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Currier Museum of Art - Chandler House
Narrative in Support of Conditional Use Permit for an Alternative Parking Arrangement

The Currier Museum of Art (Currier) proposes a project that will save, restore, and repurpose the Chandler House. The Chandler House is a historically and architecturally significant Victorian building built in 1870 and located at 147 Walnut Street. The subject property Map 18, Lot 23, contains both the Chandler House and St. Hedwig Parish. The project includes the subdivision of the parent parcel to create two (2) separate lots which will allow each building to be situated on a separate lot of record. Upon successful subdivision of the property, Currier will begin the restoration and preservation process. After preserving the building, Currier intends to use the Chandler House in furtherance of the Museum's mission. Future use of the building includes a museum on the first floor showcasing the elaborate Victorian architecture of the building, museum offices on the second and third floor, and classroom space on the basement level. Because these uses will be shifted from pre-existing Currier facilities at neighboring Currier buildings, the Currier expects the Chandler House to require very little—if any—additional parking.

Parking to support the proposed future use of the Chandler House will be provided by a combination of existing on-street public parking, existing off-street private parking owned by Currier, and a new ADA parking space to be constructed on the Chandler House property. Article 10 of the Manchester Zoning ordinance requires a total of 46 off-street parking spaces for the proposed project (1 parking space per 300-sf of museum floor area), whereas Currier proposes a single off-street parking space. Accordingly, Currier requests a conditional use permit (CUP) to reduce the number of off-street parking required by the Zoning Ordinance.

In accordance with Section 10.02(D) of the Manchester Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Board has the authority to issue a CUP to reduce the number of off-street parking spaces required. Specifically, within the C-1 district, where public parking is available within five hundred (500) feet of the principal entrance to the use served, the Planning Board may issue a CUP. They must find that the public parking available to the proposed use, in combination with other uses placing demands on such facilities, is sufficient in volume, convenience, safety, and availability to satisfy the anticipated parking demands of the proposed use.

Currier represents that adequate public parking is available for the proposed use and requests that the Planning Board grant the CUP. In support of the request, the following is provided as demonstration of compliance with the CUP criteria listed in Section 12.05 of the Zoning Ordinance:

A. ***The use is specifically authorized by Article 5, Section 5.10 or 5.11, Table of Principal Uses or Table of Accessory Uses as a conditional use;***

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Article 5, Section 5.11, Table of Accessory Uses, authorizes off-street parking as an accessory use to any principal use in the C-1 district. Furthermore, Article 10, Section 10.02(D), specifically allows the Planning Board to issue a CUP for a reduction in required off-street parking when public parking within the C-1 district is available to support the proposed use.

B. If completed, the development in its proposed location will comply with all requirements of this Article, and with specific conditions or standards established in this ordinance for the particular use;

The completion of the development will result in compliance with all requirements of the Article and with the specific standards established for alternative parking arrangements. Consistent with the Ordinance, the public parking that supports the use is located within 500 feet of the principal entrance. A parking utilization study has concluded that ample public parking is available to support this use in conjunction with the other uses in the area.

C. The use will not materially endanger the public health or safety;

The proposed alternative parking arrangement will not materially endanger the public health or safety. The alternative parking arrangement relies on the existing volume of public parking spaces which are conveniently located in relation to the use. A parking utilization study has identified a total of 226 public parking spaces (210 weekday/weekend spaces, 14 weekend spaces, and 2 handicapped parking spaces) within a 500' radius of the entrance to Chandler House. Additionally, the Currier owns approximately 62 private parking spaces within the same 500' radius.

On-street public parking during the study period revealed between 151 to 174 (71-82%) spaces available during the weekday and 177 to 194 (78-85%) spaces available on Saturday.

Private off-street parking owned by Currier Museum during the study revealed between 32 to 62 (51-100%) spaces available during the weekday and 51 to 61 (82-98%) spaces available on Saturday.

The available parking is more than adequate to support the proposed use.

Additionally, the public parking that will be utilized is directly connected to a sidewalk network. This sidewalk network includes painted crosswalks at street intersections, and street lighting, which provide a convenient and safe route for pedestrians to access the Chandler House.

D. The use will not substantially de-value abutting property;

The alternative parking arrangement will not de-value abutting property. The parking utilization study concludes that ample parking is available in the vicinity of the Chandler House to support the project's parking needs, as well as the parking needs of other uses in the neighborhood. Parking utilization counts were performed during the anticipated operating hours of the Currier Museum of Art to

evaluate the available parking in conjunction with the other uses in the area. The adequate availability of parking ensures that the alternative parking arrangement will not de-value abutting property values.

The project also includes the complete restoration of the Chandler House. The result will be a fully restored architecturally significant building that will be repurposed for community and cultural use. The significant investment in the property and community will further protect the value of the abutting properties.

E. The use will be compatible with the neighborhood and with adjoining or abutting uses in the area in which it is to be located;

The Currier Museum of Art is already located in the neighborhood, across the street from the Chandler House. Accordingly, the proposed museum use of Chandler House is a natural extension of abutting uses. Other uses within the neighborhood include commercial, residential, and institutional uses. On-street public parking has historically been used to support the parking needs of the Currier Museum of Art as well as the other commercial, residential, and institutional uses in the neighborhood. The fact that on-street parking is used to support other uses in that area is evidence that the proposed alternative parking arrangement for Chandler House is compatible with the neighborhood.

F. The use will not have a substantial adverse impact on highway or pedestrian safety;

The proposed alternative parking arrangement will not have an adverse impact on highway or pedestrian access. The project does not propose the construction of additional public parking; rather, the project will rely on public parking that is already delineated on the adjacent streets. Additionally, the public parking that will be utilized is directly connected to a sidewalk network. This sidewalk network includes painted crosswalks at street intersections which provide a convenient and safe route for pedestrians to access the Chandler House.

G. The use will not have a substantial adverse impact on the natural and environmental resources of the City;

By using existing on-street public parking, the Chandler House eliminates construction of significant onsite parking. This, in turn, avoids an increase in impervious surface area in the neighborhood and allows additional green space in front of the House. Relying on the currently underutilized public parking within the neighborhood allows the Chandler House property to remain vegetated and reduces the development intensity on the lot. As such, the proposed alternative parking arrangement limits the impact on the natural and environmental resources of the City.

H. Adequate public utilities and community facilities are available to the property to ensure that the proposed use will not necessitate excessive public expenditures in providing public services.

Adequate public parking is available in the neighborhood to support the proposed use in conjunction with the other uses in the immediate neighborhood, as demonstrated by the parking study. A sidewalk network complete with painted crosswalks exists that allows for safe and convenient pedestrian access from the public parking to the Chandler House. Moreover, this alternative parking arrangement is compatible with the City's anticipated re-design of Beech Street. The existence of this adequate public infrastructure ensures that the proposed alternative parking arrangement will not necessitate excessive public expenditures, now or in the future.