



City of Takoma Park, Maryland

TAKOMA JUNCTION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON SITE PARKING

February 6, 2018

As part of the Takoma Junction redevelopment, Neighborhood Development Company (NDC) will return to Council in Spring 2018 with a site plan/preliminary plan for Council's approval. The following are questions members of the community have raised about how the project addresses parking needs for the commercial area.

For more information, please check the City webpage for the Takoma Junction Redevelopment: <https://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/takoma-junction-redevelopment/>

What is considered adequate parking for a development in Montgomery County?

Montgomery County has followed a national trend to move away from large minimum requirements of parking, with the realization that those requirements were designed for the highest volume period (Black Friday) at the expense of other land uses. Research on the topic has shown that providing too much free and cheap parking has been found to correlate with sprawling land-use patterns, more driving, more single-driver trips and worsening traffic.

The County's Planning Department states that "Parking requirements in [Commercial, residential and employment] zones reflect and encourage a shared parking environment. In a shared parking environment, spaces are collectively used by people who work or live at properties within close proximity to one another." For example, the parking spots required for a business with day time customers, like a bakery or coffee shop, can be used by customers of a different business, such as a restaurant, during evening hours.

What are the Montgomery County parking requirements for the City's lot?

The property is located in the Neighborhood Retail zone and within 1 mile of the metro, and qualifies as a "reduced parking area" under the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance. This means that the required parking ratios are smaller. The County parking requirements include provisions for reducing parking spaces with bike- share facilities, carpool/vanpool spaces, and other factors. Properties in reduced parking areas may also seek parking waivers as part of their approval process to further reduce the required parking below the stated minimum, though it cannot be less than 50% of the baseline minimum. Montgomery County Code Chapter 59.6.2.4., [Parking Requirements table](#), gives the uses and minimum and maximum requirements.

How is the parking lot used now?

The City-owned parking lot has a total of 49 parking spaces – 46 standard spaces, two handicap-accessible spaces, and one dedicated space for food trucks. The TPSS Co-op currently leases 16 spaces from the City for the exclusive use of Co-op staff and customers. The lot is underutilized, with many spaces vacant during the day.

The City lot is occasionally used for special events like the Monster Bash and the Volunteer Fire Station Christmas tree sales, when it is partially or fully closed.

What has the Council requested regarding parking?

[Resolution 2015-19](#) notes the Takoma Junction Task Force stated that the Takoma Junction area should, in part, “encourage motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists to slow down, park, relax, and shop while functioning adequately as a link within the local road and transit networks,” and later in the Resolution, says the Council seeks, in part, “continued inclusion of public parking on the site.” In their [ranking chart](#) of February 9, 2015, the Council ranked “Parking/Structured Parking” and “Public parking for whole Junction,” fairly high, receiving 18 of 21 points each.

How much parking has NDC proposed?

NDC’s plan includes 72 underground parking spaces, which is 47% more parking than the lot currently accommodates. The lot will be for the use of employees and customers of the businesses on site, as well as other patrons of other Junction businesses.

How does the parking plan impact the TPSS Co-op?

The Co-op currently has parking on the Sycamore Avenue side of its property and leases 16 spaces on the City lot for the use of staff and customers. The additional parking in the NDC lot will allow for more customer parking for the Co-op and other Junction businesses.

What other transportation options are available at this site?

- Bus – A bus stop served by four bus lines is in front of the site, connecting to the Takoma, Silver Spring, and Prince George’s Plaza metro stations, as well as the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Transit Center. The bus routes that pass through the Takoma Junction are: WMATA F4 and RideOn 12, 13, 16 and 18.
- Bike – A Capital Bikeshare station is located on the site. The Sligo Creek Hiker-Biker Trail is within a half mile.
- Rail – The site is within one mile of the Takoma Metro station (the Red Line), enabling easy pedestrian, bike, and bus access to metropolitan wide rail destinations.
- Pedestrian – The site is well served by sidewalks and signalized crosswalks. Activation of the pedestrian signals at Grant Avenue is to occur after Pepco does its part of the work, in mid-February.