Commissioners Present: Commissioner Barr, Commissioner Hogan (Chair), Commissioner Munteanu, Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco (Vice-Chair), Commissioner Overby

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Bose and Commissioner Kennedy

ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Hogan called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

ITEM 2 – AGENDA

Commissioner Barr made a motion to accept the agenda
Commissioner Munteanu seconded
Unanimous approval

ITEM 3 – PUBLIC FORUM

Maureen Frye was at the October meeting. She in for some follow up and supporting documentation in reference to the parking issue on Lakeside Avenue near her residence. She stated it is not as bad now that the weather has cooled off. I have a copy of a memorandum from John Caulo parking issue. He provided me with a letter that I can provide to you and to the Director so that you know his position on the seven spots on the south side of the street.
Commissioner Hogan stated that we would put this on file with our records. Is there anything else that you want to call out on item?
Mrs. Frye stated there was not she just wanted to give us a little bit of supporting documentation letting you know that I’m in communication with my neighbors and we’re looking to put together a group so that we can speak to you together if you would like that otherwise I know that Director Spencer is working on getting something done.

ITEM 4 – CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Draft Minutes 10-20-21
B. Queen City Park Road Yield Sign
C. N. Willard St at Brookes Ave Parking Removal – 1 space

Commissioner Munteanu made a motion to accept consent agenda
Commissioner Barr seconded
Director Spencer stated there was some suggested modifications to the minutes, so either the consent agenda should be adopted with Commissioner Overby’s modifications or we should remove it from consent and discuss.
Commissioner Hogan asked Commissioner Munteanu if he received the communication. Commissioner Munteanu stated he received the communion and made a motion to accept with the edited minutes of October meeting. Commissioner Barr seconded with the changes to the minutes. Unanimous approval.

ITEM 5 – Narrow Street – Catherine St and Charlotte St Parking Restrictions

Associate Engineer Madeline Suender stated that at last month’s Commissioner meeting with an overview and primed what we were going to do. We had a lot of feedback from the neighborhood as well as communications from you as commissioners speaking on their behalf and a lot of them had to do with traffic calming, concerns with taking parking away, and potentially allowing there to be speeding conditions that could come from that. We edited the recommendation to switch Caroline Street so it will flip from one side of the street to the other. We have vetted with our plow and maintenance operations Director as well as the fire department and we have heard some feedback. People concerned with parking being removed.

City Engineer Norm Baldwin stated that we have had quite a bit of internal conversation in the team about this particular street. There is a balance between trying to rest the issues of safety on a narrow street and then nonce we remove parking what does it do in terms of speed conditions. This street is 26 feet wide providing 8 feet for parking and 18 feet for travel, two direction travel. We do not believe it will cause a speed condition. We thought it would be reasonable to take control to take the approach of stopped controlled intersection, flip parking so there is room for people to transition with in that space under a controlled condition as opposed to no stop control. We are proposing something a little different than what staff put together.

Commissioner Barr I always tend to side with safety and public services. If it’s too narrow, who knows what we’re going to get for snow. I feel we need to consider this for public safety. I support staff’s recommendation.

Vice Chair O’Neill-Vivanco just to clarify so I understood correctly. I think this modification will at least begin to alleviate some concerns. The plowing works better for the plow to be able to access down the hill.

