

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. D(1)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: February 5, 2008

TITLE: Continued Discussion of an Ordinance Amending the Carrboro Land Use Ordinance to Modify Foot Candle Limitations in B-1(c) and B-1(g) Districts and Parking Space Dimensions

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING	PUBLIC HEARING: YES _ NO _X
ATTACHMENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Resolution finding consistencyB. Resolution finding inconsistencyC. Draft ordinanceD. LUO Amendment Request FormE. LUO Sections 15-243 and 15-293F. Comments and Recommendations	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Patricia McGuire – 918-7327 Michael Brough – 929-3905

PURPOSE

The Board of Aldermen has held a public hearing on a draft ordinance that modifies maximum light levels in two downtown zoning districts and reduces parking space length throughout Town. Staff has finalized the language regarding illumination at the interface between residential properties and the B-1(c) and B-1(g) zoning districts.

INFORMATION

On January 22nd, the Board of aldermen held a public hearing to consider a request from Laura van Sant to amend the text of the Land Use Ordinance. During the presentation, staff requested additional time to finalize the language characterizing where additional illumination would be allowed. There were no citizen comments other than Ms. van Sant replying to a question gauging her interest in the Board deciding on the request in conjunction with consideration of comprehensive lighting ordinance revisions. The draft ordinance has been modified to clarify those lot lines in the B-1(c) and B-1(g) districts where additional illumination would not be permitted (*Attachment C*). Such locations are as follows:

- (1) Where such lot lines separate properties zoned B-1(c) or B-1(g) from properties zoned residential;
- (2) If and to the extent that properties zoned residential lie directly across a street from the lot lines of properties zoned B-1(c) or B-1(g);
- (3) Where such lot lines separate properties zoned B-1(c) or B-1(g) from properties that are not zoned residential but that are used for residential purposes and were so used on the effective date of this subsection.

There has been no change to the section of the draft ordinance that reduces the minimum length of a parking space from 19 to 18 feet.

Background – provided for January 22, 2008 Public Hearing

Summary of the request. The request seeks an exception to the .2 footcandle requirement for outdoor lighting in the B-1(c) and B-1(g) and to reduce the parking space length from 19 to 18 feet (*Attachment D*). The current requirements are specified in Sections 15-243 (a) and 15-293(d) of the Land Use Ordinance (*Attachment E*). A draft ordinance that responds to this request has been prepared (*Attachment C*).

Existing and proposed ordinance provisions

Footcandle limitations. The Land Use Ordinance currently includes requirements for sufficient light to ensure safety and limitations on excessive illumination so as to prevent harming nighttime vision of drivers on adjacent streets and otherwise harmful impacts to nearby residents and property. The current requirement of .2 footcandles at the property line was added in 1999 as part of the “good neighbor performance standards” recommended to implement the *Facilitated Plan for Carrboro’s Northern Study Area*. Footcandle is the unit of measurement for light, with one footcandle representing the amount of light emitted from one candle at a distance of one foot away. The maximum .2-footcandles at the property line represents light equivalent to two/tenths of one candle at a distance of one foot from a candle. As a point of reference, the NC Fire Code, 2006 edition, requires exit lighting to provide a minimum of 1 foot-candle (approximately 11 lux) at the floor level. There are exceptions for auditoriums, theaters and concert halls where performances are conducted to decrease the level to .2 foot-candle (2.15 lux) provided that required illumination comes on immediately when an emergency occurs.

A sample of other local governments footcandle limits is provided below:

	FC Limit adjacent to res	FC Limit adjacent to non- res
Chapel Hill, NC	.3	.3
Durham, NC	.5	5
Salisbury, NC	.1	.1
Raleigh, NC	.5	2
Brighton Township, Michigan	.5	1
Goodyear, Arizona	.8	2
Longmont, Colorado	.1	na
Pueblo, Colorado	.1 fc (20 feet from property boundary)	Same as for residential

A range in the limits is apparent, some of which are consistent with the Town’s footcandle limitations at the property line. Some local governments have found that limits on maximum illumination and shielding requirements for light fixture sufficiently limit excess light. These approaches tend to be more straightforward to administer by applicants and staff. Staff notes that more comprehensive draft lighting provisions are awaiting review by staff. Staff hopes to begin work on this review by mid-year, pending completion of other environmental initiatives and posting

by the International Dark Sky Association of its updated Model ordinance, which is not available at the present time. In light of these factors, staff notes that the Board of Aldermen could delay action on the request to increase footcandle limitations. Should the Board wish to act on the request, a limiting condition has been included in the draft ordinance. This text states that the footcandle limitation is increased at those lot boundary locations in the B-1(c) and B-1(g) that are not adjacent to residential property (either zoned or used or residential purposes). In those locations, the footcandle limit will remain at .2. The applicant has not objected to the limitation.

Reduction in parking space length. Report on average car length indicates an overall reduction in automobile sizes since 1990, though within certain classes, vehicles sizes have increased. Currently, the average car length is 16.5 feet, with the average large SUV measuring nearly a foot longer (17.3 feet) (source: Edmunds.com). A survey of parking space dimensions from other local government land use regulations revealed a narrow range of parking space lengths were specified. Parking space lengths in local, pre-cast parking decks were also collected. These data are provided in the tables below.

Location	Parking space length, 90 angle
Toronto, Ontario	18.5 feet
Ann Arbor, Michigan	18
Durham, NC	18
Arlington, Virginia	18
Clark County, Nevada	18
Chapel Hill, NC	18.5

Parking space lengths in local pre-cast parking decks.

Location	Parking space length
Durham Bulls	18
Marriott	18
Ramshead	18
Craig	18
Rosemary Street - TOCH	18

The results of these inquiries suggest that a reduction in the Town's parking space length is not inconsistent with standards used in other locations and would provide a space sufficiently long to contain many passenger and work vehicles. Clearly, some vehicles will be longer than the minimum space length. Any inconveniences associated with this result may be weighed against the benefits, including: economic (lower land, construction, stormwater management costs due to reduced area); environmental (reduced impervious surface/stormwater); and opportunity (land area devoted to parking in the downtown is not available for other uses). Staff notes that the ordinance provision as it exists and as it is proposed for amendment establishes a minimum dimension for the length of parking spaces throughout the town. Changes to the parking aisle widths are not proposed. Staff notes the following action options:

Action Options

- 1) Make no changes to the existing Land Use Ordinance provisions associated with footcandle limitations and parking space length.
- 2) Adopt as proposed both provisions of the draft ordinance.
- 3) Adopt only change to parking space dimension, holding off on changes to lighting in relation to comprehensive changes to lighting.

The draft ordinance was referred to the Planning Board, Economic Sustainability Commission, Environmental Advisory Board, Transportation Advisory Board, and Orange County staff for review and/or recommendations. Comments and recommendations have been received from the Planning Board, TAB and Orange County and are attached (*Attachment F*).

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact has been identified in association with the proposed ordinance changes.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen adopt the resolution (*Attachment A*) finding the draft ordinance consistent with adopted policy and the draft ordinance (*Attachment C*).