

City of Birmingham  
ADVISORY PARKING COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING

Birmingham City Hall Commission Room  
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan  
Wednesday, August 2, 2017

**MINUTES**

These are the minutes for the Advisory Parking Committee ("APC") regular meeting held on Wednesday, August 2, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m. by Chairman Lex Kuhne.

**Present:** Chairman Lex Kuhne  
Gayle Champagne  
Anne Honhart  
Steven Kalczynski  
Lisa Krueger  
Al Vaitas

**Absent:** Judith Paskiewicz

**Birmingham Shopping District** Richard Astrein  
Ingrid Tighe

**SP+ Parking:** Catherine Burch  
Sara Burton  
Jay O'Dell

**Administration:** Commander Mike Albrecht  
Austin Fletcher, Asst. City Engineer  
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer  
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS (none)

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF July 12, 2017

**Motion by Ms. Champagne**  
**Seconded by Dr. Vaitas to approve the Minutes of the APC Meeting of July 12, 2017 as presented.**

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Champagne, Vaitas, Honhart, Kalczynski, Krueger, Kuhne

Nays: None

Absent: Paskiewicz

298 S. OLD WOODWARD AVE.  
VALET PARKING REQUEST

Mr. O'Meara advised that the owner of the above property, located at the northwest corner of Brown St., has submitted plans requesting a permit to construct a five-story hotel with two underground levels of private parking. The plans have received Community Impact Study ("CIS") and Preliminary Site Plan approval from the Planning Board. As a condition of such approval, the Planning Board asked the applicant to appear before the Advisory Parking Committee ("APC") to receive a recommendation relative to the removal of on-street parking, as proposed on their plan.

The applicant is requesting approval to remove all existing parking spaces to create a permanent valet service at the front door of the new building on S. Old Woodward Ave. The applicant plans to have valet service available for all visitors to the building, whether they are overnight guests, long term residents, patrons at the restaurant, meeting attendees, etc. Vehicles will be taken to the building's proposed Brown St. garage entrance when space permits, and they will be returned to the valet area using the S. Old Woodward garage exit. When space does not permit, the valet drivers will seek other options, such as the Pierce St. Parking Structure. There is precedent in town for removing parking spaces for valet. The Townsend Hotel pays a fee for the meters and uses seven parking spaces along Merrill St.

With the recent change in the metered parking rate to \$1.50 per hour, the City will now charge \$3,000/year per meter per space.

At the July 12, 2017 meeting of the Advisory Parking Committee ("APC"), the above topic was reviewed. The APC asked to have the opportunity to review the traffic impact analysis prepared for the project as a part of the Planning Board's review. That information is now provided.

It was mentioned that there is no space on Brown St. for delivery trucks to line up to unload, as there is only the one traffic lane. Mr. Kalczynski observed that traffic flow and parking are intertwined. The APC is being asked to remove eight

spaces at a time when the City is in a crisis mode with parking. When additional people are added, where do they go?

Addressing a question, Mr. O'Meara advised the bus stop will be moved north of Merrill St., and the space will be turned back to parking. The redesign will represent a net gain of two parking spaces.

Mr. John Gaber, Attorney with Williams Williams Rattner & Plunkett, PC, spoke to represent the property owner, Lorient Capital, LLC. Mr. Gaber wanted to ensure there is no conflict of interest with respect to Mr. Kalczynski being the manager of the Townsend Hotel. The Chairman indicated the nature of this board is that it is comprised of stakeholders. Mr. Kalczynski provides insight into situations that the committee would not have otherwise.

Mr. Kalczynski noted he does not have a conflict of interest. His role on the APC is only to approve or disapprove recommendations for parking. Therefore he will not recuse himself from the consideration of this matter.

Mr. Gaber went on to note that under the current parking nine spaces will be removed. After the street is reconstructed, the area is proposed for 12 spaces. However, accommodating three spaces for the driveway and one space for the sidewalk bumpout at the corner gets it down to eight. The project is a five-story luxury boutique hotel comprised of 126 guest rooms with 17 rental apartments on the fifth floor. There will be a banquet hall, meeting rooms, restaurants, and bars. One component of the building is the two floors of underground parking which provide 56 parking spaces. Only 22 of those spaces are required for the apartment units on the top floor. So the other 34 are available for the general use of the facility. Another feature of this project is enhancement of the streetscape which will help to facilitate some of the City's goals and objectives relative to pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Their Traffic Management Plan has been reviewed by the City's Traffic Engineer and he has signed off, as has the Planning Board. That plan provides for valet at the front. From there the valets will circulate around the Brown St. side of the building and enter the parking garage there. If there is not room below to park the cars they will be stacked and the valets will relocate them off site. One feature of the Plan they think is important is there will be cross training of hotel employees in valet service. Then they can assist when needed.

