

BURLINGTON DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
DRAFT MINUTES, July 16, 2014
(The June 18, 2014 meeting was cancelled)
645 Pine Street
(DVD of meeting on file at DPW)

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Bob Alberry, Tiki Archambeau, Jim Barr (new Commissioner), Asa Hopkins, Nathan Lavery, Solveig Overby and Jeffrey Padgett

Director Spencer called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

ITEM 1 – ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

Director Spencer called for nominations for Chair. **Commissioner Alberry nominated** Commissioner Lavery; Commissioner Hopkins seconded. Commissioner Lavery accepted the nomination for Chair for FY15. Unanimous.

Commissioner Lavery called for nominations for Vice Chair. **Commissioner Overby nominated** Commissioner Hopkins; Commissioner Alberry seconded. Commissioner Hopkins accepted the nomination of Vice Chair for FY15. Unanimous.

ITEM 2 - AGENDA

Commissioner Barr moved to remove Items 5.50 (Remove Two Stop Signs at Elmwood Ave & Spring St) and 5.60 (Communication on Wastewater Charges) from the Consent Agenda; Commissioner Padgett seconded. The two items will be added on the Agenda as Items 9.5 and 9.6. Unanimous.

ITEM 3 – THANKS TO OUTGOING COMMISSIONER MARK PORTER

Commissioner Porter was unable to attend the meeting so his official recognition will be postponed until the August meeting. Commissioner Lavery thanked Commissioner Porter *in absentia*. Commissioner Lavery introduced Commissioner Jim Barr (first meeting).

ITEM 4 – PUBLIC FORUM

Caryn Long, regarding work being done at 12 Weston Street: 1) Upset that DPW issued a building permit during an appeal period. 2) Asking for clarification of a statement she claims was made during last night's appeal hearing about the necessity of building permits for work for Minimum Housing. 3) Concerned about the relationship between Zoning (Dept of Planning and Zoning) and Building (Dept of Public Works, Inspection Services Division)...Feels some people are allowed to work without permits. 4) Would like a follow-up about the "driveway issue" she reported to the Commission months ago.

Max Tracy, City Councilor: Feels proposed rate changes in the Downtown Parking Core are warranted and encouraged the support of the proposed changes.

Stephen Litwhiler: Requesting that the two taxicab stand spaces on Colchester Avenue in front of Domino's Pizza removed and wants 4 parking spaces for his tenants and delivery drivers. Assistant Director Norman Baldwin stated that this request is part of tonight's Consent Agenda (Item 5.30, Colchester Ave Taxicab Stand Removal), though instead of 4 parking spaces Mr. Litwhiler is requesting tonight, staff is recommending 3 spaces.

ITEM 5 – CONSENT AGENDA (Refer to Commission Packet)

- 5.10 Champlain College Shuttle Temp Stop
 - Staff recommends that the Commission adopts the proposed shuttle drop-off/pick-up space.
- 5.20 Handicap Parking Title Change
 - Staff recommends changing the title of Section 7A of the Code of Ordinances from 'Handicapped spaces designated.' to 'Accessible spaces designated.'

- 5.30 Colchester Ave Taxicab Stand Removal
 - Staff recommends that the Commission:
 - Adopt the removal of the two taxicab stands in front of 485 and 495 Colchester Avenue.
 - Adopt 30 minute parking on the east side of Colchester Avenue starting at the corner of Colchester Avenue and Barrett Street and extending north 60 feet.
- 5.40 CarShare VT – Request for New Parking Spot
 - Staff recommends the Commission adopts a CarShare space on the south side of Locust Street at Callahan Park.
- 5.70 Commission Annual Report

Commissioner Alberry moved to accept the Consent Agenda as amended and staff’s recommendations; Commissioner Barr seconded. Unanimous.

ITEM 6 – PARKING PROPOSED RATE CHANGES

(Presentation, Pat Buteau, Assistant Director & Chapin Spencer, Director) (Refer to Commission packet)

Director Spencer recognized the work of those present: Pat Buteau and Brad Cummings (DPW); Kelly Devine (BBA); Nate Wildfire and Diane Colangelo (CEDO); John King and Jan Wright (BPD); and thanked them, along with Local Motion and the Regional Planning Commission (which funded many of the studies) for their efforts. The Downtown Parking Initiative is a partnership between the Department of Public Works (DPW), Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) and Burlington Business Association (BBA) and was launched through a Council meeting in November 2013.

View Director Spencer’s presentation at: www.cctv.org

If the Commission chooses to move ahead tonight, changes could begin and implemented well before the holiday season in the downtown core (July: Order smart meters; August: Begin education campaign; September: Installation of 5 multi-space smart meters; October: Installation of single smart meters). A Parking Management Plan is expected out this spring. The increased rate and the meters *without* time limits are only proposed for the downtown core (within the marked “box” on the map in Director Spencer’s presentation). Parking *outside* the downtown core or in the parking garages would be more economical. The smart meters will collect data on usage and turnover.

Kelly Devine, Burlington Business Association: As representative of over 300 downtown businesses, supports the proposed initiatives.

