

City of Birmingham
Advisory Parking Committee
Regular Meeting

Held Remotely Via Zoom And Telephone Access
Wednesday, December 1, 2021

Minutes

These are the minutes of the Advisory Parking Committee ("APC") regular meeting held on Wednesday, December 1, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Chair Vaitas.

1. Rollcall

Present: Chair Al Vaitas
Vice-Chair Richard Astrein
Aaron Black
Steven Kalczynski
Judith Paskiewicz (arrived 7:35 a.m.)
Lisa Silverman
Jennifer Yert

Absent: Lisa Krueger
Sarshar Nasserian
Mary-Claire Petcoff

Administration: Scott Grewe, Operations Commander
Ryan Weingartz, Parking Manager
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

SP+: Catherine Burch

2. Introductions
3. Review of the Agenda
4. Approval Of Minutes: Meetings Of September 1, 2021 and October 6, 2021

Dr. Silverman stated that, for the September 1, 2021 minutes, under Meeting Open to the Public for items not on the Agenda "on Woodward between Maple and Brown or Chester" should be changed to "downtown".

**Motion by Vice-Chair Astrein
Seconded by Ms. Yert to accept the minutes of September 1, 2021 as amended.**

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Astrein, Yert, Paskiewicz, Silverman, Black, Vaitas, Kalczynski

Nays: None

Motion by Vice-Chair Astrein

Seconded by Ms. Yert to accept the minutes of September 1, 2021 as submitted.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Astrein, Yert, Paskiewicz, Silverman, Black, Vaitas, Kalczynski

Nays: None

5. Parking Fines Review

PM Weingartz reviewed the item.

Vice-Chair Astrein, Dr. Silverman and Mr. Kalczynski said the City should consider raising the fine amount if the goal is to deter people from remaining in metered parking spaces beyond the permitted time.

There was discussion regarding whether the cost for a first-time offense should be raised, or whether it should be raised only for multiple violations.

Mr. Kalczynski said the fine amount should be the same for each violation.

Chair Vaitas, Vice-Chair Astrein, Dr. Silverman, and Ms. Yert all concurred that the fine should be raised after a certain number of violations. They were concerned that an occasional shopper or diner might be deterred from visiting Birmingham if the first few parking fines were too expensive. They explained that their goal was more to deter repeat offenders.

OC Grewe noted that it costs \$10 to park in a structure legally and that it also costs \$10 for a ticket when one illegally parks on the street.

In reply to OC Grewe, Dr. Silverman and Mr. Black ventured it would be more appropriate to make it more expensive to park illegally than it is to park legally.

There was general APC consensus that the fee structure needed to be re-evaluated to encourage more turnover of on-street parking.

OC Grewe said he would ask PC Albrecht to report back to the APC how many people tend to be repeat offenders and what the options might be for increasing fines for repeat offenders.

6. Monthly Parking Inventory

PM Weingartz reviewed the item.

It was noted that if an individual had a parking permit for a structure that was full on a particular day, they could be granted parking at another structure for the day by speaking to SP+ parking staff.

Ms. Burch stated increasing the number of permits available:

- Would not likely result in a meaningful occupancy increase since the majority of people wanting permits are already parking in the structures, just at the daily rate;
- Could help the City diminish the backlog of people waiting for parking permits, some of whom have been waiting since 2014; and,
- Would make Birmingham a more business-friendly environment by having more permits available for employees to use.

Ms. Burch and PM Weingartz noted the number of permits offered could also be lowered after the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic diminish, if necessary.

OC Grewe concurred that increasing the number of available permits would not likely result in a meaningful occupancy increase in the structures.

PM Weingartz said he would be reaching out to larger companies to see if they had excess permits now that some of their staff are more regularly working from home.

Ms. Burch and PM Weingartz briefly summarized flex parking and explained how it could be utilized in Birmingham in the future.

Dr. Silverman asked whether increasing monthly rates for permits should be considered since they are offered at a significant discount over the daily rate.

Chair Vaitas and Vice-Chair Astrein both noted that the current permit rates are a significant expenditure for small businesses that pay for their employees' permits.

Chair Vaitas stated that the City has raised the cost of parking permits several times during his tenure with the APC.

PM Weingartz acknowledged the APC members' points, and noted that it also benefits the City to have businesses' employees consistently parking in the structures instead of on the street. He explained that there were a number of factors to consider regarding pricing the monthly permits.

OC Grewe said the City would likely be reviewing the costs for permit parking in the coming months in tandem with the costs for on-street parking, since part of the goal remains keeping more parkers in the structures than on the street.

Vice-Chair Astrein expressed some reservations about increasing parking costs during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr. Black said that, from the perspective of someone on the waitlist, if increasing the permit costs caused some turnover of people holding onto the permits and not using them it might actually be more beneficial for the system overall.

Vice-Chair Astrein recommended exploring ways of encouraging businesses to relinquish currently unused permits. He explained that many business owners are holding onto unused permits because they are concerned they will not be able to obtain permits again in the future if they need them.

PM Weingartz stated that increasing the number of available permits could help alleviate those concerns.

Motion by Vice-Chair Astrein

Seconded by Ms. Yert to provide direction to increase the current inventory of monthly parking passes available to the proposed numbers as provided in the December 1, 2021 APC meeting agenda.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Astrein, Yert, Paskiewicz, Silverman, Black, Vaitas, Kalczynski

Nays: None

7. Meeting Open to the Public for items not on the Agenda

In reply to Dr. Silverman, OC Grewe explained that safety was the reason for removing 55 parking spaces in the S. Old Woodward area. He noted that the City's traffic consultant studied the proposal and determined that removal of those spaces would not increase parking demand beyond capacity for the area.

Dr. Silverman said she was also concerned that Mr. Nasserian had been absent for the past three meetings, and recommended that the APC consider appointing another resident member in addition to Mr. Nasserian.

PM Weingartz said he would address Mr. Nasserian's attendance with him.

8. Miscellaneous Communications

a. Parking System Update

PM Weingartz summarized the update.

9. Adjournment

No further business being evident, the meeting adjourned at 8:49 a.m.