



City of Winooski
Vermont's Opportunity City

27 West Allen Street
Winooski, Vermont 05404
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winooskivt.gov

Planning Commission Agenda

Thursday, August 13, 2020 at 6:30 PM

- Please read our updated [Remote Meeting Procedures](#) if you plan to participate.
- To sign up for public comment, fill out our [Public Comment Request Form](#) or call 802 655 6410 to schedule.
- Attend online: <https://zoom.us/j/98353032372>
- Attend by phone: 1 646 558 8656
- Meeting ID: 983 5303 2372
- Need help installing and using Zoom? [View their online resources](#).
- Watch the live-stream via [Town Meeting TV](#).

I. Call to Order

II. Changes to the Agenda

III. Public Comment

IV. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

https://www.winooskivt.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Minutes/_07232020-677

V. Review of FY 2021 Draft Work Plan

Documents:

V - Memo - Draft FY 2021 Work Plan - 08.13.2020.pdf
V.1 - FY 2021 Work Plan - 07.01.2020 - v.1.pdf

VI. Review and Discussion of Parking Comparisons

Documents:

VI - Memo - Parking Comparison - FBC Draft versus Adopted Requirements - 08.13.2020.pdf
VI.1 - Proposed Parking Standards - NOT ADOPTED - 07.27.2015.pdf

VII. Discussion of Equity in Land Use Regulations

Documents:

VII - Memo - Land Use Regulations and Equity - 08.13.2020.pdf

VIII. Department and City Updates

IX. Other Business

X. Adjourn

Memorandum

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Eric Vorwald, AICP
Planning & Zoning Manager

RE: **FY 2021 Planning Commission Work Plan**

DATE: August 13, 2020

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Planning Commission with a draft work plan for consideration. The Planning Commission should review the draft work plan and provide comments to staff prior to approval. For reference, approval will occur at a future meeting as necessary.

Overview

Beginning in FY 2020, staff prepared a work plan to more formally organize the activities for the Commission and focus on several initiatives for the Commission. With a new fiscal year, staff has prepared an updated work plan for the Commission's consideration. The FY 2021 Work Plan builds off the FY 2020 Work Plan. Several of the activities identified in FY 2020 are still on-going or took longer than expected. Staff is using this as the starting point for the development of the FY 2021 plan.

Included with the agenda is a draft work plan. The Planning Commission should review this draft and provide any feedback to staff. Specific information to review includes:

- Specific work to be covered under each task
- The Planning Commission Role
- Timeframe for completion

The Planning Commission should discuss any changes to the draft work plan for staff to incorporate. Following this review, staff will update the draft work plan and bring an updated version for the Planning Commission to review at a future meeting for consideration of approval or additional edits.



**CITY OF WINOOSKI
PLANNING COMMISSION
FY 2021 WORK PLAN**

The City of Winooski's Planning Commission annually establishes a plan of work including tasks that will implement the 2019 City of Winooski Master Plan. The following is a list of tasks that will directly work towards implementation of the goals or strategies listed in the Master Plan. This document is organized in a narrative format that includes and Implementation Action with a summary about that action; timeline for implementation of the action, or key milestones as appropriate for the action; costs and potential funding sources if known; and specific goals and objectives from the Master Plan that will be met through the actions.

1. REVIEW AND UPDATE PARKING REGULATIONS AS APPROPRIATE

ACTION NARRATIVE

With the update to the Unified Land Use and Development Regulations in 2017, specific changes for the Gateway Zoning District were not included. One intent of the Gateway Zoning District was to promote a "park once" approach to land development and allow for reduced parking needs. Additionally, parking has been identified as a barrier to establishing affordable housing units. Parking regulations should be reviewed to determine any changes that may be appropriate. A draft parking waiver was presented to City Council in early 2020, but was ultimately voted down. With Council's denial of the parking waiver, they made the following motion:

Deny the parking waiver and direct the Planning Commission to review and revise the parking standards to support mixed use development density along the gateways as described in the City's Master Plan or identify incentives that would allow for reduced parking in exchange for development that is consistent with community identified needs such as additional affordable housing.

