

RPP Review: Proposed Program Q&A Virtual Meeting Oct 21, 2020

On Wednesday, October 21, Arlington County parking and public engagement staff held a virtual Question and Answer session about the proposed Residential Permit Parking (RPP) program. The following is an annotated list of the questions received from the community participants, and the responses provided by staff.

Questions from the public were submitted via Microsoft TEAMS Q&A text boxes and read aloud by Nate Graham, Public Engagement Specialist for transportation projects. They were answered by Stephen Crim, Parking Program Manager for the Transportation Engineering & Operations Bureau.

For a full recording of the Q&A Session, including subtitles, please click [here](#).

The public is encouraged to share comments in the project [engagement forms](#).

Additional material regarding the proposed program is available on the [project website](#). All the material is available in [English](#), Spanish and Amharic.

A Frequently Asked Questions resource is available [here](#). Additional questions about the proposed RPP program can be sent to park@arlingtonva.us

Q: Can you tell us a little bit more about how staff developed this proposed program?

A: This proposal comes out of about three years of engagement with the public that began big picture and then narrowed overtime. So back in the summer of 2018, we began with just an online comment form and some pop-up events asking people about parking in residential areas in general, and identified which comments were related to our RPP and other subjects that people seemed to be talking the most about.

From there we put together a series of public forums in the fall of 2018. We got about 200 people who attended those and it was organized around a few topics like:

- Who should be eligible for the program?
- What should the enforcement look like?
- What should parking around public facilities look like
- What about visitors and so on?

We got a lot of comments out of that. From there we went broader in terms of the audience we were trying to reach with a household survey of Arlington residents. So, we sent invitations to take a survey to about 60,000 households randomly selected using an address-based sample, and we built our questionnaire off of what we heard in those.

- Where were points of agreement?
- Where were points of difference?

To get a sense of how people felt about the program as it is.

We got about 4500 people to respond to that. And out of that entire set of feedback, we have been attempting to make compromises between the separate viewpoints, the kinds of disagreement that we see about how the program should be structured in the future.

At the same time as all this feedback, we've been collecting data about occupancy on streets to inform the discussion, but we realize that this program is about more than just occupancy. It's also about feelings of who should and should not be able to park on the street.

So what you're seeing in our proposal is basically an attempt to make compromise between the various viewpoints that exist on the program. I'll quickly end by saying that I know some of you may remember that we were to hold some in person events in the spring. The pandemic interrupted those plans and with the challenges to holding those events that we outlined in a document that we put out last month, we've decided to forgo those events in part because we don't know how long it will be before we can get people in person to engage in conversations and especially the kind of conversation that we had planned. Also in this environment we're concerned about the ability to get a diverse audience together on a virtual platform. So we decided to use the engagement that we've received so far to make this proposal and then bring that for your comment in this format.

Q: How will the paid parking program in residential permit zones be enforced? What's to stop people without permits from parking all day in a residential zone?

A: That's a good question and I think it's one that concerns people frequently when they hear about the idea of short-term paid parking. The advantage of paid parking is that it is easier to enforce at the end of the day, decisions about enforcement are based on police resources and their ability to send out staff for parking enforcement. So I can't make any promises on behalf of police, but what I will say is that by designing the short term parking to include paid parking, what police have to do is they only then have to go and pass by a block once and they can tell whether or not someone has paid.

And when the question is just "have you paid" or "do you have a permit or pass?", the person can be ticketed immediately if they do not have a record of payment or a permit or pass.

The problem with just two-hour parking and there's no payment is that police have to come back twice. They have to come back once and then come back again within 2 hours to see that the car has not been moved, and that's what that allows to ticket. So, by making it paid parking, we make the parking easier to enforce on the police and make it more likely to be enforced regularly.

Q: Given that the RPP effectively reserves parking spaces for RPP participants, why should RPP revenues only cover administration of the program and not the construction maintenance and imputed land rent costs of RPP reserved parking spaces?

A: Sure, so that's a good kind of economics question. I think that one of the problems we have in terms of setting rates and fees for things like parking is that we cannot make more revenue than we expend on the program. There are already some other fees that we justify by dint of our investment in transportation infrastructure like the cost of some of the construction we do around the County.

So, we think that it is best at this point to stick with what we know we are spending in terms of the administration and provision of the program rather than the full amortized cost of the land or the maintenance.

