

FAQs on Overnight Parking Spring 2021

The Commission has been working on refining the overnight onstreet parking rules since 2018. The following questions are based on the most recent draft of the applicable ordinance, introduced March 9, 2021 and a Public Hearing was held April 13, 2021.

Why does Mt. Lebanon prohibit on-street parking between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.? This prohibition, which has been in effect for decades, addresses both public safety and public works concerns. With no cars on the street at night, it is easier for patrol officers to determine if a parked vehicle might pose a threat to residents. Streets free of parked cars at night also allow fire, police and medical rescue teams to respond more quickly. If it snows, public works is able to plow during the night without damaging or blocking in vehicles, ensuring everyone can get to work or school in the morning. Also, it prevents people from dumping inoperable cars on the road, where they become junk and permanently block access.

Why is a change needed? Overnight parking is intended to be used infrequently and for a good reason—out of town company, for example, or the need for a temporary overnight guest. Since the municipality permitted the option of online requests several years ago, the number of nightly requests has jumped from 60 per night to more than 300 per night. This is time-consuming for patrol officers, who need to compare the license plate of each car on the street against a 10-page list that is generated each night. Mt. Lebanon streets were designed for travel, not for extended parking.

Why have requests increased so dramatically? Research has shown that many residents with access to off-street parking where they live or who are eligible to purchase overnight permits in convenient municipal lots, garages and zones are abusing the system. Rather than utilizing the off-street options available to them, these residents are making requests on a nightly basis to park their cars on the street.

What will the new ordinance mandate? The new ordinance will permit 20 overnight parking permissions per year per license plate. The Commission selected 20 because 93 percent of the requestors asked for 20 or fewer permissions per year. Residents will make requests online as usual at www.mtlebanon.org (click on MyLebo). If a license plate has exceeded its 20 permissions for the year, the request will not be approved. As always, there will be no overnight onstreet parking permitted if there is an inch or more of snow in the forecast.

If residents don't have any parking on their property, such as driveway or parking pad, what are they expected to do? Two new options under consideration are Permit Parking Zones and Special Permit Parking Spaces:

Permit Parking Zones

In areas where there is no public parking and no suitable off-street parking option within 1/10 of a mile, residents can apply for Permit Parking Zones on streets or portions of streets recommended by the parking enforcement supervisor and approved by the Municipal manager. Such a permit allows a vehicle to be parked overnight from 6 p.m. to 9 a.m., except during an inch or more of snow and ice. But in order for a street or portion of a street to be considered for the zone, a majority of owners of the property abutting the zone must request it. That step is necessary

because the zone can have potential negative impact on the neighborhood; for example, only permitted cars may be parked in the zone between 6 p.m. and 9 a.m. Before considering a street for permit zones, the manager will consider whether there are any other parking options, including the availability of nearby public parking, the width of the street and other logistical concerns.

To qualify to use permit parking areas, the resident/owner of a vehicle shall apply for a permit with proof of residency. The permit will allow that person to park within 1/10 a mile from the residence for a cost of \$150 semi-annually (\$300 a year).

Special Permit Parking Spaces

Residents whose street does not qualify to be in Permit Parking Zone can apply to the parking enforcement supervisor for Special Permit Parking Spaces (up to two vehicle license plates per dwelling) when it's impossible to park off street without substantial financial cost or when a good reason exists. This permit will also cost \$150 semi-annually (\$300 for a year) and will allow parking between the hours of 6 p.m. and 9 a.m. Special Permit Parking Spaces will never be authorized for more than one year, although a requestor can reapply for a permit when the time has expired. The manager or the manager's designee will review all requests for approval. As with the Permit Parking Zones, this permit will not allow cars to be parked on the street during snow events.

What is a good reason to request a Special Permit Parking Space? What isn't a good reason? Good reasons include (but are not limited to): The situation is expected to last more than 20 days, the reason for the request is beyond the control of the requestor and off-street/alternative parking isn't available. Not good reasons: Too many vehicles, vehicle is too large for existing space, drivers don't want to rearrange cars, off-street/alternative parking is available but is not convenient or costs money.

If a Permit Parking Zone or Special Permit Parking Space is not approved and residents have several cars or do not have room, what are they expected to do? Residents may purchase parking passes in several municipal surface lots and zones, as well as in the North and South parking garages. Day, 24-hour and night permits are available. A night permit costs \$38 a month for a lot and \$40 for a garage. For further information, go to <http://www.mtlebanon.org/2056/Permits> or call 412-343-3705.

What will happen if a car without permission or a permit parks on the street overnight? A police officer will issue a traffic citation. The cost of the ticket is \$20, the same as it is now.

What if a resident cannot access their garage because of street repair and or have an extenuating circumstance such as a dumpster in the driveway during a construction project. In the case of infrastructure repair, an exception would automatically be made, and the letter explaining the project would state that. Other requests for exceptions would be handled on an individual basis.

What is the timeline?

The ordinance is proposed to go into effect October 1, 2021. Drivers who do not purchase permits or who have already used up their 20 permissions who continue to park on the street will receive warnings until January 1, 2022, when police will start to issue fines.

What are some examples of how this ordinance will be applied?

Example 1: A driver lives ½ mile from a public garage or public parking lot. *The driver may still qualify for a Special Permit Parking Space. (If the resident lived 1/10 of a mile away, those public spaces would be considered a reasonably available alternative.)*

Example 2: A driver can park one vehicle off street, but doesn't have room for two. *If all other requirements are met, the driver would qualify for one Special Permit Parking Space, but not two.*

Example 3: The driver has a garage but their large SUV doesn't fit. *Since this reason is not beyond the control of the driver, the garage will be considered available parking.*

Example 4: A driver who lives in an area with a nearby Permit Parking Zone would prefer to have a Special Permit Parking space in front of their house instead of the using the Zone. *Since this reason is not beyond the control of the driver, the Permit Parking Zone would be considered available parking.*

Example 5: A Permit Parking Zone is large enough that if all the spaces closest to the driver's home are taken, the walk from available spaces to home is more than 1/10th of a mile. *This will not qualify for a Special Permit Parking Space.*

Example 6: A driver works late at night and doesn't wish to move or arrange vehicles late at night or early in the morning. *This is not a reason beyond the control of the driver and does not support a Special Permit Parking Space.*

Example 7: The applicant has a onstreet permit but receives a citation or is towed while parking during a snow event. *Those municipal actions are proper as nothing in this ordinance supersedes other relevant ordinances and restrictions.*

Example 8: During the day, vehicles are parked in the Special Permit Parking Space such that there is no space for driver to park. *No relief is available to the applicant. The Special Permit Parking Space is not a reserved space; it only authorizes on street parking between 6 p.m. and 9 a.m.*

Example 9: A Special Permit Parking Space has been established, but later, several residents on the street apply for Special Permit Parking Spaces. *The manager is rightly permitted to establish a Permit Parking Zone and require overnight parking use in accordance with those requirements.*

Example 10: A driver lives next to a public parking facility but there are no available permits. *That facility would not be considered available parking.*

Example 11: A permit-holder sells his or her residence and wants to transfer the permit along with the property. *This is not permitted. A permit is not property, grants no vested rights and is not transferrable. The new owner must apply for the permit, the issuance of which is not guaranteed.*

Example 12: The Ordinance or other rules and regulations change, and a permit holder objects and wishes to be considered grandfathered in the old rules. *This treatment is not available. There are no rights to the continuation of a permit, a Special Permit Parking Space, or a Permit Parking Zone, all of which are subject to change.*

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