This action presents specific direction to the Planning Commission for elements to consider related to parking reforms. Ultimately, the Planning Commission will need to balance the parking needs of multiple land uses, while encouraging reductions in vehicle trips in favor of multi-modal transportation options.



PLANNING COMMISSION ROLE

The Planning Commission should review the existing parking requirements and previous draft documents (including the Gateway Zoning District) to identify potential amendments to the parking standards. This could include consultation with members of the development community to identify challenges that have been encountered in real-world situations. Additionally, the Planning Commission should evaluate alternative transportation options to determine if multimodal transportation alternatives may be necessary to support reduced parking requirements.

This discussion may also include additional incentives for relief from the parking regulations to achieve community priorities as noted in task 2. Work on this task will also be informed by the parking study that will be conducted as part of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's Unified Planning Work Program. While work on that effort is not expected to be completed until later next year, the Planning Commission should begin reviewing and identifying possible changes to the parking regulations with final proposals to be informed by the parking study.

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Land Use Goals & Objectives	4
Municipal Infrastructure Goals & Objectives	9

TIMELINE

Options or recommendations identified for possible updates by end of CY 2020

2. REVIEW AND EVALUATE INCENTIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

ACTION NARRATIVE

The Unified Land Use and Development Regulations include incentives to encourage affordable housing and energy efficiency in buildings. Both of these incentives are incorporated into the Gateway Zoning District. As the City's priorities change, the Planning Commission should evaluate the existing incentives to determine if they are relevant, or to explore what other incentives may be more effective at achieving the City's priorities.



PLANNING COMMISSION ROLE

As the City Council evaluates the community priorities, the Planning Commission should evaluate and access what incentives may be available to support or encourage these priorities. The current priorities and strategies as discussed by City Council include:

- Affordable Housing
- Historic Preservation
- Main Street Revitalization
- Multi-modal Transportation Improvements
- Parking reforms
- Parks & Open Space Planning

The Planning Commission should review the City Council priorities and strategies and evaluate incentives for implementation. These incentives may result in amendments to the land development regulations or include standalone regulations or guidelines as appropriate.

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Land Use Goals & Objectives	1, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12
Municipal Infrastructure Goals & Objectives	4, 7, 8, 9, 12
Safe, Healthy, Connected People Goals & Objectives	1, 3, 14,
Housing Goals & Objectives	1, 2, 6

TIMELINE

Evaluate development incentives and prioritize options early CY 2021.

3. GENERAL ZONING UPDATES

ACTION NARRATIVE

Staff has been working through edits and amendments to the Unified Land Use and Development Regulations for the past year. Many of these issues relate to missing or incorrect references; formatting issues; or limited details to provide guidance with interpretations. This work plan item will cover updates to the ULUDR that were discussed over the past year related to the Form Based Code, and include additional edits for clarity and reorganization of the regulations.



PLANNING COMMISSION ROLE

The Planning Commission should review draft changes to the Unified Land Use and Development Regulations to evaluate impacts to land development and ensure clarity to the regulations is being achieved. The Planning Commission will suggest edits or changes to the amendments before holding public hearings on the changes. Following public hearings, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation to Council regarding the amendments. This may be done as one comprehensive package or in smaller sections to better manage the process.

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Multiple Goals & Objectives will be addressed through this action

TIMELINE

Draft recommendations prepared and approved by the Planning Commission mid to late FY 2021.

4. SUPPORT EFFORTS TO DEVELOP HISTORIC PRESERVATION REGULATIONS

ACTION NARRATIVE

As land development activities continue throughout the City, interest in the preservation of Winooski's history has increased. In order to implement this action, several questions have been presented. Specifically:

- What does preservation mean to the City of Winooski?
- What resources exist within the community?
- What techniques should be implemented locally to best achieve the community's preservation goals?

In an effort to answer these questions, the City received funding through Municipal Planning Grant and has engaged the services of a consultant to conduct an inventory and analysis of the City's historic resources. As part of this effort, the consultant will provide recommendations to the City on how to best preserve and protect these resources.

