

December 3, 2014

TO: Plan Commissioners

FROM: Tirrell Black
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RE: Plan Commission Workshop on 12/10/2014 – NR Parking Standards
Proposed Amendment to the Spokane Municipal Code that reduces parking requirements in the Neighborhood Retail (NR) Zone.

Issue:

This draft proposes to expand to the NR zone the “no off-street parking required” parking exception which currently exists in for Centers & Corridors and Downtown Zones; see SMC 17C.230.130(A). The current draft also adds the word “existing” which would expand this exemption in the NR zones as well as in Centers & Corridors and in the Downtown zones.

- There are 72 small commercial areas within the city, most with historic roots as local community or “streetcar” business locations that are zoned Neighborhood Retail (NR).
- The median size for these areas is 1.4 acres, the largest is 14.6 acres, and smallest is 0.14 acre; 30 are at or under one acre, 33 are between one to five acres, and 9 are over 5 acres.
- Currently these areas are required to follow the same parking standards that other commercially zoned properties are required to follow.
- This proposal will eliminate required off-street parking on small scale uses (under 3,000 square foot building size) and also allow site developers to use the smaller dimensional standards for parking stalls which are currently permitted in the Centers & Corridors zone.
- The goal is to make these properties easier to redevelop and to lessen the need to use adjacent properties solely for parking.

Past Work on this Topic:

In June of 2014, staff presented a study workshop to Plan Commission to review the location of NR zones and to look at some sample sites. The preliminary staff discussion with the Plan Commission focused around potentially adopting the Centers & Corridors parking standards for the NR Zones. Staff heard from the commissioners that this was too broad an application due to the diversity of size and location of the NR zones. Commissioners were especially concerned with the potential for “neighborhood spillover”.

On October 22, 2014, staff presented a revised proposal which focused on a 3,000 square foot building size exemption. Council Member Stuckart also spoke to the Plan Commission regarding his interest in this topic and his support for change in the Neighborhood Retail zone parking standards.

Purpose of this workshop:

Staff are seeking guidance from the Commissioners on which tactic will best serve the Comp Plan Goals and the project goals.

Background Material:

- Attached is a draft of the proposed changes to Chapter 17C.230, Parking & Loading
- Go to the City Map which is the public GIS map viewer and turn on the zoning layer if you'd like to explore NR zoning in detail.