

PARKING PRINCIPLES REVIEW AND DISCUSSION WORK SESSION

PUBLIC LIBRARY – LEVENSON ROOM
DATE: MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2019

PORTSMOUTH, NH
TIME: 6:30 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Blalock, Assistant Mayor Lazenby, Councilors Roberts, Pearson, Dwyer, Perkins, Reynolds and Becksted

ABSENT: Councilor Denton

PARTICIPATING STAFF:

John P. Bohenko, City Manager; Nancy Colbert Puff, Deputy City Manager; Juliet Walker, Planning Director; Ben Fletcher, Parking Director; Mike Casad, Parking General Foreman; Robert Sullivan, City Attorney; James Heinz, Deputy Fire Chief; Patrick Howe, Deputy Fire Chief; Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager; and Kelli L. Barnaby, City Clerk

PARTICIPATING FROM BOARDS & COMMISSIONS:

Alan Gold, Katelyn Kwoka and Bob Marchewka, Economic Development Commission; Harold Whitehouse, Ralph DiBernardo, Mary Lou McElwain and Steve Pesci, Parking & Traffic Safety Committee; Elizabeth Moreau, Polly Henkel, Dexter Legg, Jeffrey Kisiel, Jody Record and Ray Pezzullo, Planning Board; Arthur Parrott, Phyllis Eldridge David Rheume and Chase Hagaman, Zoning Board of Adjustment

1. Call to Order

Mayor Blalock called the Work Session to order at 6:30 p.m. He welcomed various members of the Planning Board, Economic Development Commission, Parking & Traffic Safety Committee; and Zoning Board of Adjustment for joining in the discussion this evening regarding parking principles. He indicated that individuals will break into smaller groups in order to review the guiding parking principles and make suggestions for modifications. He stated after the break out discussions have ended we will come back to the Levenson Room for a report back from each group.

2. Presentation by City Staff

Parking Director Fletcher reviewed the agenda that will be followed this evening. He said a review of work session goals will be discussed with presentations by City staff on 2012 Parking Principles history and annotated, a review of accomplishments to date, discussion of current conditions/trends, suggested amendments and additions followed by a break out into Discussion Groups and concluding with a report back from each of the three groups.

Planning Director Walker did a review of 2012 Parking Principles: History

- Adopted by City Council in March 2012
- Resulted from multi-year planning and analysis effort
 - Master Plan 2005
 - Downtown Parking Omnibus 2011
 - Parking Supply and Demand Analysis 2012 (Nelson-Nygaard)
 - Parking Supply and Demand Strategies Report 2012 (John Burke)
 - Multiple Work Sessions with City Council, EDC, Planning Board, Focus Groups

- Immediate Outcomes
 - Merged Parking Committee and Traffic Safety Committee into One Combined Parking & Traffic Safety Committee
 - City Council Committed to Move Forward with Downtown Parking Garage
 - Identified Opportunities for Public Parking on Private Lots
 - Elimination of In Lieu of Parking Fees
 - Modified Downtown Parking Requirements
- Principles are Based on Parking Industry Best Practices and Managing Parking Demand and Supply, Land Use, and Complete Streets
- Purpose: To Guide City Decisions (and staff recommendations) on Parking, Primarily in the Downtown Core

Parking Director Fletcher spoke to the top 8 Parking Principles:

1. A Balanced Mix of Retail/Restaurant Parking Supply that is Convenient, Viable and Central to Downtown Destinations is Key to the Short-term and Long-term Health of the City's Retail, Restaurant and Office Economies
2. Increase Parking Supply in the Downtown Core
3. Optimize Existing Resources
4. Develop and Enhance Transportation Alternatives
5. Enhance Wayfinding
6. Price more desirable on-street space to favor motivated user groups
7. Apply and Enforce Time Limits
8. Principles Should Continue to Represent Parking Industry Best Practices

Parking Director Fletcher spoke regarding the Parking Division support services. He indicated the Parking Division contributes \$2.4M annually to the General Fund. He also reviewed the five parking product tiers within the City.

