

**CENTER CITY ADMINISTRATIVE DELAY AD HOC COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

FEBRUARY 10, 2022

The Center City Administrative Delay Ad Hoc Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in the Executive Conference Room of the Norman Municipal Building, 201 West Gray Street, on the 10th day of February, 2022.

Notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Norman Municipal Building and online at <https://www.normanok.gov/your-government/public-information/agendas-and-minutes> 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilmember Lee Hall
Councilmember Steven Tyler Holman
Keith McCabe
Jim Adair
Richard McKown
Autumn McMahon

MEMBERS ABSENT

Councilmember Matthew Peacock

A quorum was present.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Jane Hudson, Director of Planning & Community Development
Lora Hoggatt, Planning Services Manager
Logan Hubble, Planner I
Colton Wayman, Planner I
Anais Starr, Planner II
Rone' Tromble, Admin. Tech. IV
Beth Muckala, Assistant City Attorney
Todd McLellan, Development Engineer
Sara Kaplan, Retail Marketing Coordinator

Councilmember Hall called the meeting to order at 11:36 a.m.

1. WELCOME

Councilmember Hall – Before we get started, I want to make sure we all understand rules of engagement for these committee meetings, because we got a little off track last time. If you would like to be recognized to speak, please just give us a little hand signal. I promise I want everybody to be able to have plenty of time to interact and get as much feedback as we can, but we also need to make sure we're not interrupting each other. Because we're on such a strict timeline, we'll reserve any public comments for the very, very end if we have anybody that would like to make a comment.

2. DISCUSSION OF REFORMULATION OF PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Ms. Hudson – I know all of you are familiar with the Center City area. We've all talked about the frustration with the parking – not enough parking, too much paving, parking in the street. What I'm looking at is, for the residential – the true commercial uses would essentially stay the same, within the document it talks about that there's really no parking requirements for the urban storefront and some areas along Gray and Flood and stuff like that. I'm looking at the areas that we've struggled with so far. One parking space per bedroom – and when I say one parking space per bedroom, that means you can have a kitchen, you can have a livingroom, and after that you're looking at a parking space per bedroom. I believe that this can be done. I believe that this will get the property owners that are parking on-site being accountable for their residents on the property. I know some of these places are extensions of the Greek organizations at the University of Oklahoma. We require a fraternity or sorority to have one parking space per sleeping accommodation, because many of the fraternities and sororities you have two bedrooms, maybe three – and you have 300 beds in those. They have to account for their parking without negatively impacting the adjacent property owners. The Center City area continues to develop at a high density, which is what we want. It creates the additional residents within the area. Long term – I'm talking 10 years from now, 20 years from now, as this area has continued to developed out – when we get our rail, when we get additional transit – these areas in the back – the parking lot areas for these residential units – when we have adequate transit available, possibly we get a parking garage – this was written with the idea that we were going to have a parking garage, one of the reasons why the parking calculations are what they are. We're not getting the parking garage right now. It doesn't mean we can't change this later. Those parking lots in the back could be utilized for an ADU when they don't need that additional parking back there. You could have essentially a true garage apartment with the parking underneath, so they could utilize that parking back there and then the other residents might be parking in a parking garage – they may not bring a car because we do have such a robust transit system at that time. They may walk over to the rail and catch that and go to Oklahoma City where their job is. We've talked about that many times – how we want to have this area available for those young professionals that are going to go up to the City. But at this time where we are right now, I think that we, City staff, as a community, we owe this area – we need to be responsible for the parking that's in this area, and I think the only way we can do that is to get a parking space per bedroom for these developments as they come forward. I don't look at it as a punishment. I know some people might look at it as a punishment. I look at it as taking care of the adjacent neighborhoods, and the adjacent property owners that are still within that neighborhood that do have a single-family home and a garage apartment. I just think that's the direction that we need to go with this.

Mr. Adair – Center City Round 2, my recollection is we very quickly changed the parking requirement from what it was in the original concept. What was it originally; what is it now? You're talking about one per bedroom now; I can understand that. But what does the current code say and what did the original Center City?

Ms. Hudson – Jim, I'm sorry, I don't have the original. What we've got is – we've put in the requirement that more than 3 bedrooms per dwelling unit, we must provide 1 parking

space per bedroom on-site. Now, that excluded the Urban General, which we're getting the same thing in Urban General that we're getting in the blue Townhouse/Small Apartment. We're not getting anything different. Logan talked about that at the last meeting. We're getting a lot of applications that are 3 bedroom dwelling units with a den, or a game room, or something with a cased opening that can easily be converted into another bedroom. So even when they're developing these sites and they say they've got 3 bedrooms per dwelling unit, if they go back and they convert the other one to a bedroom, we're just putting more residents on that lot.

Mr. Adair – So right now, if they're properly, or improperly, doing 3 bedrooms, they don't have a parking requirement?

Ms. Hudson – It's based on square footage. Up to 650 square feet for .5 spaces; 650-1,000 is 1 space.

Mr. Adair – Functionally, on the 3-story plus applications you're seeing now, how much parking is with that?

Mr. Hubble – When it's based on the square footage, it's definitely less than 1 per bedroom. What we had talked about was doing 1 per bedroom plus multi-purpose room. Like she said, they get a livingroom and a kitchen – they don't have to provide a parking spot for those, but they do for a study or whatever, plus every bedroom.

