

City of Birmingham
ADVISORY PARKING COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING

Birmingham City Hall Commission Room
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan
Wednesday, June 6, 2018

MINUTES

A quorum was not present for this meeting, therefore, no official business was acted upon. Since the City's parking consultant was present and prepared to make a presentation, the unofficial meeting was held. The meeting was called to order at 7:09 a.m. by Chairman Al Vaitas.

- Present:** Chairman Al Vaitas
Anne Honhart
Lisa Krueger (left at 8:48 a.m.)
Judith Paskiewicz
- Absent:** Vice-Chairperson Gayle Champagne
Steven Kalczynski
- SP+ Parking:** Catherine Burch
Sara Burton
- Administration:** Austin Fletcher, Asst. City Engineer
Tiffany Gunter, Asst. to the City Manager
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary
- MKSK:** Brad Strader
- Nelson Nygard:** Chris Bonjorno
Tom Brown
- Dixon Resources:** Allison Edwards

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS (none)

MINUTES OF REGULAR APC MEETING OF MAY 2, 2018

As a quorum of board members was not present, a motion could not be approved.

PARKING MASTER PLAN DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Ms. Gunter advised that to develop the draft recommendations the consultants have been collecting input from stakeholders, researching, and collecting data. There have been information gathering meetings with the merchants, and intercept surveys with people on the street. They have been working with SP+, and internally with the Engineering, Planning and Police Depts. Today they will talk a little more about the existing conditions, the strategies that are being put forth, and discuss the public meeting that is planned this evening at the Baldwin Library to gather additional information from residents and businesses.

Mr. Bonjorno offered a PowerPoint containing an overview of the proposed Birmingham Parking Plan. This is their second time before the board with a presentation on the Plan. It contains some updated supply figures and graphics, utilization numbers, key findings from the utilization data, stakeholder feedback, and strategies that will lead into recommendations.

Key Findings on-street

- Availability exists throughout the network, with at least half of the metered block segments underutilized (<70%) at all times.
- Usage is heaviest within 1-2 blocks of Maple/Old Woodward/Pierce.
- Mid-day (12 p.m. – 2 p.m.) is the peak period at nearly 70%, system-wide, and hovers around 60% during remaining hours.
- Core area utilization ranges from 80% - 88% between 12 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Key Findings off-street

- During the peak, mid-day period, all five City decks exceeded 90% occupancy.
- Chester and Woodward are most heavily used by commuters and monthly permit holders, with the vast majority of parkers staying between 5–12 hours.
- Peabody and Pierce are used most heavily by non-permitted parkers, but the split between short-term and long-term parkers is nearly even.
- The Park garage is evenly distributed between transient and permitted parkers, but more than half of non-permitted parkers are staying for 8-12 hours.
- More than 3,000 parkers are on the permit wait list, but many of them are already parking in the garages (they are paying the daily rate).

Mr. Brown took the lead on the strategies overview, where the key areas are redistributing demand and reducing demand; expanding effective capacities;

expanding supply; and lastly, optimizing operations and technology which Ms. Edwards discussed.

Strategies Overview

- Redistribute Demand
 - Move vehicles to ease the congestion in the center and shift demand more evenly across all of the parking system. Vary the rates so they are more expensive in the core and cheaper further away.

Chairman Vaitas observed that his patients perceive raising rates as the City trying to gain more revenue. Mr. Brown noted the complaints can be minimized but they will never go away. However, if the experience is improved people will come back.

- Develop a cohesive parking “brand” and information system to guide folks that is accessible online, by mobile device and in the field.
- Reduce Demand
 - Improve information and options for commuters willing to share rides, use transit, or walk to alleviate the growing demand on downtown parking facilities.
 - Increase parking availability for commuters.
- Expand Effective Capacities
 - Identify options for expanding employee parking options in downtown Birmingham and beyond.
 - Optimize the rooftop valet program.
 - Create additional on-street permits in the Parking Assessment District.
 - Explore parking in an adjacent Residential Permit Parking area.
 - Connect peripheral/remote facilities with shuttles.
 - Broker shared parking agreements with private lot and garage owners.

