

Hess, Raymond

From: City of Ann Arbor Transportation Commission
Subject: FW: Bicycle Parking Requirements

From: Adam Goodman <XXXXXXXXXX>
Sent: Thursday, July 7, 2022 10:30 PM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Cc: City of Ann Arbor Transportation Commission <TransportationCommission@a2gov.org>
Subject: Bicycle Parking Requirements

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Hi planning commissioners and staff,

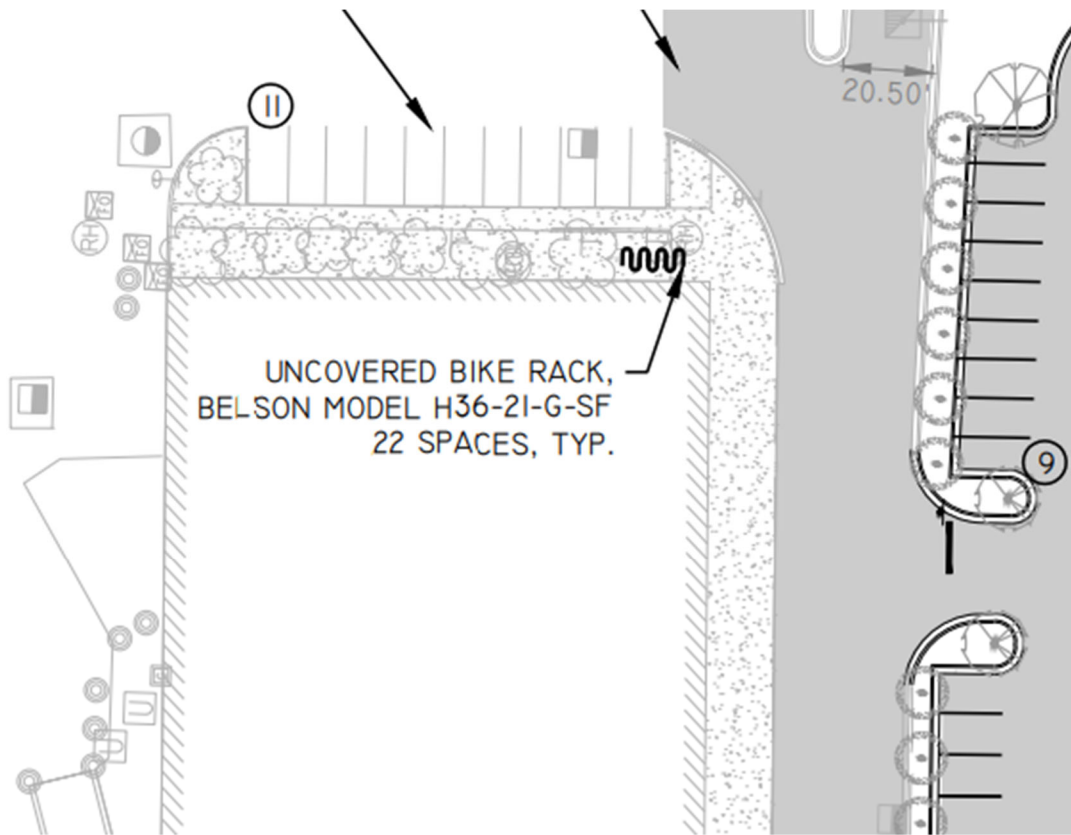
I'm writing with some concerns about the city's practices around the bicycle parking requirements in the UDC - specifically, I believe that:

1. We are not enforcing the *existing* requirements in the code with sufficient rigor, and
2. There is considerable room for improvement in those requirements themselves