Mr. Adair – I'm not trying to go in a direction where I'm opposed to what Jane is suggesting. I do want us to look at what it does to the density. I am assuming they're putting everything on the lot they can put on it today with the current parking requirements. I just want us to be aware of that.

Mr. McCabe – What we're seeing is when we develop in that area, anything with multiple stories – multiple units, they're passing – they're getting the pervious parking lots built. Then they start parking in the yard, the grass, whatever. That's not being enforced – and that's nobody's fault, but it's not being enforced. We've discussed – and this might be a little bit out of the box – we've discussed about off-street parking. So when I developed Eddington Street, and I did the off-street parking – I know my money doesn't concern you, but when I paid \$15,000 to do off-street parking and then I can't count that toward my house – I can't reserve that toward my house, but it's still my \$15,000. But we're only able to do this in sections, because we don't own the whole street. Maybe we could think outside the box, allow a builder/developer to pay for and develop the off-street parking, utilize that for their residents, and then as we gain more down the street, maybe we can change it, just like you said – if we get the transit, that would help. But that would be parking that they could count toward their unit, because they're paying for it. So that's just an idea of something that we haven't allowed yet. Maybe we should talk about that.

Mr. Adair – Keith, I want to be sure I understand what you're saying is off-street. You're talking cutting curbs back?

Mr. McCabe – The curb back from the City street to the City sidewalk, which is actually City easement.

Mr. Adair – And would be public parking.

Mr. McCabe – It is right now. But I do that, but I pay for that, and I don't get to count that toward my parking.

Mr. Adair – Is there a possibility of including that in the TIF in some manner?

Mr. McCabe – In reality, and in all honesty, an impervious surface of a parking spot 8' wide by 19' is bigger than 2 bedrooms in a lot of these houses. A bedroom to be legal is 70-80 sq. ft. is the smallest you can build. So that's 2 bedrooms I'm giving up for a parking spot. Parking spots don't pay rent; bedrooms do. And I will say this publicly, every piece of property I own has a parking spot per room, because I believe in that. I don't let my kids park in my yards. That infuriates me. But maybe if we consider looking at this off-street parking to help alleviate some of that. Even if we do it and then I rent it back from you, the way we've done stoops, the way we've done different things that sit in the City property – maybe I build it and rent it back from you. Then at least let me count that for my house. Just an idea.

Councilmember Holman – I agree with a lot of that. We've seen a few examples of that on Monnett and on Apache – specifically at Apache and Santa Fe. We've seen the inlet parking. We've seen it on James Garner. I am definitely much more in favor of increasing the on-street parking like that than I am with adding more parking spaces to these individual lots. I don't want half of these lots to be a parking lot. I want more people than I want more parking. I understand and agree with the concerns, but I would almost rather us more aggressively enforce the parking than just try to solve it by having more parking. If we have a parking person that's out there every single day – 5, 6 days a week. We have 2 and it's 7 days a week and it's all day, and if you park in the grass you're going to have a ticket and it's going to be expensive. Or you're going to get towed out of there and it's going to be even more expensive. That's what I think other cities do that have very dense areas. They don't build more parking. They say this is the parking and this is how we're going to enforce it very aggressively. I would like for the street parking to count as – like Main Street and Campus Corner, all of the parking downtown counts as all the parking downtown. So anybody can use it. I think if we can have these individual builders build that parking in the right-of-way and then that count toward their – anybody can maybe park there – the residents may not be guaranteed to be able to park right there. But if every one of these streets has parallel parking in the inlet like that, and we look at the totality of all the parking in the Center City area, I think and enforcement, to me, would be more desirable than just requiring that there be parking spaces everywhere.

Ms. Hudson – I have a question I need clarification on this. Are you saying that when someone develops a piece of property, you want them to be required to put the cut-back parking in?

Councilmember Holman – Not required, but if they do that would satisfy a parking requirement.

Mr. McCabe – It could handle two of your spots.

Councilmember Hall – But it's not guaranteed for your residents.

Mr. McCabe – But it's not guaranteed. If I may, part of our problem is with what we deal with daily, it's not just our tenants. It is the University of Oklahoma kids that don't park on the parking, so I find them in my lots – in my empty lots. My own kids are calling me saying I can't even park in my own spot. Then after 5:00 it clears out after school. So we are essentially the University of Oklahoma – and that's not a bad thing. That's why we're here. But we're the University of Oklahoma's parking lot for the kids who don't pay the \$200 a year parking pass.

Councilmember Hall – I think one of the other unintended consequences, back to your point, of round 2, is we've tried to address the previous unintended consequences by looking at greater than 3 bedrooms. One of the unintended consequences of that fix has been just what Ms. Hudson described, where we know before a project is even under construction that we don't have adequate parking as described in the form-based code because of this issue of converting spaces to bedrooms later. We're already not in compliance right now. That was a fix that has had some unexpected and unintended consequences, and I think that's really what we're trying to address. I think that's just the reality that we have to deal with.

