



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Department of Planning & Community Development

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Building Inspections
Engineering
Planning & Zoning

To: Eric Campbell, City Manager
From: Adam Fletcher, Director – Department of Planning and Community Development; and
Harrisonburg Planning Commission
Date: December 11, 2018
Re: Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Off-Street Vehicle Parking Regulations, R-6 and R-7 Districts

Summary:

Public hearing to consider amending Section 10-3-56.6 within the R-6, Low Density Mixed Residential Planned Community District and Section 10-3-57.6 within the R-7, Medium Density Mixed Residential Planned Community District to allow property owners the ability to meet off-street parking requirements as may be specified within an approved master development plan.

Background:

The R-6 and R-7 zoning districts were both adopted and added to the Zoning Ordinance in October 2005. The R-6, Low Density Mixed Residential Planned Community District was created, and is intended, to provide opportunities for the development of planned residential communities offering a mix of large and small-lot single-family detached dwellings and open spaces, together with certain governmental, educational, religious, recreational and support uses.

Like the R-6 district, the R-7, Medium Density Mixed Residential Planned Community District was also created, and is intended, to provide opportunities for the development of planned residential communities offering a mix of single-family detached and attached dwellings and open spaces, together with certain governmental, educational, religious, recreational and support uses. Under special circumstances, limited multiple-family dwellings may also be included.

Both the R-6 and R-7 districts promote innovative residential building types and creative subdivision design solutions to promote neighborhood cohesiveness, walkability, connected transportation systems, community green spaces, and the protection of environmental resources. Additionally, R-6 and R-7 communities shall be developed and redeveloped in accordance with a master development plan adopted at the time of rezoning or a subsequent approved amendment thereof. The master development plan governs development on the site and is used as a basis for subdivision and site plan approval and zoning code enforcement. Sections 10-3-56.6 (e) and 10-3-57.6 (g) of the R-6 and R-7 district regulations, respectively, require that master development plans describe in map and text form:

- (1) General layout of roads, housing areas, open space, parks, pedestrian and bicycle trails.
- (2) General location and number of community building, school, day care, church and public use sites proposed.
- (3) Description of housing types/lot configurations to be used with lot areas, minimum widths and depths, minimum yards defined.
- (4) Indication on the master development plan of the general location of housing types/lot configurations proposed.

- (5) Environmentally sensitive areas: slopes exceeding fifteen (15) percent, streams and 100-year floodplains.
- (6) Proposed active recreation areas and recreation facilities.
- (7) Proposed general landscape plan (landscape areas, plant materials and general specifications).
- (8) Description of how design principles of the district are to be met and proffers, if any, to implement the principles.

Key Issues:

Currently, Sections 10-3-56.6 (b) and 10-3-57.6 (b) of the Zoning Ordinance state that off-street parking within the R-6 and R-7 districts is regulated by Article G, Off-Street Vehicular and Bicycle Parking. Article G then regulates minimum off-street vehicular parking spaces based upon specific ratios or other determining factors for different uses. Article G also regulates other matters, such as, but not limited to, minimum off-street bicycle parking spaces, the location of parking spaces, parking lot landscaping, and how to compute the required number of spaces.

In particular, and in only considering the permissible residential uses, the R-6 and R-7 districts would follow the requirements of Section 10-3-25 (7), which require the following parking ratios:

Dwelling: One (1) parking space for each new detached single-family dwelling; two (2) parking spaces for each duplex unit. For town houses and other multifamily dwellings, one and one-half (1½) spaces for each dwelling unit with one (1) bedroom, two and one-half (2½) parking spaces for each dwelling unit with two (2) or three (3) bedrooms, plus one (1) additional parking space for each bedroom when a unit has over three (3) bedrooms.

For example, Article G would require that a four-bedroom town house provide 3-½ parking spaces. An applicant proposing to rezone properties to R-7, where the R-7 district regulations restrict the occupancy of each dwelling unit to a single family or not more than two persons, may have justification to propose providing less than 3-½ parking spaces per dwelling unit. By default, Section 10-3-25 (7)'s parking requirements, more or less, require that a parking lot be created to meet the minimum off-street parking requirements for townhouse developments. It should also be understood that an applicant could also propose alternatives to parking lot landscaping.

To assist in the utilization of the R-6 and R-7 districts, and to allow applicants the opportunity to propose creative subdivision design solutions as is the intent of both districts, staff is proposing to amend Sections 10-3-56.6 (b) and 10-3-57.6 (b), which have identical text, by modifying the text as follows:

(b) Unless otherwise specified within the master development plan, off-street vehicle and bicycle parking regulations for all buildings and uses permitted in this district are governed by article G.

In any scenario in which the developer proposes to address off-street parking in a way that is not consistent with Article G of the Zoning Ordinance, the master development plan must describe and/or illustrate the off-street parking and landscaping plan. The master development plan would be reviewed and vetted by staff and Planning Commission prior to action by City Council. When the master development plan does not specify parking requirements, then Article G would regulate off-street vehicle and bicycle parking.

Environmental Impact:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

N/A

Prior Actions:

N/A

Alternatives:

- (a) Recommend approval of the Zoning Ordinance amendment request as presented; or
- (b) Recommend denial of the Zoning Ordinance amendment request.

Community Engagement:

As required, the request was published in the local newspaper twice advertising for Planning Commission’s public hearing and twice advertising for City Council’s public hearing. The advertisement was published as shown below:

Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Off-Street Vehicle Parking Regulations, R-6 and R-7 Districts

Public hearing to consider a request to amend Section 10-3-56.6 within the R-6, Low Density Mixed Residential Planned Community District and Section 10-3-57.6 within the R-7, Medium Density Mixed Residential Planned Community District to allow property owners the ability to meet off-street parking requirements as may be specified within an approved master development plan. Currently, off-street parking regulations within the R-6 and R-7 districts is regulated by Article G, Off-Street Vehicular and Bicycle Parking, where minimum parking requirements are based upon specific ratios or other determining factors for different uses. Article G also regulates other issues, such as, but not limited to, minimum off-street bicycle parking spaces, the location of parking spaces, parking lot landscaping, and how to compute the required number of spaces. Article G would regulate off-street vehicular and bicycle parking if the master development plan does not specify particular requirements. Master development plans are approved by City Council at the time of rezoning or a subsequent approved amendment thereof.

In addition, a notice was provided on the City’s website at <https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/public-hearings>.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends (a) approval of the Zoning Ordinance amendment request as presented.

Attachments:

- 1. Extract (6 pages)
- 2. Proposed zoning ordinance amendments (4 pages)

Review:

Planning Commission recommended (4-0) alternative (a) approval of the Zoning Ordinance amendment request as presented.