Also, I would say that it also kind of gets into the whole question though of if I pay taxes, why can't I just have RPP for free. Taxation and other fees pay for the provision of the transportation network and our RPP. What you're paying for is control on other people being able to park on your street.

So essentially what we're just trying to do with the fees is to charge the users who are getting the benefit of those regulations. And there are other sources of money that pay for our transportation network County wide.

Q: Is there a resource available online where I can check if my address qualifies to apply for a permit

A: Yes, please go to <https://rppp.arlingtonva.us/verify.aspx> to check your eligibility.

Ivy, I'll note that if our changes are accepted by the Board regardless of what comes out of this process, if there are any changes to the eligibility, that website or a similar website will be made available and will be updated with whatever the eligibility requirements will be in the future.

I'll also use this opportunity to encourage everyone here listening in to go to the engagement web page <https://engage.arlingtonva.us/> and make sure you view the eligibility element questionnaire and provide your comments on what the proposed program includes for eligibility for permits.

Q: DC and other jurisdictions use RPP programs for purposes other than commuter parking. Why does Arlington claim commuter parking is the only allowable reason for the program, or does it?

A: Commuter parking is involved in the history of our program. The program was originally set up in the 1970s to prevent people commuting to Crystal City from parking in Aurora Highlands. For a long time, the general understanding was that this program is about commuter parking. However, at least since the 1990s, there has been some exclusions of some residents from being able to join the program so for a while the program has not been purely a program about commuter parking.

What you will see in the administrative section of the proposed program on <https://engage.arlingtonva.us/> is that we are proposing to remove the out of area test of 25% from our process. So today, if a block says that they want RPP restrictions, we must find that at least 75% of the spaces are occupied on a given block and that also 25% or more of the spaces have to be taken up by vehicles that are registered somewhere other than the immediate area we are removing that 25% requirement. So in essence, we are shifting the program into a more general parking management program.

Q: Can you review the process to have our RPP reevaluate for a single neighborhood that has multiple restricted and unrestricted areas?

A: Sure, so I mean I think what the question might relate to some sort of review of restrictions already in place. What we're proposing, largely still leaves the review to the request of the residents living in those areas. If somebody lives in a zone that lives on a street with RPP restrictions, the households on that street can petition for changes to expand the hours, to reduce the hours, or to remove the restrictions entirely.

People who do not have restrictions on their street apply to have those restrictions put into place if they gather enough support from their neighbors and if we find that parking conditions are sufficiently difficult to merit those kinds of restrictions.

We do not have a mechanism nor are we proposing a mechanism that looks at it on a neighborhood wide basis. We are leaving really the review of restrictions to the request of residents.

Now of course, at the end of the day, the restrictions are put in place by the County manager or his designee and we are able to change them, but we do not generally change those restrictions without a request from the community, because the expectation is always been that this has been a community

driven process. You can find more about the proposals we have for changing restrictions, removing restrictions, adding restrictions in the program administration section of engage.arlingtonva.us/ page.

Q: Where can we find the policy rules for deciding where the boundaries between different zones, e.g zone 4 or zone 15 will be located or when zones should be split up?

A: In terms of what is proposed, that is laid out in some detail in the program administration section of the [EngageArlington page](#) and in the other documentation that we have for the program. I will tell you that our program proposal does not include some sort of pre-designation of zones. It's not like we're going out and mapping, for example, all streets in this five-block radius would all be zone 30.

If they were to apply, we take the zone designation on a street by street basis and there's a series of criteria that we are proposing to essentially keep some modifications. And you see that in the documentation that we have online that the focus is primarily on arterial streets, natural boundaries, some attention to Civic Association boundaries, and the like in terms of splitting zones. The procedures that we're proposing are largely the same as they are now, but you can read the detail on that in the proposed in the program administration section.

Q: A quick follow up question regarding the previous inquiry about a single neighborhood that has multiple restricted and unrestricted areas. Clarifying that the question was in regard to a single four block stretch where one block has restrictions and three don't.

A - Nate: I believe the answer to this question and correct me if I'm wrong, Steven is that each individual block is able to apply for RPP by submitting a petition. That is true now and it would be true under the proposed program. Is that correct?