Planning Director Walker said public transit is part of public transportation and that some people choose not to have a car. She outlined our existing resources:

- COAST
- Wildcat
- Senior Shuttle
- Parking Shuttle
- Micro-transit RFQ in Progress
- Zagster Bike Share

Parking Director Fletcher reviewed Technology Enhancements:

- Data-Driven Decision Making
 - High Occupancy Zone Recommendations
- Credit Card-Enabled Smart Meters; Touch-Screen Technology
- ParkMobile App and Resident Pricing

Planning Director Walker reviewed Demographic Trends that Influence Parking Demand:

- Median Age = 41
- 20 to 34 years old = 25% of Population

- Over Age 65 = 16% of Population
- Over Age 85 = 3% of Population
- 2-person Households = 39% of Population
- Households w/Children Under 18 = 20% of Population
- Renter-occupied Housing Units = 49% of Housing Units
- Workforce – Most Workers Commute *into* Portsmouth
 - 13,270 of City Population is in Labor Force
 - 33,200 Jobs in Portsmouth

Parking Director Fletcher read a Summary Statement:

The 2012 Principles were conceived and written using what continues to be Parking Industry Best Practices. The Parking Division has utilized the Principles as a guideline to a holistic approach that has elevated service levels for all users, and minimized tax increases for Portsmouth Residents.

The Portsmouth Parking Division treats the entire City of Portsmouth as a Parking Benefit District, defined as a specified geography in which parking revenues are reinvested back into the City for a wide range of transportation-related improvements.

In addition to contributing \$2.4M to the General Fund annually, Parking Revenues are invested in Public Transportation, Downtown Police Security, Capital Projects, Wayfinding, Percent for Art, School Transportation and Downtown services such as Public Trash Collection, Snow Removal and Street Sweeping.

Continuing to follow Parking Industry Best Practices as we modify the City of Portsmouth Parking Principles will continue to provide guidance to the City's policy makers going forward.

III. Break-out Discussion Groups: Review and Discuss Potential Modifications to Principles

Planning Director Walker reviewed the list of suggested modifications / updates to the Guiding Parking Principles:

- 1) Add principles for area outside the downtown
- 2) Include time horizon for the principles (e.g. next ten years)
- 3) Indicate provision of parking for non-residential uses in the downtown is a shared responsibility between employers and the City
- 4) Re-affirm access to transportation options is a key to managing parking demand
- 5) Re-affirm pricing strategies should be optimized to manage occupancy
- 6) Indicate that pricing strategies should be optimized to manage occupancy
- 7) Incorporate strategies that support "park once" practices
- 8) Address resident-specific needs
- 9) Shift focus from increasing public supply to optimizing what we have, encouraging shared parking, expanding public-private partnerships, and improving access
- 10) Be more inclusive of all workforce needs (not just hospitality industry)
- 11) Recognize transportation needs / preferences of different demographic groups (i.e. 2+ household vs no-car household)

- 12) Incorporate transportation demand management requirements for certain sized employers
- 13) Revisit whether parking strategies should be “revenue neutral”

The three groups split up to discuss the questions. The rooms used were the Levenson Room, Hilton Garden Room and the MacLeod Room.

IV. Report Back

Group 1

Planning Director Walker reported that discussion took place around data out in the City, tracking data and the anticipated changes. She indicated that changes need to be looked at in 3-5 years rather than 10 years. She said the group felt that the optimum for parking should be 85% occupancy and that needs to be part of our Guiding Principles. Planning Director Walker said the group also agreed that we need to provide parking in different ways.

Group 2

Councilor Roberts reported the group looked at the Guiding Principles for outside the downtown. He stated 10 years is too far out and perhaps we should examine them in conjunction with the Master Plan. He reported interest in parking for non-residents should be a shared responsibility by the City and employers. He said the group agreed to reaffirm pricing strategies as a key to managing parking demand. He stated the group would like to look at parking and walking strategies and the need perhaps for discount parking for residents. Councilor Roberts said we need to be more inclusive of all workforce needs (not just hospitality industry).

Group 3

Chase Hagaman, member of Zoning Board of Adjustment, indicated the group did not focus on what they did not like about the Guiding Principles. He spoke relative to questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 10 and 13. He stated more emphasis is needed for employees and getting employers to participate in parking. He said the group felt it is important to tie everything together with market pricing. He said they also support the concept of creating a shuttle from the Fox Run Mall for getting in and out of the City.

Planning Director Walker said the City will be looking to summarize the findings and report back. She also stated that the information will be posted on-line.

At 8:10 p.m., Mayor Blalock closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kelli L. Barnaby, MMC, CMC, CNHMC
City Clerk