



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning and Economic Development Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Bruce K. Walden, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: April D. Getchius, AICP, Director

DATE: October 5, 2000

SUBJECT: Parking Requirements for Multiple Family Residential Uses

Introduction

Recent parking problems in the West Urbana and Sunnycrest neighborhoods associated with multiple family residential uses have led to questions about the adequacy of the City's parking requirements for these uses. Problems in the West Urbana neighborhood include the parking of vehicles on unapproved surfaces and in front yards. Problems in the Sunnycrest area include overflow of vehicles associated with multiple-family residences onto adjacent and nearby single-family residential streets.

Sunnycrest neighbors report that residents of nearby apartment buildings (e.g., Sunnycrest Towers South at 1102 East Colorado Avenue) do not utilize off-street parking provided for these apartments possibly because the landlord charges an additional monthly fee for the use of these spaces. In the case of the Sunnycrest Manor apartments (an elderly housing development at 1805 South Cottage Grove), a substantial variance was granted that lowered the off-street parking requirements on the basis that the development would rent only to the elderly and that these residents would not have as great a rate of car ownership as non-restricted apartments. Unfortunately, the parking provided at this development does not appear to meet the demand of its residents.

Increased parking problems are likely related to larger societal changes whereby Americans are owning more vehicles and driving more miles than ever before. In particular, students and young people are more mobile than in the past and tend to have a higher disposable income allowing them to own cars at a higher rate. This may be particularly true in locations such as Sunnycrest which are relatively distant from campus. Further compounding matters in communities like Urbana are reduced university restrictions on student car ownership.

As a result of these concerns, the City Council has asked staff to research the City's existing off-street parking requirements for multiple-family residential uses

Background

Urbana’s current off-street parking requirements for multiple-family residential uses are set forth in Table VIII-6 of the Zoning Ordinance (copy attached). For two-family, rowhouse, and townhouses, the parking requirement is two spaces per unit. For apartments, the requirement is one space per unit for efficiency apartments (designed to be occupied by one person). The parking requirements for non-efficiency apartments are based upon bedroom size and range from 0.5 spaces per bedroom to 2.0 spaces per bedroom. The intent of the requirements is to provide parking at the rate of one-half space per person, but in no case should a dwelling unit have less than one parking space. For dormitory uses (includes residence halls, fraternities/ sororities and cooperatives of more than 15 people), the requirement is one space for every three residents. For boarding houses, rooming houses, and extended group occupancy units, the requirement is one space for every two residents.

The most recent amendments to these parking requirements occurred in 1988-1989 when the parking requirements were applied to bedroom area in order to better account for actual occupancy. In 1984 the minimum number of one parking space for a multiple-family dwelling was set and in 1985 the parking requirement for efficiency apartments was increased from 0.5 spaces per dwelling unit to one space per dwelling unit.

Comparison with Other Communities

Attached to this Memorandum is a table comparing Urbana’s parking requirements for multiple-family residential uses to those of other selected communities, including Champaign, Normal, Bloomington, IL, Carbondale, Peoria, Bloomington, IN, and DeKalb. These communities were selected due to their proximity to Urbana and/or because of similarities to Urbana (e.g., total population, host to a university, etc.). Direct comparison with Urbana’s rates is difficult because each community bases its parking requirements on differing units (e.g., per bedroom size, per unit size, per resident, per dwelling unit, etc.). In particular, Urbana bases its multiple-family residential parking requirements on spaces per bedroom, whereas most communities calculate this on a per dwelling unit or per square footage basis. However, some generalized comparisons can be made. These general comparisons are depicted in the table as similar, less restrictive (i.e., less parking is required), more restrictive (i.e., more parking is required), and unknown.

As an example, Champaign’s requirements for multiple family residential units are based upon bedroom area per unit and are calculated per dwelling unit. Depending upon unit size, Champaign’s requirements may be more or less restrictive than Urbana’s. For smaller units, Champaign is more restrictive (see case example below). For four-bedroom units with small bedrooms, Champaign’s requirements are the same as Urbana’s (i.e., two parking spaces required). In the case of dormitories, Champaign is less restrictive with only one space required per four resident beds, compared to Urbana’s one space for every three residents. Parking requirements for boarding houses are more restrictive in Champaign with

one space required for every living or sleeping unit compared to Urbana's one space for every two residents.

The attached table shows that in several cases, Urbana is less restrictive than the comparable communities. This is especially true in the categories of dormitories and boarding houses.

Case Examples

Comparison of parking requirements for multiple family housing under the requirements of different communities may best be illustrated using a case example for an actual apartment building. The example chosen is the currently proposed Sunnycrest Towers North at 1806 South Cottage Grove. This project is proposed to have 80 dwelling units, composed of 48 two bedroom units, 28 three bedroom units, and 4 four bedroom units, for a total of 196 bedrooms. Bedroom sizes are approximately 100 square feet. The developer is proposing a total of 115 parking spaces.