Assistant Director Perry stated all the plows make right hand turns. We would be coming off from Hayward, taking a right onto Catherine, going down Charlotte go back around up Catherine. Our plows are 13 to 15 feet wide. Going around the corner at that width at that angle extends,, even though there is 18 feet of travel there is still a chance that we’re going to have to pick a wing up just to make it around a parked car. If we can
get it with a big truck then we do not have to call our one-ton that plows all the dead-end roads and if we cannot fit through we have to call that truck off his route to clear the snow that we cannot clear. Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco stated that when that one-ton truck is called it could not come right down. Assistant Director Perry stated no not at all and it extends his plow route. Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco stated that in the correspondence that came today this is not a pilot this is a narrow streets policy and it will be enacted as such. What is the communication going to be like from the residents to Public Works as people go through the growing pains of this shift? Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco asked about the communication that came today this is not a pilot this is a narrow streets policy and it will be enacted as such. What is the communication going to be like from the residents to Public Works as folks go through the growing pains of this shift? Associate Engineer Suender communicated with the public and each of those times I have left my information, the front desk and customer service would push them to the tech services team. It will be case by case because we historically have not any complaints from the residents of streets that this one side parking has been on but if we hear a lot we can certainly reevaluate and discuss as needed. Commissioner Overby knows that we already worked on a policy for narrow streets throughout the city. I will support this proposed plan did I hear that there was going to be an additional stop control at the intersection there? I’m supporting this the way it is. Commissioner Hogan can you walk me through the plow route? Assistant Director Perry goes up to the map and shows the plow route. I appreciate the flexibility. This is a nice balance in the middle. Director Spencer stated that we are pleased to have on the zoom call Chief Locke from the Burlington Fire Department and Deputy Chief as well. If there is any interest in hearing from them, they are available to you. Chief Locke wants to thank the team for working on this. Obviously narrow streets at times are challenges for us so we appreciate the slow and methodical effort to address this and still work with the citizens. Thank you very much it’s Trina Bech I live at 77 Charlotte and we appreciate the work to limit parking on one side of the street because if there is a lot of snow and parking on both sides of the street the plow could not get through and we did not get our street plowed. Last year I could not get out of my driveway because of the number of cars parked on each side. Commissioner Hogan will bring it back to the commission. Commissioner Barr made a motion to accept. Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco seconded Unanimous approval

ITEM 6 – Resident Permit Parking – 5 year review

Director Spencer stated that we were pleased to embark on this process and gave you a briefing at last month’s meeting. This was a challenged process five years ago and the
number of changes that were significant and caused some concern. From what we have heard, especially from City Councilors who used to have to help residents with tickets say that there are fewer complaints and that is supported by our experience here. It doesn’t mean that there aren’t improvements that are needed and what you have in front of you tonight are revisions to a program that appears to be working.

Associate Engineer Maddie Suender explained that two changes that are coming out of this are the tweaks to the contractor permits and the other change is allowing language so that we can continue to look to a digital permit program.

City Engineer Philip Peterson stated that these changes are no functional changes they are more administrative changes than anything else. We are not changing the system we are streamlining the system and making the contractor system fairer for all contractors.

Commissioner Barr so when we use the term digital thought that could also be switched with virtual so is it a virtual permit? It is not something that is physically hung or put on a dashboard. Assistant Director Padgett stated the idea is that your credential is a computer somewhere, which is the same thing that happens when you park downtown somewhere, use a parking meter, and use park mobile. Commissioner Barr stated he thinks this is great and making it more convenient is great.

Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco asked if this was a potential, we are not there yet but can you communicate when we might be there yet. Assistant Director Padgett stated yes right now this is enable says that we can go from using a hard copy permitting process to a digital version. What that opens the door to using something like Park Mobile – we can actually use Park Mobile to manage this process. We can create a virtual permit in Park Mobile that the customer can manage their guests’ permits on line. We have much tighter control; there are many benefits to having that digital platform. If we use something like Park Mobile, which is a vendor that we use already for downtown, now we start heading towards a single platform for managing all of our parking. Having this enabling language allows us to explore what it really means to expand our use of Park Mobile. Right now, we cannot use Park Mobile according to ordinance. We have to use a sticker and hang tag. Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco questioned if this would happen overnight. What would be the processes for this to happen?

