

City of Birmingham
ADVISORY PARKING COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING

Birmingham City Hall Commission Room
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan
Wednesday, April 4, 2018

MINUTES

These are the minutes of the Advisory Parking Committee ("APC") regular meeting held on Wednesday April 4, 2018. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m. by Chairman Al Vaitas.

Present: Chairman Al Vaitas
Vice-Chairperson Gayle Champagne
Anne Honhart
Steven Kalczynski
Judith Paskiewicz

Absent: Lisa Krueger

SP+ Parking: Catherine Burch
Sara Burton

Nelson Nygaard Chris Bongorno
Tom Brown

Dixon Resources Julie Dixon
Allison

MKSK Brad Strader

Administration: Mark Clemence, Police Chief
Brooks Cowan, City Planner
Austin Fletcher, Asst. City Engineer
Tiffany Gunter, Asst. City Manager
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS (none)

MINUTES OF REGULAR APC MEETING OF MARCH 7, 2018

Chairman Vaitas made the following changes:

Page 5 - Second paragraph, replace "Tonia" with "Tanya."

Page 9 - Fourth line, change the period to a comma.

Page 10 - Second full paragraph add "monthly" to the last line.

Page 10 - Third full paragraph, insert "construction" in front of "period" in the first sentence.

Motion by Ms. Honhart

Seconded by Mr. Kalczynski to accept the Minutes of March 7, 2018 as amended.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Honhart, Kalczynski, Champagne, Paskiewicz, Vaitas

Nays: None

Absent: Krueger

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM

Motion by Ms. Honhart

Seconded by Dr. Paskiewicz to add "Free Garage Parking Saturdays" to the agenda after Woodward Contract for Additional Parking.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Honhart, Paskiewicz, Kalczynski, Champagne, Vaitas

Nays: None

Absent: Krueger

34952 WOODWARD AVE.

CONTRACT FOR ADDITIONAL PARKING

Ms. Gunter advised that in an effort to increase the number of available permits to monthly parkers within the Central Business District, staff has been exploring opportunities to partner with owners of underutilized surface lots located within close proximity to the CBD. As such, staff has identified a location that would allow for approximately 138 parking spaces plus an additional 18 spaces along the concrete slab where people are currently parking for free. The lot is located

at 34952 Woodward Ave., on the corner of Woodward Ave. and Maple Rd. With that, they are looking to open up permit parking primarily for folks on the Wait List for the Peabody Structure.

The proposed contract details the specifics regarding permitted uses, termination clauses, lease cost, and the necessary treatments to make the site suitable for daily parking. Staff negotiated a minimum term of eighteen (18) months to help ensure the cost to implement the parking expansion program would not exceed the benefits. The cost to make the lot suitable for parking is estimated at \$87,400.

Assuming a 10% contingency, the total cost for implementation could escalate to \$96,100. The cost per space for opening this lot would be approximately \$600 per space. Contrast that with the cost per space to secure parking in the Downtown area which is upwards of \$27,000. The lease amount paid to the owners would be \$7,500 per month. This price assumes the sale of 150 parking passes at a cost of \$60 per pass. A gate would control access to the lot. The location of this site is ideal given that there is no need to introduce a shuttle to transport users in and out of the CBD.

It is anticipated that it will take approximately one month to complete the site preparation, and operations would begin in May 2018 as demand for parking begins to rise. Staff recognizes the need to continue to explore other viable longer term opportunities to reduce the permit parking wait list and will continue to seek partnerships with other entities, where possible, to expand parking capacity.

An additional recommendation is to allow for issuance of 20 permits for the concrete slab that would be controlled by using the hang tag system. If a parker on the Peabody St. Structure Waiting List takes a parking pass they would still remain in their same place on the list. Then if their name should come up they can move to Peabody. The permit price at Peabody is \$70.

There were no comments from the public at 7:45 a.m.

