

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. D(1)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: February 5, 2001

TITLE: Report on On-Street and Off-Street Parking on Pine, Cheek, & Oak Streets

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| DEPARTMENT: PLANNING | PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___ NO ___ X ___ |
| ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution B. Map Showing Pine, Oak, and Cheek Streets C. Applicable Town Code Sections D. Residential Traffic Management Plan | FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Dale McKeel – 918-7329 |

PURPOSE

On October 9, 2001, as part of discussions of issues associated with new development on Pine Street, the Board of Aldermen requested a staff analysis of on-street and off-street parking on Pine, Cheek, and Oak streets. A report has been prepared. A resolution that accepts the report is recommended for the Board's adoption (Attachment A).

INFORMATION

The Board of Aldermen requested that the parking analysis address whether parking should be allowed on both sides of the streets versus on one side only; the maximum number of cars that could park in both cases; and how many parking spaces exist for each house.

The Board of Aldermen also requested that Town staff obtain models from other university communities on permit systems and the maximum number of parking spaces allowed per unit. This information will be provided in another report at a later date.

Pine, Oak, and Cheek streets (see Attachment B) are residential streets that have a pavement width of 20 feet and do not have curb and gutter or sidewalks. Chapter 6 of the Town Code sets a speed limit of 25 mph and prohibits "thru trucks" on these streets. Pine Street was the first street in Carrboro on which traffic calming devices (speed humps) were installed. Traffic counts taken in recent years show the following traffic volumes:

| <i>Street</i> | <i>Vehicles Per Day</i> | <i>Date of Count</i> | <i>85th Percentile Speed*</i> |
|---------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Pine Street | 903 | September 2001 | 24.8 mph |
| Oak Street. | 396 | March 1998 | 37.2 mph |
| Cheek Street | 370 | March 1999 | 37.7 mph |

* 85th percentile speed is "the speed at or below which 85 percent of the vehicles are moving."

On-Street Parking

Section 6 of the Carrboro Town Code regulates on-street parking (see Attachment C). The town code restricts parking on one or both sides of certain streets; however, parking is currently allowed on both sides of Pine, Oak, and Cheek streets. This section also prohibits on-street parking in certain locations, such as in front of driveways; within 15 feet of an intersection or a fire hydrant; and within 30 feet of a stop sign at an intersection.

The staff has used the town's GIS system to estimate the number of on-street parking spaces on Pine, Oak, and Cheek streets. This estimate was made by determining how many standard vehicular parking spaces could fit onto each street, taking into account driveways and other "no parking" areas. The following chart provides estimates of the number of vehicles that could be parked on one side and on both sides of these streets:

| <i>Street</i> | <i>On-Street Spaces – Both Sides</i> | <i>On-Street Spaces – One Side</i> |
|---------------|--|--|
| Pine Street | 110 to 115 | 55 to 60 |
| Oak Street. | 115 to 120 | 60 to 65 |
| Cheek Street | 100 to 105 | 50 to 55 |

Note that many parts of Pine, Oak, and Cheek streets do not have an adequate shoulder for vehicles to pull completely off the road when parking. If cars were parked on both sides of these streets, there might be some places where the street would be narrowed to one lane or blocked completely.

In February 1997, the Board of Aldermen considered a change to Chapter 6 of the Town Code to prohibit on-street parking on both sides of all streets less than 26 feet wide. This restriction would have applied to Pine, Oak, and Cheek streets. This proposal was generally supported by the Police, Fire, and Public Works Departments, due to concerns that on-street parking on narrow streets can reduce emergency response time, hinder garbage and snow-plow operations, and damage and erode the shoulder on streets that lack curb and gutter.

At the public hearing, citizens and a representative of the Transportation Advisory Board had several concerns and suggestions regarding the proposal. For example, one citizen suggested that the proposal was too drastic in that it affected all of the narrower streets in Carrboro, rather than focusing on streets where on-street parking was causing chronic problems. The proposed amendment was not adopted and was sent back to staff and the Transportation Advisory Board for further consideration.

Off-Street Parking

The Carrboro Town Code also requires that developments have off-street parking (see Attachment C). For instance, the code requires at least two off-street spaces for a single-family home. The staff has used the GIS system to estimate the amount of off-street parking that is available in the driveways along Pine, Oak, and Cheek streets, as follows:

| <i>Street</i> | <i>Off-Street Driveway Parking Spaces</i> |
|---------------|---|
| Pine Street | 140 |
| Oak Street. | 190 |
| Cheek Street | 155 |

These numbers represent an estimate of the maximum number of parking spaces in driveways on these streets. It is likely that these maximums would not be achieved in typical everyday situations. For instance, it is possible that as many as 17 vehicles could park in one loop driveway on Pine Street, but many of the vehicles would be blocked in and could not exit unless other vehicles were moved. These estimates also do not include any parking spaces in garages or carports, nor do they include overflow parking in front, rear, or side yards.

Most of the driveways on Pine, Oak, and Cheek streets can hold from three to seven vehicles. It appears that all of the properties along these streets provide the minimum number of parking spaces required by the land use ordinance; almost all the properties exceed the minimum.

An amendment to require more off-street parking for homes on narrower streets was considered by the Board of Aldermen in February 1997. This amendment would have required houses built on narrower streets (less than 26 feet in width) to have off-street parking for at least four vehicles. Several citizens, home builders, and the Transportation Advisory Board voiced concerns about the proposal. Home builders stated that the requirement would require removal of more trees, add impervious surface, and affect housing affordability. The proposed amendment was not adopted and was sent back to staff and the Transportation Advisory Board for further consideration.

DISCUSSION

- The Town of Carrboro's Residential Traffic Management Plan provides an opportunity for residents to petition for parking restrictions on a street. A petition must be signed by at least 75 percent of the property owners or residents on the street. The petition is reviewed by the Transportation Advisory Board and a final decision is made by the Board of Aldermen.
- The Fire Department, Police Department, and Public Works Department have voiced support for on-street parking restriction on narrower streets, and have noted particular concerns with on-street parking on Pine Street. This is due to concerns about reductions in emergency response times and maintenance, environmental, and aesthetic concerns regarding eroding street shoulders.
- The Police Department has been closely monitoring calls from Pine Street since September, and has not received any complaints related to parking since then.
- Proponents of traditional neighborhood design state that on-street parking can be used as part of a strategy to reduce motorist speed through "side friction" (that is, parked vehicles narrow

the field of vision, causing many motorists to lower their speed accordingly). Pine, Oak, and Cheek streets lack sidewalks, however, and additional on-street parking could also reduce the visibility of pedestrians to motorists.

- The speed humps on Pine Street have been effective in calming traffic speeds. The most recent data show that most vehicles on Pine Street are traveling below the 25 mph posted speed limit.
- The Board of Aldermen has created a pedestrian task force that will begin work in the coming weeks. As part of its work, the task force will evaluate the need for pedestrian facilities in existing neighborhoods, explore means for funding these facilities, and establish priority needs with guidance from the Board of Aldermen.

RECOMMENDATION

The Administration recommends that the Board of Aldermen adopt the resolution (Attachment A) receiving this report. Until such time as residents petition for changes to on-street parking provisions, no action is needed.