

Meeting Summary: Residential Parking Working Group Meeting Five



Meeting Date/Time: Monday, November 14th, 2016, 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Meeting Location: Room 311, Courthouse Plaza (2100 Clarendon Blvd.)

Attendees: Benjamin Spiritos, James Schroll, Michael Perkins, Robert Mandle, Patrick Kenney, Dennis Gerrity, Daniel VanPelt, Neal Kumar on behalf of Sally J Duran, Dennis Leach, Stephen Crim, Susan Bell, Dennis Sellin, Melissa McMahon, Richard Hartman, Bridget Obikoya, and Jason Barnett.

Meeting Notes

Working Group Chair James Schroll opened the meeting with some housekeeping items.

- The agenda has been revised and this meeting is planned to be three hours.
- The public forum is tentatively scheduled for December 14. This needs to be confirmed so public notice can go out. Working Group members are encouraged to attend.
- He asked members to let him know about the proposed dates for future Working Group meetings.

Stephen Crim said that the public forum December 14 could be followed by a Working Group meeting that same evening.

Discussion of Principles

Members discussed a “red line edition” of the six principles that the Working Group developed in previous meetings as follows:

Principle #1: Recognize that the amount of parking provided in residential projects is a major cost factor affecting a project’s feasibility, contributing to the high cost of housing and the affordability of housing able to be delivered ~~in Arlington.~~

Principle #2: Be innovative and flexible with parking policy to allow developments to rationally respond to site-specific demand drivers, unique conditions, and future demand.

Principle #3: Provide predictability to reduce uncertainty for developers proposing projects and for the community reviewing them.

Principle #4: Recognize that reducing parking demand will reduce the impact on our roadway infrastructure. Parking policy must balance the benefits of reduced driving with the potential costs to support the shift to other modes of travel.

Principle #5: Recognize that the supply of parking is a factor that contributes to demand, which results in a higher demand for parking. Therefore higher parking requirements will result in higher car use, traffic, and environmental impacts.

Principle #~~6~~5: Address potential for spillover into residential neighborhoods.

~~Principle #6: Recognize that the supply of parking is a factor that contributes to demand, which results in a higher demand for parking. Therefore higher parking requirements will result in higher car use, traffic, and environmental impacts.~~

There were some changes agreed to in the wording of the principles and a consensus to change the order of the last two. There was agreement that the principles cover the things they must, but that the language will continue to be worked on.

TDM and Garage Use at Site Plan Buildings

Melissa McMahon from ACCS gave an overview of the County's use of Transportation Demand Management for site plan buildings. She discussed:

- **What is TDM?** TDM is in part overcoming barriers to get people to use options other than single-occupant vehicles for their transportation decisions. Parking supply and price is a form of TDM.
- **How is TDM applied in the Development Context?** Since 1990 Arlington has included TDM measures as conditions in special exception site plan approvals, using a base set of conditions. Other jurisdictions may use different approaches for TDM, including performance-based standards, menus of options with point systems, and embedding conditions within zoning requirements.
- **Challenges with applying TDM.** These include the management of TDM funds by either the County or the building developer/owner, operation of car sharing within buildings, converting car spaces to additional bicycle parking, and the limitations for residential communities in offering the kinds of transit benefits made available by employers.
- **Performance monitoring program.** Included in site plan conditions, performance monitoring is a good resource for Arlington. Data on garage occupancy were provided as a read-ahead.

Melissa McMahon's presentation was followed by question and answer with the Working Group. Questions and issues raised included

- Are the data on garage occupancy adjusted to account for building occupancy? *Staff response: No, but building occupancy in the buildings studied was 94 to 96 percent.*
- Why don't building owners lower prices to fill parking? *A member of the Working Group responded: buildings try to keep parking full but need to have flexibility to accommodate new tenants.*
- How did you collect the data in the performance monitoring studies? *Staff response: Tube counts, physical occupancy counts, surveys of residents, interviews with property managers.*
- There was discussion on how carshare providers do not usually want to have their spaces in building garages. Vancouver provides revenue guarantees at the beginning.
- Do people actually use the pre-loaded SmarTrip cards that some residential and office buildings give to tenants? *Staff response: SmarTrip cards are the most popular option.*

Statement from Staff on Desired Policy Guidance

Before Staff presented the results of their peer city review to the Working Group, Dennis Sellin of Development Services reminded the Working Group of the kind of policy guidance that Development Services would like for this Working Group process to produce.