Motion by Dr. Paskiewicz

Seconded by Ms. Champagne to recommend to the City Commission to approve the contract between Markyo Hospitality, LLC and the City of Birmingham to expand the capacity for permit parking within the Central Business District by 150 parking spaces and 20 spaces on the cement at Maple Rd. and Woodward Ave., using the hang tag for those 20.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Paskiewicz, Champagne, Honhart, Kalczynski, Vaitas

Nays: None

Absent: Krueger

FREE GARAGE PARKING SATURDAYS DURING CONSTRUCTION

Ms. Gunter requested the APC's consideration of a recommendation that would allow for free parking in the parking garages on Saturdays. The intent is to increase the desirability of the Downtown for shoppers and restaurant goers who might otherwise opt to avoid the area due to the reconstruction, and demonstrate to our merchants that the City is sincere in its efforts to support local businesses.

In 2017, between the months of April and July, the total revenue collected for all parking garages on Saturdays was \$103,411. They anticipate that utilization will be down by approximately 15% due to the reconstruction. Therefore, the total impact to the Automobile Parking System (APS) resulting from offering free Saturdays would be approximately \$88,000. This amount is significantly less than 1% of the total revenue earned during the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year for the APS.

Mr. Kalczynski was curious about how the Bonus Bucks system is working. Ms. Gunter replied that Ingrid Tighe of the Birmingham Shopping District has said that people are excited about the program. During the construction period the merchants have set up a program so that when a person shops in a store they get Bonus Bucks to come back and shop with that merchant or other merchants in the area. People have to go on line to redeem their Bonus Bucks.

Motion by Ms. Champagne

Seconded by Ms. Honhart to recommend the City Commission approve a temporary free parking garage option on Saturdays during the period of reconstruction for Old Woodward Ave.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Champagne, Honhart, Kalczynski, Paskiewicz, Vaitas

Nays: None

Absent: Krueger

Ms. Gunter said this news will be spread by putting it into the Eccentric, onto social media, and by informing the merchants so they can tell their customers.

PRELIMINARY CONSULTANT REPORT
EXISTING CONDITIONS AND BEST PRACTICES
NELSON NYGAARD

Ms. Gunter advised it might be applicable for board members to give the consultants some good direction for the future of the study so that when they come back with the next draft of the Recommendation Report they understand what the board's concerns are and they have the benefit of having done the survey. With that, she welcomed the team.

Mr. Chris Bongorno and Mr. Tom Brown gave their preliminary report in a slide show presentation:

Parking supply: 1,273 total parking meters; 3,579 spaces in 5 structures; 190 spaces in 5 lots. The current wait list is around 3,000 for permits.

Parking utilization: Availability exists all through the on-street network throughout the day. Lunch hour is highest peak use. Off-street, variation exists between garages and the distribution of monthly parkers and transient parkers. Often there is a mismatch between perception of available parking and hard data.

In response to Mr. Kalczynski, Mr. Brown said they will use intercept surveys to see who is actually using the parking system. The survey consists of a brief set of questions to create a profile of who uses what and at what time of day.

Business District survey done in partnership with the City and the BSD: The survey was distributed to over 800 contacts and they received over 400 responses.

- People were asked where they park Downtown, and it was found that 74% are parking in one of the City's decks or lots.
- The majority of employees are provided with some sort of assistance for parking cost by their employer. Fifty-five percent of those have their parking paid for entirely by their employers.
- The average overall rating for Birmingham's parking system was between satisfactory and very poor.

Answering to Ms. Champagne, Mr. Brown said this response is a little skewed toward the negative compared to other cities' responses. Therefore, there is room for improvement here.

When asked how they would rate specific parking features, the most popular feature was free 2-hour parking in the structures. Also there were some

issues with design and circulation within the decks/structures. The wayfinding is substandard to non-existent. On-street signage gets a little better rating.

- One of the last questions was about their primary concern with the state of Downtown parking. Business owners' top issue was availability of parking for customers and visitors. Property owners were concerned about the cost of parking, and employees were troubled about the availability of on-site parking.

Mr. Bongorno replied to Ms. Champagne that they studied all on-street metered usage. Ms. Champagne noted there have been issues with people saying that parking is completely full all the time. Chairman Vaitas added the surveys that were done by SP+ show perhaps parking isn't as full as people thought. However, Lot #6 is a significant problem that the committee is looking at. Mr. Bongorno indicated the team needs to get more data on Lot #6.

