



CITY OF WASILLA

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COUNCIL MEMORANDUM NO. 96-74

From: Mayor Stein
Date: July 26, 1996
Subject: Ordinance Serial No. 96-29
Parking Space Ratios - Malls

I have read and reviewed Cottonwood Creek Mall Manager K. B. Thompkins' letter asking that the new development code be amended to retain the existing 1 space to 300 gross square feet of floor area for mall developers. I believe that Mr. Thompkins makes a good case and respectfully ask that the Council consider an amendment to change the proposed 1 space to 150 square feet G.F.A to the requested 1 space to 300 square feet G.F.A.

John C. Stein, Mayor



Cottonwood Creek Mall

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July 24, 1996

RECEIVED

JUL 26 1996

CITY OF WASILLA, ALASKA

The Honorable Mayor John C. Stien
City of Wasilla
290 E. Herning Ave.
Wasilla, AK. 99654-7091

Re: Wasilla Development Code
Proposed Parking Regulations

Dear Mayor Stien,

Monday night, July 22nd, I had the opportunity to speak during the public hearing on the newly proposed parking regulations for the Wasilla Development Code. I would like to reiterate the key points, and solicit your consideration in reviewing the specific changes regarding parking for commercial properties.

My concerns are over the planning commissions recommendation to change the parking ratio for commercial property owners from one parking space per three hundred square feet of GFA (Gross Floor Area), to one parking space per one hundred fifty square feet of GFA. I am opposed to the new recommendations for the following reasons:

1. On-site parking for customers is an essential ingredient of the shopping center, but shopping center developers and regulatory authorities like our planning commission have not always agreed as to how much parking should be provided to fulfill a reasonable level of demand. There seems to be here, a gap between practical and theoretical requirements.

Throughout the years it has become apparent from the barren expanses of asphalt providing the shopping center's parking that in many cases more area was being assigned to parking than was needed. Accordingly, the parking index - or the number of parking spaces made available per 1,000 square feet of GLA - became the standard measurement to indicate the adequacy of parking at a shopping center.

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The Urban Land Institute, in conjunction with the International Council of Shopping Centers, is responsible for conducting major studies which specifically pertain to the parking requirements for shopping centers. Their study has established the parking standards for Shopping Centers nationally, including those in heavy snow areas, and are as follows:

- 4.0 spaces per 1,000 square feet of GLA for centers having a GLA of 25,000 to 400,000 square feet;
- from 4.0 to 5.0 spaces in a linear progression, with an average of 4.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet of GLA, for centers having 400,000 to 600,000 square feet; and
- 5.0 spaces per 1,000 square feet of GLA for centers having a GLA of over 600,000 square feet.

As you can see, for the most aggressive shopping center with GLA of over 600,000 square feet, the standards require only one space for every 200 square feet. These standards address the needs of shopping centers and are considered more than adequate to meet the parking needs for all hours and seasons during the year.

2. The reason given for changing our regulations (as stated by the Planning Commission), was that the commission used Wal-Mart as a guide as they seemed to have enough parking for their customers, plus an adequate amount of parking space for snow storage.
 - a. The idea of all commercial property owners being held to the standards of Wal-Mart parameters seems hardly realistic. Wal-Mart is a major retailer with a volume of traffic many times higher than that of the typical commercial property owner.
3. It is my understanding the principle consultant for recommending these changes is from Anchorage. If so, what studies or parameters were used for determining these recommendations?

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- a. Currently in Anchorage the parking regulations for a shopping center having a Gross Leasable Area of 25,000 to 400,000 square feet is four parking spaces per 1,000 square feet. Additionally, grocery stores in Anchorage over 4,000 square feet are required to have one space for every 300 square feet.
4. In order for existing properties to expand, property owners would have to purchase additional land. In cases such as ours, these proposed changes would prevent the addition of a new national retail tenant we are currently working with, thus preventing additional revenue for the City of Wasilla.

On behalf of the new owners, management company, and tenants of Cottonwood Creek Mall, I urge you to very carefully consider your decision regarding the change in parking requirements for commercial property owners in Wasilla. Furthermore, I request the parking requirements remain at their current standards of one space per 300 square feet of GFA.

Sincerely,



K. B. Tompkins
General Manager

kbt

cc: Doug Richards, CPM
City Council Members