Jason Van Driesch, Local Motion: Local Motion strongly supports the proposal and encourages the Commission to accept them.

David Porteous: Supports the overall proposal. Asks why the following streets are excluded from the downtown core map: Main to King St on St Paul St; and Main to King St on Church St as those streets have many businesses on them. Also questioned unlimited time on the smart meters and suggested the possibility of rates increasing after 2 hr. time limit, and asked that the “2 hours free parking” in garages not be eliminated, at least right away.

Greg Roy, Ward 4 resident: Likes the Parking Plan with the exception of the parking enforcement time extension (in the downtown core). The City is not allowed to charge a fee for people attending municipal meetings. Most of the municipal meetings held downtown are after 6 pm.

Michelle Boomhower, Transportation Program Director, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) & member of the Parking Advisory Committee: Reiterated that the CCRPC is the primary funding source for the efforts and expressed appreciation for the City in taking a thoughtful and deliberative approach working with CCRPC on this modernization effort.

Nathan Wildfire, Assistant Director of Economic Development: Credited Kelly Devine, BBA, as well as DPW's Pat Buteau, Brad Cummings and Chapin Spencer, for their collaboration, and encouraged the Commission to support the initiative.

Stephen Litwhiler, resident: Supports the smart meters and the ability to use a charge card for the exact time you need the space.

Commissioner Archambeau:

- Verified with Director Spencer that the smart meters in the downtown core would be where the proposed rate increases and extended enforcement hours are being proposed. The other 2/3 of the meters in the on-street system will have the same rates and hours of enforcement as they do today. 15-Minute meters will not be replaced with smart meters (i.e., coins only). Any future proposed changes (e.g., fees) would be brought before the Commission.
- Asked John King, BPD Parking Enforcement about the impact on staff with increased enforcement hours: Mr. King currently provides staff until 8pm; therefore, it would be a two-hour extension of enforcement Tuesday through Saturday. Recent technological updates have added increased security measures for the enforcement staff. No new staff is planned at this time. BPD supports the proposed changes.

Commissioner Overby: Strongly supports the initiative (e.g., the efficiency, cleanliness of facilities and way finding system) and recognizes the possibility of the need for variable rates.

Commissioner Alberry:

- Requested an explanation for the public on what happens to the dollars received from the parking system. Assistant Director Buteau: The Traffic Fund is a special revenue fund. The funds are used strictly for the Traffic Division (for traffic signals, signage and pavement markings, etc.) and are not included in the General Fund or used for other departments.
- Assistant Director Buteau introduced a model of the new smart meter and explained its usage.

Commissioner Barr encourages marketing and education in conjunction with implementation.

John King, BPD checked with the City Attorney's office: The Ordinance requires enforcement of meters during the set hours of the meters, but the enforcement of the meters is discretionary at his level. Mr. King asked that it be documented in the Minutes that whatever time period the Commission increases the meters for whatever time period is agreed upon with Parking Enforcement, the enforcement would only be warning tickets. Mr. King's staff could also issue warning tickets during municipal meeting times.

A grace period of 2-4 weeks is anticipated but not set at this time.

Meter hood fee increases will be across the board; not just hoods used on smart meters.

Commissioner Barr moved to adopt the proposed revenue enhancements for the parking system (A-F in the handout); Commissioner Hopkins seconded. Unanimous.

ITEM 7 – 12-14 BRADLEY ST CODE ENFORCEMENT APPEAL

(Communication, William Ward, Director of Code Enforcement)

(Refer to Commission packet)

Code Enforcement is requesting that the Public Works Commission uphold the findings of the Code Enforcement inspector that 3rd floor units require a second means of egress which does not exit through a bathroom. The Appellant is formally appealing Inspector Perry's findings because he wasn't informed about the issue before.

The Appellant, or his/her representative, was not present. Code Enforcement Director William Ward and Inspector Matthew Perry (who issued the Order as a result of a January 16, 2014 inspection) presented their findings.

Commissioner Padgett asked when the structure was built, and if there would be a permit on file to show that the stairway was allowed. Director Ward stated that he believes the rear structure was built in 2006 when the Appellant purchased the property and there would be a permit issued in 2006 for this. This was a routine housing inspection (inspections are done on a 3-year cycle).

Commissioner Lavery stated that all appeal-related documents in the packet, including the appeal letter from Mr. Howard, will enter into the record of this review. Commissioner Lavery once again asked if the Appellant was present before closed the hearing. A short deliberative meeting will be held after tonight's regular meeting to resolve the appeal.

ITEM 8 – NORTH AVENUE CORRIDOR STUDY

(Oral Communication, Nicole Losch, Bicycle/Pedestrian/Environmental Planner and Eleni Churchill, Senior Transportation Planning Engineer, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission/CCRPC)
(Refer to Commission packet)

Ms. Losch and Ms. Churchill presented a recap of the concept development and presented the final concepts they are recommending for the City's consideration to the Transportation Energy and Utilities Committee (TEUC) and City Council (input from the commissioners tonight will be included but opportunities for input continue and the recommendations can still be adjusted). The public meeting schedule has finished and the decision-making process will begin in August and September.

