

City of Birmingham
Advisory Parking Committee
Regular Meeting

Birmingham City Hall Commission Room
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan
Wednesday, April 6, 2022

Minutes

These are the minutes of the Advisory Parking Committee ("APC") regular meeting held on Wednesday, April 6, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Chair Vaitas.

1. Rollcall

Present: Chair Al Vaitas
Vice-Chair Richard Astrein
Steven Kalczynski
Judith Paskiewicz
Mary-Claire Petcoff
Lisa Silverman (left 8:56 a.m.)
Jennifer Yert

Absent: Aaron Black
Lisa Krueger

Administration: Ryan Weingartz, Parking Manager
Nick Dupuis, Planning Director
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist
Sean Kammer, Birmingham Shopping District Director
Scott Zielinski, Assistant City Engineer

SP+: Catherine Burch

2. Introductions
3. Review of the Agenda
4. Approval Of Minutes: Meetings Of February 2, 2022

Motion by Ms. Yert
Seconded by Mr. Kalczynski to accept the minutes of February 2, 2022 as submitted.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Yert, Paskiewicz, Silverman, Petcoff, Vaitas, Kalczynski, Astrein
Nays: None

5. 220 Merrill – Outdoor Dining

PD Dupuis presented the item.

The majority of the APC did not believe it was appropriate for 220 Merrill to be granted an outdoor dining deck when it already has 78 outdoor dining seats on its patio. They also expressed concern about the number of parking spots 220 Merrill would be occupying between its valet and its proposed deck.

Mr. Astrein emphasized the economic importance of available on-street parking for retailers and other businesses. He said that on-street dining decks represent a special privilege for restaurants versus other businesses.

Chair Vaitas concurred.

Dr. Silverman said she already hears complaints about congestion near 220 Merrill from drivers and pedestrians and expressed concern that a dining deck would make that congestion worse.

PM Weingartz recommended that 220 Merrill should be required to choose between valet and a dining deck.

In reply to Ms. Petcoff, PM Weingartz said he would not recommend a reduced combination of valet and dining deck spaces given concerns about congestion near the establishment.

Chair Vaitas and Mr. Astrein expressed concerns about a potential saturation of on-street outdoor dining decks in the City.

Chair Vaitas, Mr. Astrein, and Dr. Silverman said they did not understand why dining decks are billed to the establishments at a reduced meter rate.

Dr. Paskiewicz expressed confusion about why 220 Merrill has a valet when it is next to the Pierce parking deck.

Mr. Kalczynski noted that the impact of the pandemic is still being felt by dining establishments and that diners continue to want to dine outside. He said the APC represents the residents, and that residents' desire to dine outside outweighs the loss of the three parking spots in this case.

Brad Egan, representative for 220 Merrill, spoke on behalf of the request.

Mr. Egan clarified for the APC that:

- The valet services offered by 220 Merrill serve the public, not just customers of the restaurant;

- The operation of the valet uses their private alley, meaning that the vehicles using their valet are largely not causing congestion on the street; and,
- A dining deck would not impede the sidewalk.

Mr. Egan questioned the precedent that would be set for other dining deck requests if 220 Merrill's request was recommended for denial by the APC.

Mr. Egan contended that the size of 220 Merrill and its extant outdoor dining should not count against this request. He said that the request was proportionate, given the size of the restaurant. He also said that granting the dining deck would allow 220 Merrill's employees to recoup some of the income that was lost during the pandemic.

Chair Vaitas stated that each request is evaluated according to its particular circumstances. He also noted that the APC is in part charged with the creation and preservation of parking. He stated that the size of an establishment does not impact the APC's recommendation.

Ms. Petcoff asked if 220 Merrill could still consider reducing the number of valet or dining deck spaces in order to reduce the extent of their request. She noted that if 220 Merrill is already planning on increasing their valet staff, as was previously mentioned, then two on-street valet spaces may be sufficient.

Motion by Dr. Silverman

Seconded by Ms. Yert to recommend denial to the City Commission of the outdoor dining platform for 220 Merrill.

Motion carried, 6-1.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Yert, Paskiewicz, Silverman, Petcoff, Vaitas, Astrein

Nays: Kalczynski

6. Birmingham Shopping District Fund Request for S. Old Woodward Construction

BSDD Kammer and ACE Zielinski presented the item.

Mr. Astrein spoke in favor of the request, stating that the S. Old Woodward Construction will impact businesses during two of the busiest shopping times - the summer and early fall.

PM Weingartz stated that in 2018, the APC gave \$135,000 to the BSD for a similar request. He said that according to FD Gerber, all \$135,000 was not used by the BSD but the entirety of the funds were retained by the BSD.

In light of this information, PM Weingartz recommended that the APC grant the BSD the right to request funds up to a certain amount, to be reimbursed as the monies are spent. He explained this would help him retain the necessary funds for other parking projects.

BSDD Kammer said PM Weingartz's recommendation was reasonable. He said he would also speak to FD Gerber about what amount from 2018 went unspent and would inform PM Weingartz.

It was noted by Staff and the APC that BSDD Kammer could also return to the APC to request more funds if the entirety of the first amount is spent.

In reply to Mr. Astrein, BSDD Kammer stated that the BSD is also putting about \$140,000 of its own funds towards marketing, valet services, and maintenance for this project.

Motion by Ms. Yert

Seconded by Mr. Astrein to approve up to \$75,000, expensed to the Birmingham Shopping District as it is incurred, for parking-related accommodations related to the upcoming renovation of S. Old Woodward with the ability to come back to request additional funds if necessary.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

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

Nays: None

7. Monthly Parking Waitlist

PM Weingartz reviewed the topic. He noted he authorized the sale of additional passes at the Pierce parking deck.

Dr. Silverman commended Staff and SP+ on the reduction of the waitlist.

Dr. Paskiewicz noted that a pass release is usually deliberated on and granted or denied by the APC.

PM Weingartz confirmed that to be the case. He apologized for authorizing the release without bringing it before the APC.

Dr. Paskiewicz said it would be helpful for the APC to have more clarity about the role of the Parking Manager, since it is a new position in the City. She explained she would like clarity on the division of work between the APC and the Parking Manager; more information on who reviews items before they come to the APC; and more information on how the APC's opinions are presented to the Commission. She asked if they might be able to add this general topic to a future APC agenda.

PM Weingartz agreed to do so.

8. Parking System Update

PM Weingartz reviewed the item.

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

10. Miscellaneous Communications

PM Weingartz reviewed the communications.

- Current APC Openings
- Wayfinding Memo

11. Adjournment

No further business being evident, the meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.

Parking Manager Ryan Weingartz



Laura Eichenhorn
City Transcriptionist

APPROVED