Assistant Director Padgett stated yes we would have to communicate with our entire resident parking people. There is front-end work that needs to happen. Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco in section k streets designated for resident parking at all times except between the hours between eight and five which non-residents shall not park a vehicle for a period longer than four hours. Does that mean I can park my car on that street for our hours and then I can move it half a block down on the same street for another four hours?
City Engineer Philip Peterson stated according to parking enforcement in order to park in a new spot, yes. I do not think we are making any proposals to change that. If we were going to make that change, we would be going from that administrative change that we’re making tonight to a functional change.

Commissioner Overby had e-mail communications with questions. You send me information but I am still not persuaded that the proposal for the contractor permits I do not understand how it is going to work. Assistant Director Padgett question is about a contractor gets a permit and that contractor drives in a resident only parking zone but they’re not working on somebody’s house. Is there an opportunity for abuse by the contractor who has a permit to just park anywhere in any resident zone. The reality is that is the way that the ordinance is set up right now. Two ways a contract can park in a resident only parking zone; put a logo on the side of their truck or they can come down here and buy permits. This is part of the reason that we revamped this is the likelihood of someone who does not have logos on it is going to be a startup contractor. Part of this program is creating a scenario where all contractors are created equal and you can go and park in resident parking only whenever and wherever you like. We are trying to create a little more structure to this and make it a little more fair across the board. Director Spencer stated to make it clear we have recommended change language the revised language here adds the permit shall only be used when the contractor is providing service to a resident on the street with resident only parking. Commissioner Overby stated the current thing we are getting rid of is a resident may request up to eight contractor permits valid for 30-day increments for construction purposes. Assistant Director Padgett said in the first paragraph it says no one shall park in a neighborhood unless they have a permit or they are identifiable while conducting delivery or performing a scheduled or requested service. That langue screws up this whole thing. Commissioner Overby stated so this has been abused, that’s what’s being abused and that’s what you’re getting around. Assistant Director Padgett stated it creates an uncomfortable position for everybody, creates confusion. So we caught this today as we were reviewing this is we forgot to strike this; we were going to ask in your motion to include striking in that sentence or service vehicles. Commissioner Overby stated that she was on the Public Works Commission when this was implemented and no way was that intended to be used for contractors. We very specifically wanted the contractors to use the one that they’re proposing to change. I didn’t understand that was being abused by contractors. Let me read what the proposal is which to me is not going to work. The language instead of the homeowner getting permit and give to the contractor. The new language is that a contractor providing services to a resident located on the street with resident only parking may request a permit valid for any and all designated resident parking street throughout the city. The cost shall be five dollars for one, one month permit, thirty dollars for a six
month permit or fifty dollars for a one year permit and then you’re statement of when the contractor is providing service to a residence on a street with resident only parking. The question that I had relating to that was what documentation does a contractor need to provide to establish entitlement to a contractor residential permit. Right now we have requirement for a homeowner to get a permit. You know your answer was there isn’t really isn’t any eligibility criteria in the ordinance. How is it anticipated that the contractor permits will be enforced to ensure that permits are only used when a contractor is providing service to a residence on a particular street. Your answer was this was going to be administered by Park Mobile.

Assistant Director Padgett stated Park Mobile is enforcing the parking we have no way of knowing if someone is there doing legitimate business. If our team starts to see like Summit Street is contractor row all day and every day we’ve got a problem. The bigger problem we have now is our process is a barrier for contractors on how hard it is for them to park legally in resident only parking and dealing with the permitting process. Commissioner Overby stated no license plate numbers will be used via Park Mobile so the enforcement, it sounds like there will not be enforcement except if there was abuse over the whole city. Is there a limit of contractor permits issued per firm? Your answer was no. I am just the answer I am hearing is the contractors are frustrated with dealing with the method that we have.

Assistant Director Padgett we are streamlining the process for them. If the contractor has a trailer they do not just get a $75 ticket they get $150 ticket. Commissioner Overby this to me is a concern where a contractor can park anywhere in a resident only parking. The Park Mobile thing I think the added future digital permitting without us actually knowing the contractual arrangements for the Park Mobile and the way they handle the license plate. I do have a concern as was communicated to all of us I cannot support that generic language in this proposed change.

