Planning Commission – March 15th, 2022

Ordinance Amendment – Off-Street Loading and Unloading Regulations (Loading Docks)
Amendment
Off-Street Loading and Unloading Regulations

Current City Code Language – Loading Berths/Docks
- Does not allow loading berths/docks to be in the front yard or a side yard adjacent to a street.
  - Applies to all zoning districts.

Proposed Change
- Allows loading berths/docks in the front yard and side yard adjacent to a street if:
  - The subject property is zoned industrial, and
  - The front yard does not face a different zoning district.
Amendment

Examples

• Lot 1 – Zoned Residential
• Lot 2 – Zoned Industrial
  • Front Yard = East property line
  • Lot 2 would **not** be able to have a loading dock in the front yard
  • Lot 2 **could** have a dock in the side yard (south) facing the street

• Lot 3 – Zoned Residential
• Lot 4 – Zoned Industrial
  • Front Yard = North property line
  • Lot 4 **could** have a loading dock in the front yard
  • Lot 4 could **not** have a loading dock in the side yard (east) facing the street
Why Make the Change?

Meetings and discussion with an industrial property owner

- What is the intent of the code? Who is it helping to protect?
  - Proposed change protects the value and visual aesthetics of adjacent, non-industrial, properties while allowing added flexibility to the industrial properties.
- This will also help to align the code with the current environment of the I1 district.
  - The image to the right shows I1 properties that have a dock in the front or side yards.
Amendment

Staff Recommendation

City Staff is requesting that the Planning Commission:

1. Review the proposed amendment,
2. Hold a public hearing, and
3. Recommend approval of the proposed amendment.
The City of West Saint Paul does ordain:

**SECTION 1.** West St. Paul City Code Section 153.349 relating to the application of off-street loading and unloading regulations is hereby amended as follows:

§ 153.349 APPLICATION OF OFF-STREET LOADING AND UNLOADING REGULATIONS.

(A) The regulations and requirements set forth in this subchapter shall apply to the required and non-required loading and unloading facilities in all districts.

(B) If, in the application of the requirements of this section, a fractional number is obtained, one loading space shall be provided for a fraction of one-half or more, and no loading space shall be required for a fraction of less than one-half.

1. **Location.**

   (a) All loading berths shall be 25 feet or more from the intersection of two street rights-of-way.

   (b) In all Commercial and Residential zoning districts, loading berths shall not occupy the front yard or a side yard adjacent to a street.

   (c) In all Industrial zoning districts, loading berths shall not occupy the front or side yard if the front or side yard abuts that front or side yard of a non-industrial different zoning district.

2. **Size.**

   (a) Unless otherwise specified, the first berth required shall not be less than 12 feet in width and 50 feet in length.

   (b) Additional berths shall be not less than 12 feet in width and 25 feet in length. All loading berths shall maintain a height of 14 feet or more.

3. **Access.** Each loading berth shall be located with appropriate means of access to a public street or alley in a manner that will least interfere with traffic.

4. **Surfacing.** All loading berths and access ways shall be improved with a durable, dust-free material.

5. **Accessory uses.** Any area allocated as a required loading berth or access drive so as to comply with the terms of this chapter shall not be used for the storage of goods,
inoperable vehicles nor be included as a part of the area necessary to meet the off-street parking area.

(6) **Screening.** Loading berths must be completely screened from eye level view of streets and open spaces by means of landscaping that is at least 75% opaque within two years or by a screen wall of the same materials and color as the principal building.

**SECTION 2. SUMMARY PUBLICATION.** Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 412.191, in the case of a lengthy ordinance, a summary may be published. While a copy of the entire ordinance is available without cost at the office of the City Clerk, the following summary is approved by the City Council and shall be published in lieu of publishing the entire ordinance:

The ordinance amendment clarifies allowable locations for loading docks in different zoning districts.

**SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.** This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication according to law.

Passed by the City Council of the City of West St. Paul, Minnesota, this 11\(^{th}\) day of April, 2022.

Attest:

David J. Napier, Mayor

Nicole Tillander, City Clerk