



King County
Department of Development and Environmental Services
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REGULATORY REVIEW COMMITTEE

- MINUTES -

MEETING DATE: August 22, 2001

TO: Building Services Division Staff	Land Use Services Division Staff
Chris Ricketts	Joe Miles
Jim Chan	Greg Borba
Pam Dhanapal	Lisa Pringle
Ken Dinsmore	

Caroline Whalen, Deputy Director
Harry Reinert, Special Projects Manager
Tim Barnes, Prosecuting Attorney's Office

FM: Harry Reinert, Co-Chair

Present: Dave Baugh, Pam Dhanapal, Ken Dinsmore, Lanny Henoch, Lisa Pringle, Harry Reinert

Issue:

1. What are the requirements for “stacking spaces” for a drive-through espresso stand?

Background

The King County Code (K.C.C.) generally requires restaurants and other commercial and retail establishments to provide parking for their customers. Businesses that provide drive-through facilities are required to provide spaces for vehicles waiting in line. These spaces are known as “stacking spaces.”

K.C.C. 21A.18.080 provides:

A. A stacking space shall be an area measuring eight feet by 20 feet with direct forward access to a service window of a drive-through facility. A stacking space shall be located to prevent any vehicles from extending onto the public right-of-way, or interfering with any pedestrian circulation, traffic maneuvering, or other parking space areas. Stacking spaces for drive-through or drive-in uses may not be counted as required parking spaces.

B. Uses providing drive-up or drive-through services shall provide vehicle stacking spaces as follows:

1. For each drive-through lane of a bank/financial institution, business service, or other drive-through use not listed, a minimum of five stacking spaces shall be provided; and
2. For each drive-through lane of a restaurant, a minimum of seven stacking spaces shall be provided.

The number of stacking spaces a drive-through business is required to provide is dependent on the type of business and the number of lanes.

Discussion

K.C.C. 21A.18.080 requires a minimum of seven stacking spaces for each drive-through lane of a restaurant. All other drive-through businesses, including banks and business services, are required to provide five stacking spaces.

The total number of stacking spaces required is dependent on the number of drive-through lanes. Since the code does not include a definition, the most reasonable approach would be to treat each drive-through window or service bay as a separate lane. If a drive-through facility had a service window on only one side of the building, there would be only one drive-through lane. If the same building had service windows on either side of the building, there would be two drive through lanes. In those instances where orders and deliveries are taken at separate windows, the two together should be considered as one service window.

This approach is consistent with the intent of K.C.C. 21A.18.080 which is to ensure that there is sufficient room for vehicles waiting for service so that on-site parking, pedestrian access, and traffic flow are not impeded by the waiting vehicles. The more service windows that are available, the greater the potential for creating these adverse impacts the code requirements are designed to address.

A second issue is how the stacking spaces are to be configured. K.C.C. 21A.18.080 requires that there be direct forward access to the service window. This means that there cannot be significant interruptions in the lane, such as for access to other locations on the site. These interruptions may affect the flow of vehicles in the lane such that the waiting vehicles will block access to parking or affect the flow of traffic. Some small breaks in the line of cars, such as a pedestrian walkway, are allowable.

With respect to Espresso stands, there is a question of whether this type of business falls under the "restaurant" or "banking" provisions of K.C.C. 21A.16.080. Under the Zoning Code, espresso stands are considered to be an "eating or drinking place." See K.C.C. 21A.08.070A and SIC 58 (Standard Industrial Code). SIC 58 includes a variety of eating establishments, including drive-in restaurants, coffee shops, fast food restaurants, hamburger stands, and box lunch stands. In addition, the Seattle-King County Department of Health licenses drive-through espresso stands as restaurants. For purposes of calculating stacking space requirements, espresso stands with drive-through facilities should also be treated as a restaurant.

Conclusion

Under K.C.C. 21A.18.080, stacking spaces are required for businesses that provide drive through facilities. K.C.C. 21A.18.080 requires a specific number of stacking spaces for each drive-through lane. Each service window or bay at which drive-through service is provided shall be considered a drive-through lane. The stacking spaces are required to have direct access to the drive-through facility, which means that there should not be significant breaks in the line. Gaps for pedestrian walkways are allowable.

A drive through espresso stand is a restaurant for purposes of K.C.C. 21A.18.080. Seven stacking spaces are required for each drive-through window.