To: Paul Luke, Chairman, Skokie Plan Commission
From: Brian J. Augustine, Zoning Administrator and Permit Manager
Case: 2023-18P: Zoning Chapter Amendment

Driveways

### General Information

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<th>Petitioner</th>
<th>Village of Skokie</th>
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<td>Purpose</td>
<td>The Village of Skokie is requesting an amendment to Chapter 118, Zoning Article XI Off Street Parking and Loading Facilities, to prohibit new curb cuts and front yard driveways on lots that abut or have access to a public improved alley.</td>
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### STAFF ANALYSIS

In addition to recent sustainably initiatives, staff has also been reviewing pedestrian friendly policies. The Community Development Department, along with other Village Departments, have always strived to make Skokie a more pedestrian friendly place. Creating a more walkable environment by adding public walks has been a more recent initiative by the Village. Along with the adding of public walks where feasible, staff is striving to make as many walks in town as pedestrian friendly as possibly.

In order to achieve further sustainability and a more pedestrian friendly Village, the Community Development Department, with support from the Engineering Division, is proposing to prohibit driveways from a street on a lot that abuts a public alley. The following are the four main reasons staff is proposing this ordinance change:

1. **Storm water reduction into the combined sewer system.** The Engineering Division is always looking for ways to reduce the amount of storm water draining into the sewer system. The more driveways and aprons from streets that are in the Village, the more stormwater that will run off into the sewer system.

   Per the Engineering Division, during a 1-inch per hour rainfall event, a driveway and apron of 300 square feet will discharge about 162 gallons of stormwater into the sewer. This of course assumes it is a steady rainfall event. Smaller driveways will produce less than that and larger driveways will produce more. It is possible some of the stormwater may reach a grassy parkway or front lawn area, but if pitched properly, a majority of that stormwater will run to the street.
If we can lessen the number of new driveways coming from a street, we can reduce the amount of water draining to the streets in the future. The less stormwater draining to the street means less flooded streets and less water backing up into a basement.

2. Pedestrian friendly environment. Skokie has sought out ways to create a more pedestrian friendly environment throughout the Village. In 2012, Skokie implemented a permit fee that goes towards installing new public walks where there are none. Over the past several years Skokie has added over 9 full blocks of new public walks. In the future the goal is to add about 4-6 blocks per year.

The addition of public walks on one or both sides of a street is intended to help remove pedestrians from walking in a street. There is greater chance of being struck by a vehicle if you are walking in a street than if you are on public walkway. There is also a greater chance of being struck by a vehicle if there are driveways that cross walkways. The less vehicle – pedestrian intersecting points, the better.

Prohibiting driveways from the street on lots that abut an alley, will help create a more pedestrian friendly environment. The more walkable and pedestrian friendly an area is the greater likelihood a family will go out for a walk together, a person will go for a jog, or children will play together in front yards.

3. Loss of green space and front yard/parkway trees.

Staff estimates more than 10 mature front yard or parkway trees have been lost over the past several years because of new front yard driveways. Even though a permit is required to remove a tree and permit fees are set aside to plant new trees, it takes years for a newly planted tree to come close to the leaf area that the mature tree provided. Larger trees usually have more leaf area which in turn produces more oxygen and captures CO2. A larger leaf area means a greater shade area, a greater shade area leads to lower temperatures and a reduction in the heat island effect.

The loss of green parkway space was partly discussed in point 1 with the increase in stormwater flow into the street. When new aprons get installed in the parkway this turns into less green space, which leads to less permeable and plantable areas.

4. Loss of on-street parking spaces. Another negative side effect of allowing new curb cuts and driveways is the loss of on-street parking spaces. The convenience the driveway provides to one property owner, results in the loss of one or in most cases two on-street parking spaces. On blocks that have more homes (smaller lot widths) this leads to more guests fighting for less street parking. In some cases, visitors can park on their friend’s driveway, but they may not always fit on the driveway.

On properties that do not abut a public alley, a driveway accessible from the street will be still be permitted. The ordinance will always allow a property owner to provide for on-site parking.
Staff feels the elimination of driveways from a street, when feasible, will ultimately lead to less stormwater runoff into the street, a more pedestrian friendly and green environment, less trees being removed, and more on-street parking spaces being maintained. Staff has included some examples of similar policies. Also included are photographs showing vehicles blocking public walks, numerous curb cuts on a street that abuts a public alley and a block with zero curb cuts, numerous parkway trees and a copious amount of green space.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the following sections of Chapter 118 Zoning of the Skokie Village Code be amended, with text to be added highlighted and text to be removed highlighted and stricken through in the attached draft ordinance.

**ARTICLE XI. OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOCATING FACILITIES**

Sec. 118-212. - Motor vehicle parking facility design standards.

(c) **Access driveways to off-street parking and loading spaces.**

(1) Width of driveways (measured at the street right-of-way line abutting the lot) shall be as follows:

a. Residences without shared driveways: Not less than 9 feet wide and not more than 22 feet wide.

b. Nonresidence uses and all residences with shared driveways:
   1. Not less than 14 feet wide for a one-way driveway;
   2. Not less than 20 feet wide for a two-way driveway when less than 20 parking spaces are being served;
   3. Not less than 24 feet wide for a two-way driveway when 20 or more parking spaces or 2 or more loading spaces are being served; and
   4. Not more than 35 feet wide.

(2) The radius connecting the street pavement edge and driveway edges shall conform with the Standards for Parking Lots and Driveways as established by the Engineering Division.

(3) The acute angle formed at the intersection of a driveway and street pavement edges shall be not less than 60 degrees.

(4) The spacing between separate driveway entrances on a lot (measured at the street right-of-way line abutting the lot) shall be as follows:

a. On arterials: Not less than 30 feet.

b. On streets not classified as arterials: Not less than 16 feet.

