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## Zoning at heart of city issue: Parking a problem for businesses nestled in Temple neighborhoods

by [Fred Afflerbach](#) | Business Writer

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Map shows an area in Temple that is a point of contention between businesses and private residences. (Map courtesy Temple planning department)

A few months after Wenda Elliott opened a scrapbook store on North Ninth Street near downtown Temple a neighbor dropped by for a visit. It didn't go well. Ms. Elliott recalled the woman living next door said she wanted a car parked in front of her house moved and abruptly left.

Two year later, this parking issue between residential and commercial interests has mushroomed into a public hearing before the planning and zoning commission that could have an impact on how the city regulates growth in an old neighborhood nestled between downtown and the Historic District.

Ms. Elliott wants the area to remain Central Area, because that designation is less restrictive regarding business. Ms. Elliott said leaving things alone would attract entrepreneurs who are more likely to invest in the neighborhood. Installing such things as a new wood floor, she has sunk \$30,000 into the century-old home she converted into Wendaful Scrapbooks.

"Old houses are treasures, and they're also a lot of work. And most people don't have the time, money or inclination to take care of them. I think it would better serve the city to have little businesses that would care," she said.

Ms. Elliott and others say they are concerned that the NS designation would force businesses to install parking spaces in front and back yards and possibly make some investors raze houses for parking lots.

Councilman Tony Jeter, whose district includes this neighborhood, would like to see it changed to Neighborhood Services. Jeter said that designation would offer a balance between residential and commercial interests without sacrificing that family feel you get from tree-lined streets and grand old houses with large front porches.

"I think you have a unique area that is suited for both residential and neighborhood services," Jeter said. "It is an area that has character, has potential to look like some parts of Austin where you have attorneys, offices, bookstores, little coffee shops, and it all fits together and works well."

Jeter said parking issues can be "mitigated" through resourceful use of alleys. And sometimes people living and working together just have to learn to get along. Jeter asks: Who hasn't parked in front of someone's house while attending a party?

"The parking lot fills up and you park on the street. Is it a reasonable thing to expect that nobody's ever going to park in front of your house?" he said.

This parking problem is the driving force behind the push to rezone this area, 32-year Temple real estate agent Lloyd Thomas said. Thomas would like to see the city figure out a way to provide parking that would service the area.

"We're in a dilemma. What do we do to preserve what we've got (some grand old homes) and allow for progress, allow for new business to develop and come to town,"

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he said.

Next door to Wendaful Scrapbooks, Scott Shine and his wife, Hilary, invested about \$80,000 renovating the home they bought 10 years ago. The Shines want the city to change the zoning to single family because most people in the neighborhood now use their home for that purpose.

Shine said he is not trying to get the city to close the scrapbook store - Wendaful can continue operating regardless of all zoning changes. Rather, he hopes to prevent any more businesses opening in the neighborhood.

“Once you get another business, and another business, it becomes a nuisance to the area where the infrastructure was never designed to be a business area,” Shine said. “So you really create an area that is stifling the enjoyment of the neighborhood. And it is clearly a residential neighborhood.”

After Monday’s public hearing, the Planning and Zoning commission could vote on a motion to change the zoning. From there, the matter would have to be approved by city council before enforcement begins.

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