



STAFF REPORT

DATE: June 12, 2018

DISCUSSION

AGENDA ITEM: Downtown Parking

SUBMITTED BY: Kristina Handt, City Administrator

REVIEWED BY: Jack Griffin, City Engineer

Rob Weldon, Public Works Director

Emily Becker, Planning Director

BACKGROUND:

With the reconstruction of Lake Elmo Ave in 2016, the number of parking spaces downtown was impacted as a change was made to parallel parking spots consistent with Washington County policy. This provides a safer parking option in that cars are not backing right out in to traffic. Through Phases 1 and 2 of the Old Village project, approximately 18 park spaces were lost. Most of this was due to the change to parallel parking but 3-4 spots were lost along Upper 33rd with the Council decision to shift the road away from Steve Johnson's storage facility. While the number of parking spaces has changed do to the new design, the signs restricting parking to either 15, 60 or 90 minutes were put back in the same location. The attached map provides details on the number, location and time restriction of parking spots.

Since the project was substantially complete, the city has received numerous comments from the public about the changes. These include complaints that patrons of other establishments are parking in front of the post office for more than 15 minutes; that there are too many 15 minute parking spots according to others; handicap parking/valet service in front of the Lake Elmo Inn taking parking spots away from others; a lack of a handicap parking space near the curb cut by Village Hair Care; and the crosswalk not being replaced at Upper 33rd and Lake Elmo Ave. Lake Elmo staff has met twice in the last 6 months with Washington County staff to discuss these concerns and review options. If the City would like to see any changes to the parking regulations, the County requests the Council pass a resolution.

ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL:

What, if any, parking changes should the City seek from the County on Lake Elmo Ave? Are there any changes that should be made to parking on city streets?

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

As mentioned, staff has heard a number of issues of concern raised by the community and some of them are competing interests. For example, do you remove the 15 minute parking in front of the post office so that it is available to anyone? This may be a welcomed change from those visiting other establishments such as the Lake Elmo Inn but certainly would not please those who are already complaining about not being able to park in front of the post office when they need to visit that location. Staff's recommendation with respect to the time limits would be to not change the 15 minute parking area but perhaps remove the 60 and 90 minute limits all together or switch the 60 to 90 so there is more consistency.

With respect to the handicap/valet parking issue, staff does not have a recommendation. Rather we have encouraged the County to treat the businesses similarly. Meaning if they decide to allow one business to do it, they should be open to allowing other businesses the same convenience. The challenge with this then

is that fewer parking spots are available to the general public if they are reserved for handicap/valet parking. In a situation where we are already hearing concerns about the decreased number of parking spots, it may not make sense to further restrict parking.

County staff has agreed to replace the crosswalk across Lake Elmo Ave at Upper 33rd. They will seek to standardize the cross walk crossings downtown however. Some of the crosswalks are painted, while others have the signage and some have both. The County is still evaluating which is the best option.

Lastly, to help direct the public to more public parking options (i.e. the library parking lot, the small lot on the north side of 34 St), staff has proposed placing “Public Parking” signs at those locations and on Lake Elmo Ave directing folks to the library parking lot.

OPTIONS:

- 1) Direct staff to prepare a resolution detailing the changes the city would like to ask for from the county?
- 2) Direct staff to make no further changes (crosswalk and public parking signs are already agreed to by county and city)
- 3) Direct staff to make changes (to be determined by council at meeting) to city streets

ATTACHMENTS:

- As Built Map from Phases 1 and 2

