



TOWN OF CARRBORO

PLANNING BOARD

301 West Main Street, Carrboro, North Carolina 27510

Thursday, April 20, 2017

COMMENTS ON PARKING STUDY

The Planning Board agreed that the presentation was edifying and presented good data. It brought clearly to light that the parking problem Carrboro faces is not a lack of parking but an imbalance between private and public parking. This results in some lots close to downtown remaining empty at peak hours even as the most popular lots are overfilled. We are generally in favor of the near-term initiatives and long-term goals presented, and have the following additional comments:

- The LUO needs to offer more flexibility & reductions in presumptive parking standards across zones. The town should find creative ways to encourage developers to include structured parking in new projects.
- Private-public partnerships are critical to resolving our parking imbalance. We should pursue more collaboration with owners on after-hours parking, in particular, so that lots do not sit vacant after their adjacent businesses have closed while visitors cannot find parking in the downtown.
- The town should follow the recommendation to increase or amend signage and add wayfinding guides. Simple and clearly visible signage would be best, such as the classic blue P sign, with notes on travel time. Carrboro should have a single standard format in line with town branding.
- The town should especially consider having wayfinding signage located at the point to which GPS systems direct travelers to "Carrboro, NC". The sign at Peace and Justice Plaza in Chapel Hill is an example.
- The town website contains excellent information about public parking. What can the town do to make this page easier to find?
- Now that the study has been completed, we urge the Board of Aldermen to think deeply about the future form of parking in Carrboro, not only its amount. Acres of surface parking have a long-term impact on the environment, including heat island effect, increased stormwater volume, and unpleasant vistas for the pedestrian. Carrboro would be well served by increasing the density of parking in our arrival corridors. The Rigsbee lot on Greensboro St could be a likely site for town-owned structured parking as part of the library project.

- The town should support and expand Carrboro initiatives to encourage walking and to make walking and biking more pleasant in all seasons.
- For the long term, the town should examine possible scenarios for “smart” paid parking, including wayfinding apps, demand-based pricing, and progressive features like free short-term parking for people running errands.

Moved: Tiemann

Seconded: Hunt


Vote:

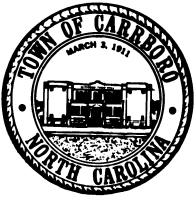
Ayes: (8) Adamson, Clinton, Foushee, Hunt, Pendergrass, Poulton, Rosser, Tiemann, Whittemore

Noes: (0)

Absent/Excused: (3) Gaylord-Miles, Pendergrass, Rivera

Abstentions: (0)


_____ 4/20/2017
Chair Date



TOWN OF CARRBORO
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

301 West Main Street, Carrboro, North Carolina 27510

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N

APRIL 6, 2017

**COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS ON PARKING STUDY REPORT –
 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Motion was made by TAB Member Kurt Stolka that the TAB agrees that the parking study report is an excellent document that should be adopted by the Board of Aldermen. The following suggestions and general comments are provided for consideration by the Board of Aldermen:

- 1) The TAB supports creation and implementation of a wayfinding signage program in order to provide uniform and consistent signage identifying parking areas in downtown Carrboro;
- 2) The TAB suggests that the Town look closely and try to identify and improve upon any existing issues with inadequate street lighting downtown, as any such issues may impede the willingness of visitors to the downtown to walk any appreciable distance to and from parking areas if they do not feel secure;
- 3) The TAB notes that it is very important for the Town to ensure that the owners of private parking lots are in agreement with and buy in to what the Town plans to do moving forward with respect to parking;
- 4) The TAB agrees with the concept of creating a downtown parking board and suggests that the parameters of the work such a Board is asked to do should be crafted in a way that ensures that the focus remains on maximizing the whole community's interest in improving upon downtown parking moving forward through cooperation amongst all parties rather than competition between one or more parties;
- 5) And finally, the TAB is in agreement that no additional parking decks need to be constructed at this time.

VOTE:

AYES: 5

ABSENT/EXCUSED: 2

NOES: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0

(for Colleen Barclay, chair) on April 13, 2017.

NORTHERN TRANSITION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting: Monday, April 10, 2017

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the *VHB Draft Carrboro Parking Study* as
Presented at the 4.6.17 Joint Advisory Board meeting.

The NTAAC finds that the referenced parking plan is comprehensive and acceptable. The NTAAC also believes that the following items deserve additional study and consideration:

- A frequent shuttle bus service on weekends that would likely use one of the park and ride lots as a base for regular service along Main, Weaver and Franklin Streets.
- A bike share program.

MOTION (Moore, 2nd by Vrana) (*AYES: Unanimous*);



Jeff Kleaveland for NTAAC chair, Amy Jeroloman



Environmental Advisory Board
301 West Main Street, Carrboro, North Carolina 27510

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N

Parking Study

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2017

The EAB commends the Town for commissioning this study and would like to express our appreciation to VHB for the professional and thorough study, report, and presentations.

Editorial Comments

Consider moving Figure 2 on page 18 to the Executive Summary. It is useful to be able to refer to the map of the parking lots as soon as specific lots are mentioned on page 4.

On page 5, paragraph 1, change “least” to “lease”.

Comments on the Content of the Parking Study

In the Recommendations section, consider referencing Carrboro’s Vision 2020 document, particularly the following sections:

3.24 Frequent, accessible public transit is necessary for a thriving downtown. Multi-modal access to downtown should be provided. As traffic increases, Carrboro should consider perimeter parking lots served by shuttles to bring people downtown.