Dennis Sellin reminded the Working Group that the staff reviews parking requests in Site Plan applications on an ad hoc basis. The County Board and County Attorney are looking for a consistent policy to apply. Staff, the Board, and the County Attorney want a clear rationale for allowing the lower ratios that are requested. Staff is agnostic when it comes to methodologies, and also reminded the Working Group that staff are stewards of the public realm and do not want to degrade the public roadways.

Arlington Division of Transportation Director Dennis Leach added that the environment in the Metro corridors is changing. The transportation options are becoming much richer. The County is providing the infrastructure and services to reduce the need for personal vehicles.

Peer City and Best Practices Review

Stephen Crim reviewed research into other jurisdictions and the strategies and practices related to parking policy. He listed the various practices and highlighted some that would be a major departure for Arlington and probably out of scope for consideration here.

He presented a map of cities that have revised or are in the process of revising their parking policies, mostly by eliminating or lowering the minimum requirements. He discussed strategies of other jurisdictions in this region.

The presentation of a table listing the most common strategies led to a lengthy discussion of shared parking—what it is and how it can be applied. He discussed in more detail the experience of two cities: Portland, which in 2002 abolished minimum requirements in many areas, but in a 2013 revision re-introduced minimums; and Chicago, which adopted a policy in 2013 that decreased minimums near transit in areas with “pedestrian streets,” and in 2015 reduced the minimum to zero in zones near rapid transit.

Discussion and Direction to Staff

Mr. Schroll asked that the group work toward consensus on providing guidance to staff on developing policy drafts. Comments and questions included:

- Keep in mind how the processes in other jurisdictions relate to the Site Plan process in Arlington. Many of these other communities have their reduced parking ratios incorporated into their zoning ordinances. Arlington’s Site Plan process allows for more public participation and input for each project.
- Why isn’t the County investing in providing shared parking? *Staff response: the County has taken that position that the private sector is to provide off-street parking while the County invests in other modes of transportation, such as Metro, Capital Bikeshare, and so on.*
- Would parking maximums require a change in the code? *Staff response: because we are setting policy, a change in the code does not seem likely to staff, though they will consult.*
- General agreement to consider a maximum ratio as long as it offered flexibility.
- Does staff define a Metro zone? *Staff response: the Working Group’s scope is for land zoned such that multifamily residential buildings can be built by right or by Site Plan approval within the Metro Corridors as long-defined in the General Land Use Plan.*
- Would like to be able to expand the policy to other areas, particularly Columbia Pike.
- Need to consider criteria for transit overlays.

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- Need to differentiate between bus and rail.
- Can we make a distinction for affordable or senior housing, and for rental vs. condo?
- Include an index for amenities in the vicinity of the development, such as a walkability score.
- Do we know how many new residents moving in do not have cars? *Staff response: yes. We will provide information on this.*
- Discussion of considering the number of units vs. number of bedrooms.
- Require more TDM for ratios on either end of the spectrum.
- Look at what the market is now in ratios and shared parking.

At the close of this conversation, staff confirmed with the Working Group that they were to develop initial policy frameworks for the next meeting using the following strategies:

- Transit overlay zones
- Parking maximums
- Affordable housing parking ratio reductions
- Parking ratio reductions for the “bikeability” / “walkability” of the development site
- On-site and off-site shared parking
- Parking ratio reductions/relief for small development sites
- TDM requirements for both sites with ratios that are low and sites with ratios that are high

Next Meeting

Chair James Schroll closed the meeting and reminded everyone that the Working Group would meet again on Wednesday, November 30th at 7 PM in Room 311 of 2100 Clarendon Boulevard.

Presentations

TDM and Garage Usage at Site Plan Buildings

Editor’s Note: Melissa McMahan spoke from a set of talking points for her presentation. There are no slides that accompany these notes.

WHAT IS TDM?

Transportation Demand Management is the use of programs/services/incentives activities to influence individuals' transportation decisions, specifically, encouraging use of non-Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) modes.

