

Birmingham City Commission - Special Workshop Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 10, 2021
6:00PM
Virtual Meeting On Zoom
Meeting ID: 655 079 760

Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/event/3470/videos/544030266/>

Workshop Session

This will be considered a workshop session of the City Commission. No formal actions will be taken. The purpose of this workshop is to participate in a discussion regarding ~~Unimproved Streets~~ the Parking Assessment District¹.

I. Call to Order

Pierre Boutros, Mayor

II. Roll Call

Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk, called the roll.

Present: Mayor Boutros (location: Birmingham, MI)
Mayor Pro Tem Longe (location: Birmingham, MI)
Commissioner Baller (location: Birmingham, MI)
Commissioner Hoff (location: Birmingham, MI)
Commissioner Host (location: Birmingham, MI)
Commissioner Nickita (location: Birmingham, MI)
Commissioner Sherman (location: Birmingham, MI)

Absent: None

Administration: City Manager Markus, City Clerk Bingham, Planning Director Ecker, Finance Director Gerber, City Attorney Kucharek

III. Presentation & Discussion

CM Markus updated the Commission on the parking system's status. He stated that as of April 30, 2021 the parking system had \$18,830,600 in an unrestricted net position. Over the next five years, costs for updates to the decks excluding Pierce are estimated to total just under \$10 million. Another \$2 million is estimated to be required for updates to some of the City's surface lots. He also stated that as far as he and CA Kucharek could tell, the City could again assess businesses for further maintenance of the parking system.

A. Presentation

The presentation was given by CA Kucharek and FD Gerber.

¹ As corrected at the May 24, 2021 meeting.

B. Discussion - Where Do We Go From Here?

Mayor Pro Tem Longe and Commissioners Baller and Nickita thanked CA Kucharek and Staff.

In reply to Commissioner Baller, CA Kucharek stated that the formula for calculating the assessments in the Parking Assessment District (PAD) was created before the percentages were determined. She said the percentage amounts were determined by the Commission at the time. She stated that new entries to the PAD are assessed based on the formula from 1982, and are only assessed once.

CM Markus noted that the decision of how to assess new entries to the PAD seems to have been made differently each time based on the economic and political environment since there is no formal policy. He said there also did not seem to be consistency in assessing the benefitting properties versus assessing the users of the parking system.

CA Kucharek stated that Chapter 94-15 of the City's ordinances charges the City Manager with the computation of the District and how it is assessed.

Commissioner Nickita said it would be important to simplify and clarify the City's policies regarding the PAD to make it more fair to the City's businesses. He said that residential uses of the parking structures also needed to be factored into the discussion since the City seeks to promote more residential in the downtown. He noted that the requirement to provide parking for residential buildings stymies developers' ability to create more 'missing middle' housing.

CA Kucharek noted that Chapter 94-15(3) does not require that primarily residential buildings be assessed for use of the parking structures.

Mayor Pro Tem Longe stated that the Commission would need an additional workshop to specifically address questions A-E as posed in the workshop's agenda packet. She said the answer to question A was yes in her opinion. She concurred with Commissioner Nickita that the City needs to create more fairness in the assessment process. Mayor Pro Tem Longe continued that the City needed to create policy regarding:

- Buildings that were initially assessed and then replaced by buildings much larger in size and use;
- Using the PAD to incentivize parking;
- Reducing the residential parking requirements so that offices could be converted into residential if appropriate, especially in a post-Covid-19 context where people are increasingly likely to be working from home; and,
- Assessing for parking structure maintenance and improvements.

Commissioner Hoff commented that the City did not yet have accurate parking usage counts for a post-Covid-19 environment where more people might be working from home. She cautioned the City to keep in mind that the parking system is likely undergoing a transition in its usage.

Commissioner Host concurred with the Mayor Pro Tem that an additional workshop on this topic would be necessary.

In reply to Commissioner Host, PD Ecker said the Planning Board does not to more in-depth analysis of parking for new businesses in the PAD because of the way the ordinance is currently written. She said changes to the ordinance would need to occur at the Commission level. She also stated that new businesses in the PAD, if the address was already assessed for the PAD, are not assessed again.

Commissioner Host said it was unfair that businesses new to the PAD are not assessed if the address was already assessed.

Commissioner Baller expressed frustration that many of these parking issues were not reviewed methodically by the City earlier than this. He noted that the funds in the parking system can be used towards parking improvements in the Triangle District, which he said he had been told was not the case in the past. He advocated

for the creation of policies that would assess for costs of repairs and maintenance of the parking structures. He concluded by saying that the City does not currently have a sound plan for expanding the City's parking system and that a holistic, strategic plan needs to be developed.

IV. Public Comment

Jeff Hockman, Chair of the BSD, noted he was involved in the policy discussions regarding assessing for both the Peabody and Chester parking structures. He offered to review those discussions for the Commission in the future if it would be helpful.

Paul Reagan and David Bloom thanked CA Kucharek for her presentation.

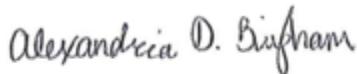
Mr. Reagan expressed concern that the numbers Andres Duany used to make parking recommendations for the downtown area would need to be recalculated. He also said the City should know what the total demand for parking is given the businesses throughout the City and what the total parking supply is. He recommended that projects in the PAD only be approved if the applicant can demonstrate the PAD has sufficient remaining parking capacity.

Mr. Bloom said developers building in the PAD should have the option to pay into the PAD or provide their own parking. He also recommended that the Commission create a specific timetable for updating parking ordinances since developments continue being approved based on outdated parking ordinances.

Mayor Boutros concurred, saying that pursuing the matter further was important to the City.

V. Adjourn

Mayor Boutros adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.



Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk
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