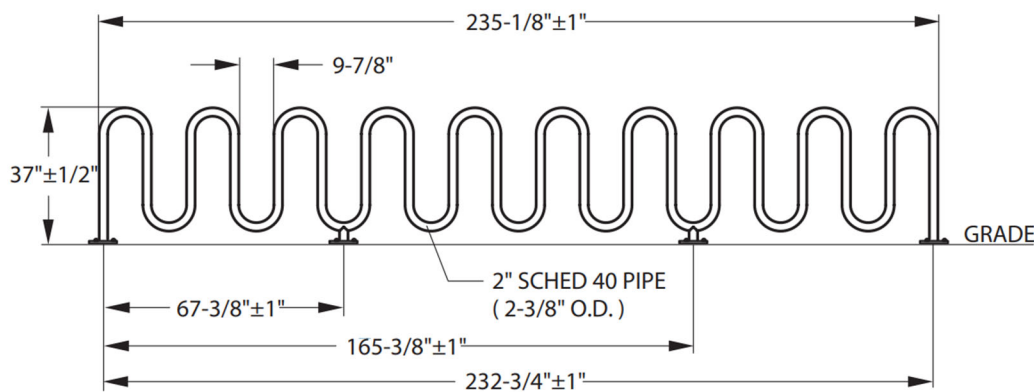
Here's the relevant UDC section stating requirements for our least stringent class of bicycle parking ("Class C" / uncovered):

Fixed bicycle racks, such as hoop style racks or another type of rack that meets these standards, shall be securely anchored in pavement and designed so that both wheels and the frame of a bicycle may be securely locked with a chain, cable or padlock. One Bicycle Parking Space shall consist of a space not less than two feet wide by six feet long with a minimum clear access aisle width of three feet. Pavement shall meet City Public Services Department Standard Specifications. Asphalt, concrete, porous pavement, pavers or brick shall connect the fixed bicycle racks to a Sidewalk or Driveway.

Now, for one example: a 2016 site plan for the Maple Village shopping center's parking lot improvements (project SP15-052 in etrakit - <https://etrakit.a2gov.org/etrakit/Search/project.aspx?activityNo=SP15-052>) promised to include the (required) 88 bicycle parking spaces using 4 "Belson Model H36-21-G-SF" bike racks dispersed through the development, e.g.:



This Belson rack is what's more commonly known as a "wave rack" design. Here is a dimensional drawing from the manufacturer (<https://www.belson.com/Dimensions/H36-21-G-SF-Dimensions.pdf>):



This rack claims to have a capacity for 21 bikes. Some very simple math would show, then, that it does not meet the city's existing standards, which again state: "One Bicycle Parking Space shall consist of a space not less than **two feet wide** by six feet long". In this rack, bicycle parking spaces are - interpreting measurements generously - about 1 foot wide, not 2.

Maple Village is just one example. I've seen several other relatively-recent developments also use this sort of bike rack design. So, as I said at the top, I would ask that the city apply its existing standards more rigorously on future plan reviews.

Now, to the second point: it could be argued that this type of rack might still be allowed under the existing UDC if we simply cut its stated capacity in half, i.e. this rack could be used to provide 11 spaces, not 21, because then each bike

would get ~2ft of space. This is where I believe our code should be improved and strengthened, because if the city seeks to promote cycling for all ages and abilities, as a serious mode of transportation, then this rack design should *never* be permitted.

The City of Boston has a set of bike parking guidelines

(https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2022/02/Bike%20Parking%20Guidelines_v2.1_0.pdf) that I would consider to be the gold standard. They establish (and clearly explain the rationale for) a set of 5 "performance criteria" by which bike rack designs should be judged, then apply them to a number of well-known rack designs. As you can see in the guidelines document, the "wave" rack design fails on 3 out of 5 of these criteria (A - it doesn't provide 2 points of contact to support a bike upright, D - use is unintuitive, e.g. I often see people prop up their bike sideways and block the entire rack, and E - it doesn't work well with cargo bikes and other nontraditional designs).

Essentially, I would love to see Ann Arbor adopt Boston's bike rack guidelines in full into our own UDC. I do think this work is considerably less urgent than much of what the commission is already engaged in, e.g. transit-corridor zoning, but perhaps it could find a home on a future work plan...

I have also CC'ed the transportation commission, as this might be of interest to them as well.

Thanks for your attention to this issue, and for all the good work y'all do.

- Adam