Ms. Gunter suggested having different tiered levels of passes for people who don't park every day.

Once the construction is finished, Mr. O'Meara thought one of the recommendations should be to keep the rooftop valet going and start matching up the number of permits sold to see if the valets are really needed.

Ms. Gunter reported they are getting 85-90% utilization in the garages throughout peak times with the shift to the three hour maximum restriction and the use of valet. There is still capacity even with losing 150 on-street spaces due to the construction.

- Promote a "park once" downtown.
 - Improve wayfinding to identify and promote facilities.
 - Consider expanding public valet beyond the current construction period.

- Enhance walkability with improved sidewalks, crossings, and wayfinding.
- Explore a bike share program.
- Coordinate downtown shuttle options with commuter services.
- Identify on-demand mobility service options to meet the needs of visitors and employees.
- Expand Supply
 - Pursue joint development opportunities that both meet the needs of on-site users and provide excess capacity for users throughout downtown.
 - Near-term demand for parking is high, but long-term demand is unclear.
 - ✓ Identify underutilized sites in and around downtown for purchase or lease and convert to short-term parking use.
 - ✓ Hopefully the site becomes a development that enhances and expands the downtown experience.

Ms. Edwards continued the presentation at this time.

- Optimize Operations and Technology
 - The maintenance and operations contract for the City's five garages has not been subject to competitive bidding or amendment since the original signing date in 1991.
 - Issue a parking operator solicitation that incorporates best practices in parking management and technology.
 - A Service Operator Agreement will allow the City to better manage the amount of permits, and more maintenance in the garages.
 - Parking enforcement is often viewed negatively.
 - Change parking enforcement officers into a "Parking Ambassador" program.
 - Equipment in City garages has demonstrated limitations that impede efficiency.
 - Optimize use of existing gate technology and consider options for additional equipment or features that could improve function and reduce congestion at the gates.
 - ✓ Review options to add ParkMobile to the parking structures.
 - ✓ Consider adding to or modifying existing SKIDATA equipment to allow for additional payment options.
 - ✓ Explore License Plate Recognition ("LPR") equipment options so that when a car pulls up the LPR will know it was there for less than two hours and will let it out. The LPR also helps to monitor data.
 - Curbside use should be implemented as much as possible.
 - Support downtown businesses and a walkable, urban downtown by maintaining availability for curbside loading, delivery, and services in the morning.

- ✓ Parkers should be able to utilize those spaces in the afternoons and evenings. The parking curb should be active morning through evening.
- Demand for electric vehicles ("EV") is growing.
 - o Establish a set of policies and programs to facilitate installation and expansion of EV network infrastructure in downtown Birmingham. The more options that people have, the better.

Mr. Bonjorno went on to talk about the open house that will be held at the Baldwin Public Library between 5 and 7 p.m. this evening. Stations will be set up with a team member at each station who will discuss the overall project. Five thousand postcards were mailed out to inform residents and businesses. The purpose of the open house is to obtain feedback on the evaluation and strategies developed by the consulting team. Public input will then be incorporated into refining the strategies and recommendations.

Mr. O'Meara noted the City has always been hesitant to install electric vehicle charging stations with the idea that the demand is low and whether they want to block off a space where no one else can park because of the station. Ms. Edwards noted the amount of electric vehicles will steadily increase over time. Ms. Gunter said they do not want to restrict spaces, given the amount of demand and the limited supply. So they have to review the opportunity with respect to the current supply. The City won't jump into electric vehicle charging stations that take spaces out of the garages or the street until they do that review.

Ms. Edwards said vehicles should only be allowed to park at the stations while actively charging. That prevents people from pulling in and storing their vehicle for many hours. The word "actively" changes the conception.

With regard to cost to the consumer, Mr. Brown noted his understanding from their other Michigan clients is that they have not been able to charge for the service because they are not a utility. Therefore it is offered as a perk. Mr. O'Meara indicated there has not been a strong demand for charging stations in Birmingham.

Speaking about loading zones, it was discussed there should be a "no idling" ordinance for trucks that are loading or unloading, because the noise disturbs people who are dining outside.