Assistant Director Padgett stated we are going into this eyes wide open. We understand that we are maybe making things a little looser and there may be some unforeseen consequences. Digital permitting does not enable license plate reader technology. We take someone physical hang tag permit and put it in the computer. All we are asking for is the ability to do in the computer what we are now doing in hard copy. When we write someone a citation we are reading whether they comply whether they have paid through park mobile and tie into T2 and we figure out who the person is by connecting into the DMV. We are certified b the Criminal Justice Information system through the FBI. We are asking to take the digital permitting concept put it in RPP.

Commissioner Munteanu in five years do you visualize a medallion or are you looking to phase into the digital parking for the residents?
Assistant Director Padgett stated a digital process. We can do a hybrid approach in the meantime. If this is enabled, we could do the contractor parking in a digital permitting format and keep the current hangtag method going for the residents until the bugs are worked out. End goal to have a continuous platform across all of our parking.
Commissioner Hogan had a question about the institution of fees have those fees have the desired impact over subscription in some places?

City Engineer Philip Peterson stated the permits would just be handed out so that’s why we had the restrictions and that’s why we instituted a very modest fee. There is only 2 RPP streets where four hour parking to the public is allowed. No 4 hours parking allowed on every single RPP street; only two streets South Prospect and the south side of Bradley.

Barbara Hedrick Park Mobile being used downtown is a pay by app system isn’t enforcement still done by the parking enforcement personnel. The driver can pay remotely to extend their parking there. It was explained to me that this is going to replace the stickers and tags so when you buy a new car you don’t have the hassle of taking the old sticker off the car and putting it on your new car. The vision is that this is going to replace the stickers but it’s going to license plate readers there are so many issues with the license plate reader technology this is engagement issue not just an information issue I think the language on digital parking permit system should be removed from the text that you want to approve tonight but back up and start engage the public. Explain what you’re going to do and how you’re going to be responsible before asking us for authority and approval before going forward with something that we don’t know how you’re going to use it. The other thing I want to mention is the easier you make it for people to park on the street the more SOB driving you’re going to have, Commuter will come in and park on the street for free rather than taking a bus or using a park and ride from their remote town into Burlington. You should make parking on the street very difficult for commuters for residential area. Downtown yeah we want them to park on the street to shop.

City Engineer Philip Peter stated there is no functional change to the RPP.

AD Padgett stated when you do Park Mobile you choose to forfeit your name and your license plate number. We have a strong contract with them that ensures their data security. Park Mobile enforcement in RPP does not expose those people to, their personal data does not get exposed unless they are in violation.

Director Spencer what we’re prepared to do is if you all would like more time to discuss the mobile pay platform staff is fine to cut that out and do advance with just the contractors only permits.

Commissioner Barr we use it now on campus and have changed to a completely virtual permit system. Benefits we’ve saved money in not purchasing plastic hang tags and have also saved a lot of angst for our customers if they forget to put up their hang tag they get a citation for not displaying it. We have everything in our system as far as someone who is authorized to park on our campus, and visitors who come to campus use park mobile which notifies us that they have paid or not.
AD Padgett we do have a mobile pace concept that we are fleshing out and we see as enabling language to give us the confidence to move forward and we would certainly come to you. If we need to take it out tonight to move forward with the contractor that’s fine.

Commissioner Barr is making a motion to accept staff’s recommendation. Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco seconds

Commissioner Overby when you’re dealing with a private company who basically has other reasons for doing things besides just providing the service it’s a bit more of a challenge. Park Mobile is a private company and yes we are supposedly voluntarily giving their license plate in order to use it because there is no other choice. I would like to have this better explained to the city residents or if the commissioners are fine with it then that’s the vote. I do not think it’s a good idea without educating the people in this community about what’s happening with privatizing of services that the city wants to provide.

