

**SUPPLEMENTAL MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Zoning Commission

**FROM:** Matt Jesick, Development Review Specialist  
*JLS*  
Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development Review & Historic Preservation

**DATE:** June 1, 2021

**SUBJECT:** ZC Case 21-04 – Text amendment to Subtitle C § 712 to clarify and allow special exception relief to certain vehicle parking requirements

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**I. BACKGROUND AND RECOMMENDATION**

At the May 10 public hearing for this application, the Commission asked the Office of Planning (OP) to further study ways the text of Subtitle C § 712 could be refined to address the concerns of ANC 1A. The ANC had raised the issue of cars parked on compact parking spaces and protruding into narrow public alleys, rendering passage by trash trucks or other large vehicles impossible. OP had proposed, and the Commission voted to approve, text that would address that condition when applicants came before the BZA. The ANC also commented that a greater depth of vehicular parking spaces should be maintained for matter of right scenarios, instead of allowing compact spaces in all cases. OP worked with OAG to craft additional language for § 712 to address those instances, and that proposed text is shown below. OP shared the text with the authorized representative of the ANC, who stated that the language seemed to address the ANC’s concerns.

OP and OAG are also proposing one final clarification to § 712 – to clarify and consolidate the screening requirements of §§ 712.9 and 714.2. Other than § 712.9, all other screening requirements are currently contained in § 714. Those edits are shown below. OP recommends approval of the proposed text amendments.

**II. PROPOSED ZONING TEXT**

**Compact Parking Dimensions on Narrow Alleys**

ANC 1A was concerned about cars protruding into alleys and obstructing vehicular movements through the alley. This problem would be most acute on the most narrow alleys, so OP proposes to limit the ability to establish a compact length parking space when an alley is 15 feet or less in width. A property owner with access on such an alley could still use the compact parking length dimension, but BZA relief would be required, pursuant to § 712.11. The proposed text of § 712.3 follows.

712.3 The minimum parking space dimensions shall be provided as follows:

- (a) Subject to paragraph (f), when four (4) or more spaces are required, at least fifty percent (50%) of the spaces shall meet or exceed the full-sized dimensions specified in Subtitle C § 712.5;
- (b) Subject to paragraph (f), when three (3) spaces are required, at least one (1) of the spaces shall meet or exceed the full-sized dimensions specified in Subtitle C § 712.5 and the others shall meet or exceed the compact-sized dimensions specified in Subtitle C § 712.6;
- (c) Subject to paragraph (f), when two (2) or fewer spaces are required, they may meet or exceed the compact-sized dimensions specified in Subtitle C § 712.6;
- (d) Notwithstanding Subtitle A § 102.6 and Subtitle C § 701.14, any existing parking space may be reduced in size in conformance with the requirements of this subsection by obtaining a building permit approved as zoning compliant; ~~and~~
- (e) No parking space, whether required or not required, shall have dimensions less than the compact-sized dimensions specified in Subtitle C § 712.6; and
- (f) No parking space, whether required or not required, shall have a length less than the full-sized dimensions specified in Subtitle C § 712.5 if the space is directly accessible from a public alley that is fifteen (15) feet or less in width.

### Consolidation of Screening Requirements

Section 712 deals almost exclusively with parking and aisle dimensions. Section 712.9, however, also addresses screening, a topic which is otherwise governed by § 714. For clarity and ease of use, the following changes are proposed by OP, in cooperation with OAG.

- Relocate § 712.9(a) so that it becomes part of § 714.2. The wording of the relocated section would be the same as already approved by the Commission, except to apply the requirement to all external surface parking, whether required or not.
- OP proposes to change the unit-count threshold of § 714.1 to match § 712.9, so that any property devoted to residential with more than two units would need to meet the screening requirements.

The amended text is shown below:

712.9 Except on a lot that only has one (1) or two (2) dwelling units, all:

- ~~(a) All required parking spaces that abut public space, such as sidewalks, streets, or alleys, shall have physical structures, such as wheel bumper guards, curbs, and/or guard rails installed to separate and protect the abutting public space from~~

~~vehicular encroachment, except if the abutting public space is the access point or driveway to the parking space; and~~

- ~~(b)~~ — All parking areas and spaces shall be designed and operated so that sufficient access and maneuvering space is available to permit the parking and removal of any vehicle without moving any other vehicle onto public space.
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714.1 Screening shall be required for any external surface parking spaces except:

- (a) On a property located in a PDR zone that does not abut property that is not within a PDR zone; or
- (b) On a property devoted to residential uses with a maximum of ~~three (3)~~ two (2) dwelling units.

714.2 Screening of external surface parking shall be provided in accordance with the following provisions:

- (a) Screening shall be provided around the entire perimeter of the surface parking area;
- (b) ~~All required parking spaces that abut public space, such as sidewalks, streets, or alleys, shall have physical structures, such as wheel bumper guards, curbs, and/or guard rails, installed to separate and protect the abutting public space from vehicular encroachment, except if the abutting public space is the access point or driveway to the parking space;~~
- ~~(c)(b)~~ Gaps ~~Except as required by paragraph (b) of this section, gaps~~ in the screening are allowed only to provide driveways and pedestrian exits or entrances that open directly onto a street, sidewalk or alley. No individual gap may exceed twenty feet (20 ft.) in width; and
- ~~(d)(e)~~ The ~~Except as required by paragraph (b) of this section, the~~ screening shall be either:
  - (1) A wall or solid fence at least forty-two (42) inches high; or
  - (2) Evergreen hedges or evergreen growing trees that are thickly planted and maintained, and that are at least forty-two (42) inches in height when planted, and maintained in perpetuity.