

City of Birmingham  
ADVISORY PARKING COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING

Birmingham City Hall Commission Room  
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan  
Wednesday, January 20, 2016

**MINUTES**

These are the minutes for the Advisory Parking Committee ("APC") regular meeting held on Wednesday, January 20, 2016. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lex Kuhne at 7:35 a.m.

**Present:** Chairman Lex Kuhne  
Anne Honhart  
Steven Kalczynski  
Lisa Krueger  
Judith Paskewicz  
Vice-Chairperson Susan Peabody  
Al Vaitas (left at 9 a.m.)

**Absent:** None

**SP+ Parking:** Catherine Burch  
Josh Gunn  
Jason O'Dell

**Principal Shopping District:** John Heiney

**Administration:** Austin Fletcher, Engineering Dept.  
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer  
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

**RECOGNITION OF GUESTS**

Andrew Miller, Parking Consultant from Carl Walker, Inc.

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2015**

**Motion by Dr. Vaitas**  
**Seconded by Ms. Paskewicz to approve the Minutes of the Regular APC Meeting of October 21, 2015 as presented.**

**Motion carried, 7-0.**

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Vaitas, Paskewicz, Honhart, Kalczynski, Krueger, Kuhne, Peabody

Nays: None

Absent: None

ACCESSIBLE PARKING POLICY IN CBD

Mr. O'Meara advised the City of Birmingham's policy on accessible parking in the Central Business District has not changed in many years. The current policy is:

1. Vehicles displaying a valid disabled parking permit may park at any meter for as long as needed, without paying at the meter.
2. Vehicles displaying a valid disabled parking permit may park at any yellow curbed zone as long as needed, as long as the vehicle is not disrupting the flow of traffic.

The City has received some complaints that the current policy is sometimes abused, reducing parking availability at the meters for customers.

Last year, the City hired parking consultant Andrew Miller of Carl Walker, Inc., to study our current policy, compare it to what other similar cities are doing, and provide any suggestions for modifications. The Carl Walker report brought attention to the expected upcoming changes later this year with the American Disabilities Act ("ADA"). It is anticipated that on public streets where individually marked parking spaces are provided, once a street undergoes construction such as repaving or resurfacing, the City will be obligated to begin providing marked parking spaces for the disabled at the ratio of 1 for every 25 (or less) parking spaces on a particular block.

The City plans to reconstruct Hamilton Ave. this spring from N. Old Woodward Ave. to Woodward Ave. To remain compliant with the ADA, the City plans to install three new marked accessible parking spaces. The spaces will be located near a corner so that the proposed handicapped ramp can be available for people using these spaces. The parking space will be signed and designated with blue pavement markings, as well as a blue painted parking meter and post. People using the space will have to display their handicapped parking permit and they will have to pay at the meter, similar to any other space.

Rather than have a slow transition over many years, staff recommends that blue designated accessible parking spaces be installed in accordance with the 1 per 25 ratio throughout downtown. A total of 64 existing parking spaces (6% of the total) will have to be changed and reserved for the disabled. Staff predicts that

the number of available spaces probably won't change much because many disabled persons will choose to park in the structures where two hours are free, rather than pay at the meters. Discussion clarified that the City is not mandated by the ADA to give away free parking spaces. It was thought the two most important issues would be the location and the amount of time that people have at any given meter.

If this change in policy is approved by the City Commission, staff will move to implement the change by summer 2016. It is expected that the total cost will be approximately \$25,000, charged to the Auto Parking System Fund.

Mr. Andrew Miller addressed the Committee. The current system makes it difficult for people with disabled placards to find a space on the street because they are competing with everybody else and the demand is very high. Putting ADA spaces on the street will open up more accessible spaces. One option to consider is to increase the time on the ADA meters, recognizing that disabled people may need a little more time to get in and get out. The trend in most cities is to enforce time limits and charges for ADA meters.

Once Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines ("PROWAG") are published, it is recommended that a community follow the guidelines because they will soon become regulations.

Mr. O'Meara commented that because the current policy is free unlimited parking on the street, it has been found that the ADA spaces in the structures are under-utilized right now.

