



City of Sunnyvale

Excerpt Meeting Minutes - Final Planning Commission

Monday, February 26, 2024

7:00 PM

Online and Bay Conference Room
(Room 145), City Hall,
456 W. Olive Ave.,
Sunnyvale, CA 94086

No Study Session | Public Hearing - 7:00 PM

7 P.M. PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Pyne called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Chair Martin Pyne
Vice Chair Nathan Iglesias
Commissioner Galen Kim Davis
Commissioner Daniel Howard
Commissioner John Howe
Commissioner Michael Serrone
Commissioner Neela Shukla

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

3. [24-0141](#) Forward a Recommendation to the City Council to Evaluate the Minimum Automobile Off-Street Parking Requirements for Residential Uses (Study Issue CDD 19-07)
File #: 2022-7404
Environmental Review: The action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a).
Project Planner: George Schroeder, (408) 730-7443, gschroeder@sunnyvale.ca.gov

Principal Planner George Schroeder presented the staff report with a slide presentation.

Commissioner Howard confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that the cost of a parking space varies and is dependent on the age and type of the parking structure.

Commissioner Howard and Principal Planner Schroeder discussed a new state law that mandates property owners to separate the cost of rent from the cost of a parking space (unbundling). Commissioner Howard responded that, in his opinion, it would be ideal to lease parking spaces to those who need them.

Commissioner Howard proposed that any revenue the City receives from street parking fees may be invested in public transportation or bicycle infrastructure.

Commissioner Serrone confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that there is no separate study issue to examine minimum off-street parking requirements for commercial uses, but this study issue examines shared parking between commercial and residential land uses.

Commissioner Serrone confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that replacement parking is required when a main dwelling's covered parking (garage or carport) is converted into anything other than an accessory dwelling unit (ADU).

At Commissioner Serrone's request, Principal Planner Schroeder explained why compact parking is prohibited in mobile home parks and non-residential and mixed-use developments.

At Commissioner Serrone's request, Principal Planner Schroeder defined senior housing.

Commissioner Serrone confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that in part, this study issue aims to objectively define limited street parking.

Commissioner Serrone confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that the comparison of parking requirements between the City and other jurisdictions does not account for Below Market Rate (BMR) parking reductions under the California Density Bonus Law.

Commissioner Howe confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that for-sale condominiums and townhomes are categorized as multifamily residential developments.

Commissioner Shukla proposed that this study issue should examine the use of street parking on wider roads adjacent to multifamily developments.

Vice Chair Iglesias questioned why there is a need for this study issue. He also shared his concerns regarding the impact that imposing street parking fees may have upon those who are economically disadvantaged.

Commissioner Davis confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that other neighboring jurisdictions do not have a provision for limited off-street parking requirements for residential uses.

Chair Pyne noted that it may be worthwhile to consider the recently approved multifamily projects with reduced parking spaces due to waivers.

Chair Pyne stated that establishing a minimum for off-street parking requirements for residential uses would be beneficial to residential areas such as his own.

Chair Pyne spoke in agreement with comments made by Commissioner Howard regarding the funding of public transportation or bicycle infrastructure within the City by any revenue collected from street parking fees.

Chair Pyne and Principal Planner Schroeder discussed whether a vehicle is defined by the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and the implications that certain definitions may have on City parking requirements.

Chair Pyne confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that any modifications to the staff-recommended Alternative 1 would be considered Alternative 2: Alternative 1 with modifications.

At Chair Pyne's request, Principal Planner Schroeder specified instances that may require detailed parking studies that will necessitate a specialized consultant and a budget modification.

Chair Pyne confirmed with Principal Planner Schroeder that the timeline for implementing minimum off-street parking requirements for residential uses is largely dependent on staff workload.

Commissioner Howard responded to earlier comments made by Vice Chair Iglesias and Chair Pyne by discussing the relationship between street parking and street safety, providing waivers to those unable to afford street parking fees, and using City revenue to improve our public transit system.

Chair Pyne opened the Public Hearing.

There were no public speakers for this agenda item.

Chair Pyne closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Davis spoke in overall support of a motion to establish a minimum requirement for automobile off-street parking for residential uses.

Commissioner Serrone stated that he is opposed to parking requirements that are strictly punitive for vehicle owners with no other community benefits. He added that he is in support of allocating resources between vehicles and bicycles and unbundling parking and rental costs.

Commissioner Serrone expressed his interest in data regarding the use of single-family garages for purposes beyond parking or whether parking spaces in multifamily developments are underutilized or overutilized.

MOTION: Commissioner Howard moved to recommend that the City Council direct staff to conduct community outreach and prepare amendments to the Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) and applicable Specific Plans parking regulations, to be considered at future hearings. The amendments to be studied are as follows:

- 1) Eliminating minimum automobile off-street parking requirements for residential uses.
- 2) Unbundling parking costs from rental costs for existing tenants.
- 3) Implementing street parking fees for everyone except low-income individuals and allocate the generated revenue to fund such improvements to our public transportation system as the Silicon Valley Hopper program.

The motion failed for lack of a second.

MOTION: Vice Chair Iglesias moved to recommend Alternative 3 to the City Council: Do not modify parking requirements.

The motion failed for lack of a second.

MOTION: Commissioner Howe moved and Commissioner Howard seconded the motion to recommend Alternative 2 to the City Council: Alternative 1 with modifications.

The modification is stated below:

- 1) The City Council will also consider whether to direct staff to study the following amendments:
 - a) Eliminating minimum automobile off-street parking requirements for residential uses.
 - b) Unbundling parking costs from rental costs for existing tenants.
 - c) Implementing street parking fees for everyone except low-income individuals and allocate the generated revenue to fund such improvements to our public transportation system as the Silicon Valley Hopper program.

Commissioner Howe noted that by the time the City Council considers this item on March 19, 2024, staff will know which amendments are fiscally feasible to study.

Commissioner Howard spoke in support of the motion and explained why.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Chair Pyne proposed a friendly amendment to also study the requirement of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plans for all new projects, exempting most small projects including single-family homes, in lieu of eliminating required minimum parking for residential uses. Deliberation with Principal Planner Schroeder revealed that the inclusion of modification 1.C may not be feasible. Upon removal of this modification, Commissioner Howe and Commissioner Howard accepted the friendly amendment.

Commissioner Davis voiced his support of the motion.

Commissioner Serrone stated his support of the motion and emphasized the importance of mass transit and bicycle infrastructure.

Commissioner Shukla confirmed her support of the motion.

Vice Chair Iglesias advised that he is not in favor of the motion and explained why.

Chair Pyne spoke in support of motion and detailed ways it will benefit the City.

MOTION: Commissioner Howe moved and Commissioner Howard seconded the motion to recommend Alternative 2 to the City Council: Alternative 1 with modifications.

The modification is stated below:

1) The City Council will also consider whether to direct staff to study the following amendments:

- a) Eliminating minimum automobile off-street parking requirements for residential uses.
- b) Unbundling parking costs from rental costs for existing tenants.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Chair Pyne proposed a friendly amendment to also study the requirement of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plans for all new projects, exempting most small projects including single-family homes, in lieu of eliminating required minimum parking for residential uses.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Chair Pyne
Commissioner Davis
Commissioner Howard
Commissioner Howe
Commissioner Serrone
Commissioner Shukla

No: 1 - Vice Chair Iglesias

This recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at the March 19, 2024 meeting.