A - Stephen: Yes, that is true, but if you have questions about the history of a specific situation, sometimes we get those like how is it that this ended up this way and sometimes we don't know, but if you want to ask about a very specific situation, please feel free to email park@arlingtonva.us or you can email me at scrim@arlingtonva.us and ask about the specific situation.

Q: Does the paid parking in the proposed program mean that residents have to pay despite their permit if there parked in their zone? Does it mean that residents have to pay if they're not in their zone but don't have the two-hour limit, which I assume means that they are exceeding the two-hour limit?

A: So basically, if you have a permit or pass, let's say that you are currently somebody who has a zone 12 sticker and you give your zone 12 visitor passes or flex pass to people to come to your house. None of you will need to pay during the hours of restriction.

If you were to park in a different zone like say you drive over to Zone 1A to visit a friend, and for some reason you're not able to get a visitor pass from him or her - maybe they've lost them, maybe they can't find them, maybe there's a timing problem and you're showing up early - then you will have the option to pay, but as long as you are displaying a permit or pass you will not have to pay for parking for that two hour limit, nor will you be restricted to the two hours.

So, if you have a permit or pass, you are able to park as long as you like - subject of course to the 10 day limit that we have everywhere in the County - basically it's for situations where somebody doesn't have a permit or pass. They are able to pay for two hours of parking on a street with RPP restrictions.

Q: How long does a car have to stay in one place on a residential street before you can call it in that is abandoned and are commercial vehicles allowed on residential streets?

A: These are very frequent questions so I'm going to answer them quickly. Although there can be some nuance to the first question on "how long can you wait before calling somebody", at the moment the time period is 10 days. However, the police have to see 10 days so you may see a car and it's been 11 days if you call to the police on Day 11, they will come out and inspect the vehicle, but they do not just take someone's word for it that it's been longer than 10 days. They will then note it and come back within 10 days to see if the vehicle is still there. So, that is why sometimes it can be confusing what the time period is. The 10 days is the time from when the police first note the vehicle, and then when they come back and see that the vehicle still parked.

In terms of commercial vehicles, one thing that's important to note is that there are many types of vehicles that I refer to as work vehicles because they are lighter duty like say, Toyota Tacoma or a Sprinter van. These are not commercial vehicles in our code, though they are used for work purposes. They're allowed to park on residential streets. It is vehicles over a certain gross tonnage, and I have to admit that the number is escaping me now, but very large commercial vehicles like dump trucks, moving vans, large vehicles like that, those are not allowed to park on streets where the abutting land is zoned for residential use.

Q: For residents of condominiums and condo buildings, they have one building parking spot but no access to apply for the zone parking on their street. When the parking enforcement comes through to the system, does the system use license plate reading technology and the address associated with that car? Has that been considered as a way to address some of the issues with parking access?

A: I think this is really two questions, but they're adjacent. So, our enforcement currently is not based on license plate recognition. We are considering that although the decision whether or not to move to that kind of technology is something that we'll be looking at in the future. We are making upgrades to our backend the system that we run the RPP program on and it would have the capability to use license plate recognition to more efficiently enforce, but a decision on that hasn't been made.

I think the underlying question though about buildings and whether or not you can get permits is really going to depend on whether you're building was built as through one of our special exception processes where the board could allow a developer to build less parking than the zoning ordinance requires. So, most of the new or condominiums and apartment buildings in the last few decades those that were built with some sort of board approval, they would not be eligible for permits in our proposed program as they are not permitted to obtain permits or join the program now. Buildings built by right or under the typical zoning ordinance, and these are typically apartments and condos that were built generally before the 1970s, they would be eligible under our proposed program to petition for and join the program if we find that parking occupancy is high enough.

Q: Why are site plan development residents excluded from the program?

A: There are two reasons for proposing that we continue to prevent site plan buildings from joining the program

One, when the County grants the developers the permission to build less parking in the zoning ordinance requires we want to make sure the developers simply aren't offloading the cars of that they might expect their residents to bring onto the street. If we allow them to build, we want to allow flexibility so that if a developer is building with the intention of or selling to people who have fewer cars, it's not zero, but maybe fewer than other buildings, then we want them to be able to do that, but we don't want developers to come in like Oh, we need only like 1 parking space for every 2 units knowing that the

residents of those buildings could just join the RPP program and park on streets of those restrictions. So that's reason one.