Councilmember Holman – I just want to mention, too, the one that was done on Apache and Santa Fe is parallel parking. It's not blocking the street and there's still enough greenspace between it and the sidewalk that there's trees planted. We want the tree-lined streets. This one is the best example that I've seen of how to do it, as far as the parallel parking. But that's what I'd like to see is more of that block-by-block – that off-site or street parking could be counted toward that, even if it's not reserved specifically for that. In front of my house, my driveway is a single width. I have a downstairs neighbor, and my girlfriend and I both have cars. I actually have 2 cars – one that's old and over heats if I drive it too long, so it sits in the driveway. But the whole one side of my street allows parking and there's enough for 2 cars to park in front of my house. A lot of times I'm able to park my truck there, but a lot of times I'm not – it's taken by a student. Now, when school is out, my truck will be the only car parked on the street. So my house doesn't technically have enough parking, but it does if you look at the totality of the parking. Sometimes I might have to drive one block over and I can park somewhere. That's the path I'd like us to go toward, more than just having more on-site surface parking lots.

Ms. McMahan – I just want to say that I 100% agree with that assessment, and I think that if you're looking at the quality of life in that area, people parking on the grass – if we could enforce something like, especially if you're looking at game days and the number of people – multiple properties that we have, we have to basically employ a tow truck company every single game day because our tenants can't park there. I think that

would add so much value overall to address not just our density issues, which in my opinion, having fewer parking spaces per property naturally will increase some higher-level tenants, in my opinion – people who are a little bit older, maybe not college students. I think it's a great solution. Again, to your point, something that we overlooked in round 2.

Mr. Adair – Two things. Is it within our purview – are we going to talk about the expenditure of TIF funds? Prioritization of public improvements. Obviously, you've got street improvements. I'm sure, with Councilman Holman and I in the room, we will talk about alleys. Public Works is going to want to talk about sewer and water and, obviously, drainage is on everybody's mind. There's a lot of things on this platter. With The Noun, we're now finally getting some real money into the TIF to do something with. If they're looking at major street reconstructions or overlays – the City may incorporate some widening into their scenarios. The other thing that we've flirted with in the past but never really gotten into is parking permits. How much are you going to upset every homeowner in there if every homeowner gets 2 parking permits – we start a black market in parking permits, which is probably fine. Again, an additional enforcement tool.

Councilmember Holman – I don't think we built that on Apache and Santa Fe – I don't think the City built that parallel parking. Did the developer? Well, there's 2 separate buildings, I guess. But the developer would have, I assume, paid to build that. We could look at using TIF funds to do that, but I think if a builder is willing to do that to help count toward their thing, that would be cost effective from our side.

Councilmember Hall – The other thing that I think goes into this conversation is just, again, assumptions when this code was written originally that there was going to be a parking structure possibly coming on-line. We have some narrative in here, too, about how far away you can provide for parking – like 1,000 feet away, or something like that. Is that right? So that's still sitting in here as an assumption that is not our current reality, either. Then, as to parking permits, I think one of the other discussions that we had in round 2, in the previous ad hoc committee, was just the notion of if parking is such a premium in this area, should we pay to park there? With the lack of a parking structure, are we aware of anybody that actually has a shared parking agreement?

Councilmember Holman – One of the big things about the Center City is there's at least 3 very large – well, if you count the one by The Noun – there's at least 4 very large parking lots, 3 of which are church parking lots, which are empty most of the time. On my street on College, the Lambda Chi Fraternity is at the end of the street on Lindsey and College and they pretty much have no parking. They have a little bit on the front and a little bit on the side. They have no parking lot at all. They used to park behind the apartments that are next door that are abandoned, but 2 years ago the owner of those apartments decided to fence off the back and not let anybody park back there anymore. So the Lutheran Church across the street has a parking lot on College that's pretty large and is empty most of the time, and they sell semester permits to any student maybe, but to the Lambda Chi Fraternity people, I guess, as long as they want to park there on Sunday morning – that's how they do it. The churches, you know, were involved in the Center City charrettes and there was a lot of discussion about their parking lots and the future of

those and how they could be better utilized, while still giving them the space that they need, of course. What makes it a little bit hard to say let's add more parking on each individual property when there's – you know, the First Baptist parking lot is an entire city block – takes up both sides of a city block – a whole square. First Christian is a half of a whole city block. McFarlin's is half of a whole city block. So to think of those sitting empty most of the time, and we have a parking problem and we want to solve it by adding more parking and more concrete. If we could find a way to do some partnership, like the Lutheran Church does with the fraternity, that may be some way ...

Councilmember Hall – The only shared parking agreement that I'm aware of is The Noun. They have a 20-year long-term shared parking agreement with the First Presbyterian Church. I think there are some other church parking lots that provide student parking. Some they purchase and some provided as a service to the community. Because a lot of what we're going to try to stay focused on this round is just what the Planning Department has experienced in their day-to-day work life of the impact of what we did the last time, as well as things that we didn't get to address quite yet. That's why we're circling back to this and definitely interested in getting your feedback. But also trying to address the other piece of this, which isn't just about parking per se, but with some of the fixes that we made last time. I think there's a challenge – and correct me if I'm wrong, Ms. Hudson – but part of the challenge in this is adding the greater than 3 and we have some incremental increases in number of parking places required, but what we're seeing is projects that are being constructed that don't even have the minimum parking available based on what the reality is after the project is finished. So I think that's part of this, too. Any other input or comments about this?

