

**MINUTES OF THE  
PARKING GARAGE SITE SELECTION COMMITTEE**

**September 25, 2012**

**Conference Room A**

**8:00 a.m.**

**Members Present:** Councilor Anthony Coviello, Councilor Christine M. Dwyer, Councilor Nancy Novelline-Clayburgh, John P. Bohenko, Steve Parkinson, Nancy Carmer, Nick Cracknell, Rick Taintor, Adam Cannon

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Chairman Coviello called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and briefly discussed the agenda. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss a draft of the committee's final report to the City Council on the selection of potential sites for future parking garages.

As the first order of business, Councilors unanimously approved the meeting minutes from the September 17, 2012 meeting.

Councilors received no written communication from the public.

As the next order of business, City Council and City staff discussed a preliminary draft of the committee report to the City Council.

Councilors went over each section within the report and made various edits to the content that will be reflected in the final report. These changes included:

- Emphasizing the importance of the growing deficit of parking spaces in Portsmouth
- Clarifying traffic pattern data and adding more narrative explanation of the traffic counts
- Adding recommendations to continue to explore future parking structures at the McIntyre & Deer St. sites through partnerships
- Stating contingencies of recommendations (i.e. contingent upon envisioned renderings)

City Manager Bohenko directed staff to make the suggested changes to the report.

Looking ahead, Councilor Dwyer requested that the City Council include members from the other committees that would have a role in a future new parking garage. City Manager Bohenko said copies of the report would be circulated to the Historic District Commission, Economic Development Commission, Parking, Traffic and Safety Committee, the Planning Board and the Transportation Policy Committee. He added the groups will be informed of work sessions.

With no other business to discuss, the next meeting date was established as a City Council work session on Monday, October 15th, 2012 at 6:30p.m. (provided the full City Council concurs).

To begin the public comment session, City Manager Bohenko gave a rough outline of the actions needed from this point forward once a site is selected for further study by the City Council. He also noted that once there is a clearer timeline for those steps, City staff will develop a schedule to be included as an addendum to the report.

Four members of the public came forward to speak in the public comment session.

Jim Lalos of 103 Congress Street asked if the Worth Lot were selected, whether 2015 would be the start or end of work on a new parking garage. To this, City Manager Bohenko answered that City Council will need to approve a site prior to a schedule being developed.

Scott Nelson and Natalie Roman-Nelson of 151 Congress Street are the owners of Portsmouth Health Food. They are concerned about their employees and customers being able to access to their grocery store during construction of a garage at Worth Lot. Both individuals asked where the handicapped and elderly would park, how they could pay

their employees if business suffers as a result of the impact and who will pay their unemployment if layoffs ensue. They also noted that they paid \$41,000 in property taxes to the City.

City Manager Bohenko noted that the City values businesses and would meet with the affected businesses to develop mitigation measures. In addition, Councilor Dwyer stressed the importance of a construction management plan and highlighted her recent experience with the new Middle School.

Sam Winebaum of 29 Vaughan Mall stated the importance of looking at the overall parking picture rather than just one large garage. Mr. Winebaum is concerned that prior issues of poor parking planning has led to the challenges the City is currently experiencing. In addition, Mr. Winebaum recounted his trips to Park City, Utah as an example of different parking planning where Park City allows people to park at their high school and shuttles people into downtown. According to Mr. Winebaum, this costs the city less money. He is also opposed to a tall parking structure on Vaughan Mall that would create a “canyon” effect.

City Manager Bohenko responded that the City has approached the parking situation in a comprehensive omnibus process that examined both large and small, private and public parking facilities.

Monte Bohanan of 76 South School Street and the Music Hall wanted to echo the concerns of citizens on the effects of having a new alley between a new parking garage and the Worth Block. He is also concerned that it would become a remote place where late night conflicts erupt. In addition, he stated that he wanted to see some consideration of the aesthetics and maintenance of the structure over the long-term.

Concluding the meeting, Councilor Coviello stated that every site would have a group of people it affects positively and negatively. It is important for people to communicate with the City Council because they can work together with impacted parties.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Adam Cannon  
Assistant Project Manager