Mr. Van Driesch distributed a handout to the commissioners about the Advisory Committee's recommendations and the value of implementing them in the near-term rather than in the medium-term. Local Motion is supportive of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

Ms. Losch will e-mail the Commission when the location of the TEUC meeting on August 13th is set.

ITEM 9 – SIDEWALK SYSTEM FUNDING

(Oral Communication, Nicole Losch, Bicycle/Pedestrian/Environmental Planner)
(Refer to Commission packet)

In consideration of the time, Director Spencer offered to delay this discussion. He asked the Commission if there were any funding options *missing* for better stewarding the City's sidewalks. Director Spencer projected for the audience the short list of alternatives (Tax Increment Financing; Property Tax; Transferring Plowing to Adjacent Property Owners; General Obligation Bond; Gross Receipts Tax; and Ithaca District Assessment Model).

Commissioner Archambeau suggested the idea of returning the funding of the school crossing guards to the schools. Director Spencer replied that the funds not spent on the crossing guard program would be retained by the Traffic Division and DPW would need to find out if they had authorization to spend the traffic fund in that way.

Commissioner Overby suggested a "vanity sidewalk" idea (such as the "Hollywood Stars concept) whereas citizens would pay for a plaque or something on a sidewalk panel. She also inquired about other options to laying new sidewalk slabs (less stages?) or different materials (considerations which have already been explored in the past).

Commissioner Lavery asked if Director Spencer could contact a peer in the Ithaca area to ask what approaches other cities use to raise funds for a large sidewalk infrastructure refurbishment.

ITEM 9.5 - (formerly 5.50) Remove Two Stop Signs at Elmwood Avenue and Spring Street
Staff recommends that the Commission:

- Amend the current Stop sign locations to remove the Stop sign at the intersection of Elmwood Avenue and Spring Street, causing current traffic on Elmwood Avenue to stop, to be effectuated upon permanent closure of Spring Street between Elmwood Avenue and Walnut Street; and
- Amend the current Stop sign locations to remove the Stop sign at the intersection of Elmwood Avenue and Spring Street, causing current traffic on Spring Street to stop, to be effectuated upon permanent closure of Spring Street between Elmwood Avenue and Walnut Street.

Commissioner Padgett: We don't have a policy on mid-block crossings; we need one, and need to understand when, where and why they should be used, and pedestrians need to be educated on how to use mid-block crossings. Ms. Losch: There is general guidance on mid-block crossings in the Transportation Plan.

Commissioner Hopkins: Why are we making all of these changes around a bus stop, instead of just moving the bus stop?

Commissioner Lavery: Seems logical to consider moving the crosswalk. Suggests a motion be made to move the Stop signs and not put the crosswalk in at this time. Ms. Losch: Tonight's recommendation concerns only the removal of the Stop signs (the crosswalk was not on their list of recommendations).

Commissioner Overby: "Pennies for Parks" money was raised to put the heavily-trafficked path in as a paved path (in the small triangle park); one end of the footpath leads directly to a corner of the triangle at which there is no crosswalk.

Assistant Director Norm Baldwin: Staff has been researching policies pertaining to mid-block crossings with no results. One of the Engineering staff has left, creating a shortage.

Commissioner Alberry moved to accept staff recommendations (above); Commissioner Archambeau seconded. Unanimous.

ITEM 9.6 - (formerly 5.60) Communication on Wastewater Charges (Refer to Commission packet)
This is not an actionable item but information for the Commission to consider whether they want to make revisions to the current policy. Commissioner Padgett supports further consideration of revisions.

ITEM 10 – MINUTES OF MAY 21, 2014

Commissioner Archambeau moved to accept the minutes; Commissioner Alberry seconded.

Commissioner Barr abstained; the 6 other commissioners voted in favor.

ITEM 11 – DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Chapin Spencer, Director)

(Refer to Commission packet)

Consolidated collection (of trash, recycling and organics) will be added as a future agenda item. Director Spencer is the City's representative on the Board and has voted to continue the evaluation process because the concept continues to show potential benefit for the City. Commissioner Padgett has volunteered his service as a committee member and is awaiting to hear of his acceptance.

ITEM 12 – COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Archambeau:

- Sidewalk advertising update request; Director Spencer will get back to him.
- Interested in learning whether Champlain Clean-Up Plan will have an impact on the City's wastewater treatment plants. Director Spencer will get an answer for him on wastewater, as well as stormwater.
- Vermont Climate Assessment- Predicts more snow and rain in next 25 years. The City is aware of the aging infrastructure and the possibility of increasingly intense rain and snow events.

ITEM 13 – NEXT MEETING DATE & ADJOURNMENT

The next DPW Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 20, 2014 at 6:30pm.
(Commissioners Alberry and possibly Archambeau may not be in attendance at the August meeting.)

Commissioner Hopkins made a motion to move into a brief deliberative session (10:10pm) to discuss the appeal from Item 7, then immediately adjourn the regular meeting; Commissioner Padgett seconded. Unanimous.

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