Councilmember Holman – I'd say that extra room – I'd be fine with that having to be calculated, and that could be satisfied by the off-street or the on-street or off-site parking – however you want to describe it. So 3 bedrooms and whatever. I'd be fine with that, just not requiring that it all be – if we're going to do that, that it all be on the same site.

Mr. McKown – I had a little trouble hearing at this end of the table. The last time we worked intensely on this, I ended up doing a completely incomplete analysis of what if we had some on-street parking and where could we do 45° angle parking, where could we do parallel, and then what would bike lanes look like? So as I zoom in and out of this, the east/westerly roads – and of course, that's one of the coolest things about Norman is it's on a 45° angle. But there is room – the rights-of-way are different widths. So mostly the east/west rights-of-way are wider, creating an opportunity to do 45° angle parking. You don't double your number of parking spaces with 45° angle, but you almost double them, so it's way better than parallel. 45° angle parking has an additional benefit, in that it causes drivers to drive more slowly, because they have no idea when someone might be backing out into the driving lane, whereas parallel parking provides a good benefit – it makes for a safer walking route for pedestrians because there's a parked hunk of metal separating them from moving cars. We could only do parallel parking on the north/south-ish roads, but you could squeeze a bike lane in. I know it's really hard to see from that end of the table, but that's a parking space and then the green – oh, no, that's not a bike lane, because I planted trees in it. There is one version over here where he did tree lawn, parallel parking, bike lane, drive lane. I know we're not going to do 45° angle

parking, but we should. It's the right thing to do. Here are those two conditions side-by-side. It's something I've clearly put a lot of effort into and it's all just available to whoever wants to work on that.

Councilmember Hall – How many spaces did you calculate you could do?

Mr. McKown – Remember I said it was incomplete. There's a lot of curb cuts. There's a lot of – so I don't know. It's a bunch. It was a way of trying to think about, if we took this block-by-block, and said the TIF money is starting to accumulate. What if we redid this alley and this street as a thing, and then that sets a precedent for going forward. I would recommend let's do it block-by-block, see how it works, and then move forward. There is one piece of right-of-way that is particularly big, compared to some of the others. I believe it's Jenkins, and I think that's why the houses appear to be set back so far. But another thing that you mentioned, Councilmember, is trying to make changes based on – and I do want – it's just so hard for the public to get their mind around – so many of the things that have been built in the area that people aren't happy with – those things were already built before we ever drafted this form-based code. So we have the problem with the form-based code, in terms of administering it, and then we've got the disappointment that the public experiences when they just see things they look at and they go I don't like what I'm seeing here, and the mini-dorm or whatever – the behavior that comes with. That's why we created this document in the first place. I feel like we have to remind ourselves that was already in – that's not a result of this document, and the public doesn't know that. Public perceives all of it is form-based code gave us mini-dorms, and that is the complete opposite of what happened.

Councilmember Hall – The mini-dorms gave us form-based code.

Mr. McKown – That's what exactly happened. But the reason I bring all that up is that wide right-of-way on Jenkins – if we studied that really intensely as a potential 45° angle parking location to take up and create trees and create good walking facilities, that would be the place I would start, because then now you could begin to use the landscape, use all that to sort of soften the effect of some of the things that have been built there that are less than awesome, and it could also help solve part of the parking irritation.

Councilmember Hall – I don't know if you're willing to share that, but if you are, could you forward it to the Planning Department?

Mr. McKown – Totally. I'll go to work on it right now.

Mr. McCabe – I love the idea. City requires 19' depth for a parking space. There is not enough easement in Center City to give you 19' from the edge of the road into the yard. We typically have 8-9' from the curb to the sidewalk, 3' of sidewalk, property starts. I love it, but that's the problem is we don't have the 19' depth to do that. Richard is correct on Jenkins, because Jenkins was always deemed – that's the reason why the houses are 30' residential build line instead of 25. I can't remember what designation of that road was, but I was always told that could be a 4-lane. I've always heard that for the last 20 years.

Maybe there's more room to do that. But I would think that if that is something that we really want to look at, trying to get ahead of the problems that we always create for ourself – I can't get 19' depth on a parallel parking.

Mr. McKown – Well, you're correct, but you've got to go both ways. So this drawing is actually scaled and it goes back into the street so it involves making the drive lane either 11' or possibly 10' wide, and it's based on what Oklahoma City did in the Project 180. Those driving lanes are all 10' wide and I believe everything is 13' wide – that's the City of Norman standard – 26' wide residential street. But some of those streets may be 32' wide. So if you're rebuilding a whole street from scratch and start with the centerline and go 10, then these are all drawn at 20' for a 45° angle spot, you've still got room to get your tree lawn and your sidewalk in there. It can all fit, if you go both directions. But, again, it's just sort of like there's always stuff. There's utilities in the way. This definitely needs to be studied. This is very high-level conceptual idea.

Councilmember Hall – I think it does go along with one of the other things that is still also hanging out there, which is just that block-by-block development and developing a complete street and finishing out the alleys. That's part of a much larger discussion that we're not going to have today. But I think this plays right into it.