Ms. Champagne asked Chief Clemence whether the meters are all working at capacity. He replied the meters are working but the City is not enforcing the sensors.

Ms. Honhart asked about strategies. Mr. Brown replied they are focusing on a full understanding before they are ready to present ideas. Right now their scope is limited to the City parking system but they could talk to private property owners and get a sense of how much capacity they have. If signage is allowed to be added, it will be necessary to make sure it is Birmingham appropriate and maybe even looks consistent with the City if it is a partner facility.

Mr. Brown added they will talk about a tweak on a resident parking program that generates revenue for the neighborhood. Chief Clemence thought maybe excess capacity in three of the five structures should be looked at. Mr. Brown answered that off-street they are not ready to make a blanket statement that there is excess capacity but it certainly looks like it on-street. Chief Clemence's second point was that in terms of satisfaction, this population believes the cost of the meters is too high. Further, the vast majority are not satisfied with the current parking structure situation. Mr. Brown replied the survey focused on businesses, property owners, and employees. Often the business owner anticipates that the metered parking is too expensive and then when you talk to people using the system they can't believe the best spaces are practically being given away.

Mr. Kalczynski commented that in the past five years the City has absorbed a lot of new types of employers that have filled the parking capacity to the point where there is perception that no space is available and rates are increasing. Mr. Brown noted that often you find a wide range of people who are willing to pay for a better space. They will prioritize convenience and cost is less of an issue for

them. It is frustrating to drive around a number of blocks and not find a space. At the other end of the spectrum there are folks where cost absolutely drives their decision. Maybe that means charging more in some convenient zones and less in others not so convenient, and letting people know that. Use price to sort of redistribute demand. With regard to changing the pricing at different times of the day, Mr. Brown said he prefers to keep things simple. He likes predictability.

Dr. Paskiewicz said it is good information for the board to realize that some businesses are loading the system with big chunks of employees. The idea of parking at a remote spot and being brought in has not caught on with any of the employers because people want to have access to their cars. Mr. Bongorno said an equal incentive could be offered by employers to try another mode of transit such as biking or car pooling. It may get a 5% or 10% shift over a series of years.

Parking management best practices:

- Performance based pricing ensures availability and not on increasing City revenues. This changes the way the pricing is done to reflect the demand patterns to show where people want to park versus where parking is available. Rate variation should be sufficient to redistribute demand.
- Promote off-street options along with incentives to get parkers off the streets and into the garages.
- Improve signage and have it be part of the Downtown branding. Color coding helps to convey rates.
- Remote parking and shuttles. Shuttles may be used at peak periods for getting people to and from the remote lots, but they can also serve multiple purposes during the day. They can turn into a visitor circulator that gets people around Downtown.
- Demand reduction strategies increase transit commuting to reduce daily parking demand. High quality shelters and subsidized transit passes improve rider experience.
- Other demand management strategies include car sharing, bike sharing, fleet vehicle sharing. One of the benefits of fleet sharing is that it increases the demand for car sharing in the community. Another important opportunity is to set aside VIP spaces for registered ride share vehicles. Free Uber or Lyft service would make it convenient for employees to travel to and from their remote parking spot or elsewhere.

Discussion turned to Maven which is the GM brand for car sharing. Mr. Brown indicated they are definitely interested in penetrating the Detroit market, including suburban Detroit.

- Expanding effective capacity makes better use of the existing parking supply. Shared parking brokering is where the city has adopted partner parking facilities and branded them in a way that is consistent with public parking facilities. That allows private facilities to become part of the shared network.