PLANNING COMMISSION ROLE

Based on the results of the survey and recommendations from the consultant, the Planning Commission will evaluate the recommendations and determine the appropriate method to protect and preserve these resources. This may be through specific amendments to the Unified Land Use and Development Regulations, or standalone regulations specifically crafted for historic resource



preservation. The Planning Commission may also support this effort by hosting public meetings or input sessions as appropriate.

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Land Use Goals & Objectives	10, 11
Municipal Infrastructure Goals & Objectives	12

TIMELINE

Review recommendations and information following completion by the consultant. Estimated timeline early CY 2021.

DRAFT
v.1



Memorandum

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Eric Vorwald, AICP
Planning & Zoning Manager

RE: **Comparison of Draft Form Based Code Parking and Adopted Standards**

DATE: August 13, 2020

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Planning Commission with a comparison of the parking standards that were drafted in 2015 but not adopted as part of the Form Based Code, and the existing parking standards in the Unified Land Use and Development Regulations (ULUDR). This comparison should be used to inform the Planning Commission's discussions as they review the parking standards for the City and make recommendations on amendments. No action by the Planning Commission is required and this information is being provided for discussion purposes only.

Overview

In 2015, when the Form Based Code was drafted for the City, the draft included specific standards for parking. These standards would apply to the Gateway Zoning District and accommodate reduced levels of parking than are currently required for more traditional development. The intent of the specific parking regulations for the Gateway Zoning District is to shift the emphasis from vehicle trips to pedestrian trips. This is part of the initiative to create a more walkable, vibrant, and active street space that will support the development patterns outline in the code. These parking standards were never adopted as part of the Form Based Code, therefore the parking requirements in the Gateway Zoning District are consistent with a traditional development pattern that is designed to accommodate vehicles.

Sample Parking Calculations

In order to make a comparison between the 2015 draft parking and the adopted parking, a hypothetical building will need to be envisioned. For this exercise, we will consider a multi story mixed use development. This project will include 6,000 square feet of non-residential space on the first floor and 30 dwelling units on the upper stories consisting of studios, 1 bedroom units, and



2 bedroom units. The non-residential space will consist of 3,000 square feet of commercial/retail space, and 3,000 square feet of office space.

ADOPTED PARKING REGULATIONS PER SECTION 4.12			
USE	PARKING STANDARD	TOTAL SPACES	APPROXIMATE LOT COVERAGE¹
RESIDENTIAL 30 units – all less than 3 bedrooms	1 space per unit + .5 spaces for units with 3 or more bedrooms. 1 additional space for every 4 units (calculated in increments of 4)	37 spaces	5,994 square feet
OFFICE – 3,000 square feet	4 spaces per 1,000 square feet	12 spaces	1,944 square feet
COMMERCIAL – 3,000 square feet	3 spaces per 1,000 square feet	9 spaces	1,458 square feet
TOTAL BASE PARKING		58 spaces	9,346 square feet
ADMINISTRATIVE REDUCTIONS			
SHARED USE	Not eligible. Requires 10,000 square feet of non-residential space.		
TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES	10% reduction	5 spaces	810 square feet
OFF-SITE PARKING²	The greater of 20% or 10 spaces	11 spaces (20%)	1,782 square feet
ON-STREET FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL³	Customer or client portion only	5 spaces	N/A – existing roadway
GRAND TOTAL		37 spaces	6,754 square feet

- ¹ Assumes a parking space of 9' x 18' and does not include drive isles
- ² The maximum rate for off-site parking is assumed. The total required spaces would increase if off-site parking were not available or not available at the maximum rate.
- ³ On-street parking totals may be less based on specific uses or locations



2015 DRAFT FORM BASED CODE PARKING REGULATIONS – NOT ADOPTED			
USE	PARKING STANDARD	TOTAL SPACES	APPROXIMATE LOT COVERAGE⁴
RESIDENTIAL 30 units – all less than 3 bedrooms	.75 per unit .25 designated as shared parking	23 spaces 8 designated as shared use	3,726 square feet
OFFICE – 3,000 square feet	No requirement	N/A	N/A
COMMERCIAL – 3,000 square feet	No requirement	N/A	N/A
GRAND TOTAL		23 spaces	3,726 square feet

Next Steps

The Planning Commission should review this information and provide input on both sets of standards. As noted previously, this is being provided for informational purposes only and the Planning Commission is not reviewing this as a proposed amendment. As work on the parking study progresses over the next year, the Planning Commission will have additional opportunities to discuss parking standards. This information may also provide insights to the Planning Commission as we discuss incentives for development as described in Task 2 of the Draft FY 2021 Work Plan.

