



Legislation Text

File #: 14-0022, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Discussion of Prohibition on Parking in Public Lots from 3 AM to 5 AM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an opportunity for the Board of Aldermen to discuss the late night/early morning parking prohibition for public parking lots in the downtown.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

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INFORMATION: The late-night/early morning prohibition on parking in downtown public lots was established on June 26, 2013 in conjunction with a review of towing and parking provisions in the Town Code. Signs indicating the limitation were installed thereafter.

The parking prohibition was included in changes presented in June in response to a request for staff to explore ways to minimize the overflow to downtown public parking lots of parking generated by nearby residential properties. In recent years, renovations of two downtown properties adjacent to public parking areas have resulted in an increase in the number of vehicles parking overnight in nearby public lots. In December, Board of Aldermen members expressed an interest in revisiting the prohibition on parking in the wee hours of the morning. One concern that has been expressed is that, fearing a parking ticket, drivers who have frequented one of Carrboro's entertainment venues will choose to get behind the wheel when it is unsafe or illegal for them to do so. In addition, since the signage does not indicate the mechanism for enforcement, some drivers might anticipate that their vehicles would be towed if found in violation.

Since the June 2013 action, work has been progressing on several fronts related to parking and towing: staff has presented a framework for completing a study and plan for downtown parking; outreach associated with anticipated enforcement has gotten underway and; some businesses have requested that the Town step up enforcement and others have requested that the Town establish a mechanism for granting permission for longer-term parking; and, public meetings where staff will seek to identify 'matches' between parking supply and demand - as an interim step to the longer-term parking management strategy that will result from a planning effort - were held in early February. Vehicles have been observed parking in some downtown lots during the wee hours in recent weeks; a systematic data collection effort has not been undertaken.

Possible action options are as follows:

- Direct staff to prepare an ordinance removing the 3 am to 5 am parking prohibition from downtown public lots.
- Direct staff to prepare an ordinance modifying the Town Code related to the late night/early morning parking prohibition.
- Leave the existing regulations as they are. Direct staff to communicate with the community regarding enforcement (e.g. tickets, rather than towing). Revisit following data collection associated with the

parking plan.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: Impacts vary in relation to next steps identified by the Board of Aldermen.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen discuss the parking prohibition and direct staff regarding any alternative approaches.