Councilmember Holman – I think streets like you mentioned, the east-west – like Linn, Apache and Symmes and Eufaula are all wider – have a much wider right-of-way than the north and south streets. There are examples on Linn Street and on Duffy of 45° angle parking. In front of the Episcopal Church on Duffy, they have a long row of 45° parking, and so does the counseling center there on Linn and Webster – they have a long row of 45° parking along Linn Street. So I think the side streets, or the north-south, are not big enough under our current standards it looks like to do that. But maybe our current standards on width of lanes and depth of parking spaces should be looked at, too. I think it needs to be a mix of parallel and 45° parking, where possible. Again, going back to using a scalpel and not a chainsaw to try to figure out this – each block is different; each block has different space and different things like that. So I think a mix of both those block-by-block, depending upon if there is enough space to do it.

Councilmember Hall – We already have all the work from Johnson & Associates on the block-by-block infrastructure plan. I think, basically, the consensus I'm hearing is to maybe expand the conversation a little bit about the on-street parking, but that we recognize that the greater than 3 bedroom issue has been problematic and possibly be able to incorporate some mix there.

Ms. Hudson – I will say this, I need to get with Legal and make a determination, because if we've got a unit that comes in and they've got 3 bedrooms and they've got a den – they've got 2 dens. So, technically, we would classify that as 4 bedrooms, and we have a special use requirement in the document that says if you have 4 or more bedrooms you have to get special use. So on one side, we're saying you've got 4 bedrooms, this is what you have to do for parking, however, we're ignoring the fact that they have to go forward and get special use.

Councilmember Hall – I think we need to get that sorted out. I really do.

3. DISCUSSION OF QUALITY STRUCTURES AND ARCHITECTURAL REQUIREMENTS

a. BUILDING HEIGHT

b. NUMBER OF UNITS PER LOT

Mr. Hubble – First, this is a new map. Last time it was hard to see because of all the little orange hatch, which blended in with some of the other colors. So now we've changed it to a bluish/purple color. So everything that's in the periwinkle color would be the Urban Residential that we talked about a few weeks ago. It's all of what was the pink Neighborhood Middle, the blue Urban Townhouse/Small Apartment, then also what was originally Urban Residential. I have a couple of copies of these.

We have been talking about the parking issue at the same time and in the same vein as these other issues. We're interested in increasing the housing choice, obviously, so not everything is 4 bedrooms per unit. We've come up with this idea of taking this 3-pronged approach of increasing the parking minimums, as Jane talked about, increasing the height limits within the Urban Residential, and instituting unit minimums. So based on what the frontage type is and maybe where it is, having a minimum number of units that have to be there, which we really don't have in any of the frontages right now. The parking minimums and the unit minimums together could really go a long way toward solving the issue of only having one housing type, because being required to have – so if you're limited by how many parking spaces you can have, because the lot is only so big, and you have to have a parking space per bedroom, then you're going to be limited to how many bedrooms you have. If we have a unit minimum on top of that, then that number of bedrooms has to be split more among a larger number of units, so a smaller number of bedrooms per unit.

I didn't go through and do a real official version of this, but this is an idea we had for the maximum heights that we could do. I left the orange, red, and yellow the same, so this is just for the Urban Residential. Down here, which is pink, is currently a 2-story maximum, which is closest to campus. This area in the middle is a 3-story maximum. Then the Urban Residential is 3 and 4, which I have left it. We increase the pink area to 5-story maximum, because it is closest to campus, as we talked about last month, and it makes sense to have a lot higher density there than we currently do. Then did the same along the Urban General that is near the train tracks and much closer to Main Street – so increase that to 5. Then kind of taper down a little bit as it got closer to the single-family housing that exists over here. Left the Urban Residential the same, because I know in the past that has been the reason the Urban Residential exists was to have it step down from 5 to 4 to 3 to 2 stories as it got to the Detached Frontage. So that's mostly what I have. The unit minimums could be – we've thought of a few ideas for that. What we've been thinking about most is maybe having unit minimums be based on that maximum height, so where it's 5 stories, we could say the unit minimum is the number of stories minus 1. So in 5 stories, it would be a 4-unit minimum. In the 4-story area, it would be a 3-unit minimum. We kind of hope that doing that, on top of maybe whatever we do for parking, can in some way create a new type of housing. That's all I have right now.

Mr. Adair – I'm looking around the room to see who's old enough. I'm hoping Jane is. Before Center City, probably early in Mayor Rosenthal's tenure, there was a proposal to do – I think on the old Etech site – this is just kind of on the north edge of Campus Corner.

Mr. Hubble – Where that parking lot is now?

Mr. Adair – Where the parking lot is now. It belongs to the City. To do a 6-story structure.

Mr. McKown – I'm old enough to remember this.

Mr. Adair – My memory is it was 2 levels of structured parking underneath 4 levels of residential above it. But what you're proposing is starting to sound more like that to me, Logan. If you're looking at 5 and 6 story structures in there, I think you're looking at a level of structured parking. Don't you, Richard?

Mr. McKown – The market won't support it if you don't. The problem, of course, with that is those kinds of buildings are really hard to end up having an active frontage. Our lots are 140' deep and a parking garage is 124' wide, so you have 16' to work with. In the case of the building Jim is talking about, there is not an alley there – it's Buchanan Street on the west side. So they never showed us any pictures of what that building was going to look like from Buchanan, because it was going to be a blank wall – it was the back side of a parking garage. But, if you look at it in most other cases, where that is the alley – but it is really tricky. I can pull up a model of one of these buildings on 140' deep lot where we figured out how to do it. It's just it's really hard. It's one of the most expensive types of building you can build, because it's all stacking up on this podium, and the structure of the parking is really lots of concrete, lots of fire suppression in it. It's almost 50% more expensive than, say, the building that caught on fire this week.