The second reason is something we laid out to the board in the Manager's Report delivered back in the fall of 2019. We have an affordable housing crisis in the County, and we are determined to build more housing in our planning or allow more housing to be built to accommodate the people that are moving into our community and help prevent prices from spiraling up even further. In our survey or survey work confirmed some things that we heard from the public in general, which is that support for new housing drops quite a bit if the people who are going to live in those buildings will be able to park on the existing residence streets. So in essence, this is a policy that is meant to allow for the housing development that the community would benefit from.

Q: Do we have to petition to get our passes if we live in a Co-op on a resident by resident basis or will be automatically eligible and just get notification to pay for the permits?

A: Yeah, good question. So if you're in a multifamily building that would be eligible under the proposed program or - it doesn't have to be a multifamily building to be a Co-op, But anyway - if you're in a building or like set of townhomes that are operated as a Co-op and you are eligible to petition, you would still have to go through a petition process, and if you are on the same physical block as say other types of housing, say your co-op is on the same block, like some single family detached homes or another Co-op, the petition has to be for all of the residents of that block and we are proposing that 80% of the households that are on the block would need to support the petition. So there would still need to be coming together of neighbors to support the request first.

Q: Are individual streets and buildings being examined case by case to determine eligibility or are blanket rules applied to neighborhoods.

A: There's sort of a yes and no there, so again, petitions and eligibility. The petitions come in block by block, and we're making a slight change in the definition, so it's basically a block is a street from 1 intersection to another intersection or from the intersection to the end of the street. And we study those blocks on a case by case basis.

Now, in terms of the rules that we are proposing and what would these restrictions be? Our proposal is that residents could still apply for different hours of restriction as they do today. We give a standard set of hours like you can apply for 8:00 to 5:00 on weekdays and then five to 1:00 AM on weekdays, and then you can also apply for those blocks of time on weekends. The petitioners' block could still say we want these hours and because there's something nearby that has a lot of activity that's generating this kind of parking pressure. Then we'll go out and study the occupancy during those hours that the block has selected.

However, our proposal would be that all streets would have the two-hour paid parking and that also the proposed permit caps related to the amount of off-street parking would be in effect for all streets. We would not be customizing that street by street.

Q: Would existing zones be grandfathered into the proposed program?

A: If you have restrictions on your street now, they will stay. If you live in zone 4 or if you are on a street that has restrictions for zone 4, the sign will still say zone 4. The hours of restriction will remain in place.

We will introduce though 2 hour paid parking on streets that don't already have it. From there, residents will be able to petition for changes.

The only other change is that we are proposing to create a new way of managing the edges between two zones. Right now, we have inconsistent ways in which we deal with like the spaces where Zone 8 and 12 come together and where other zones come together and it leads to a situation where either some households get permits for two zones or households have only access to one's own, but that they are at the edge of the zone, so they have a smaller search radius where they could find parking near their home. What we intend to do is along the edges where two zones come together for one block in either direction of that edge. The permits from the two zones would be valid, so your restrictions would remain in place. If you're on that street in Zone 4 and you happen to be at the edge, your sticker will still work, it's just that somebody from an abutting zone will also be able to park there for one block in and you will be able to park one block in to that other zone.

Q: Changes to parking restrictions for one street can easily affect parking in adjacent and neighboring streets. How does the County take their needs into account when making decisions on RPP?

A: It is a great question and it is a difficult question to answer. We have chosen to leave this really as a block by block proposal, simply because we have struggled to come up with a workable consultation process that expands the scope to consider restrictions on one street. We recognize that there may be impacts on streets nearby, but our proposal does leave this as a block-driven process.

Q: Petitions for new RPP zones have been frozen. When would they be unfrozen?

Q: We had hoped that we would be able to begin accepting petitions as soon as the new program is adopted, the problem that we face right now is of course, the pandemic and the changes that have come in transportation patterns. So something that we have not thought through yet is when it would be appropriate to begin examining the parking.

In situation out in the community, if COVID were not a thing and if we were not dealing with this terrible situation, what I would say is that we would take time. This period is always a very-staff intensive thing and of course with new rules to explain, would expect a lot of our staff. Time will be taken up simply responding to inquiries and making sure everyone understands the new program.