Attachments

Included with the agenda is the Draft parking standards for the Form Based Code dated July 27, 2015. For reference, only the sections in this attachment that are highlighted in yellow have been adopted as part of the regulations for the Gateway Zoning District. The standards for regulating the number of parking spaces in the Gateway Zoning District follow Section 4.12.

⁴ Assumes a parking space of 9' x 18' and does not include drive isles



Part 7. Parking and Loading Standards

701. Intent

These Gateway District standards are intended to:

- A. Promote a “park once” environment that will enable people to conveniently park and access a variety of commercial, residential, and civic enterprises in pedestrian friendly environments by encouraging shared parking.
- B. Reduce fragmented, uncoordinated, inefficient, reserved single-purpose parking.
- C. Avoid adverse parking impacts on neighborhoods adjacent to redevelopment areas.
- D. Maximize on-street parking.
- E. Provide flexibility for redevelopment of small sites and for the preservation of historic buildings.
- F. Increase visibility and accessibility of public parking.

702. Minimum Parking Requirements

- A. RESERVED PARKING: Reserved parking includes all parking that is not shared parking.
 - 1. COMMERCE/SHOP/CIVIC: There is no minimum requirement for RESERVED PARKING.
 - 2. RESIDENTIAL: A minimum of .75 parking space per residential unit shall be provided.
- B. Shared Parking:
 - 1. COMMERCE/Retail: There are no minimum shared parking requirements where the non-residential Gross Floor Area (GFA) is under 10,000 square feet. Sites over 10,000 square feet in non-residential GFA shall provide a minimum of 1.25 spaces per 1,000 square feet of non-residential GFA as shared parking.
 - 2. RESIDENTIAL: A minimum of .25 parking space per residential unit shall be provided as shared parking.
 - 3. Shared parking shall be designated by appropriate signage and markings (parking shall be clearly visible and accessible to the public) as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
- C. Achieving parking requirements:
 - 1. These parking requirements may be met either on-site or within a 600-foot walking distance of the development.
 - 2. Parking shall be located in compliance with the parking setback/regulations for the site on which it is located, as indicated on the REGULATING PLAN and/OR BUILDING ENVELOPE STANDARD.

D. Bicycle Parking:

1. Sites and/or projects over 10,000 square feet in land area have the following requirements:
2. For commerce, the developer must provide 1 employee bicycle parking rack (2- bike capacity) per 5,000 square feet of commercial floor area and 1 visitor/customer bicycle parking rack (2-bike capacity) per 10,000 square feet of commercial floor area. The employee and visitor racks may be co-located.
3. For residential, the developer must provide 1 tenant bicycle parking rack (2- bike capacity) per 10 units and 1 visitor bicycle parking rack (2-bike capacity) per 25 units. Projects under 10 units shall have no requirement.
4. Bicycle parking facilities shall be visible to intended users. The bicycle parking facilities shall not encroach on any area in the public right-of-way intended for use by pedestrians, nor shall they encroach on any required fire egress.
5. On-street bicycle parking spaces (typically along the STREET TREE ALIGNMENT LINE) may be counted toward the minimum customer/visitor bicycle parking requirement.

E. Permissive parking and loading facilities:

1. Nothing in this regulation shall be deemed to prevent the voluntary establishment of off-street parking or loading facilities to serve existing use of land or buildings, in accordance with all regulations herein governing the location, design, and operation of such facilities.

704. Special Parking Standards

A. Joint Parking

Sites abutting one another shall physically connect their surface parking areas at the lot line to create connecting drive aisles. This may be accomplished using COMMON DRIVES. Where such surface parking areas lie within 50 feet of one another, a mutual access easement acceptable to the Zoning Administrator shall be executed. Parking lot configurations existing (insert effective adoption date) are exempt from this requirement.

