

Paterson Times

Council seeks to free up parking along the side of city hall for residents

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An ordinance before the city council seeks to free up a block of parking along the side of the city hall. The ordinance introduced by Kenneth Morris, councilman at-large, repeals a 2010 ordinance that created restricted parking spaces for council members on the Washington Street side of the city hall building.

“For years, if not decades, that has always been public parking,” said Morris. If passed, the ordinance will free up approximately five parking spaces. Parking meters will be installed on each of the spaces to allow residents to feed the meters and park their vehicles.

“We use that spot over there,” said Ruby Cotton, 4th Ward councilwoman.

“Council has parking in the council lot,” argued Morris. “This parking should be returned to the public.”

Members of the council have a parking lot that sits behind the city hall building. Most council members park inside the lot; however, some do park along Washington Street.

“I park there almost every day,” said Cotton.

“I use it every time I get a chance,” added Anthony Davis, 1st Ward councilman.

Cotton suggested the city return some of the spaces and keep at least two. “Don’t take the whole block up,” said Cotton.

Davis, Cotton, Mohammed Akhtaruzzaman, 2nd Ward councilman, park on the location during council deliberations.

“Folks have been asking for this for a long time,” said Morris.

“I haven’t heard anyone but Ms. Muhammad,” said Davis.

Waheedah Muhammad, former school board member, who avidly attends council meetings, has scolded council members during multiple occasions for greedily taking up street parking, when they have an entire lot to park in.

Cotton suggested the city free up two parking spaces inside the council’s lot to make up for the spaces that are being freed up. “Let’s take those two spots the mayor has in that lot,” said Cotton. “We need those two spaces inside that lot.”

Morris said former mayor Jeffery Jones illegally took those two spots. Julio Tavarez, 5th Ward councilman, directed the city clerk to send a communication to the administration to recapture the two spots that were taken.

“I think we should give the whole four spaces back to the community,” said Alex Mendez, councilman at-large. “We have a lot of issues in terms of parking. Tax payers are constantly looking for space to get into city hall.”

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