So we could certainly begin taking petitions earlier, but the part of us actually getting out into the field to do work would have to wait until after our renewal season in the spring. And now with the pandemic, I think we need to think a little bit further about when it would be appropriate to even be looking at the transportation system for programs like this in the future. I know that that's not a very satisfying or definite answer, but it's certainly something that's like vexing all of us as we try to plan for the future of our programs in the presence of something that's quite unusual.

Q: Given the impacts, did you take into consideration the ways which this proposed program would encourage or discourage more impervious surface, i.e driveways on single family home lots. Do these changes make our stormwater situation better or worse, and is that a policy goal for this program and should it be?

A: Yes, stormwater is certainly important, as is water quality. Really, the impervious surface question is something that is very well covered in the zoning ordinance and in the portions of our other policy that deal with our obligations for the Chesapeake Bay. Water quality and - I'm using imprecise words here because it's been a long time since I've worked in water planning, but in any case - we do have a set of robust other policies that deal with how much surface should be impervious. And especially single-family detached homes and how much should be left as pervious. So that is what we believe is the primary way to manage

that. What this program is really trying to do is manage where people park. It is not trying to manage the parking supply that landowners are providing for themselves or for tenants.

Q: While the original intent of this program may have been for commuter concerns, are the building of new large apartment buildings where guests park on the street for long periods of time be a consideration for permit parking?

A: I think one of the key things about the program as we are proposing here recognizes that the public has expectations for RPP that go beyond commuters and so it's about parking management more in general. In terms of new buildings and visitors, one of the compromises that we made in producing this proposal is that buildings built by site plan and certain kinds of other special exception would not be eligible to be part of the program.

On the other side, in the petition process we've removed the 25% requirement or the requirement that we find at least 25% of the vehicles on a street are not registered in the area or not registered to residents. So basically, that test goes away. So, the question really just becomes well, how full is your street regardless of the source.

Now, the master transportation plan dictates that we need to be balancing the desire to make parking easy with the fact that on street parking is desirable for a few reasons. One, it slows people down on streets because you make the street a little bit narrower so it can make the streets safer and also on-street parking is just an efficient use of resources. So, were following that, trying to balance that. So, by removing the 25% rule we are also simultaneously raising. The total occupancy threshold that a block would have to have in order to be granted restrictions. So the 25% rule would go away and then we would have to find that at least 85% of the spaces on a street are occupied as opposed to at least 70% as it is in the current program.

Q: The proposal increases the number of households on streets who must agree to a new restriction, i.e. petition. What happens if there are a few people on the street who are unable to answer the door to sign or incapacitated? Would they be included in the maximum of 20% allowed to not sign the petition and still be granted an RPP review?

A: I think we will have to consider what would be done for people who just can't be reached. I think that we have not thought through. Certainly, all of the conditions that might be outside of the norm certainly as we move the threshold or as we propose to move the threshold up, we need to be considering situations like this where somehow people aren't reachable. When you look at the program administration rules on the website, that documentation on that you do you will see that we admit that document may not have every last situation and how we plan to cover it, but it's a good question and you've given me something that we would need to think about if our proposals are accepted by the board.

Q: For older apartment complexes where the complex controls the streets, will they be permitted to get permits for local streets while their management restricts the use of the private streets?

A: So I assume the person is talking about internal streets, like where you say there's maybe public streets on certain sides, but there's a private street internal to the site that is reserved only for people who have permits for the apartment building or condo buildings. Our proposal does not exclude older complexes with internal streets, they would still be able to apply for permits and passes on public streets if they abut public streets.

Q: Car sharing remains an allowable use allowing vehicles to be parked in RPP zones under the proposed programs. Has the study looked into the impact of car sharing programs on RPP?

A: Not expressly no. We have not looked especially at the number of vehicles as part of this that are parked in RPP zones. We do get data from our vendors on that. I would say that the important thing to remember though with car share in general is that car share vehicles are being used by people who either live or who are visiting in RPP zones. So, the reason why we have allowances for car share vehicles to park on our RPP streets, it's because the residents who live there would not be able to use that service if they were not allowed to park their vehicles on RPP Street. I think more generally as we allow for all kinds of different service providers and people serving the home, already we do that, and we propose to do that here. We would continue to allow car share vehicles to park in RPP streets because it's a service that the residents themselves or their guests are using.

