

SUBJECT: A report and recommendation on a proposed map amendment to add Urban Parking Overlay District #2: “Camp Washington”, as outlined in § 1425-04 - Urban Parking Overlay Districts in the Cincinnati Zoning Code, to a portion of Camp Washington.

ATTACHMENTS:

Provided, in addition to this report, are the following attachments:

- Exhibit A – Location Map
- Exhibit B – Request for an Urban Parking Overlay District from Camp Washington Community Board
- Exhibit C – Letter of Support from Camp Washington Community Council
- Exhibit D – Letter of Opposition from Christopher Cain

BACKGROUND:

On August 7, 2013, Cincinnati City Council approved Ordinance 259-2013 for text amendments to the Cincinnati Zoning Code (CZC) to modify Chapter 1411, “Downtown Development Districts” and Chapter 1425, “Parking and Loading Regulations” to reduce the minimum parking requirements for residential uses in the Downtown neighborhood of Cincinnati and to create Urban Parking Overlay Districts to make it possible for City Council to eliminate minimum parking requirements in the areas it determines to be appropriate. § 1425-04 of the CZC, that allows City Council to establish Urban Parking Overlay Districts within which the provisions of Sections 1425-03, 1425-05, 1425-07, 1425-09, 1425-11, 1425-13, 1425-17, 1425-19, 1425-21, and 1425-23 of the Zoning Code, do not apply.

In early 2019, Camp Washington requested a zone change in the southern portion of their Neighborhood Business District (NBD) to Urban Mix to fulfill a recommendation of the recently approved *Made in Camp* (2018) plan to create a mixed-use NBD (p.11). During the zone change process, Urban Parking Overlay District no. 1: “Walkable Urban Core” was being established in Downtown, Over-the-Rhine, Pendleton, and portions of Mount Auburn and West End. Seeing this, Camp Washington leaders and some property owners expressed interest in potentially applying an Urban Parking Overlay District (UPOD) in a portion of Camp Washington.

On March 1, 2021, the Camp Washington Community Board formally requested an Urban Parking Overlay District, along with a map of the desired boundary (Exhibit B). The proposal is to create Urban Parking Overlay District #2, “Camp Washington”, in a portion of Camp Washington, as an overlay district to eliminate all off-street parking requirements in the area within the Overlay District, except for the physical location of parking, should any be provided.

The boundary, which was requested by the Camp Washington Community Board as shown in Exhibit B, contains all of the non-Manufacturing General zoning that isn’t I-75 right-of-way, with the exception of Planned Development 39 (PD-39) and Planned Development 90 (PD-90). It also includes the northwest corner of Spring Grove Avenue and Hopple Street as these buildings have commercial or residential character.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

A public staff conference was held on May 18, 2021. Notice was sent to every property owner in the proposed Urban Parking Overlay District, along with the Camp Washington Community Board and Camp Washington Community Council. Eight members of the public attended the public staff conference. Everyone was generally in support of the proposal, including some business owners who were waiting for this proposal to go through before making additional investments in the neighborhood. There were questions as to what might happen for residential property that does not have off-street parking, as Camp Washington continues to revitalize. The Camp

Washington Community Board stated they are working on a public parking lot for the Camp Washington Neighborhood Business District (NBD), which should help. The UPOD could be modified or eliminated based on the wishes of the neighborhood or combined with other programs, such as residential permit parking.

Staff has also received several emails phone calls on this proposal. The correspondence received has either been in support of the proposal or questions as to why a notice was sent and how the proposal would affect the property owner. Staff did receive one letter of opposition, which is attached as Exhibit D.

ANALYSIS:

The existing parking regulations do not promote a high-density, walkable, pedestrian-friendly, and mixed-use environment, as well as a strong sense of character of place. Lifting existing parking requirements can help create and maintain the urban form desired in Camp Washington, which is an area of higher density, established before both automobiles and zoning regulations were common practice.

Under existing regulations, the minimum parking requirements for much of Camp Washington are already effectively eliminated or severely reduced. For all commercial uses in Camp Washington, the first 2,000 square feet of gross floor area is exempt from the parking requirements and may be further reduced or eliminated if within 600 feet of existing parking.

Camp Washington contains a high-density, mixed-use urban environment that promotes and encourages walkability and provides the foundation for a healthy and attractive neighborhood. *Plan Cincinnati* (2012) supports the enhancement and increase of compact and walkable development, as does *Made in Camp* (2018). This is a desirable goal that will promote larger societal goals, such as environmental and fiscal sustainability, equity, small business development, and preservation of historic architecture.

The proposed elimination of minimum off-street parking requirements removes an obstacle to the redevelopment of the Camp Washington, reutilization of existing buildings, and the conversion of buildings to more productive uses.

CONSISTENCY WITH PLANS:

Plan Cincinnati (2012) recommends, in the short range, to “Revise the City’s Building and Zoning Codes [...] with standards that emphasize traditional neighborhood development over suburban development” (p. 157) and to “Develop changes to zoning regulations to remove barriers to the adaptive reuse of buildings” (p. 197).

Made in Camp (2018) recommends to “Do something dramatic to jumpstart the business district” (p.19) and to “analyze parking requirements and make necessary changes” (p. 23).

The existing minimum parking regulations emphasize suburban development patterns, obstruct the renovation and rehabilitation of existing buildings, and endanger the urban fabric and historic character of the city, by attempting to provide parking for all vehicles, contrary to the recommendations of these plans.

CONCLUSIONS:

Minimum parking requirements are not designed to promote a high-density, walkable, pedestrian-friendly, and mixed-use environment, as well as a strong sense of character of place. The Camp Washington Community Board made the request, and the Camp Washington Community Council has provided a letter of support. *Made in Camp* (2018) and *Plan Cincinnati* (2012) do not support minimum parking requirements in urban neighborhoods. The existing parking requirements within the neighborhood are already relaxed, therefore eliminating them would not result in a significantly adverse impact to Camp Washington.

RECOMMENDATION:


The staff of the Department of City Planning recommends that the City Planning Commission take the following action:

APPROVE the proposed map amendment to add Urban Parking Overlay District #2: “Camp Washington”, as outlined in § 1425-04 - Urban Parking Overlay Districts in the Cincinnati Zoning Code, to a portion of Camp Washington.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Approved:


Katherine Keough-Jurs, AICP, Director
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