With regard to the loading situation on Brown St., trucks will back up into a driveway, be off of the road, and be able to use that area for loading and unloading.

There was discussion by the APC members that \$3,000/year per space seems low. Mr. O'Meara explained that figure is based on 60% occupancy. Mr. Richard Astrein received confirmation that the City Commission is the final arbiter of the cost structure.

**Motion by Ms. Champagne**

**Seconded by Ms. Krueger to recommend to the City Commission the removal of eight on-street parking spaces at 298 S. Old Woodward Ave. to allow for the operation of a valet service by the adjacent property owner, in exchange for an annual payment of \$24,000 (at \$3,000 per meter) to be charged annually once the adjacent hotel is open for business.**

Ms. Champagne added she thinks one of the things that makes the Townsend Hotel really special and part of the ambiance of the City is the valet in front.

Mr. Gaber stated they think that a hotel is the highest and best use for this property. The City could be looking at a dense office building there. That would put more daytime peak demand on the system than the hotel will. Secondly, in addition to the 56 spaces underneath, there is stacking for 20 more cars. Also, if public spaces are not available they are obligated to work out an arrangement for other parking. Lastly, progress is being made because the City has recognized the parking problem and is expanding the N. Old Woodward Structure.

**Motion carried, 5-1.**

**VOICE VOTE:**

Yeas: Champagne, Krueger, Honhart, Kuhne, Vaitas

Nays: Kalczynski

Absent: Paskiewicz

Mr. Astrein brought up the point that the rate to pay into the Parking Assessment District is low, as is the rate being charged to the hotels for taking meters off the street. Someone coming into the Parking Assessment District now should be paying market rates to buy in to the structures.

**AD HOC PARKING DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Mr. O'Meara reported there were four different development teams that submitted a response to the Request for Qualifications of how they thought the N. Old Woodward Ave. property could be redeveloped. All four were brought to the Ad Hoc Parking Development Committee. It was decided that all four are viable options and the teams will have another 90 days to submit their final proposal.

After that the Development Committee will review them and interview the parties that are still on the table.

#### CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Mr. O'Meara advised that the painting project at the Park St. project is now well under way. It is still cheaper to keep fixing that structure than to tear it down and start over.

#### MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mr. O'Dell noted there have been increases in revenue both in the monthly and the transient figures. They are seeing the garages being slower than last year. As a direct result of all of the new equipment that has been added, there have been fewer free cars. The number of people who were previously scamming the system has been cut down. Generally SP+ keeps a very close eye on the app to make sure it relays an accurate report on the available spaces in each garage.

The Chairman asked if there is a way to audit whether the people who have permits are still the ones using them. Mr. O'Dell replied that when an account gets behind, the contact the owner of the permit. The permit is taken away when a customer says they don't park there anymore. Individuals are not allowed to switch their permit to another individual.

People without a credit card can purchase an In Card, which has been popular. Also, the readers have been placed as close as they can go to the vehicles, and that has resulted in a better traffic flow in and out of the structures.

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

After discussion, Commander Albrecht agreed to address the valet service about parking cars too close to the intersections.

Chairman Kuhne noted the rates on the street and in the structures have been increased to reflect market rates. However, the one core thing that does not reflect market rates is allowing the first two hours free. Ms. Burch observed that that pricing strategy is still important. Not having that feature would reduce usage of the parking structures, and people would be circling the streets looking for a spot or not coming at all. Neighboring communities are modeling what Birmingham is doing in this regard.

Dr. Vaitas noted he has been getting reports about the new meters. When a meter is below the maximum time limit with a few minutes left and a parker puts

in a quarter, the meter zeroes out before adding time. So, the parker loses a few minutes rather than having time added up to the max time limit. Commander Albrecht verified there is still a ten minute grace period.

As the former vice-chairman is no longer on the committee, the following motion was made:

**Motion by Ms. Champagne**

**Seconded by Ms. Honhart to nominate Dr. Vaitas as Vice-Chairman.**

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Champagne, Honhart, Kalczynski, Krueger, Kuhne, Vaitas

Nays: None

Absent: Paskiewicz

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING

September 6, 2017

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

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City Engineer Paul O'Meara