Q: As part of this 2-hour paid parking program would pay stations would be installed in residential communities? Would all RPP zones would become two-hour paid parking as part of this proposed program?

A: There would be no physical meters installed. We would be expecting people to pay either using ParkMobile or the EasyPark device. Some of you may have that - it is provided by the Treasurer. One of the reasons for that is that would be a large investment in meter infrastructure to install and put out there. And the other thing is that in many residential areas installing a meter may be difficult either physically or it may be difficult to put them in on streets and still make them accessible to people with disabilities. So, we would not be installing either the multi-space meters or the single-space meters or pay stations anywhere. And yes, our proposal is that all streets with RPP restrictions would have the two-hour paid parking applied.

Nate: We talked a little bit about why that was included in the proposal. Steven, just for the benefit of those asking the two-hour paid parking part, correct?

Stephen: Yeah, so there's a few reasons there. One we do sometimes get complaints about the complexity of dealing with the passes and permits and getting them to their residents, and sometimes people will ask us like, why can't we just have the two-hour short-term parking? They do in many other places like the district, there's frequently 2-hour free parking for everybody, Alexandria has that. Making it metered makes it easier to enforce, so in some ways it makes it easier for residents and guests to park there. It also makes it easier for others who were just making quick visits to the nearby area to be able to park. We have seen that on-street occupancy on streets with RPP during the middle of the day generally gets no more than 40 to 45% and so we think that there is space to just allow a little more. More space for residents' guests and other users.

It could also of course be used by people like construction or somebody who's just making a short trip to a house and the resident isn't there to make the pass available, but they would have a way to legally park for a short period of time.

Honestly, if it were enforceable to have short term parking without payment, I would do it, but I think that would sort of lean too heavily in the direction of like a permissive program that's not enforceable and we want to make sure that there's some confidence that this will be enforced, and I think that there is a one of the questions that it was included in.

Q: The verification tool mentioned earlier only works if you are already in an RPP zone, not if you would be eligible if a zone was implemented in the future. Is that correct?

A: Yes, thank you. That's a very good important clarification. So yeah to Ivy's original question and to the follow up person, under the current program there are so many site specific tests for whether or not a

building could apply for and get permits. We don't have like a database that covers all of those things. With this proposal we would be simplifying eligibility and so we would be able to create a database that would say you're at least eligible to petition or not.

Q: Is the zone designations determined before or after the petition process? I imagine it would be much more popular in my newly-eligible building if we were in Zone 6 then in Zone 5.

A: Yeah, so the zone determination would be made like during the petition process. We would take the petition, look at the situation in terms of the size of the existing zones around and make a determination at that time to what zone we would likely put that block in.

Q: Can you explain the reasoning behind the new proposal and the rewards or punishments the new proposal would include based on whether a home has its own driveway?

A: OK, so what we have done with this proposal is to link the amount of the number of permits that household could get to the amount of off street parking they already have, and this really comes out of the fact that depending on who you ask, many residents who live in different housing types think somebody else should not be able to have RPP permits because of off-street parking they already have.

So many residents who live in single family detached homes or townhouses, they will say that people who live in multifamily buildings shouldn't be able to be part of our RPP because the developer supposed to provide all that parking in a parking lot or garage. Meanwhile residents who live in multifamily buildings will say I don't understand why it is that house that has driveway and garage is able to be part of our RPP because they have all that off-street parking.

What we're trying to do is treat more equally the concept of there's a relationship between how much of the RPP program you can participate or how many permits you can get and the amount of off street parking you already have. So basically, if you have any off-street parking on your site or on your in your building on your property, you would be limited to two annual permits. and if you have no off-street parking provided with your building, your townhome, or your single-family home you could have up to 3 permits.

Q: A concern that I've heard from neighbors is the parking signage in front of their homes. Will the two-hour paid parking require additional larger signage to provide the zone numbers to input into ParkMobile?

A: That's a very good question. Obviously, we have not gotten to the point of designing signage, but I think it is reasonable to expect that the number of the like the square footage or square inches of sign will necessarily have to increase in order to implement this. There's just no way that we could fit the variety of information that would be needed in the existing sign space. Though I don't have for you now what those might look like - we don't want to just put the cart before the horse and design a sign before we even know whether this is something that this is a change will be incorporated into the program - but it is a good question and it's something that we will be working on if the board approves the two-hour parking.