B. On-Street Parking

1. A parking space located on a public street may be included in the calculation of shared parking requirements if it is adjacent to the building site (where more than 50% of the space is fronting).
2. Each on-street parking space may only be counted once.

C. Off-Site Parking

1. Off-site parking must be located within a walking distance of 600-feet from the site it is serving.
2. The off-site parking must be the subject of a long-term lease approved as to form by the city attorney, or permanently dedicated for off-site parking use.

D. Tandem Parking

1. Tandem parking is only allowed for:
 - a. Single-family residential projects; and
 - b. Multifamily projects and the residential component of mixed-use projects.
2. Two parking spaces in tandem shall have a combined minimum dimension of 9 feet in width by 34 feet in length.
3. Up to 75 percent of the total required off-street parking spaces provided may incorporate tandem parking.
4. Tandem spaces shall be assigned to the same dwelling unit. Tandem parking shall not be used to provide guest parking.

705. Surface Parking Lot Plantings for New Development

- A. The edge of any surface parking lot adjacent to a STREET-SPACE shall be planted with canopy shade trees from the Tree Lists in *Part 5, Urban Space*, placed at an average distance not to exceed 30 feet on center and aligned parallel three to seven feet behind the RBL/STREET WALL.
- B. The edge of any surface parking lot adjacent to residential (detached) lots shall comply with *Part 4, Building Form Standards, D. Neighborhood Manners*.

706. Loading Facilities

- A. No loading facilities are required.
- B. Where loading facilities are provided, they shall be located to the rear and COMMON DRIVE side of buildings.

Memorandum

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Eric Vorwald, AICP
Planning & Zoning Manager

RE: **Land Use Regulations and Equity**

DATE: August 13, 2020

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Planning Commission with information related to the Unified Land Use and Development Regulations (ULUDR) and to consider an alternative approach that works to remove bias that may be built into these regulations. These biases are generally incorporated into the residential zoning districts, but may apply in other districts as well. This memo will also discuss current legislation that, if signed into law, would require changes to the ULUDR and generally align with and remove several standards that lead to inequity in the City's land use planning. The outcome would be regulations that provide a more equitable approach to land development and meet or exceed the proposed statutory requirements.

Overview

As land use regulations have been developed and refined in communities across the country, these regulations have traditionally been designed to segregate uses. This segregation of uses has been done, in part, to protect public health. For example, separating industrial uses from residential uses has often been done to limit health impacts on the residential areas from the byproducts of these industrial uses. These uses were often buffered with less intense uses such as commercial or offices. This has been the standard style zoning that has been in effect since the 1920's.

While zoning has been used as a tool to separate uses, it has also been used to separate people. This is most commonly seen in residential zoning that limits development to single unit dwellings and excludes multi-unit dwellings from the same district. The result has often been more affluent single unit homes on larger lots in desirable locations of a community. Similarly, affordable properties have been developed where land is cheaper; often in less desirable parts of the community or adjacent to non-residential uses. Over time, this pattern of development has resulted in a disproportionate share of rental units or smaller homes being clustered in specific areas of a community due to the zoning restrictions.



In an effort to establish regulations that are more inclusive of development types, the Planning Commission should review the land use regulations to identify regulations or standards that are perpetuating a divided community. This will typically focus on the standards for residential zoning districts, but could also include other regulatory standards, such as waivers, conditional uses, or parking requirements.

Senate Bill 237

In support of this review and evaluation of land use regulations, the Vermont Legislature has passed legislation that supports more inclusivity in residential zoning. Sometimes referred to as a “missing middle” housing bill, the Vermont Senate passed S.237 earlier this year. S.237 provides new requirements for municipalities related to residential development including lot sizes, dwelling unit types, and accessory dwelling unit (ADU) provisions. Several highlights include:

- Requiring lots sizes of 1/8 acre (5,400 square feet) where water and wastewater service is available
- Requiring equal review of single-unit development and two-unit development
- Increasing the minimum allowable size of an ADU
- Eliminating any conditional uses that rely on a “character of the area” test
- Mandating reduced parking when it is decoupled from a lease agreement

While this bill has been voted out of the full senate, it will still need to be reviewed and voted on by the house. Changes to the legislation could still occur, however the Planning Commission should be mindful of legislative actions that may require local changes to the land use regulations.

