

Parking regulations remain muddled

By Michael Kooi

Residents and landlords earned a possible reprieve on stricter parking regulations this past month when the city council rejected a proposed ordinance to clarify and toughen front- and side-yard parking rules.

Developed to combat the appearance of blight in some neighborhoods, the ordinance aimed to define what constitutes a front yard more clearly and would have required – among other things – that side-yard driveways and lots be limited in size and made of asphalt or concrete. Opponents cited undue burdens – in terms of cost and convenience – on

residents and property owners as cause for rejection.

Despite the proposed ordinance's failure, front-yard parking remains illegal in Duluth. While the police admit that the current regulations are vague to the point of hindering enforcement, they can ticket cars they perceive as violating the law. The best way to avoid these gray areas – according to City Councilor Jim Stauber, who sponsored the failed ordinance – is to park only on the property's approved driveway, on the side of the house, in back or on the street.

Some other parking rules of thumb:

Alternate side parking – The city limits parking to one side (even or odd) of most residential streets throughout the entire year. Violators can be ticketed or towed. Changeover periods occur weekly from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Sundays. Schedules can be found at the police Web site, or monthly in *The Hillsider*.

Sedentary vehicles – Owners must move vehicles parked on city streets once every 24 hours.

Parking distances – Vehicles must be parked at least seven feet from driveways and alleys, 10 feet from hydrants and 30 feet from stop signs.