Supporting Carsharing in Cambridge: Proposed Zoning Changes

Community Development Department
October 27, 2015
What is Carsharing?

• More people sharing use of fewer vehicles
• Hourly or daily use
• Membership-based organization (no per-use contract)
• Web/phone reservation (no office visit)
Why Is Carsharing Important to Cambridge?

• More mobility
• More sustainable transportation
• Fewer cars
• Easier parking
• Less traffic
• Less pollution

Better quality of life for everyone
Less Competition for Parking

- 1 carshare car = 9 to 13 private cars

Change in Resident Parking Permits and # Households

- 8% decrease in permits from 42,615 to 41,812
- 4% increase in households from 44,300 to 42,615

Sources:
TPT Permit data and 2000 Census, 2013 ACS Estimate
Survey: If you ARE a carshare member now or WERE a carshare member in the past, how has carsharing affected your car ownership?

After I became a member:

- **40%** I kept my car, but use carsharing for special purposes (such as van rental)
- **26%** I didn’t have a car before I joined and I still don’t
- **16%** I got rid of my only car
- **7%** I didn’t buy a car (or second car) when I otherwise would have
- **7%** I got rid of my second car
- **4%** I had no change in my car ownership

From: Cambridge Residents
Responses: 977
City of Cambridge Survey, January 2015
How Often Zipcars Are Used, Average

• Turnover = 1.7 reservations per day
• Vehicles are in active use 9 to 11 hrs per day
• 89% of reservations are made between 6 am and 10 pm
• 36 out of 300 cars reserved 10 pm to 5 am, including full-day reservations
Community Process

• 9 Neighborhood Meetings: Sept – January
• Presentation, then group discussion
• Online survey
Comments from Neighborhood Meetings

- “Can you please put carshare on-street and off-street in residential areas? That would be useful.”
- “When my car dies, I won’t get another. I’ll do carsharing and use cabs.”
- “With a two-car driveway, we keep thinking about getting a car, but we have been putting it off because of carsharing options.”
- “We know so many people who are car-free even with kids.”

Questions and Concerns

- “Will allowing carshare vehicles to park on residential property make it harder for me to find on-street parking?”
- “Will landlords raise parking fees, pushing more cars onto the street?”
- Noise and bad driver concerns
Survey: Would you like carshare vehicles to be located in private off-street parking spaces in residential areas?

From: Cambridge Residents Only
Responses: 1014

City of Cambridge Survey, February 2015
Survey: What is the farthest you would walk to use a carshare vehicle?

**Current Members**
- 10 mins: 45%
- 7 mins: 19%
- 5 mins: 22%
- 2 mins: 2%
- 15+ mins: 12%

**Non-Members**
- 10 mins: 16%
- 5 mins: 33%
- 7 mins: 12%
- 15+ mins: 6%
- Would not be a member: 6%

**From:** Cambridge residents
**Responses:** 945

**From:** Cambridge Residents
**Responses:** 125

*City of Cambridge Survey, February 2015*
Why Are Zoning Changes Needed?

- Carsharing is not clearly defined or regulated
- Unclear regulations have impeded growth of carsharing
- Especially restrictive in areas where it would be most convenient to residents
Zoning Petition Overview

Petition approach:

- **Parking is parking.**
- **Parking can be used for carsharing,** to serve residents without requiring car ownership.
- **General and specific limitations** apply, depending on the type of parking facility.
# Zoning Petition Overview

**Petition details:**

| 6.24.1 Intent                  | • Increasing mobility options for Cambridge residents, employees and visitors  
                              | • Reducing reliance on automobile ownership and use  
                              | • Lessening total demand for parking spaces |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6.24.2 Definitions            | • Carsharing Vehicle and Carsharing Organization  
                              | • Consistent with M.G.L. Chapter 90  
                              | • Distinguishes between carsharing and traditional rental car agency |
## Zoning Petition Overview

**Petition details:**

| 6.24.3 General Limitations | • Parking facility must be lawful  
|                           | • Carsharing Vehicles must be registered  
|                           | • No sales, servicing, dead storage, repair, &c.  
|                           | • No on-site personnel  
|                           | (unless allowed as a principal use, e.g. office)  
|                           | • All owners must agree (e.g., condos)  |

| Planning Board Recommendation: | • *Spaces must be registered with Cambridge TP&T*  
|                               | • *Full-size parking spaces only*  
|                               | • *At least 10 feet from a residential building on an abutting lot in lower-density residential district*  |
## Zoning Petition Overview

**Petition details:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.24.4 Principal Use Parking (e.g., pay garages &amp; lots)</strong></td>
<td>• No specific limitations on carsharing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **6.24.5 Accessory Parking** | • Carsharing can use **required accessory parking**, provided all occupants can access (subject to terms of membership)  
• **Non-residential uses**: no limitation on number |
## Zoning Petition Overview

**Petition details:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.24.5 Accessory Parking (cont’d)</th>
<th><strong>Original Petition:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Accessory Residential Parking:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No more than 30% of total number of spaces, PB can modify by special permit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not allowed on single-family residential lots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning Board Recommendation:</strong></td>
<td>• <em>Limited to lots with 4 spaces or more</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Carsharing can occupy any spaces above 75% of the number required by zoning or special permit</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Zoning Petition Overview

Examples (assuming one space per unit required):

8-unit lot (6 spaces)
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space

8-unit lot (7 spaces)
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car sharing space

8-unit lot (8 spaces)
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car sharing space
- Car sharing space

8-unit lot (9 spaces)
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car owner space
- Car sharing space
- Car sharing space
- Car sharing space

75%
# Zoning Petition Overview

## Petition details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Board Recommendation: 6.24.6 Modifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Grandfathering of Existing Spaces</strong>&lt;br&gt;Must register with TP&amp;T within 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Other Modifications by Special Permit</strong>&lt;br&gt;Required public hearing and notification to abutters</td>
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</table>
Cambridge has 321 shared cars in 91 Locations
## Existing Carsharing in Cambridge

### Existing Carsharing Locations by Principal Land Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+ Unit Residential</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Lot/Garage</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-9 Unit Residential</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 Unit Residential</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Existing Carsharing in Cambridge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Total Existing Carsharing Locations:</strong></th>
<th>91</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential sites with fewer than 4 parking spaces:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential sites where less than 75% of the required parking is provided:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites where a parking space might be within 10 feet of a residential building in an A-1, A-2, B, C or C-1 district:</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Spaces that meet zoning dimensions for a regular (non-compact) parking space</em></td>
<td>???</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**ALL FIGURES APPROXIMATE.** Sources: Cambridge GIS, Assessing Database, visual observation.
Discussion

Photos: Gretchen Ertl