- Circulators are a way to promote a park once approach by offering transit service around Downtown.
- A Residential Benefit District uses excess daytime capacity to offer employee day passes. It reinvests program revenues into neighborhood streetscape improvements.
- Curbsides can be programmed to suit multiple functions during the day, evenings and weekends to allow for the daily and hourly flow of commerce and people.
- Public valet is a great tool for helping to accommodate peak influx of visitors. It reduces on-road congestion where people are circling and looking for parking.
- Land banking is investing in lots that are essentially land banks. Added supply becomes available on a temporary basis. Communities have become reluctant to pay for a new parking garage because of the uncertainty of how much parking will be needed five years from now.
- Joint development is when the City does not bear the total cost of building a new facility. They offer an opportunity for a private developer to add supply to the system. The City partners with a developer to ease some of their cost of providing parking, but they want the developer to provide shared parking/public parking as part of that.
- Real-time information and availability. There is an opportunity in the garages to increase wayfinding.
- The City has invested in new hand-held equipment in recent years that will allow for more efficient monitoring of license plates for compliance with the parking system. They also allow the opportunity to track data.
- With the change to smart meters last year there has been the use of 50% coins, 25% Park Mobil, and 25% credit cards. So, people are taking advantage of that flexibility of payment options.

In response to Mr. Kalczynski, Mr. Brown said he has seen that cities generally don't like a system that reserves a space ahead of time because it leads to inefficiencies. It can create frustration when a space sits empty because people don't show up while other people are circling around looking for a spot.

Ms. Julie Dixon stated that for on-street parking reserving a spot is a management nightmare. For off-street, reservation systems are quite popular. It comes down to garage operations and there are quite a few inefficiencies with it. You definitely don't want to allow anyone to reserve a specific space because when they show up, someone's car may be parked there. Offering validations is where you can start to appease your restaurateurs and commercial business owners. People love free parking.

The smart system that Birmingham has in place will contribute to predictability about available parking and even the total cost of a trip.

- Enforcement should focus on performance and not on generating revenues. They know that this Police Dept. emphasizes a customer friendly approach to enforcement and that is their recommendation for the way to go.
- Curbside use and regulations should meet the needs of a variety of users and prioritize higher-quality uses where and when demand exists. Visibility is needed and stacking capacity is needed.
- It should be made clear to the public that meter revenue goes to enhancing the Downtown environment that parkers are enjoying.

Ms. Champagne inquired if there is a new formula that determines how many parking spaces are needed for a certain amount of square feet/building.

Mr. O'Meara stated that there are no parking requirements in the Assessment District unless it is for residential use where parking has to be provided on-site.

Ms. Honhart noted that maybe the occupants of a building have tripled and yet there is no accounting for that in the formula.

Mr. Brown commented that parking minimums were always a very imperfect process, especially in downtowns. Cities are seeing the office demand for parking go up. What is lacking here is a contribution from the developer that helps fund parking, so that when the City needs to expand supplies there are meaningful contributions from those developers to do that. He thinks Birmingham has a lot of the framework for a better solution. A formula might be offered to developers that they could provide some parking or they could provide a contribution toward public parking.

Mr. O'Meara asked that the consultants also explore options for new buildings in the future to be forced to use an off-site parking environment, at least for some period of time in the future.

Responding to Ms. Champagne, Mr. Bongorno indicated they will be looking at focus time in May and June to hold a public workshop at the Library to do some intercept surveys and meet with a variety of focus groups. Further, they hope to conduct another survey. He agreed to amend the meter demand maps and send them to City.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Ms. Burton announced that everything is looking good with nothing out of the ordinary to report.

MEETING OPEN FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Ms. Honhart noticed they are taking down the old signs at the Pierce St. Structure.

Ms. Gunter talked about the communications push. They e-mailed the monthly permit parkers about the changes that would take place. Those same fliers were placed in the structures, the stairwells, and in the elevators. They anticipate starting the permit rule change program on April 9th.

Chairman Vaitas noted there has been some utility construction north of Oak on Old Woodward Ave. across from Tim Horton's which has taken all of the permit parking away. Mr. O'Meara said that should wrap up soon. Chairman Vaitas added that the sidewalks at the rear of Lot #6 are crumbling away. Mr. O'Meara responded they will be repaired as part of the renovation project for the lot.

It was reported that the valet from all four stations was about 150 last week.

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING

May 2, 2018

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

City Engineer Paul O'Meara

Assistant City Manager Tiffany Gunter