Mr. Hubble – These are height maximums, again. They wouldn't be required to build these big structures, but it would be an option that's available to developers if they wanted to. They could continue to build – you can fit 4 units in a 2-story building. These shorter buildings we're getting right now would still be an option, certainly. It would taper off as you go down to the Detached Frontage. I hear what you're saying. The taller building could certainly be metal construction, concrete. We talked to Greg Clark, the Building Official, about that quite a bit. There are ways to build 4-story buildings with wood. You have to work on some things, but it is possible.

Mr. McKown – Well, the 5-story building – the bottom 2 are concrete just parking, and then everything above that is wood. But it's a building type that is – what we need to do is draw through it. We need to draw – just like we're talking about with the pattern zoning. If you take a set of rules and then start trying to draw a building that the market will actually support, very quickly you can come to a yes/no – will it work or will it not? You could always go build a building down there with zero parking. Our market has never rewarded properties with zero parking. So bankers won't finance it, and I don't expect them to get built. That was something when Dan Proic left us – he's from Berkeley, California. They can do all kinds of things in Berkeley, California with not enough parking. It's lovely out there. They ride their bike everywhere.

Councilmember Hall – And they have transit to support things.

Mr. McKown – I would like to see us try and draw through this, and I'm happy to help with that.

Councilmember Holman – Most of you know how I feel about height. I don't, generally, support height limits at all. I've compromised and agreed to them in Center City stuff, but I often feel like, in many cities – Boulder is my best example. Downtown Boulder really, if you look at it from a little bit of a distance, it looks like a block because all the buildings are the same height. All of the buildings in downtown Boulder have been built to their height limit, which is 5 stories, to protect the view of the mountains and whatever – I get it – but what it has resulted in is that there is no variety. The buildings look differently architecturally, but they're all the same height, which doesn't give any kind of – it's kind of neat when you look at a block and not every building is the exact same height. One is a 1-story, then a 3, then a 2, then a 4. So what we've seen in Center City is that the current height limits – every single building, pretty much, that gets built is built to the height limit. So now all the buildings are the same height. To me, I would like to see more variety. I'm for having a higher ceiling to 5. I agree that it doesn't mean they have to build it to 5, but currently you can only build 3, we're going to let you build 5 if you have a project that pencils out right and that's what you want to do, in that area you would be able to do 5. I do support height limits in regard to, if there's a single-family 1-story house right here, I would not want a 4 or 5-story building built next to it. I do support the step-down idea for sure, and I like that that is represented here. But I definitely think in the blue area and the orange areas, that taller buildings are appropriate, if they work for the person wanting to build them. So I'm for increasing the limit in these areas based on that. It doesn't mean that's what they'll do, but it seems that there might be more of a demand for more than 3-story currently, since all the buildings are being built to the height limit. If there could be a little bit more space for some variety to take place in the more dense area of it, that's away from the single-family part, I think that would be appropriate.

Mr. McCabe – Just quickly penciling with what you're talking about, on a typical lot 50' wide, 140' deep, if I go 80' from the alley in, keeping with the City standards, I can get 4 spaces per side, which would allow for 8 spots. If I could do the off-street parking for 2 more spots, that would give me 10, so then if I did the 5 units of 2 bedrooms that you're suggesting, that would be 10 bedrooms, 10 spots. So that would support the off-street parking to be counted toward that, as an idea.

Mr. Hubble – I have no problem with the off-street parking being counted.

Mr. McCabe – I'm just running some quick numbers, and just trying to make it work. But that would support 5-story, 2-bedroom units with 10 spots. I could do that.

Mr. Adair – But you're going to a 5-story structure.

Mr. McCabe – Correct. That's 5-story – if that's allowed – that's what's being built.

Mr. Adair – Is that taking you to steel?

Mr. McKown – No. Fire-treated lumber. You can go 4 stories without fire-treated. Once you go to 5-stories, you've got to do fire-treated lumber. Adds about 10% cost increase across the board.

Mr. Adair – I'm agreeing with what Richard was saying. I appreciate your quick numbers. I'd like to see this played through. I don't want us to fool ourselves by saying we're raising the height limit, when we've got other restrictions that can't really let us get there. And the truth is, we raise the height limit, we're going to get public push-back. Height has been a huge public issue. I mean, literally, The Noun hotel we were fighting over a handful of feet. There are single story residences all through this area.

Councilmember Holman – Not single-family. That's the difference. The blue there are no single-family left – none. So in the yellow, I would not want a 5-story next to the yellow, but in the middle of the blue, those houses are multi-family, formerly R-3, and could be redeveloped into higher density.

Mr. Adair – And the real thing, Logan, is I think we're getting really close. We've exhausted all of our solutions to getting closer to what we want – I'm afraid we have to have a unit requirement.

Mr. McKown – Explain what you mean by a unit requirement.

