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Target may offer parking lot



Uriah A. Kiser / Photo

The Target parking lot at Stafford Marketplace has multiple open parking spaces, spaces the store says it may lend to area commuters.

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By [URIAH A. KISER](#)

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NORTH STAFFORD — A major retail store in the area says it wants to help relieve some of the commuter-parking burden in Stafford County.

Bill Dawson, Target store manager at Stafford Marketplace, said the store has an open parking lot on the side of its building that is rarely used, and would be an ideal commuter parking area.

“We want to be a leader in this effort and try to utilize a parking area that is not being used at this time,” said Dawson.

Dawson said the retail store is in talks with the property management company and developer of Stafford Marketplace, hoping to ink an agreement that would allow commuters to use the unused spaces, which separate Target and the Chili’s restaurant.

If an agreement is made, the parties would be eligible for a portion of \$150,000 in federal money, distributed through the Fredericksburg Metropolitan Planning Organization, set aside to rent the spaces.

“I have spoken with FAMPO and they are very excited about the idea,” said Dawson.

Parking spaces located in front of the Target store would not be considered for commuter use, according to Dawson.

With the recent closing of a commuter lot in the recently renamed “Town Center at Aquia” — formerly Aquia Towne Center — along U.S. 1, the already overburdened Garrisonville and Mine road commuter lots are feeling the additional strain from commuters forced to park farther west on Garrisonville Road.

“I’m just thankful that Ramco-Gershenson let us use the lot for as long as they did, and for letting us use it for free as long as they did,” said Supervisor Paul Milde, R-Aquia.

Ramco-Gershenson, the developer of the new “town center” project, notified commuters April 25 that cars parked in its lot would now be towed at the owner’s expense.

Jim Syverson is a commuter that uses the Garrisonville commuter lot, or at least tries.

The Fredericksburg resident said that when he cannot find a parking space in the mornings, he usually parks illegally along the curbs of the parking lot. When those illegal spaces are full, he parks across the street inside Stafford Marketplace shopping center, in front of Best Buy.

“Everything is full. This lot fills up after the one on Mine Road. I wonder if Best Buy is going to restrict the parking,” said Syverson who arrives at the lot after 7 a.m.

Milde and Mark Dudenhefer, R-Garrisonville, have been united in recent months trying to negotiate commuter parking space agreements with local shopping centers.

In addition to Stafford Marketplace, the supervisors were in talks with Brafferton Square, a smaller shopping center on Garrisonville Road that houses fast food restaurants, a video rental and department store. That shopping center declined their offers.

Another option appears to be the newly developed Quantico Corporate Center, a 1 million square-foot business and hotel complex, located on U.S. 1 near the Stafford-Prince William County line, north of Boswell’s Corner.

“We’re in preliminary talks right now and things are looking good, but that is all I’ll say for now,” said Milde.

The corporate center is a project of the Fredericksburg-based Silver Companies.

Dudenhefer also added that Stafford commuters suffer because motorists from Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania counties use the North Stafford lots, due to the success of their carpooling lines.

“The lots are very crowded when you have Stafford commuters using the lots. When you add commuters from the Fredericksburg area that drive up here to park, it makes the matter even worse,” he said.

Dudenhefer said Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania area commuters should use less crowded lots in the southern portion of the county, on Courthouse and Warrenton roads. In the meantime, Dudenhefer said he plans to hold a commuter-parking summit June 4 to discuss solutions to the parking problems. The summit will be held at Moncure Elementary School in North Stafford.

“It will be a mix of presentations and public input,” he said.