Transportation Demand Management acknowledges that building public infrastructure (e.g. bike trails), or providing public transit services (e.g. ART bus), is not always enough to get people to use the options. There are often barriers to overcome, including:

- Relative cost (real and perceived cost of option v personal vehicle)
- Available information (what options do I have?)
- Relative comfort/familiarity (If I use that option, will it take me where I need to go? Will I look stupid if I don't know how to use it properly?)
- Convenience (will it be on time? Is it nearby? How long do I have to wait? How late will it run?)

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- Concern about safety (waiting for transit at night, using a bicycle on the road with cars, taking shared rides with strangers)
- Social pressure (what other's we know most typically do)

TDM attempts to identify and mitigate these barriers to using the options that are available.

Parking – supply and price – is in itself a form of TDM. How? Supplying ample parking at trip origin or destination:

- reduces the search cost for storing a vehicle
- makes the car relatively more convenient compared to an option that might require a short walk, and
- hides the opportunity cost of what that space might otherwise have been had it not been made into parking.

If parking is free, the relative cost compared to transit, taxis, or other services appears lower because a driver is not paying the actual cost of providing the parking infrastructure or service. Decreasing parking supply, or increasing parking cost, can influence transportation decisions.

HOW IS TDM APPLIED IN THE DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT?

Arlington applies TDM to development as a part of special exception approvals, those development projects which require variance from what is allowed by-right under the Zoning Ordinance.

You heard about this process from Lisa Maher and Matthew Cullen in a previous working group session.

Arlington has developed a set of standard site plan conditions which form the basis of negotiation and discussion with a developer, and those conditions include A TDM condition and a bicycle parking condition. These conditions are considered the base program for supporting transportation options at these properties. This base program is a list of supportive activities, services, or incentives the building will offer to occupants in order to influence their transportation decisions.

Generally speaking, if projects are proposed with markedly more density, less parking, or other perceived sources of impacts, the conditions are modified further to assist with reducing those effects. For TDM, this could mean additional funding (to be used at the building), special support for a particular mode (cargo bike parking for a grocery store).

Other approaches used by jurisdictions include:

- Performance-based standards. Escrow and penalty funds when performance not met
- Menus of options with point systems a la LEED
- Embedded within Zoning requirements. Requiring certain things, such as bike parking, within the by-right process

CHALLENGES WITH APPLYING TDM TO DEVELOPMENT

Over the years of monitoring compliance with various TDM conditions of development, staff have observed several recurring challenges. A few which may be pertinent to recommendations from this process include:

- a. The management and accountability for building-specific pools of funds
 - i. When building owners manage pools of funds, there is a high level of communications effort to obtain evidence of disbursement
 - ii. When the County manages the pools of funds, there is a high administrative burden to disburse appropriately
 - iii. Funds managed at the building level create duplicative administrative processes as each is invoiced, collected, held, and disbursed individually
- b. The agreement and operation of carsharing within buildings
 - i. Operation of carsharing in a building requires cooperation of a carsharing service provider
 - ii. Operation also usually requires repeater coverage within the garage (to connect the cars to the network), as well as willingness to allow carshare members to access the garage to get to the vehicle
- c. The lack of flexibility over time to convert garage car space to additional (or minimum required) bicycle parking
 - i. Residential bike parking is heavily-used
 - ii. Bike parking has not historically counted toward minimum parking ratios
 - iii. Removal of car parking and provision of bike parking could at minimum require an administrative change, at maximum a site plan amendment
- d. The limitations of the regional transit benefit/pass options for offering benefits to residential building occupants

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AS A PART OF A TDM PROGRAM

Arlington has incorporated building performance monitoring requirements into site plan development conditions. These requirements allow us to collect data which describes the trip generation, mode split, and parking occupancy of the building as-built, as well as awareness and use of on-site and offsite services. The benefits of this requirement include:

- Data may be used to inform other site plan approvals
- Data may be used to inform long range development policy
- Data may be used to inform refinement and implement of on-site TDM programs

Example **correlations** from these data which pertain to this Working Group's efforts:

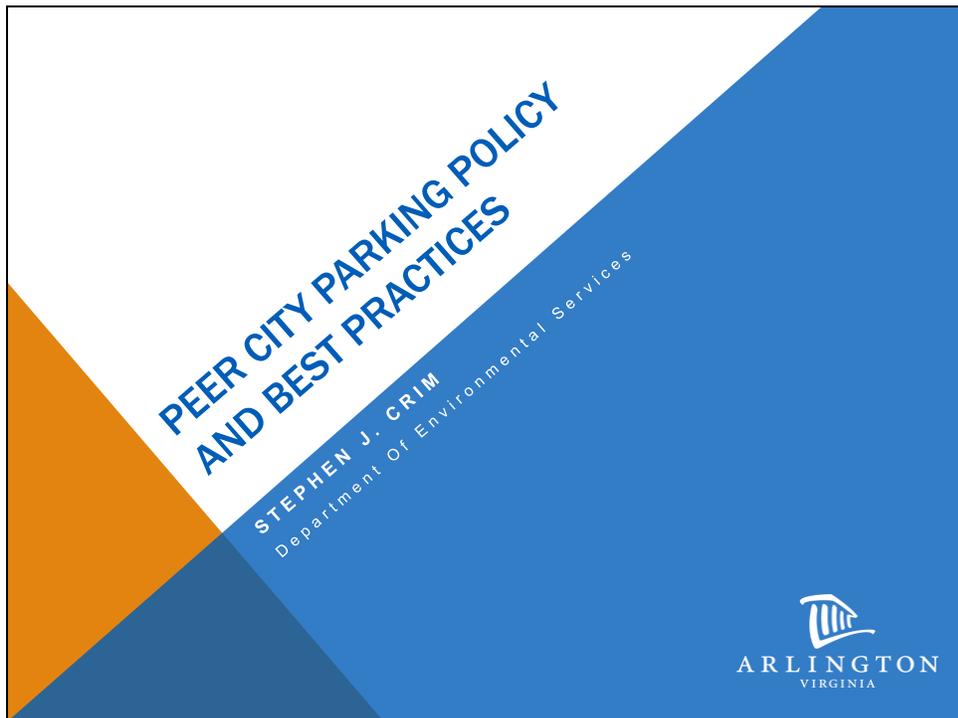
- Residential garages average max occupancy is around 78- 80% in this sample. (75% of sites never exceeded 85% occupancy)
- There doesn't appear to be a correlation between parking occupancy rates (cars per space) and parking supply (spaces per unit), however,
- Average vehicle ownership per adult resident appears to go up as parking space provision per adult resident goes up. (this speaks to potential importance of unit mix of the building)

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- While cars parked per unit does not seem to be related to base cost of parking in a building, elsewhere in our data...
- ...Average vehicle ownership reported per adult resident drops as reported parking cost increases.
- Vehicle ownership increases with household income and being outside the metro corridors, and also for condos v renters. The latter relationship may be reflective of the higher incomes reported by resident of condos v residents of rental apartments

Peer City and Best Practices Review

Editor's Note: The following are the slides and accompanying talking points that Stephen Crim used in making his presentation on staff's peer city policy review.



As you have seen, communities today are implementing a variety of parking strategies.

- The read-ahead materials for this evening covered a lot of ground.
- The 1990 Eno Transportation Policy Foundation report that was part of the read-ahead for Meeting Two also described a variety of parking policy strategies, some of which are still seen as best practice.

Before we talk about specific communities, lets recall the broad types of strategies

CURRENT PRACTICE IN PARKING POLICY APPROVAL AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE

Transit Overlay Zones	Off-Site Shared Parking
Affordable Housing Reductions	Centralized Parking
Senior Housing Reductions	Create Parking Requirements based on Number of Bedrooms
Land Banking/Proof of Parking	Differentiate Parking Requirements between Rental and Owner-Occupied Housing
Eliminate Parking Minimums	
Create Parking Maximums	
Use On-Street Capacity to Count towards Parking Supply	
Parking Freeze	
On-Site Shared Parking	

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The first set of measures that we shared with you are what we called “Approval and Development Phase” strategies, or parking policy measures that affect the parking that is built at a given site.

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There are a few strategies that would be a departure from other County policies or which we do not believe would be appropriate for the Working Group to recommend:

- **Parking Freeze.** This is a neighborhood or district strategy, and it's outside the scope of a Site Plan or UCMUD.
- **Centralized Parking.** As we shared in Meeting 2, Arlington County generally does not build publicly financed or operated parking to serve private development, and so moving to a model like Montgomery County's parking districts would be a major departure from the way Arlington County provides parking.