Mr. Adair – A minimum number of units. If we're going to get away from a 6-bedroom unit, then we're going to have to require it.

Councilmember Hall – Which has been the running conversation since 2017.

Mr. Adair – We have danced around it and not gotten there twice.

Mr. McKown – Keith, can you make that work? The unit requirement.

Mr. McCabe – Yes.

Mr. Adair – The only other thing I was going to say was, Jane, we were talking about meeting the parking requirements off-site. Again, I'm going to sound like I'm getting more restrictive here. We talked about, I think, meeting it within 1,000 feet. In Boston that may work. Downtown Oklahoma City that may work. Norman, Oklahoma – 1,000' is going to take you to church parking lots. They're not using them today. It's not practical. It's just not who we are. I always said I'm spoiled. I want to work in Norman, Oklahoma and not drive to Oklahoma City, because I don't want to deal with the commute or the parking. And I want to be spoiled.

Ms. Starr – So are you suggesting you want to reduce it to 500? I'm not sure I'm understanding what you're suggesting.

Mr. Adair – I'm not picking a number, Anais. I'm just saying, if we think 1,000' is a solution, 1,000' will take you to a parking lot from anywhere in there just about. I'm saying we need to be more practical about what we're doing, which is probably being more restrictive on meeting an off-site requirement.

Councilmember Hall – I think that's right. I think, again, those were functions of the early code based on assumptions that have not been met, are not realistically going to be met, in the whole park once environment. That's the key word – park once. That means a vehicle has got to be parked somewhere, even if you're walking around and you don't use it until the end of the semester when you go back home. I think that's really what has tripped us up in a lot of ways, too.

Councilmember Holman – I'd just mention that I do agree that, for most of Norman, 1,000' is really far away, but in this area of town these kids are walking to campus from Symmes and Apache and Eufaula. They're living in this area so that they don't have to pay for parking on campus, in a large part I would guess – maybe not, but that's part of it. And a lot of them are walking a mile to get to campus or to the south end of campus. Because of the scooters and other things, they don't have to necessarily walk. But I think this area is a little bit different than other places and people do walk more. But maybe 1,000' – and I think part of it is they don't use those parking lots for the churches because they're not allowed to, that I know of. People that live in Center City – I don't know that they have permission to park at First Baptist overnight or during the daytime, and if they did – that would be probably the biggest solution overall for the whole area is if there was an agreement – a parking permit that people that lived in the area could purchase from the church. Something like that would be the biggest overall, and way less expensive than building a parking garage. Even if we build a parking garage in Center City, it's going to be right by Campus Corner, and that's going to be a walk for a lot of people. But I agree that we've got – maybe 1,000' is too far. But ultimately trying to come up with some agreement where we can get these parking lots used more.

Mr. McCabe – Maybe this goes with support of what they're saying. In reality, the kids are going to park at their house. Whether you allow them the 1,000' – if you allow a builder/developer to count 1,000' – need 2 parking spots over there. I get to count it, but that's not where they're parking. They're parking on my lots. So maybe that's where we come back to the fact of you have to account for the spots on the physical lot itself. Maybe that's the area that we look at, because they're going to park in the grass. They're going to park on the lot. They're going to park on the sidewalk. They're not walking.

Councilmember Holman – Maybe it's just a block. You can account for the parking that's on that block – street parking or whatever. And then beyond that you have to find a spot on your property.

Ms. Hudson – I have a question. I wasn't involved in the very beginning of this going on 5 years ago, when we had the charrettes and public meetings and stuff like that. At no time was it ever discussed with the churches that we could utilize that parking? Did that not ever come up as an opportunity?

Councilmember Holman – It was a point of discussion that the parking lots were vastly underutilized.

Ms. Hudson – They didn't volunteer?

Councilmember Hall – I'm not sure the conversation ever took place.

Councilmember Holman – They were at the charrettes. First Baptist was there, and I know that one of the drawings had a parking structure built on their parking lot. Just building a giant parking garage in the middle of Center City using their lot and they would still have rights to the ground level. Or that the parking garage could even have apartments built into it. That type of thing. But they seemed to be receptive to the idea of the future of this area – better utilizing their parking lots and maybe making some money off their parking lots, too. But it hasn't been revisited since then.

Ms. Hudson – The reason I ask is the community rumors that I've always heard is that there's no dealing with the church parking lots. They don't want the students parking there. They don't want to give up that space. Not to say that maybe that hasn't changed now. But I'll gladly take some time and reach out. I just wanted to know if somebody remembered how it had ever been discussed.

Councilmember Hall – I think the difference may be offering student parking – daytime parking for students that are going to class and coming back and then leaving to go to wherever they're living vs. that whole concept of shared parking, and using it as overnight parking when it's not being utilized by anybody else. I think we're talking about maybe the same population, but different intents of why they need a parking place. It's not to park overnight because they live there; it's to park during the day because they're going to class.

Ms. McMahon – That was my question. Just logistically, at a church, if you're living there, to me, it's very different than if you're just parking there during class, because where do – so let's say we have even just 100 people parking in that lot. Where do those cars go on Sunday? What happens if there's a funeral on a Tuesday or a Wednesday? Logistically, how does that work? I don't know.