Questions Not Answered during the Event

Q: Paid parking - so currently my street has no paid parking evenings and weekends. Would we have to pay on Saturday + evenings till 8pm now, but not Sunday?

A: Two-hour, paid parking would only be in effect during the hours of RPP restriction. So if your street has RPP restrictions until, say, 5 PM, Monday through Friday, two-hour, paid parking would be an

option for those without permits and passes only until 5 PM, Monday through Friday. On evenings and weekends, parking would be free and open to all as it is now.

Q: There is a by-right luxury condo building constructed in the 21st Century in the heart of Clarendon with a huge underground garage. What purpose does it serve to allow this building to restrict four coveted urban streets? The current cutoff is 1964. What's wrong with that?

A: Most recent condo buildings would have been constructed through a "special exception" process, not "by-right." These buildings would still not be able to petition for restrictions under the new program. However, assuming that this building was approved by right, then under the proposed program, residents of the building could petition for restrictions, along with their neighbors on the block. Single-family detached homes with off-street parking have been able to obtain restrictions close to popular destinations since the program began, regardless of when those homes were built. Allowing condos and apartments built by right to do the same would make the program more equal than it is now.

Q: The proposal would increase the number of parking spaces from 75% to 85% full in order to qualify for a new restriction. Can the residents request and obtain information on the number of available spaces on the street in order to decide whether the street would qualify before going through the effort of the petition process? Also, the proposal says that the usage of parking on the street would be evaluated on multiple occasions, but does not provide details on how this will be done. Could you explain what the process will be to determine parking usage on the street meets the 85% capacity requirement to receive a new restriction?

A: Staff will not go out to measure a street before a petition is received. However, the County would share its rules for measuring the number of parking spaces on a block so that residents could get a rough idea of the number of spaces. Before the moratorium, staff conducted at least two surveys for each block of hours that residents requested; more surveys were conducted if one survey showed occupancy above the threshold and one survey showed occupancy below the threshold. Staff believes that two surveys is too few. Some residents have said that with so few surveys, staff might, by chance, see lots of open parking spaces when parking spaces are usually hard to find, and deny restrictions. Others believe that with so few surveys, staff might, by chance, see few open parking spaces when on most occasions, parking is easy to find. Staff has yet to determine the number of surveys that would be required in order to determine that the street meets the occupancy requirement under the new program, and is working to balance the desire for accurate data with the reality that resources for data collection are limited.

Q: Have you considered the impact of 2-hour parking everywhere zoned on residential areas near commercial areas (sometimes zone hours are designed to keep the commercial traffic out).

A: Yes. Adding two-hour, paid parking on all RPP streets would allow people driving to commercial areas to park in those residential areas for a short time. However, since the parking would be paid at the same rate at two-hour meters, people driving would not save money by parking on streets with RPP restrictions, and if they park on a street with RPP restrictions, then they will generally have to walk farther to their destination than if they were to park in a metered space that already exists today. For these reasons, staff think that the two-hour parking will increase parking occupancy by a small amount. Also, streets with RPP restrictions are, on average, less than half full during the day, so a small increase would still leave parking spaces for residents and visitors.

Q: I am an Arlington Mill resident. Even with RPP, how will this solve the parking issue if all other neighboring civic associations use RPP on their streets. Arlington Mill has one of the highest population densities in Arlington and a lack of parking and suffered for years from lack of nighttime parking.

A: All residents living on streets with RPP restrictions will be able to park on nearby streets with restrictions as long as they all have the same zone number. Civic Association boundaries are one criterion among six that staff will consider when assigning zones, and zones will not be drawn based on Civic Association boundaries alone. The proposed program does not offer a defined way in which residents on streets can contest restrictions already granted or proposed for a neighboring street.

Q: Ok that makes sense now, zone 4 still exists as is - but do we need to request permits as if new? Or just assume we'll need them and get advised when payment is due?(so do we have to ask (petition?) individually to get our passes if we live in a co-op, each resident? Or are we automatically eligible and we'll get notification to just pay for the permits?)

A: All residents who have RPP restrictions on the street where they live and who are eligible to obtain permits would need to apply for those permits every year, as under the current program. The County does not mail permits proactively because many residents move to new homes, sell vehicles, or trade in vehicles each year.