

City of Birmingham  
ADVISORY PARKING COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING

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

**MINUTES**

These are the minutes for the Advisory Parking Committee ("APC") regular meeting held on Wednesday, April 20, 2016. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lex Kuhne at 7:30 a.m.

**Present:** Chairman Lex Kuhne  
Steven Kalczynski  
Lisa Krueger  
Judith Paskewicz  
Al Vaitas

**Absent:** Anne Honhart  
Vice-Chairperson Susan Peabody

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

**Birmingham Shopping District:** Richard Astrein  
John Heiney

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

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS (none)

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 16, 2016

**Motion by Ms. Paskewicz**  
**Seconded by Mr. Kalczynski to approve the Minutes of the Special APC Meeting of March 16, 2016 as presented.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

**VOICE VOTE:**

Yeas: Paskewicz, Kalczynski, Krueger, Kuhne, Vaitas

Nays: None

Absent: Honhart, Peabody

**PARKING SYSTEM RATE CHANGE PROPOSAL**

*Problem*

Mr. O'Meara noted the Birmingham parking structures have long been operated with the premise that spaces need to be made available in each parking structure at all times for customer (shopper) traffic. However, with the large increase in office occupancy seen since 2013, demand on the parking structures is greater than can be accommodated. Monthly permits are sold out in all five structures and a large number of employees elect to park in the parking structure all day and pay the daily rate.

Through the efforts of the manager's office, off-site parking options have been made available at three local churches. However, it appears that parking off site is not considered an attractive option, particularly if it is as costly as just parking in the structure.

A new large influx of employees started working in Downtown Birmingham in late January. We are now in a position where all five parking structures are often filling for a period of time during the middle of the day. It is important to the overall dynamics of the Downtown to have a healthy retail/restaurant sector in place. If the customers of these establishments come to town and cannot find a parking place, it will impact their bottom line.

*Solution*

In order to keep the parking structures open and accessible to customers, the number of employee vehicles within needs to be reduced. The following options are offered for consideration:

**1. Increase the Parking Structure Daily Rate**

It is proposed to have all five structures match the rate structure currently in use at Pierce St. The maximum rate drops back to \$5 for those that leave after 10 p.m. in order to help late evening employees since parking demand is much lower at that time of night.

## **2. Increase the Parking Structure Monthly Permit Rate**

It was discussed that this permit rate increase was designed to motivate the big employers to move to the off-site parking lots. However, it affects the bottom line of smaller businesses.

## **3. Reduce the Cost of Parking Vehicles Outside Downtown**

The City would cover the cost of the lot rental through the Parking System. Committee members thought this may be a hard sell because that type of service may not fit some of the larger companies.

## **4. Reduce the Authorized Number of Monthly Parking Permits**

Converting future permit sales to daily traffic will then encourage more vehicles to participate in the off-site parking options. Or, they will park there anyway at the daily rate.

Finally, due to the above changes, it is appropriate to review the rate at the parking meters:

## **5. Increase lower cost parking meters so that all meters charge the rate of \$1 per hour.**

If one chooses to park at a low rate meter and the new parking structure rates go into effect, it is actually cheaper than parking in the structures.

Dr. Vaitas favored the two-tier parking rates in front of businesses in the Lot 6 area.

The chairman called for comments from the public at 8:07 a.m.

Mr. Richard Astrein, 120 W. Maple Rd., received clarification that free parkers who park for less than two hours represent 61% of customers. Mr. Astrein thought those parking five hours or more should be at a higher rate. Further, enforcement should be tightened so that permit parkers go to the top floors.

The committee was not ready to move on this matter today because of their need for numbers showing how many people are using the different price categories.

Mr. John Heiney asked for a list of those employers who pay for their employees' monthly passes. Another push can be made to them to show that shuttling to off-site lots will seem more attractive once the permit rates are increased.

It was noted that when people come to Birmingham and can't find a place to park, retailers and smaller service businesses will be affected because their

customers will be circling and then giving up. That is taking money out of the business owners' pockets.

Consensus was to select three members each from the BSD and APC to develop a strategy and then have a joint meeting with the Planning Board to discuss parking. Chairman Kuhne, Ms. Krueger, and Dr. Vaitas volunteered to represent the APC.

The suggestion was made to initiate a lower rate for people parking in the structures after 4 p.m.