(5) On corner lots, the spacing between the driveway entrance and the right-of-way line of the adjacent intersecting street shall be as follows:

a. To intersecting arterials: Not less than 15 feet.
b. To an intersecting street not classified as an arterial: Not less than 8 feet.

(6) Location. Access to off-street parking can only be from a public alley. Curb cuts are prohibited unless the lot does not abut a public improved alley. Relief may only be granted for mixed-use, business or industrial properties.

ATTACHMENTS
1. Santa Monica, CA Parking Design and Development Standards 9.28.120
2. Photographs taken in Skokie on July 27, 2023
3. Washington D.C. Residential Driveway and Curb cut application
Santa Monica, California
9.28.120 Parking Design and Development Standards

All off-street parking and loading areas except those used exclusively for stacked or valet parking, shall be designed and developed consistent with the following standards.

A. The design, location or position of any parking layout, entry, driveway, approach or accessway from any street or alley shall be approved by the Director.

B. Parking Access.

1. Driveways. Driveways must lead to parking spaces that comply with the design standards in this Section and all other applicable standards.
   a. Single-Unit Residential and Ocean Parking Single-Unit Residential Districts. Subject to Section 9.28.120(B)(3), no more than one driveway to a public street is allowed on a parcel with less than 100 linear feet of street frontage, and no more than 2 driveways to a public street are allowed on a parcel with 100 linear feet or greater of street frontage.
   b. All Other Districts. Subject to subsection (B)(3), the number of driveways shall not be more than necessary to allow access in and out of a parcel and/or building.

2. Combined Entrances. Combining entrances for off-street parking with those for off-street loading is permitted.

3. Alley Access. Access to parking areas shall be from alleys. Curb cuts are prohibited except where a project site meets at least one of the following criteria:
   a. The site has no adjacent side or rear alley having a minimum right-of-way of 15 feet. Corner parcels with no adjacent side or rear alley must take access from the side street.
   b. The average slope of a multi-unit residential parcel is at least 5 percent.
   c. The Director determines that a curb cut is appropriate due to traffic, circulation, or safety concerns.
   d. Commercial properties may have nonresidential parking access from side streets.
PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN ON JULY 27, 2023

All photographs taken are of streets that abut alleys.

1. 7800 Block of Kenton – Truck making a delivery and partially blocking a public walk.

[Image of a truck partially blocking a sidewalk]

2. 8400 Block of Drake – Van parked and partially blocking a public walk.

[Image of a van partially blocking a sidewalk]
3. 8100 Block of Tripp Ave. - There are fourteen homes on the east side of the 8100 block of Tripp and all the homes have attached garages with driveways to the street.

4. 7900 Kilbourn Ave – There are ten homes on the west side of the block and no driveways to the street.
RESIDENTIAL DRIVEWAY AND CURB CUT

I want to: Repair or replace an existing residential driveway or construct a new residential driveway with a curb cut.

Do I need a permit? Yes, any use of the public right-of-way, which is defined as the space outside of the private property line, requires permission from the District Department of Transportation and can require a rental payment for use of the space. Please note: the driveway must lead to parking on private property.

Where do I go to get this permit? The public space permit office at 1100 4th Street, SW, 2nd floor, between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:15 pm, weekdays except Thursday when hours are 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. DDOT electronic permit kiosks are available to simplify the permit application process. These kiosks are located at the Permit Office as well as at seven Metropolitan Police Department District Stations or you may enter your application information, and submit your application online from your home or office computer at https://tops.ddot.dc.gov

What do I need to apply for my public space permit?
1. Register yourself as a user on the DDOT Transportation Online Permit System (TOPS) at any of the DDOT electronic permit kiosks or online at https://tops.ddot.dc.gov.
2. Complete an on-line application at any of the DDOT electronic permit kiosks or online at https://tops.ddot.dc.gov.
3. If applicable, Fine Arts Commission and/or Historic Preservation Review Board approval must be obtained before permit application is submitted.
4. Site plans and other supporting documents may be uploaded online or paper copies may be submitted to a public space technician at the public space permit office.
5. If you want to repair or replace an existing driveway in-kind:
   a. There may be no change in the width or location of the driveway.
   b. Photo taken from the street showing the existing driveway and the vehicle parking area on private property.
   c. Two (2) copies of the site plan showing the replacement driveway with the vehicle parking on private property, drawn to scale, indicating replacement in-kind to DC standards and specifications which are online at:

- Or -

6. If you want to construct a new curb cut and driveway:
   a. Off-street parking must be accessed from a public alley, unless applicant proves that the property does not have alley access or alley access is not practical and would cause undue hardship to the applicant. Shared driveways are encouraged.
   b. Photo taken from the street showing the proposed driveway and the parking area location.
   c. Ten (10) copies of the site plan showing the proposed curb cut and driveway with the vehicle parking on private property, drawn to scale, showing a curb cut and driveway constructed to DC standards and specifications which are online at:
   d. Please present one (1) copy of the site plan for the new curb cut and driveway to a public space technician at the public space permit office for review before submitting the full package of site plans.
7. A separate public space permit for the temporary occupancy of public space will be required for the work zone associated with the replacement of an existing driveway or the construction of a new curb cut and driveway.

How much will this permit cost? The permit will cost $75.00. There will also be an inspection fee and refundable restoration deposit. Both vary depending on the square footage and several hundred dollars for each is common. Checks or money orders should be made payable to “DC Treasurer.” Discover, MasterCard and Visa are accepted.

How long will the application take to process? Two (2) days for a permit to repair or replace an existing driveway or forty five to sixty (45-60) days for a new driveway. You may check your application status at https://tops.ddot.dc.gov.

What if I need additional information? Please call the Public Space Permit Office at (202) 442-4670.