**CURRENT PRACTICE IN PARKING POLICY
POST-OCCUPANCY**

- On-Site Car-sharing Spaces/Service
- Free Car-sharing Memberships
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities
- Incentives for Transit
- Pricing and Unbundling of Parking Costs

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We also provided you with a list of post-occupancy parking strategies, or strategies that a building owner might put in place after the building opens.

- **On-Site Car-sharing Spaces/Service** – Site plan conditions allow carshare spaces to count towards minimum required.
- **Free Car-sharing Memberships** – Site plan conditions ask for one-time distribution of free carshare memberships and in certain cases, we've asked for on-going subsidy of carshare memberships.
- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities** – We do require a variety of pedestrian and bicycle improvements, but not in exchange for reduced parking requirements.
- **Incentives for Transit** – We also ask that developers provide SmarTrip cards once to new tenants when they move in and in some cases we've asked for annual distributions of SmarTrip cards, but we do not require on-going, total subsidies as some communities have. We also don't make this an exchange for reduced parking minimums.

- Pricing and Unbundling of Parking Costs – We do require that residential buildings unbundle their parking, but we do not mandate certain price levels.



- As you saw in your read-ahead, communities around the United States are revising their policies, from localities right here in the DC area, to small towns and big cities around the country. We picked 14 communities to share with you in the table that came with your read-aheads.
- Tysons, Montgomery County, Alexandria, and the District are our neighbors, and it's good to see what they are doing.
- The others are cities that planners routinely cite as forward-looking and models of the kind of Smart Growth policy that Arlington has adopted.

PARKING STRATEGIES IN OUR REGION

<p>Washington, DC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transit Overlay Zones ▪ Eliminate Parking Minimums ▪ Off-Site Shared Parking ▪ On-Site Car-sharing Spaces/Service <p>Alexandria, VA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transit Overlay Zones ▪ Affordable Housing Reductions ▪ Create Parking Maximums ▪ Create Parking Requirements based on Number of Bedrooms 	<p>Tysons Corner, VA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transit Overlay Zones ▪ Create Parking Maximums ▪ Create Parking Requirements based on Number of Bedrooms <p>Montgomery County, MD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Affordable Housing Reductions ▪ Senior Housing Reductions ▪ Use On-Street Capacity to Count towards Parking Supply ▪ Off-Site Shared Parking ▪ Create Parking Requirements based on Number of Bedrooms ▪ On-Site Car-sharing Spaces/Service
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Here are the techniques from above that we found Washington, Alexandria, Tysons Corner, and Montgomery County using.

HOW COMMON ARE THESE STRATEGIES?

Strategy	No. Cities from Staff Peer City Review Using this Strategy
Off-Site Shared Parking	7
Transit Overlay Zones	6
Affordable Housing Reductions	6
Create Parking Maximums	6
Eliminate Parking Minimums	5
Senior Housing Reductions	4
On-Site Car-sharing Spaces/Service	4
Create Parking Requirements based on Number of Bedrooms	4
Use On-Street Capacity to Count towards Parking Supply	3
On-Site Shared Parking	2
Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities	2
Centralized Parking/In-Lieu Fees	1
Pricing and Unbundling of Parking Costs	1

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The table above describes how frequently each of the techniques are used by the municipalities in our preliminary research.

TWO CITIES' EXPERIENCES WITH PARKING POLICY CHANGES

PORTLAND, OR



CHICAGO, IL



Image Sources: USGS (Portland); flickr user markcbrennan (Chicago)

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So what kind of experiences have these cities had?

Here are two municipalities to consider

- Portland's is a story of a retrenchment on parking policy.
 - In 2002, the City actually passed a measure removing all minimum parking requirements in areas "well served" by public transit.
 - As buildings with no off-street parking were constructed, neighboring residents became concerned about vehicle volumes and parking shortages on nearby streets.
 - A later study did not find a relationship between zero-parking buildings and local traffic volumes, but in response to neighbor concerns, the city reimposed (small) parking minimums between 0.2 spaces per unit and 0.33 spaces per unit in some areas of the city.
- Chicago has expanded parking exemptions in recent years.
 - In 2013, the city passed an ordinance that allowed 0.5 spaces per unit within 600 feet or 1,200 feet of a rapid transit stop.
 - Developer interest in building according to these standards was lower than the city expected.
 - The 2015 ordinance went further, eliminating all requirements within 1,320 feet or 2,640 feet for a pedestrian street.

