



Legislation Text

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TITLE:

Public Hearing on the Parking Study and Associated Recommendations

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is for the Board of Aldermen to receive public comment on the findings and associated recommendations of the parking study and to consider adopting the document as the Town's Parking Plan.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

CONTACT INFORMATION: Christina Moon - 919-918-7325; Patricia McGuire, 919-918-7327; Timothy Tresohlavsky - 919-741-5506

INFORMATION: In November 2015, the Town entered into a contract with VHB Engineering, a transportation planning firm out of Raleigh, to prepare a parking plan with a focus on the downtown. The purpose of the plan was twofold. First, to evaluate supply: how much parking is currently needed and how much will likely be needed in the next five-to-ten years. Second, to provide guidance as to what role, if any, the Town should play in providing and managing parking; if it is determined that the Town should play a role in providing parking, what would be an appropriate metric for the Town to utilize the payment in-lieu parking provisions in the Land Use Ordinance (Section 15-292.1)?

The scope of work for the project included a substantial data collection effort to ensure that any recommendations would be based on actual data-counts-rather than perceptions. Acknowledging the importance of personal experiences, however, the project included a survey, public meetings and other outreach/input sessions, including meetings with the business community. VHB also met with representative groups of local businesses (identified on the basis on their availability of on-site parking), toward the end of the project to compare its findings with the business owners regular observations and experiences.

Since the initiation of the parking study, the Board of Aldermen has received four presentations on the project.

1) Timothy Tresohlavsky, with VHB, provided a report of the initial findings from the field data collection on [April 5, 2016](https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2763176&GUID=F1139C80-1ABE-4F08-9B11-EEB646E6BDF8&Options=&Search=>); 2) Town staff provided a general update on [June 21, 2016](https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2882404&GUID=5872FCAD-D99B-4215-8317-1A4BD692EDCB&Options=&Search=>) [<https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2763176&GUID=F1139C80-1ABE-4F08-9B11-EEB646E6BDF8&Options=&Search=>](https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2763176&GUID=F1139C80-1ABE-4F08-9B11-EEB646E6BDF8&Options=&Search=>); 3) Mr. Tresohlavsky provided a presentation on draft recommendations on [November 15, 2016](https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2882404&GUID=5872FCAD-D99B-4215-8317-1A4BD692EDCB&Options=&Search=>) [<https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2882404&GUID=5872FCAD-D99B-4215-8317-1A4BD692EDCB&Options=&Search=>](https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2882404&GUID=5872FCAD-D99B-4215-8317-1A4BD692EDCB&Options=&Search=>); and 4) Mr. Tresohlavsky provided review of the revised study report and associated recommendations on [February 21, 2017](https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2963798&GUID=EF35F007-0193-4889-9A80-720828DFC349&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=parking+plan&FullText=1>) [<https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2963798&GUID=EF35F007-0193-4889-9A80-720828DFC349&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=parking+plan&FullText=1>](https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2963798&GUID=EF35F007-0193-4889-9A80-720828DFC349&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=parking+plan&FullText=1>). At the close of the February 21st agenda item, the Board referred the matter to the Planning Board, Transportation Advisory Board, Environmental Advisory Board, Northern Transition Area Advisory Committee, Economic Sustainability Commission and the Recreation and Parks Commission. Mr. Tresohlavsky presented the parking study materials

at the April 6, 2017 joint review meeting as well.

The study contains detailed data on current parking supply and demand, including occupancy rates for all parking lots in downtown Carrboro and length of stay and turnover rates for public lots. Projections of future parking supply and demand were prepared based on development projects that are approved but not yet completed. Among other findings, the study has revealed the following:

- The existing parking is sufficient to support the current demand in the downtown, and will for at least the next ten years.
- The development and implementation of a management plan will more likely yield the desired result of mitigating the existing parking supply, particularly during the peak hours of 11 AM to 1 PM and 6 PM to 9 PM for centrally located public lots.
- Management strategies that could be used to better utilize parking include:
 - Facilitating a shared parking system between public and private sector,
 - Installing clear and consistent regulatory and wayfinding signage, and
 - Lighting and sidewalk improvements in study area.

The parking study, including an outline of the process, public involvement, data collection, findings, and recommendations is provided (Attachment B); the appendices still in draft form are provided (Attachment C). Comments from the advisory boards are provided as Attachment D; the Recreation and Parks Commission did not prepare comments.

During the February presentation of the draft study, information on the number of businesses whose parking was ‘grandfathered’ was requested. Grandfathering typically refers to nonconforming situations which are allowed to continue. The study did not involve an analysis of individual businesses and/or property and so this information is not readily available. During the study, an intern assisted Town staff with a review of satellite parking agreements which have been filed. Land Use Ordinance Section 15-299 allows existing businesses and historic properties in the downtown to operate without meeting the Town’s presumptive parking requirements, though the provision emphasizes the ongoing obligation of properties/businesses to provide the parking that is needed in order to meet parking demand for their operations. These agreements have been used for a number of years to document a business owner’s understanding of the obligation and to report on whether any satellite parking has been obtained.

A resolution (Attachment A) has been prepared that would adopt the study, its findings and recommendations as the Town’s Parking Plan and direct staff to begin steps toward implementation.

Alderman Slade requested that the following link be provided for the Board to read prior to Tuesday’s meeting: https://www.usdn.org/uploads/cms/documents/2015usdnconvening_summary.pdf

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: There is no immediate fiscal impact for adopting the Parking Plan. Future costs and staff time will be dependent on the schedule for implementation. For example, the cost for some recommendations such as signage or Town website information or phone apps to direct visitors toward parking locations may be nominal. Other recommendations such as physical infrastructure for sidewalk construction or improved lighting may require design services and contracting, and would come back to the Board for review and approval at future meetings.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen consider the resolution for plan

adoption and direct staff toward the next steps of scheduling implementation.