Planning Board: This goal was extremely forward-looking when it was adopted. More attention to advance transportation planning is needed urgently to achieve it. Peripheral structured parking combined with shuttle service is one of few viable solutions to downtown traffic congestion and parking inefficiency.

3.25 Walkability should be encouraged downtown and pedestrian safety and comfort should be a goal. The town should improve lighting and shading, and create auto barriers.

The recommendations should make a stronger case for education, increasing walkability and use of bicycles and public transportation, and partnering with private lots. Specific recommendations could include the following:

- Education:
 - We agree that more consistent signage and signs providing walking distances will help reduce idling and trolling, and thus carbon footprint. It may also be helpful to post signs with a map of parking locations, such as the map found in Figure 2 of the report.
 - Information about parking locations should be included on the Carrboro website, in a format that makes it easier for out-of-towners to plan where to park.
 - A parking app might help drivers find lots with available parking. This could be done by user reporting, such as is done in the Waze app, or by past histories of parking use vs. time of day and day of the week.
 - Make parking information and brochures available at the Carrboro Farmer’s Market

- Increased walkability:
 - The Economic Sustainability Commission has found that more street benches and bicycle parking will encourage greater non-vehicular use of our streets.
 - Institute a downtown-wide slow zone to encourage sense of pedestrian safety in our downtown
 - Encourage use of shade trees to enhance walkability
 - Ensure pedestrian connectivity between parking lots and locations of interest
 - Consider a package pickup area for the Carrboro Farmer's Market.
- Improved access for bicycles
 - Pursue a 'Platinum' Bike Friendly community designation
 - Public parking needs to integrate more bike parking
- Expansion of our free bus system, to include
 - additional routes and times, especially evenings and weekends, and
 - A campaign to encourage people to use the free bus system more. A survey shows that, while our buses do link to the places people need to go, they do not make full use of the bus system.
- Partnering with private lots
 - Incentivize public access to private lots. For example, rather than leasing entire lots, the Town could lease parking spaces after hours from private lots.

General Comments on Parking

This parking study was focused on supply and demand management. A more comprehensive parking policy and management strategy needs to consider mitigation of environmental impacts associated with parking.

These impacts can be generalized into two categories: direct impacts associated with the parking facilities, and indirect impacts associated with policies and management as that relate to motor vehicle use and transportation demand management.

For the first category, as the next tier of study related to downtown parking, Carrboro should pursue a study to recommend specific strategies and measures to mitigate these environmental impacts from downtown parking. 43 acres of the downtown, or 30% of the total downtown area, is dedicated to parking:

Table 14: GIS-Summary of Land Categories within Downtown Carrboro

Buildings	1,247,374	28.6	20%
Landscape/Open Space	2,026,271	46.5	33%
Parking/Driveway	1,873,650	43.0	30%
Sidewalks, Roadway Right-of-Way	810,195	18.6	13%
Railroad Right-of-Way	212,834	4.9	4%
Total	6,170,324	141.7	

Currently, downtown parking lots have environmental and public health and enjoyment liabilities because of the impervious surfaces and absence of vegetation. Additional studies should consider: 1) reduction in stormwater runoff by reducing parking lot impervious surface (this could include more parking decks and fewer surface lots, allowing for an increase in green space) and installing stormwater control measures (e.g., rain gardens, permeable pavement, engineered tree planters); 2) increase in tree canopy over parking lots to reduce heat island effect, air pollution, and runoff, increase carbon sequestration, and

create more livable and aesthetically pleasing spaces; 3) use of solar shade canopies over parking spaces to generate renewable energy.

For the second category, a study could be pursued to quantify the greenhouse gas emissions associated with potential parking management approaches, and recommend parking management approaches that can reduce emissions, consistent with the recently adopted Community Climate Action Plan. There are a number of potential avenues to explore under this topic, which could include a study of the impact of charging for parking in shifting mode choices to more carpooling, use of transit, walking, and biking. A few other examples are: how to best pursue installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and how to manage parking to facilitate and increase more use of local and regional transit.

The above efforts could recommend specific management measures and funding strategies, and include outreach to parking lot owners and others to develop collaborative partnerships to help shift downtown parking from a greyer to a greener parking paradigm.

VOTE:

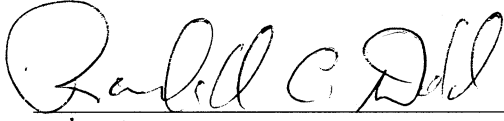
AYES: Hoban, O'Connor, Patrick, Perera, Sinclair, Skelton, Turner

ABSENT/EXCUSED:

NOES:

ABSTENTIONS:

sev


4/11/2017
(Chair)
(Date)



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Board of Aldermen
FROM: Economic Sustainability Commission
DATE: April 21, 2017
RE: Comments/Recommendation regarding recent Parking Study

At the April 12, 2017 the Economic Sustainability Commission discussed the Parking Study provided by VHB Engineering dated November 15, 2016 and had the following comments and a recommendation.

The ESC commented and asked the Board for further clarification if the results of the study change if shared parking was not an assumption of the findings and recommendations? Are the impacts of new projects being considered, i.e. the Southern Branch Library? Are all the impacts from other multi-modal forms of transportation including shared cars, i.e. Zip cars considered in the study?

The ESC recommended reducing future parking demand by continuing and expanding efforts already underway to make Carrboro an even better place to walk, cycle and ride transit.