Parking requirements for this development in the various communities evaluated is depicted in the attached table. Under Urbana's regulations, a total of 98 spaces would be required, which is equivalent to 1.23 spaces per unit. This is due to the fact that the parking requirement is based upon an average per bedroom. Under Champaign's regulations, a total of 160 spaces would be required, or 2.00 spaces per unit. This is due to the fact that the parking requirement is based upon the total bedroom area in each apartment. All of the other communities are more restrictive than Urbana and would require between 160 and 198 parking spaces (between 2.00 and 2.48 spaces per unit).

Different results may be found depending upon the specific size and number of bedrooms proposed. For example, if the 80 units proposed at Sunnycrest Towers North were all four-bedroom units with bedrooms at 100 square feet in size, then Urbana's requirements would be the same as many of the comparison communities, and less restrictive than some of the communities (see attached table).

Discussion

There are numerous issues associated with increasing the off-street parking requirements for multiple-family residential developments. Among these are:

- ?? Increased convenience for apartment residents
- ?? Reduced effect on neighboring properties
- ?? Reduced congestion on surrounding streets
- ?? Recognition of societal changes in increased automobile usage and ownership
- ?? Possibly improved consistency with other communities
- ?? Increased cost of construction and rental prices

- ?? Increased consumption of land area for parking
- ?? Increased pavement area and associated drainage infrastructure
- ?? Encourages increased automobile usage
- ?? Increases legal nonconformities

It should be noted that any revision to parking requirements would apply only to new construction and would not affect existing properties or existing parking problems. If Urbana were to adopt more restrictive parking requirements, any improvement in parking congestion concerns would be incremental in nature and would occur only as new construction occurs. Revisions to Urbana's multiple-family residential parking requirements could also affect the types and unit mixes of apartments proposed by developers. For example, Urbana's regulations currently favor a mixture of two- and three-bedroom units, while Champaign's regulations favor provision of four-bedroom units. Any revisions to Urbana's parking requirements will need to take a careful look at possible private sector reactions and changes in the multiple-family housing market.

Recommendation

If Council wishes to consider changes to the parking requirements, staff recommends further analysis on the adequacy of our current parking requirements for multiple-family residential uses.

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Other community research conducted by Paul Lindahl, Planning Intern

Attachments:

1. Table VIII-6, Parking Requirements by Use, from Urbana Zoning Ordinance
2. Comparison of Parking Spaces Required for Multi-Family Residences for Various Communities
3. Apartment Parking Requirements Case Examples: Sunnycrest Towers North and Hypothetical Case Example

Apartment Parking Requirements Case Example: Sunnycrest Towers North

(80 dwelling units: 48 two-bedroom units, 28 three-bedroom units, 4 four-bedroom units)

Community	Parking Requirement	Unit Calculation	Project Parking Needed	Required Spaces/Unit
Urbana	0.5 spaces per bedroom between 70 and 119 square feet	0.5 x 196	98	1.23
Champaign	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit for over 200 square feet of bedroom area per unit	2.0 x 80	160	2.00
Normal	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit	2.0 x 80	160	2.00
Normal – Campus Overlay	1.0 spaces per bedroom	1.0 x 196	196	2.45
Bloomington, IL	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit	2.0 x 80	160	2.00
Carbondale	Depends upon Land Use Intensity standards.			
Peoria	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit	2.0 x 80	160	2.00
Bloomington, IN	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit for two-bedroom units; 3.0 spaces per dwelling unit for three-bedroom units; 4.5 spaces per dwelling unit for four-bedroom units	2.0 x 48 + 3.0 x 28 + 4.5 x 4	198	2.48
DeKalb	1.0 spaces per bedroom	1.0 x 196	196	2.45

Apartment Parking Requirements Hypothetical Case Example

(80 dwelling units: all four-bedroom units)

Community	Parking Requirement	Unit Calculation	Project Parking Needed	Required Spaces/Unit
Urbana	0.5 spaces per bedroom between 70 and 119 square feet	0.5 x 320	160	2.00
Champaign	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit for over 200 square feet of bedroom area per unit	2.0 x 80	160	2.00
Normal	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit	2.0 x 80	160	2.00
Normal – Campus Overlay	1.0 spaces per bedroom	1.0 x 320	320	4.00
Bloomington, IL	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit	2.0 x 80	160	2.00
Carbondale	Depends upon Land Use Intensity standards.			
Peoria	2.0 spaces per dwelling unit	2.0 x 80	160	2.00
Bloomington, IN	4.5 spaces per dwelling unit for four-bedroom units	4.5 x 80	360	4.50