



# CITY OF HARRISONBURG COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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March 1, 2022

**TO THE MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA**

**SUBJECT:** *Consider amending off-street vehicle and bicycle parking requirements in Article G of the Zoning Ordinance for community building and community center uses*

**EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF HARRISONBURG PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING HELD ON:** February 9, 2022

Ms. Dang said the definition of *community building* in the Zoning Ordinance (ZO) is as follows:

*Building, community:* A building for social, educational, cultural, and recreational activities for a neighborhood or community, provided any such use is not operated primarily for commercial gain.

The *community building* use has included community buildings associated with housing developments (townhomes, apartments, duplexes, or single-family detached home developments), where the use of such space is primarily used by residents of a housing development. The *community building* use also applies to places like the Dallard-Newman House owned by the Northeast Neighborhood Association at 192 Kelley Street and the Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project at 425 Hill Street.

With regard to *community center*, there is no definition in the Zoning Ordinance that defines this use. When the *community center* use appears in the Zoning Ordinance it is described as a subset of governmental uses and would be used to apply to places like the City's Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activities Center and the Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center, both owned and operated by the City of Harrisonburg.

Attached is a summary table of *community building* and *community center* uses as they appear in zoning district regulations as uses permitted by right and by special use permit.

Staff proposes to amend off-street vehicle and bicycle parking requirements within Article G of the Zoning Ordinance (ZO) for *community building* and *community center* uses. Specifically, within Section 10-3-25, staff proposes the following changes:

- (14) Community centers ~~not associated with a housing development~~, libraries, museums and similar facilities not dependent on public assembly or seating: One (1) parking space for each two hundred and fifty (250) square feet of gross floor area. ~~Community centers associated with housing developments, where the use of such space is primarily for the use of residents of the housing development, have no minimum off-street parking requirements.~~
- (29) Community buildings: If associated with housing developments, where the use of such space is primarily used for the residents of the housing development, or if the building is no greater than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, then no minimum off-street parking requirements. If the building is not associated with a housing development and is greater than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, then one (1) parking space for each two hundred fifty (250) square feet of gross floor area.

Historically, staff has applied the *community center* parking requirements of one parking space for each 250 square feet of gross floor area to *community building* uses. In June 2019, staff proposed and City Council approved amendments to Section 10-3-25 (14) with the intent to allow *community centers (and community buildings) associated with housing developments* to have no minimum off-street parking requirements. The intent was and still is to allow *community buildings associated with housing developments* (townhomes, apartments, duplexes, or single-family detached home developments) to not have to provide off-street parking spaces because when housing developments are constructed, the parking requirements for dwelling units, Section 10-3-25 (7) of the ZO, must be met for each individual dwelling unit on site; and therefore, would meet the parking needs for the community. The residents are the same individuals who will primarily use the *community building* and having to provide additional parking for an area to be utilized by the residents, whom already have parking, creates excessive parking, reduces available green space for residents, increases stormwater runoff, and increases the cost of the development.

The amendments proposed herein are intended to differentiate *community buildings* and *community centers* and to amend how the off-street parking requirements for *community buildings* is determined and implemented. Staff proposes to allow *community buildings* that are associated with a housing development or are no greater than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area to have no minimum off-street parking requirements, and if the building is not associated with a housing development and is greater than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area, to provide one parking space for each 250 square feet of gross floor area.

For illustration purposes, the *community building* at 192 Kelley Street (zoned R-2) currently has +/- 1,408 square feet of gross floor area and there are plans for a building addition that would make the building a total of +/- 2,250 square feet of gross floor area. The *community building* at 425 Hill Street (zoned R-2) has +/- 576 square feet of gross floor area. If the proposed amendments are approved, then these two *community buildings* would not have any minimum off-street parking requirements.

Staff also proposes the following amendments to Section 10-3-25.1, Off-street bicycle parking spaces as shown:

Use	Parking Requirement
Community centers, <a href="#">community buildings</a> , private clubs, museums, libraries, recreational and leisure-time activities, and similar uses	1 space/10,000 square feet of gross floor area or 4 spaces minimum, whichever is greater

Staff recommends approval of these amendments.

Chair Finnegan asked if there were any questions for staff. Hearing none, he opened the public hearing and asked if there were any callers wishing to speak to the request. As there were no callers, he closed the public hearing and opened the matter for discussion.

Commissioner Whitten moved to recommend approval of the request.

Commissioner Baugh seconded the motion.

Commissioner Armstrong	Aye
Commissioner Baugh	Aye
Commissioner Byrd	Aye
Councilmember Dent	Aye
Commissioner Orndoff	Aye
Commissioner Whitten	Aye
Chair Finnegan	Aye

The motion to recommend approval of the request passed (7-0). The recommendation will move forward to City Council on March 8, 2022.