



MORGANTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

March 11, 2010
6:30 PM
City Council Chambers

Chair:

Marti Shamberger, 5th Ward

Vice-Chair:

Peter DeMasters, 6th Ward

Planning Commissioners:

Sam Loretta, 1st Ward

Tim Stranko, 2nd Ward

Bill Petros, 3rd Ward

Kathryn Greever, 4th Ward

Carol Pyles, 7th Ward

Jennifer Selin, City Councilor

Ken Martis, Admin.

STAFF REPORT

CASE NO: TX10-03 / Administrative / Surface Parking Areas

BACKGROUND and ANALYSIS:

The City's zoning regulations have for many years required off-street parking areas to be finished with concrete, asphalt, or similar acceptable permanent surfacing material. The purpose of requiring permanent paving is to stabilize parking areas so as to:

- Ensure safety for foot traffic and mitigate damage to vehicles within off-street parking areas.
- Reduce rutting and rapid deterioration caused by frequent vehicular traffic, heavy vehicles, and weather changes.
- Organize and manage parking areas by marking individual spaces thereby maximizing utilization.
- Reduce aggregate debris in public roads and rights-of-way which present safety hazards to foot, bicycle, and motorcycle traffic.
- Reduce aggregate infiltration and silt build-up in stormwater management systems.
- Reduce dust and debris buildup and aid in property maintenance.
- Improve the quality of the urban built environment.

A grace period of twelve (12) months following the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy has been provided where ground conditions are not immediately suitable for permanent surfacing. Unfortunately, there have been recent instances where the developers of permitted stand-alone parking lots and small to mid-scale apartment buildings have used this twelve (12) month grace period, not due to poor ground conditions, but as a result of purported financial hardship. These instances have undermined several of the regulatory provisions noted above.

Construction planning and investment within the City should include the provision of permanently surfaced parking as a part of the delivered development and not as an afterthought.

In order to reemphasize the need for permanently surface parking in new developments and reinforce the City's ability to ensure same is delivered for the enjoyment of residents, customers, and visitors and for the benefit of the entire community, the following minor Planning & Zoning Code text amendment is submitted for Planning Commission consideration:

Planning Department

Christopher Fletcher, AICP
Planning Director
389 Spruce Street
Morgantown, WV 26505
304.284.7431



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1365.09 PARKING DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS.

(C) Surfacing and Drainage.

- (1) All open off-street parking areas shall be surfaced with an all-weather, dust-free concrete or asphalt material, and shall be maintained in good condition and free of weeds, dirt, trash and debris; except that, a gravel surface may be used for a period not exceeding ~~one year~~ six months after the date of granting the Certificate of Occupancy where ground conditions are not immediately suitable for permanent surfacing as specified above.
- (2) A gravel surface in the area of storage or handling may be used permanently in association with industries that handle liquids or chemicals which create a potential hazard if containment should be lost and where absorption into the ground through a loose surface material would eliminate or alleviate such hazard.
- (3) Such parking areas shall be graded and properly drained in such a manner that there will be no free flow of water onto either adjacent property or public sidewalks. Further, any run-off generated by such improved areas shall be disposed of in accordance with the stormwater management ordinance and other City regulations.
- (4) Other surface materials and designs may be utilized when specifically approved by the City Engineer, for purposes of reducing storm water runoff or other environmental and aesthetic considerations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the proposed text amendment be submitted to City Council with an affirmative recommendation to amend the City's Planning & Zoning Code accordingly.

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