

## EXCERPT MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 18, 2011 WICHITA-SEDGWICK COUNTY METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COMMISSION

**Case No.: DER2011-05** - requests proposed changes to the Unified Zoning Code parking standards on property described as:

**BACKGROUND:** In response to discussions with the development community and staff, Current Plans Division proposes an amendment to the *Wichita-Sedgwick County Unified Zoning Code (UZC)* parking standards. The purpose of this amendment is: to make the UZC parking schedule a more comprehensive tool for the development community; to bring the UZC parking standards in line with national standards; to make it easier to redevelop small infill sites and to encourage a pedestrian accessible community. Attached is a table containing proposed changes to the number of required off-street parking spaces required by the UZC Section IV-A.4; the parking table lists the land use and then the number of required parking spaces. The existing UZC parking table currently lists only 59 uses, while the land use matrix recognizes 120 land uses. Currently, if one wants to know the number of parking spaces required for a use not listed in the parking table, one is directed to the Office of Central Inspection (OCI) where, over the years, they have developed and maintained a list of the number of spaces required for uses not listed in the parking table. The proposed amendment has expanded the number of uses listed in the parking table to include all land use types contained in the use type matrix, and includes a recommended number of spaces required for each use.

Staff compared our current parking standards against those in the 2006 National Parking Association's (NPA) *Recommended Zoning Ordinance Provisions* for parking. In most cases our local standards are similar or require less off-street parking than those recommended by the NPA study. The attached comparison table demonstrates the few cases where our current code would require more parking than the NPA's recommendations. The attached proposed changes show where we recommend bringing all of our parking standards more in line with the NPA recommendations with several parking requirement reductions. These proposed changes also take in consideration an analysis of MAPD parking reduction requests over the past 10 years. The analysis revealed that one third of all parking reduction requests were for commercial projects, less than an eighth for industrial, and the remaining divided between schools, churches, swimming pools, offices, warehouses, multi-family residences and medical developments.

A new proposal for the parking table is to allow some uses to submit a parking study in lieu of a published standard. The uses proposed for a parking study instead of a published standard can be of such a wide range of scales, potential impacts, operating characteristics or location requirements that off-street parking requirements can better be established by a study. Use types, proposed for the parking study requirement are: cemetery, airport, heliport, boarding, breeding or training kennel, recreation and entertainment indoor and outdoor, riding academy or stable, rodeo in the city, hazardous operations, agricultural processing, agricultural research and grain storage. In the event that a parking study is not submitted, staff would select a use that is most similar to the proposed use and use that parking standard. There are also a few uses, such as "utility minor" or "construction burn site limited" where it is proposed that off-street parking not be required. Uses for which there is not a published standard are considered to be small enough in scale or limited duration as to not warrant the cost of building permanent parking. A final proposal is to amend the "location" section of shared parking standards contained in Section IV-A.9.a to allow, by administrative adjustment, staff's ability to increase the current 600-foot distance that remote off-site parking can be provided, and/or to allow remote parking to be separated from its building or use by an arterial street, expressway or freeway. Today, remote parking must be located within 600 feet of the use it serves and cannot be separated by the three previously mentioned roadways.

**CASE HISTORY:** UZC parking standards have existed in their current state since at least 1989, City Zoning codes as old as the 1940s had parking standards for various land uses.

**CONFORMANCE TO PLANS/POLICIES:** The *1999 Update to the Wichita-Sedgwick County Comprehensive Plan* Land Use-General Objective I.B. is to “Encourage future growth and development to areas that are served by existing public facilities and services, or which can be served economically and promote compact and contiguous development.” Strategy I.B9 for that objective states, “Amend the zoning code to permit developments in older areas with most or all the required parking permitted on non-contiguous property.” Transportation Objective V.E. is to “Promote pedestrian/bicycle-oriented improvements to create alternative transportation networks to major destination points in the City and County.” Strategy V.E2 in support of that objective is to “Increase the convenience of pedestrian/bicycle access to and within commercial and employment areas.”

The proposed amendment to the UZC parking standards supports these Comprehensive Plan Objectives and Strategies by encouraging infill development on smaller sites with reduced parking space requirements, and allowing more flexibility in off-site parking distances. This amendment also supports these Objectives and Strategies by reducing the overall size of parking areas with reduced parking requirements, making development more compact and therefore more accessible to pedestrians and cyclists.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Based on these factors and the information available prior to the public hearing, staff recommends adoption of the proposed amendments. This recommendation is based upon the following findings:

1. **The zoning, uses and character of the neighborhood:** As proposed, the amended UZC parking standards would allow more flexibility in older neighborhood commercial re-development through reduced overall on-site parking requirements, increased flexibility in the location of off-site parking, and a parking study in lieu of a published standard for certain land uses.
2. **Extent to which removal of the restrictions will detrimentally affect nearby property:** Reduction of the off-street parking space requirement for certain land uses could affect nearby property with greater competition for on-street parking, and potential unauthorized use of neighboring parking spaces.
3. **Relative gain to the public health, safety and welfare as compared to the loss in value or hardship imposed upon the applicant:** Reduced overall on-site parking requirements and increased flexibility in the location of off-site parking should not affect the public health, safety and welfare, and will increase development flexibility on smaller sites.
4. **Conformance of the requested change to the adopted or recognized Comprehensive Plan and policies:** The *1999 Update to the Wichita-Sedgwick County Comprehensive Plan* Land Use-General Objective I.B. is to “Encourage future growth and development to areas that are served by existing public facilities and services, or which can be served economically and promote compact and contiguous development.” Strategy I.B9 for that objective states, “Amend the zoning code to permit developments in older areas with most or all the required parking permitted on non-contiguous property.” Transportation Objective V.E. is to “Promote pedestrian/bicycle-oriented improvements to create alternative transportation networks to major destination points in the City and County.” Strategy V.E2 in support of that objective is to “Increase the convenience of pedestrian/bicycle access to and within commercial and employment areas.”

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5. Impact of the proposed development on community facilities: Reduced overall off-street parking requirements for certain land uses could increase on-street parking in those locations.

**JESS MCNEELY**, Planning Staff presented the Staff Report. He reported that the plan was forwarded to both the Wichita Area Association of Realtors (WAAR) and Wichita Area Builders Association (WABA) and no negative comments were received. He said the general consensus was that the proposed changes increase flexibility, lowers the overall requirements, and makes the UZC a more comprehensive tool for the development community.

**MITCHELL** suggested making all parking studies available for all categories.

**MCNEELY** said that was something to consider and pointed out that if someone had a very unique site and the parking would not meet parking requirements, they could do a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and customize their parking requirements. He said in a way that option is already out there. He mentioned that the City had 130 administrative adjustments and variance requests over the last several years to reduce parking requirements and all of those requests have been approved. This proposal attempts to respond to that fact and to provide greater flexibility.

**MCKAY** asked Mr. McNeely to explain the changes requested by the Advance Plans Committee.

**MCNEELY** briefly explained that the existing zoning would preclude you from having remote parking for a supported land use further than 600 feet from or across an expressway/freeway or arterial. He said this Code change will allow a staff administrative adjustment to deal with arterial requests.

**MOTION:** To approve subject to staff recommendation.

**HENTZEN** moved, **DOWNING** seconded the motion, and it carried (13-0).

**FOSTER** asked about the comparison portion and if the national standards will be deleted in the final document.

**MCNEELY** responded yes. He said those standards were provided to illustrate to the Commission how Wichita matches up with the national standards.