### N. OLD WOODWARD AVE. PARKING STRUCTURE VALET PROPOSAL

Mr. O'Dell reported that discussions have been held with SP+ management to take a look at valet assist to help address the current high demand for parking in the Central Business District. An idea was presented that is successfully used in large cities where parking demand is high. When a parking structure becomes full the structure (or a portion thereof) can be turned over to a valet only operation in order to utilize more spaces. Most of the various options involve roof level valet parking. It is not clear how the public will respond to this option but it is recommended that it be tried in the beginning on the roof of the N. Old Woodward Ave. Structure. Further, a lot more cars could be parked on the surface lot if it was valet controlled. Everyone agreed this would be a very cost effective way to increase capacity.

#### **Motion by Dr. Vaitas**

**Seconded by Dr. Paskewicz The Advisory Parking Committee recommends that the City Commission approve the SP+ proposal to operate a valet service on weekdays at the N. Old Woodward Ave. Parking Structure roof level wherein:**

- 1. Two valet service staff provided by SP+ will be stationed at the entrance to the roof level from approximately 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**
- 2. As the structure nears capacity, all vehicles looking to park on the roof would be required to valet their vehicle, at no additional cost to the customer.**
- 3. The cost to the Auto Parking System is estimated at \$52,020 annually.**
- 4. Valet service hours will be subject to change based on actual need.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Vaitas, Paskewicz, Krueger, Kalczynski , Kuhne

Nays: None

Absent: Honhart, Peabody

### 35001 WOODWARD AVE. TEMPORARY PARKING LOT LEASE PROPOSAL

Mr. O'Meara explained that a signed lease is now in place for the committee's review. The two existing approaches on Woodward Ave. would be used at entrance points to two dead end rows of parking. The fence has been removed and no new fencing is proposed at this time. All signs shall have the City color dark green background, with white lettering, to help clarify that it is a City of Birmingham operation. One sign will be posted at each entrance stating PERMIT PARKING ONLY. Once inside the lot, a second, more informative sign will give a better description of how the lot is being monitored, and that a permit tag must be displayed.

Monthly permit holders will be sold a permit in three month increments. They will be provided a tag to display on their rear view mirror. Vehicles parked in the disabled permit spaces will need to display both their disabled parking permit as well as their monthly parking permit.

It is recommended that only 40 permits will be authorized for sale at this time, given that only 37 spaces will be contained in the lot and two of them will be reserved for the disabled. Since the Park St. Structure is filling currently on a regular basis it is most advantageous to first offer permits to those who have been waiting the longest on the Park St. Parking Structure waiting list. The suggested cost is \$65/month, the same being charged at the Park St. Structure. Those buying permits would be encouraged to remain on the waiting list at the Park St. Structure, so that when the opportunity opens up, they could still move into that facility for a longer term parking location.

The property owner has been gracious in offering the use of the property at no cost. The initial signed lease will be for 12 months, to commence upon approval by the City Commission. Based upon labor and equipment charges used for the operation of the City's other lots, it is anticipated that the ongoing cost to operate the lot will be about \$20,000 annually.

It is not clear if the lot will be truly self-sustaining. However, operation of this lot is considered an important move to improve public service rather than increase revenues. Staff sees this as an excellent opportunity to use this vacant property for a beneficial use while it is awaiting redevelopment.

At 9:12 a.m. there were no comments from the public.

**Motion by Ms. Krueger**

**Seconded by Mr. Kalczynski that the Advisory Parking Committee recommends to the City Commission that the mayor be authorized to sign the lease offered by the owner of the vacant property located at 35001 Woodward Ave. for the operation of a temporary parking lot. Further, it is recommended that the lot be maintained by the City with its gravel surface, and that monthly permits be offered for sale at the rate matching that being charged for permits at the Park St. Parking Structure, offered first to those on the Park St. Parking Structure waiting list. All costs and revenues derived from this lot (other than Police Dept. enforcement) will be directed to and from the Auto Parking System Fund.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Krueger, Kalczynski, Kuhne, Paskewicz, Vaitas

Nays: None

Absent: Honhart, Peabody

#### ACCESSIBLE PARKING SIGNAGE ICON

Postponed to the next regular meeting.

#### CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Mr. O'Meara advised that equipment for the Chester St. Parking Structure will be put into place this weekend. As of Monday morning, only cashless payment options will be offered. Mr. Gunn reported this news was very well received at the Birmingham Men's Club.

#### MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mr. O'Dell noted there have been significant increases.

#### MEETING OPEN FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Dr. Vaitas suggested the owner of the parking lot at Woodward Ave. and Oak St. could be approached to see if the City could use the lot for valet only. That would decrease the liability aspect if that is his concern.

#### NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING

May 18, 2016

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