

PARKING COMMITTEE MEETING
7:30 AM –Thursday, December 11, 2008
City Hall – Conference Room A

I. CALL TO ORDER:

City Manager John Bohenko called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Councilor Kenneth Smith, Chair
John Bohenko, City Manager
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director
Deputy Police Chief Len DiSesa
Jon Frederick, Parking Manager
Andrew Purgiel, City Auditor

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

MOTION made by Jon Frederick to accept the minutes of the November 13, 2008 meeting. Seconded by Deputy Police Chief DiSesa. Motion passed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

(A) State Street Reconstruction Project – Request for plan approval (Sidewalk, Curb, Pavement and Parking Layout Plan attached) – Peter Rice, City Water/Sewer Engineer, introduced Jeff Murray and Jeff Hyland, design team for this project. The project is being driven by underground utilities issues and an administrative order from EPA to address our sewer problems. We had a sewer collapse recently on State St. At the same time, we are trying to improve the esthetics and functionality. We held two public meetings for input from business owners, residents and the general public. A lot of the input received was related to traffic calming and improving esthetics. The main thrust was no loss of parking. We believe the design balances the needs of esthetics and safety issues while maintaining the current number of parking spaces and loading zones.

Jeff Murray referred to the conceptual plan. What we are attempting to do is calm traffic down and be more pedestrian friendly by reducing travel lanes from 14 ft to 11 ft, adding bump outs at intersections and shorten the distance of crosswalk lengths to improve overall safety. Parking locations are essentially the same even with the bump-outs and enhancements to the Pleasant St. intersection, Penhallow and Chapel Streets. With some esthetic improvements, we were able to maintain the existing 68 parking spaces and 2 loading zones. We're proposing to shift the loading zone at

Rusty Hammer 30-40 ft away from the intersection and the fire hydrant, placing it closer to the alley way. Peter Rice will speak with the owners of Rusty Hammer concerning the loading zone.

Deputy Chief DiSesa asked if the parking spaces would interfere with access to the hydrant. Mr. Murray responded, "No."

The 2nd loading zone remains in vicinity of the Victory. Business owners have requested our looking at a 3rd loading zone, which is not shown on the plan. There's the opportunity to place a loading zone or a bus loading area in front of the Temple Parking lot, in lieu of two parking spaces. We bring this up for consideration and discussion.

The City Manager suggested for benefit of the Parking Committee that in the future when setting up a loading zone we entertain a "No Idling" ordinance or provision.

The Chair suggested getting answers from the business owners, especially regarding how the loading zone will affect Rusty Hammer and how the curb reconfiguration will affect Rosa's.

Peter Rice asked that if the Committee concerns could be addressed by memo. The Chair and City Manager concurred.

(B) Vendors – Parking Space (memo dated November 20, 2008 attached) –

Jon Frederick reported this was a request from the City Manager to look at a policy regarding vending from parking spaces.

Attorney Sullivan stated that a \$10 parking ticket as a cost of doing business is so small that the trucks are willing to stay in a public parking space for more than two hours. Secondly, as the trucks want to have as much foot traffic as possible so they can sell, they park in places where there's a lot of pedestrian traffic. This creates a safety issue as people cut across the crosswalk or jay walk to get to these trucks. This issue is presented to you to think about, and perhaps adopting a pilot program.

The City Manager suggested working in conjunction with the Vending Committee via a joint meeting between the Vending and Parking Committees. It's not going to get any better, will only get worse. Right now we have only one truck, but potential exists for more. It will be harder to manage with more trucks, so now is the time to do something.

Attorney Sullivan referred to the Ordinance, stating that there is no parking related Ordinance regarding vendors. The Vendor's Ordinances do have provisions to the effect that "if vending from a vehicle on or near the street, the vehicle must be so far from curb." There is some regulation that seems to allow it from the vendor's point of view, but nothing that either permits or denies it from parking.

Jon Frederick stated the truck we're seeing on State St. parks next to the Bank's parking lot on the southerly side of State St., where there's only one parking space on the block.

The City Manager would like to have a joint meeting with Vending and Parking Committee meeting in January and come forward with a joint recommendation between Jon Frederick and rest of the staff.

- (C) **Sticker Program** – Request for Store Owner’s Validation – The Chair stated we are taking a look at putting a sticker program where a business owner can buy stickers similar to the validation for the parking lot. The City Manager referred to the cost of the stickers and the need to have internal control. Jon Frederick will evaluate and put a proposal together for the next meeting.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to table to next meeting. Seconded by Jon Frederick. Motion passed.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

- (A) **Residential Parking** – Continuation of Discussion (District Maps, Visitor permits) – Jon Frederick presented the committee with maps. The first is of the City itself. We are considering a sticker based program where permits would be issued to any resident of the City, numbered in accordance with their residence. We will be able to track who is parking in the downtown residential parking areas for a year to allow us to mold this program accordingly.

The City Manager suggested keeping it as simple as possible and perhaps use color coding.

Jon Frederick reported the two areas needed to be focused on is the Islington St. Corridor (District A) as far as Cabot Street. Referring to the map, the area would include Middle St., Cabot and McDonough over to Maplewood and Bridge St.

The City Manager stated people would come in annually to get their sticker.

Jon Frederick stated the cost of the sticker would be \$25 per vehicle for the first two vehicles, the sticker for the third vehicle would be \$50.

Jon Frederick is proposing 4 visitor passes – good for one day each – would be free with the purchase of the permit. The visitor’s permit would be labeled with the residential permit number in order to track who the visitor’s permit belongs to. The resident would pen in the date on the pass, and in order to avoid any fraudulent use, we’ll emboss the date section. Additional sheets purchased thereafter would be \$5 each, covering the cost of administration.

The second district is the South End covering Court St. to the Bridge at South Mill. Over 50% of this area is no parking.

The City Manager suggested setting up a public meeting in January in Council Chambers and televise it.

Steve Parkinson suggested looking at the cost for appropriate signage on all those streets.

The residential parking restrictions would be in effect from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

(B) Peirce Island Boat Launch – Request for Over-Night Parking Pass Permits for Boaters – The City Manager recommended this be residential only. Councilor Pantelakos asked if this came under the Recreation Board and stated they have not heard anything about this. Jon Frederick discussed this with the Recreation Department. City Manager asked that this go before the Recreation Board and place on their next agenda. Also speak with the Peirce Island Committee and be placed on their next agenda as well.

Steve Parkinson recommended there be a definition of what kind of vehicle allowed to park there over night, excluding motor homes.

MOTION made by City Manager to table this to refer back to the Recreation Board and Peirce Island Committee for a report back. Seconded by Steve Parkinson. Motion passed.

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

Respectfully submitted
Elaine E. Boucas, Secretary