There were no comments from the public at 8:27 a.m.

**Motion by Ms. Honhart**

**Seconded by Ms. Peabody set a public hearing on Accessible Parking Policy in the CBD for Wednesday, February 24 at 7 p.m. at DPS to discuss changes to the disabled parking in Birmingham.**

**Motion carried, 7-0.**

**VOICE VOTE:**

Yeas: Honhart, Peabody, Kalczynski, Krueger, Kuhne, Paskewicz, Vaitas

Nays: None

Absent: None

## OFF-SITE PARKING OPTIONS UPDATE

Mr. O'Meara noted that monthly parking permit demand has grown beyond what the parking system can support, resulting in a large waiting list at all five parking structures. Additionally, both the Palladium Bldg. and the Balmoral Bldg. plan to bring in many new people and there is no place for them to park.

Last May the APC was updated on initiatives the city manager's office was pursuing, including possibly renting existing church parking lots for alternative parking areas. At that time a program of carpooling was suggested as a means to get four employees to group together. While no one has used the carpooling option to date, it is still considered a viable option. In the past several months, two options have surfaced as possible ways to address the problem:

Shuttle: It is possible that a large employer could hire a company to provide a shuttle from a remote parking lot to the downtown office of the company paying for the service. Possibly more than one company could work together.

Valet: A private company could be hired by a large employer to run a valet service to take individual cars to and from a remote parking lot.

The cost structure for carpooling would be completely between the employer and the City. The City's costs that would need to be covered would include the church parking lot rental (negotiated at \$10,000 per year per lot, and the cost of one monthly permit at Chester St. (for the benefit of four employees).

For the shuttle and valet operations, the City's rental fee for the remote lot would have to be covered. The employer would also be responsible for the cost of the private company's charges for valet or shuttle services.

While the feasibility of these programs may have seemed low in the past, as demand for parking continues to rise, we expect these programs to look more attractive. The current option of parking in a parking structure and paying \$5 per day can be brought down with these options, and hopefully will become more attractive. As employee demand makes the parking structures busier, the demand can also have negative consequences on customer parking as well. Staff will work to encourage these programs actually being used, in an effort to keep the parking structures open and available for shopper and customer traffic.

Chairman Kuhne thought it would be a good idea to talk behind the scenes with the Planning Board chairman about requiring a new commercial building to have a certain number of parking spots.

### RAIL DISTRICT AD HOC COMMITTEE

Mr. O'Meara said the new committee will talk about parking policy in the Rail District because things are getting squeezed in that area. An APC member has been asked to join the group. Ms. Krueger volunteered for the position.

### MONTHLY PARKING PERMIT RATES (not discussed)

### AD HOC PARKING DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

Mr. O'Meara advised the committee meets once a month on Wednesday. The Pierce St. Structure is off the table for now and the focus is on N. Old Woodward. The scheme is to construct a new five-story building on the N. Old Woodward Ave. frontage that is about 50 ft. deep. The existing building will be demolished. There is a small building proposed on the north side of Willits. This creates about 11,000 spaces instead of the 770 existing spaces, which is a gain of 529 spaces. Next month, Mr. Saroki will put together a detailed drawing that shows massing along the block in 3D. Financing will come from the sale of the land, bonding, and special assessments. A public vote will be required both for the sale of the land, and to authorize the sale of bonds.

If the project goes through it will take 18 to 24 months to execute.

Ms. Paskewicz, who is a member of the ad hoc committee, indicated she is the lone voice on that committee pushing for more public space downtown because of the added residences along with increased density in the offices.

### MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mr. O'Dell reported there has been a lot of revenue coming in because of the extra business. The increase in revenue is tied to the daily office workers parking all day because there are no monthly permits available.

Mr. O'Meara advised that the Park St. Structure will be painted in late summer. One-half floor will be blocked off at a time.

### MEETING OPEN FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (not discussed)

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING

The regular meeting will be moved to February 24, 2016, to conduct the public hearing scheduled today.

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Paul O'Meara  
City Engineer