Councilmember Hall – First Presbyterian, I know, used to have parking permits for day parking, and I think that's going to change fundamentally with the lease agreement with The Noun hotel once that's open. So I'm not sure what that will look like going forward. But I think that option will probably go away. I'm pretty sure McFarlin just allows anybody to park in their lots during the week during the day with no charge as a service to the community, just providing parking. But I can't speak to the other ones.

Mr. McCabe – Just FYI, the landlords of all the new residences on Trout – all of that new development – they buy a parking pass for their tenants and they include it in their rent, and they park across the street on OU. That's how they handle their parking.

Councilmember Hall – In the OU parking.

Councilmember Holman – The Lutherans are getting – students are paying them for a semester or two semester parking pass. They're making money off their empty parking lot.

Councilmember Hall – But is that for overnight parking?

Councilmember Holman – They park there overnight and during the day. Just not on Sunday, I think – Sunday morning.

Mr. Adair – Downtown, we're leasing some church parking. And literally, we don't get to use it on Sunday morning, and our tenants know that. Now downtown, there's an abundance of parking options for them on Sunday mornings. So when they come home on Saturday night, they park in one of the municipal lots, and move their car the next day. There's practical solutions to some of this. I've always found the churches to be receptive to conversations.

Councilmember Hall – So that time may have come to revisit that.

Councilmember Holman – It doesn't even have to be their whole parking lot. They could say just the row of spaces at First Baptist that are along Eufaula – we're going to reserve that and people can buy permits, that live in Center City area – any person. Or if the builders bought them and included it in the rent.

Councilmember Hall – You could have numbered spaces.

Councilmember Holman – But I prefer pursuing all those solutions over just acquiring more of these individual lots to be half parking. I know we can redevelop them later and things, but just how can we better utilize what is already there if participants are willing, and then can we add more street parking and all those things before we start trying to add more – and more street parking might help take some of the pressure off the alleyways, too.

Councilmember Hall – We certainly did discuss that. We didn't really finish that conversation in the last ad hoc round.

Interestingly enough, when Matthew Petty and Matt Hoffman were here for the study session last week in front of City Council, I did have the opportunity to take them on a driving tour around Core Norman, and just sort of presented a lot of the issues that we were going to be discussing here. Their observation was they really thought getting the parking concentrated behind all of those units was actually a really positive thing, and that they'd been in other places where they had not really addressed it and it was even worse. So they saw the ability to park on-site and that that parking was behind the building so that you could pull the building up closer to the sidewalk for that active street edge – they saw that as a real positive in what we've been doing.

Councilmember Holman – Without blocking sidewalks and driveways.

Mr. Adair – I believe the evolution of a lot of the church parking lots in the Core are 30 years old, and at the time they happened they were very controversial. Some of them were hotly debated rezonings. I'm not sure I want this in the minutes, but I think today in Center City, if you met the wall requirement, you could tear down a structure and build a parking lot. We've seen some parking lots pop up that surprised me – my limited knowledge of the code.

Councilmember Hall – Yes. We've got parking lots where we want density.

Mr. Adair – Most of the core churches, like I said, over the last 30 years have gotten pretty satisfied with the amount of parking that they've got.

Councilmember Hall – I think just the concept of shared parking has certainly gotten a lot more visibility and more discussion recently, and realizing that we have massive numbers of parking lots and parking places that are not being fully utilized. I think we can do a lot better at that, too.

Mr. McCabe – And the churches are seeing a decreased number of parishioners, which means decreased revenue. So as a member of a church, you start looking at alternate means of financial, so you would probably be more open to look at the renting of a space, as you wouldn't have 10 years ago.

Councilmember Hall – When you refer to that whole parking lot controversy in probably the 90's, I would say. At that time that was the impetus for neighborhoods to get really serious about historic district overlays, and it was in response to fraternities and sororities and churches just razing entire blocks of houses to have parking that was only used a couple of days a week.

4. DISCUSSION OF NEXT STEPS

Councilmember Hall – We've got 10 more minutes. I think we're going to discuss our meeting schedule, which got completely disrupted because of our snow storm last week. Do you want to address your proposal?

Ms. Hudson – Today is the 10th. I think we can meet on the 24th, which would probably be a good thing – that's 2 weeks out. We already have an agenda item on the 3rd of March, which will be Part 9 of the code, which addresses pervious parking, drainage, and stuff like that. So March 3rd has already got a topic. As it stands right now, I would suggest we meet on the 24th. I know that does back us up to the following week to the 3rd, but then we would meet back on the 17th, which is St. Patrick's Day, and then on the 31st of March and tentatively just putting that schedule up there.

Councilmember Hall – And that puts us back on our original timeline.

Ms. Hudson – Pretty much so, yes.

Mr. McCabe – Is that cancelling the 17th?

Councilmember Hall – Yes.

Mr. McKown – I'm not available on the 24th, but I am available next week. I know that's not enough time to get work done.

Councilmember Holman – Either one is fine with me.

Councilmember Hall – I think we probably just need to go ahead, because I know you have to have some time. So I think we go ahead with the 24th and we'll do our very best to keep you caught up. So the 24th, the 3rd, 17th, the 31st. Okay.

5. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Councilmember Holman – When we talk about corners, just because we had that issue on Tuesday night, and when we might discuss that issue, but I think those guys will probably want to be there whenever we do talk about corner lots.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.