

Public input for ZOAC meeting on November 5, 2020

Per the chair's request, I am providing my statement to ZOAC from 11/5 in written form below:

Thank you for the time and special thanks to chair Murphy for having each department weigh in to show the pervasive and pernicious nature of one-size fits all parking minimums.

Greetings ZOAC members and city staff. My name is Patrick Kennedy and I reside at 413 Melba St. If you are not familiar with Melba Street, it is in the middle of the Bishop Arts District. I have an office in the middle of Uptown Dallas. I am here today to talk about these two neighborhoods: Bishop Arts and Uptown, two of the most in-demand areas for parking and often over-run by cars. This is the by-product of success...the problem is that it is not managed and these areas had to overcome the existing parking code to reach that success – defined by housing, jobs, and tax base.

Which I should add, that this city needs more of both of these kinds of places. The demand for walkable neighborhoods, outstrips supply causing the land and housing prices to go completely haywire resulting in inequitable development.

First, some anecdotal evidence I have observed in UPTOWN:

- Several businesses have been trading parking spaces for outdoor dining, even well before COVID...why? Because the majority of their receipts are now coming from the neighborhood. The best parking space is a bedroom nearby...which is better for repeat customers than a parking space. Therefore, we need housing for people, not housing for cars.
- Grocery stores in the neighborhood have over-built high-cost below-grade parking (at the grocery stores request, which is fine but that means the rents must be extraordinarily high and the development is not replicable) but much more of the business is coming from daily repeat, walk-up customers rather than traditional once-a-week load up the station wagon type trips as was expected. There is a reason that despite population increasing by 1000% in the last thirty years that traffic counts in the area have remained flat.
- There are housing developments that have floors of parking that have never seen a parked car. Many residents will park on the street because it is more convenient and walk up to their unit.
- In the Harwood District, they've been converting ground floor garage space into ground floor retail because they over-built parking. Why over-build in the first place? In and eventually recovering from a pandemic, we should be doing what we can to lower barriers to investment and infill development.
- There are residential garages empty during the day and office garages empty at night, yet there are valuable infill sites that can't be built upon because the site is too small or oddly shaped (that could make for very interesting buildings) because they can't meet parking requirements set either by the city or by conventional lending and brokerage demands, which is not for the greater good.
- There are opportunities to be able to deliver attainable housing on some of these sites if not for the minimum parking requirements if we were to allow creative design and development.

In BISHOP ARTS:

- Since I've lived there and seen it change over time, studied the changes in policy and design, and had many conversations with those that have been involved with its growth, much of the area's current success stems from a reduction in required parking from about 2001. It's what helps make historic renovations work. It allows for clustering or economic agglomerations work so you don't have to tear down neighboring buildings to provide off-street parking. All of which is what helps small and local businesses succeed functioning as a naturally occurring incubator.
- There are over 1000 on-street spaces in the neighborhood, but few will venture south of 9th street looking for an available space because of the expectation of finding a spot precisely at the destination. But in successful places, the destination is not a specific business, but the neighborhood itself – where parking once and walking around should be both inevitable and encouraged.

- The amount of on-street parking within a five-minute walk is approximately double what the conventional parking code would require off-street for the existing retail.
- People will happily pay \$10 to valet, but we don't adequately meter the spaces so the high value spaces are constantly full, often taken up by employees and not encouraging turnover, which leads to circling endlessly looking for a nearby space. This would be the perfect place for a Parking Benefit District where the revenue generated by the demand, success, and attraction of the place could generate revenue to re-invest in the area for needed public improvements (or to pay for the management of the parking district itself).

There is no perfect one-size-fits-all solution; only trade-offs. We should want and allow for more of these kinds of neighborhood revitalization stories throughout the city without the barriers constructed by the parking code. We should choose managing the by-products of success rather than struggling against existing code in order to create successful places.

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