AD Padgett quick point of clarification. You mentioned that Park Mobile is the only way to pay in Burlington right now you can pay with coin, credit card or the app at all of our parking that we manage.

Commissioner Hogan stated this is an administrative change to allow some flexibility in how things are managed.

Commissioner Munteanu before any kind of digital permitting program is implemented for residential parking will that come back to the Commission or is this our only chance to give consent to this in our roles as commissioners.

Director Spencer with an expansion of either the existing mobile pay vendor or a new contract with another mobile pay vendor would need to go to the Board of Finance and City Council because it’s a contract. If approved with the language here my understanding is that the authorizing language is would then be an ordinance and then it is merely a contracting issue that would go to Board of Financing.

AD Padgett we need to also amend your motion to include the modification of the text in the clearly identifiable service vehicles strike the service and strike the schedule or required service so basically that sentence says delivery vehicles are allowed to come onto residential parking and park while they are doing their deliveries.

Commissioner Barr so if I’m reading it correctly and listening to you and since I made the motion what you’re suggesting is under appendix C Section 27a a clearly identification service or delivery vehicle while conducting a delivery or performing a scheduled or requested service and what you’re suggesting is to just strike the second half of that sentence.
AD Padgett strike the references to service
Commissioner Barr I’m ok with that strike
Commissioner Hogan item 3 a clearly identifiable service or delivery vehicle while conducting a delivery or performing a scheduled or requested service. And if I could restate what I am hearing as the suggested medication for this to read a clearly identifiable delivery vehicle while conducting a delivery.
AD Padgett correct. We made a lot of changes with this one.

Commissioner Barr my motion still stands with the amended language as stated previously.
Commissioner Hogan is the amended language friendly with the seconder
Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco it is
Commissioner Hogan this is an administrative change and I feel like if my car is parked illegally blocking a fire hydrant I would hope that vehicle would get a ticket and it would somehow eventually be traced back to me through digital means.
Commissioner Munteanu aye – Commissioner Barr – aye - Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco “aye” – Commissioner Overby “nay” – Commissioner Hogan “aye”

ITEM 7 – DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Director Spencer stated that we have 30 open position, 17 of which are for crossing guards, 13 seasonal and full time position as well. Part of the incentives are we have a hiring bonus, we are expanding on call program, and recycling drivers were reclassified to a Grade 14, which is the same grade as the street personnel. We have full support of AFSCME for this. This fundamentally is much stronger that currently exists in the ordinance.
We have an executed contract with our design engineering firm Stantec and we’ve already had a kick off meeting. We’ll be engaging the public in the coming weeks.
City Engineer Baldwin stated I don’t think people really understand now and are fearful of making use of that space but I hope now people understand that it’s available.

ITEM 8 – COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Overby sent document in relation to the shortage of jobs but there is a very interesting book by a guy Robert Ford Why Jobs Die and What to Do about It. There some ideas in there really worth considering.
Also WCAX did a story on the crossing guards and I am not aware if people know that they can do just morning or just afternoon shifts.

Commissioner Munteanu Main Street and University Heights was a great meeting on November 1st. It is clear at class changes how congested the intersection gets is at pedestrian capacity. What direction can the city go in to help this problem?
Commissioner O’Neill – Vivanco Recruiting crossing guards retired folks. How do we recruit for these positions? We have had some crossing guards that parents have known and trusted for years.

Commissioner Hogan – some crossing guards receive Valentines from the children. Leaf pick up why early? Information Officer Goulding stated the last few years have been a challenge of snow and ice. We have had snow the last couple years during this time. For water quality purpose want to get the leaves when they fall to help protect water systems. Leddy Park and Oakledge Park have been open for citizens to bring leaves to.

ITEM 9 – ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING DATE – DECEMBER 15, 2021

  Commissioner Barr made a motion to adjourn
  Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco seconded
  Unanimous approval