The discussion turned to dining platforms and Mr. Bonjorno thought the aggregate amount of spaces that they take up is not that significant. The decks are a big part of an inviting and walkable downtown. Mr. Brown agreed to take a look to make sure the amount of platforms is right sized for Birmingham.

The group talked about Parking Lot 6. Mr. Bonjorno said when they did the on-street counts they did not count Lot 6. Dr. Paskiewicz observed that people with permits say they cannot get a permit spot there and have to use the meters.

Mr. O'Meara noted that many merchants are reporting that they are doing as well or better during construction as last year. Ms. Honhart thought that free parking on Saturdays is wonderful for visitors. The gate stays open and there are no backups.

Ms. Gunter reported that in crunch times SP+ now has operators at the gates assisting people. It helps tremendously in keeping the lines down.

Mr. Bonjorno suggested adding at least one more tier of charges on the meters. That needs to be accompanied with clear and predictable communication to the public as to the areas where parking gets more expensive. Eye level wayfinding might be feasible, such as sleeves on the poles. The three tiers of rates need to be complimented with a map. He recommended that rates for ADA parking should be consistent with other meters.

APPOINTMENT TO THE AD HOC MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

Ms. Gunter advised that the RFP is out for the city-wide Master Plan. The City Commission is looking for representation from the community and from each of the relevant boards to select the consultant and participate in the study.

Chairman Vaitas volunteered to be on the committee and all were in favor.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mr. Gunter reported that revenues are up and expenses are down, primarily because there haven't been any major undertakings. This year they are at 47% free parking. SP+ ambassadors are now helping people in and out of the gate system so there is not a pressure to just let somebody out because they are holding up traffic. Now they can process the payment.

Ms. Burch commented that with the SKIDATA system that requires a credit card when entering a garage they might see somewhat of a reduction in people who are taking advantage of the two hours free by moving their car every two hours. Also, with the old system they had to let people out because of equipment problems.

Ms. Gunter advised they are seeing a lot more usage of the valet assist in the Park and Chester structures, as the valet assist program is being enforced when the garage is full. As Mr. O'Meara stated, this may warrant allowing this program to go on beyond the construction season to determine whether or not it is still useful and if it is worth allowing for additional issuance of permits.

MEETING OPEN FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

- Ms. Gunter reported the City Commission has allowed them to move forward with the ad hoc Parking Development Committee's recommendation on the N. Old Woodward Garage demolition and re-build to gain some additional capacity with 1,150 spaces over the existing 745. The Committee made a recommendation to the Commission to move forward with the team that proposes to stick within the existing fabric of the downtown Birmingham community and offers two levels of underground parking and one additional level above ground. The Commission approved the opportunity for City staff to engage in negotiations with the Walbridge Woodward Bates team that would allow for a public/private partnership development model that then can be reviewed by the ad hoc Parking Development Committee and taken back to the Commission prior to the next step.
- A scope of work will be issued next week to engage a development consultant team and a legal firm to review the elements of the deal as it involves, and work with staff and Walbridge Woodward Bates Partners. The public will have to vote on a bonding measure.
- Gravel is down and signage is being created for Parking Lot 12 at the SE corner of Woodward Ave. and Maple Rd. They are working with contractors to install a gate arm for permit holders to enter and exit the lot. Thus far 100 permits have been issued. They will stick with that for now to determine how people use the lot before issuing more
- The wait list for permits has now been pulled ahead to 2015.
- Chairman Vaitas noticed that construction at the north end of N. Old Woodward Ave. has come to a halt and the parking spaces have been out of commission for quite some time. Mr. O'Meara advised the City sidewalk is damaged beyond repair so if there is a several month wait before anything more happens there will be some costs on the developer's part to rebuild the sidewalk and get the parking spaces open again.

- Dr. Paskiewicz asked that the construction workers not be allowed to use the parking in front of the stores in that strip for their turn-around. They have ruined the bed at the south end.

- Chairman Vaitas said regarding Parking Lot 6 expansion there is a species of tree called the Thuga tree that grows to 40 to 60 ft. and is an effective screening tool.

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING

July 11, 2018

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:28 a.m.

City Engineer Paul O'Meara

Assistant to the City Manager Tiffany Gunter