If the standards outlined in S.237 were to become law, the City’s ULUDR would need to be updated. Specifically, the following table provides a comparison between the existing residential zoning standards and the proposed legislation as they relate to the bulleted list above.



COMPARISON OF WINOOSKI RESIDENTIAL ZONING AND S.237				
	Residential A	Residential B	Residential C	Proposed Legislation
Minimum Lot Size	10,000 ft ²	7,500 ft ²	7,500 ft ²	5,400 ft ²
Uses	Single-unit only	Single-unit or two-unit		Up to four-units where residential uses are permitted
Maximum Units per Lot	2 units per lot		3 units per lot	No specified density directly identified
Parking	- 2 spaces per primary unit - 1 for accessory dwelling units			Each 1 space counts as two if leased separately from the unit and located within ½ mile of a transit stop
Size of Accessory Dwelling Unit	Cannot exceed 30% of primary dwelling			The greater of 30% of the primary dwelling or 900 ft ²
Character of the area	References throughout the regulations. Specific analysis of the "character of the area affected" included in the standards for conditional use review (Section 6.8). Other Sections with character area references include 2.8, 4.14, 5.7, 6.2, 6.3, 6.6, 6.8, Article IX, and Appendix B.			Character of the area cannot be a standard of review in conditional use review

NOTE: *The provisions outlined in the "Proposed Legislation" column are an interpretation based on the language in the official bill. Additional clarification on the intent of the bill may result in updates or amendments that change the impacts to municipal regulations.*

Options for Residential Zoning Districts

With the legislative impacts of S.237, the Planning Commission may want to consider options for how uses are regulated in residential zoning districts. Several options include:

1. Moving from a per unit limitation to lot coverage limits

Dimensional standards outlined in Section 2.5 currently include limitations on lot coverage. The total lot coverage could be adjusted to limit the overall footprint of a building rather than the number of units. The total unit count would be at the discretion of the property owner. Lot coverage would also need to account for parking and setbacks.



2. Allowing more residential uses by right

As the table above notes, two-unit developments are not permitted in the Residential A Zoning District, but are permitted in the other residential districts. Multi-unit structures (3 or more units) are not permitted in any residential zoning district even though the Residential C Zoning District currently permits up to three units per lot. Many properties in the City currently exceed the maximum dwelling unit count per lot, therefore they are considered pre-existing non-conforming uses.

Also, a detached cottage is only permitted as a conditional use. If the detached cottage meets the requirements of an accessory dwelling it can be permitted without conditional use approval, but requires additional review and consideration based on the owner occupancy requirement currently in place for an accessory dwelling. Even if the property is owner occupied, a detached cottage would be considered a conditional use if it exceeds 30% of the primary dwelling.

3. Combining or reducing the existing residential zoning districts

Currently the only difference between the Residential B and Residential C zoning districts is the total number of dwelling units permitted (2 versus 3 respectively). Both permit two-unit structures and neither permits multi-unit dwellings (defined as 3 or more units in a building). Both of these zoning districts have multiple properties that currently have 3, 4, or more dwelling units. It may be appropriate to consider combining these two districts into one or increasing the number of units permitted.

4. Revising the ULUDR, specifically the standards for conditional use, to remove any references to "character of the area"

As noted above, the "character of an area" is an ambiguous term that is often used to limit uses that result in more housing opportunities. S.237 removes this as a metric for reviewing applications, therefore the City should similarly consider removing this from the ULUDR. The character of an area is truly in the eye of the beholder and cannot be measured. Similar to basing decisions on "quality of life" metrics, there is no quantifiable measurement for this standard that can apply universally.

Next Steps

The Planning Commission should discuss these approaches and determine if there is interest in taking a proactive approach to amendments that will reduce the inequities that exist in the ULUDR and provide more opportunities for housing throughout the City.

