parking. There is space on the west side of the existing grain elevator to provide approximately five on-site parking stalls, including an ADA stall. Although parking could be constructed in part of their open space to the east, the owners would prefer to not use part of the open space for parking and plan for an outdoor use in the future and rely upon the historical use of the street for parking.

4625 Reliable Street has historically been served by on-street parking when it was an industrial use as grain elevator and automotive repair, as seen in historical aerial photos. In the property owners' situation, staff believes there is ample on-street parking available on Reliable Street due to the size of the road and the limited amount of commercial use in the area. (Attachment 3 Reliable Street Parking Locations) The right-of-way along Reliable Street is unique in that it include non-standard road improvements, including a scale associated with the form elevator use.

Reliable Street currently permits parking as parallel parking. Any other configuration of parking spaces would require City Council approval an ordinance to specify an alternative parking configuration for angled parking.

The proposed text amendment would likely meet their immediate needs for a café and gallery without constructing off-street parking, but future uses for assembly space or events may still trigger the need for construction of off-street parking.

Attachment 1: Request Letter

Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance – Checklist

Explanation of the reasons for the zoning text amendment:

Neighborhood Commercial (NC), according to Table 29.406(2) in the Ames Municipal Code, requires the same parking as all other commercial zones except Downtown and Campus Town Service Center Zones. The NC zone is unique compared to other commercial zones as it is defined as intended for small commercial areas in or near residential neighborhoods with an emphasis on pedestrian-friendly. Additionally, the zoning district standards control development size making a large-scale development unlikely. The defined “purpose,” as seen in Section 29.801, is similar in nature to the “purpose” in both Downtown Service Center (DSC) and Campustown Service Center (CSC). Both DSC and CSC do not require any off-street parking for any Trade and Wholesale use. By allowing street parking to count towards the off-street parking requirements, redevelopment and re-use of parcels zoned NC would be encouraged to achieve the “purpose” described for NC.

“Sec. 29.801. “NC” NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL.

Purpose. The Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zone is intended for small areas in or near residential neighborhoods. The zone encourages the provision of small-scale retail and service use for nearby residents. Uses are restricted in size to promote a local orientation and to limit adverse impacts on nearby residential areas. Development is intended to be pedestrian-oriented and compatible with the scale of surrounding residential areas. Parking areas are strictly regulated, to promote compatibility with the character of surrounding residential development and the intended pedestrian orientation of the uses”

A general description of the properties that will be affected by the zoning text amendment

There are currently seven areas in Ames zoned Neighborhood Commercial (NC). A majority of the parcels are near either Campustown or Downtown. The seven areas are:

- Reliable Street
- 24th Street at Grand
- Hazel and Lincoln Way
- S 16th Street and Creekside Drive
- North of Sixth Street
- Sixth Street and Grand
- West Street

Consistency of this zoning text amendment with the LUPP

The Ames LUPP describes Neighborhood Commercial, (LUPP, p.35) as:

“Neighborhood Commercial – represents existing clustered commercial land uses that integrate aesthetically and physically with existing adjacent residential neighborhoods. Since Neighborhood Commercial land use are among residential areas, higher design, building materials, and landscaping standards apply”

While parking is not specifically addressed, the importance of integrated aesthetes are mentioned. While working with the neighbors adjacent to the Reliable Street, a concern of a large parking lot being added was brought up. By using the already available on-street parking adjacent to the parcel zoned NC, the additional paved parking surfaces would be minimized, keeping with a neighborhood aesthetic.

In the New Lands Policy Options of the LUPP reduced parking requirements for Neighborhood Commercial is recommended to encourage pedestrian connections and reduced vehicular traffic.

“Neighborhood Commercial. It is recommended that much of the new neighborhood - scale commercial be associated with Village Residential. The inclusion of such commercial services is intended to support residents of the associated village primarily. It is recommended that existing centers achieve their permitted maximum floor area ratio and be encouraged to have a greater mix of uses. Maximizing floor area ratios can be achieved through shared parking arrangements, reduced parking requirements and inclusion of non-peak hour traffic generating uses such as banks. Retrofitting of existing centers should encourage the integration of uses and design similar to supporting commercial uses in Village Residential. Retrofitting should also encourage pedestrian connections with residential areas in reducing vehicular traffic.” (LUPP, p.60)

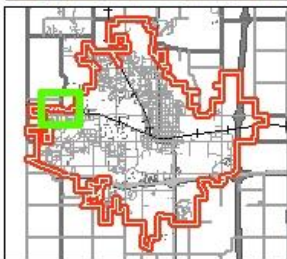
Existing ordinance

The existing ordinance for parking is found in Table 29.406(2) which is attached at the end of the packet.

Proposed ordinance

On-street parking immediately abutting an individual property zoned Neighborhood Commercial may count toward the parking requirements listed in Table 29.406(2) for commercial uses.

Attachment 2: Location Map



4625 Reliable Street

Attachment 3: Parking Map



ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF AMES, IOWA, BY ENACTING A NEW SECTION 29.801(5) THEREOF, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ALLOWING ON-STREET PARKING ; REPEALING ANY AND ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT TO THE EXTENT OF SUCH CONFLICT; PROVIDING A PENALTY; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ENACTED, by the City Council for the City of Ames, Iowa, that:

Section One. The Municipal Code of the City of Ames, Iowa shall be and the same is hereby amended by enacting a new Section 29.801(5) as follows:

“Section 29.801 Neighborhood Commercial Zoning Standards.

* * *

(5) **Parking Requirements.** All parking is required to be provided on-site as required in Table 29.405 (2). However, if on-street parking is available on the street immediately adjacent to the site, those on-street stalls may be counted towards the required parking at 1:1 ratio for commercial uses only. For parking to be available it must be designated for on-street parking by the City.”

Section Two. Violation of the provisions of this ordinance shall constitute a municipal infraction punishable as set out by law.

Section Three. All ordinances, or parts of ordinances, in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict, if any.

Section Four. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as required by law.

Passed this _____ day of _____, _____.

Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

Ann H. Campbell, Mayor