

PARKING BOARD
MINUTES
MARCH 7, 2016

A meeting of the Salem Parking Board was held on Monday, March 7, 2016 at 4:30 pm. at 120 Washington Street, Salem, MA. Present were Michael Caggiano, Elysia Alleman, J. P. Story and Rinus Oosthoek. Also present was Assistant Parking Director Alan Sullaway.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Oosthoek made a motion to approve the minutes of November 9, 2015. Ms. Alleman seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion so carried.

2. REQUEST BY NORTH SHORE CANCER WALK FOR FREE PARKING IN THE SOUTH HARBOR GARAGE ON JUNE 26, 2016

Mr. Caggiano read the request letter into the record. The request is for free parking from 6:30am to 12:30pm on the day of the walk, Sunday, June 26, 2016.

Mr. Oosthoek made a motion to approve the request by North Shore Cancer Walk for free parking in the South Harbor Garage on June 26, 2016 from 6:30am to 12:30pm. Ms. Alleman seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion so carried.

3. ZONE 1 PARKING PASS

Mr. Caggiano stated that for the Zone 1 parking passes, over the last couple years the City has issued 125 annually for \$25 per monthly pass for parking at designated spaces at Riley Plaza, the Starbucks lot and the strip by Dodge Street. Due to recent planned construction, up to 40 parking spaces have been lost. As a result the annual sale of monthly Zone 1 passes has been capped at 75. In doing so, there are certain times that the Riley Plaza area has been at capacity for Zone 1 parking. He stated that there are currently eleven free parking spaces on the east side of Riley Plaza. Those eleven spots have been considered unenforceable, free spots.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that he believed they were for the businesses, such as the insurance company, and Lifebridge.

Mr. Caggiano stated that he believed that post office employees get there first and use them all day. He noted that the only other metered section is closest to post office - thirteen spots of 1-hour meters. Closest to flagpole are three handicapped spots plus five other 1-hour meters. There is a total of 18 metered spots plus 11 spots of unzoned parking. He stated that there are persons who are upset because they were unable to buy their monthly pass, due to them being sold out. Mr. Caggiano provided photos taken today at noon, which showed several empty spaces. He suggested authorizing the Parking Director to increase the passes to be sold from 75 to 100 and somehow add the eleven free spots part of Zone 1, as well as eliminating some of the

unused meters and adding them to Zone 1, as well. He acknowledged that some of the Norman Street owners can park in Zone 1 as well.

Mr. Oosthoek asked if the city will be recreating the 40 lost spaces somewhere. He noted that there will be parking behind the new building and asked if some of those lost spaces are going to be recreated there.

Mr. Caggiano stated that he did not know and that this is part of the frustration of what the board has been dealing with for many years.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that he felt the Board should invite someone who knows and ask for the information.

Mr. Caggiano stated that if City can take away 40 spots, he felt the Parking Board should be able to put back some.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that the City also took the spots away on Congress Street. He stated that if you are an employee at Pickering Wharf, you cannot buy a \$25 pass, because then you have to park at Riley Plaza. He stated that we don't know what the plan is and suggested inviting the planning department or whoever is dealing with this.

Mr. Caggiano stated that the issue for constituents right now is that they once had the Zone 1 pass are now not able to park.

Mr. Oosthoek replied that he was in agreement, but that he felt that the Board should act based on data, not anecdotal information or pictures from one day use of Riley Plaza. He agreed the free ones are always filled, but that is by observation, not data.

Mr. Cagianno stated that the frustration with the Board is that it has an opportunity to fix something; but if we want to wait, the issue is not going to go away. He noted that people are upset because overnight 40 spaces for Zone 1 are eliminated.

Mr. Oosthoek made a motion to consider finding alternate spots to replace the lost spaces in Zone 1, to request data from the City and to invite someone from the Planning Department or otherwise to provide the data.

Mr. Story requested to table the motion in order to have more discussion.

There was no second.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that he strongly agreed that the Board should look for alternate spaces because there is a demand.

Mr. Caggiano stated that there was once a controversy around Steve's Market regarding the meters. Phone calls were made and City Hall realized that they needed to keep that short term parking. He stated that he feels this is a similar situation but in reverse, because 40 spaces are

lost and now people are reacting. He asked how many people have been turned away for monthly passes.

Mr. Sullaway replied that 30-50 people in total, although not all in the same month.

Mr. Caggiano stated that he agreed there are people who could collect data, including meter personnel. He noted that those eleven free spaces may have people who park there 24 hours. He stated that this effects 30 or 40 people and felt the board could do something about it. He noted that this lot has underutilization. He would like to increase the number of passes sold and utilize those free spots, questioning why those 11 park for free.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that he was in agreement. He stated that, while not for the 11 spots, he was afraid that if the board finds a solution for the northern part, the City will forget to think about what should happen with those lost parking spots.

Mr. Story asked if the spaces to the right of Starbucks where the construction is taking place are gone and never coming back.

Mr. Oosthoek replied in the affirmative. He stated that he believed that the discussion at the permitting meetings was that parking would be moved to the rear of building. However, there was no discussion if those would be Zone 1 spaces once the building is built.

Mr. Story asked the timeline for construction.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that demolition will be in May, and it will be 1 ½ -2 years before built.

Mr. Storey stated that there would be no solution for 2 years.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that the spaces on Congress Street could also be reinstated. He stated he did not mind as a first step to ask for more information.

Mr. Caggiano asked who would get it.

Mr. Oosthoek felt it should come from the Planning Department.

Mr. Storey asked, if the change is made to the Riley Plaza spaces, if Mr. Oosthoek's concern that the parking that was promised on the other side won't happen.

Mr. Oosthoek replied in the affirmative. He stated that he believed there is not enough Zone 1 availability, so if the 40 in front are moved to back of the new building and the Board proceeds, it will expand Zone 1 parking.

Mr. Storey asked why adding these spaces today is of concern.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that for the eleven on the left, he did not have a concern. He stated that he did not know the background about the rest and why they are one hour.

Mr. Caggiano believed originally they were 30 minute parking on the right for the post office.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that when the plan came along, the original plan was to be 4 hours, but it was somehow turned back to 1 hour.

Mr. Caggiano asked how many spaces are available in Zone1 and if it was just Riley Plaza.

Mr. Sullaway stated that only Zone 1 spaces are in the Riley Plaza area.

Mr. Caggiano asked if there were less than 75 spaces.

Mr. Sullaway replied in the negative. He noted that the Norman Street condo passes must be used there. He suggested using the eleven and maybe some of the meters, but leaving some for the Post Office, Steve's Market and Dunkin Donuts customers.

Mr. Caggiano suggested 18.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that it could be made as a temporary measure during construction of the new building.

Mr. Caggiano suggested that for the eleven spaces there be an easing in period for the first week or so, by putting a note on the windshield that the spaces are turning into Zone 1. If people complain like what happened with Steve's Market, then we can address it. Zone 1 was a good thing and it got significantly reduced due to the construction and now there are people who relied on it who are now getting parking tickets and increased cost of parking.

Mr. Oosthoek asked if there has been any day that people with passes couldn't park and complained.

Mr. Sullaway replied that it happens occasionally, particularly during October or when there is snow, not just snow emergencies.

Mr. Caggiano stated that the Zone 1 passes are a good deal and that maybe the City should charge more.

Mr. Oosthoek made a motion that during the period of construction of the Mill Hill hotel project, which is approximately two years, that we have a temporary measure to add 18 spaces from the current Riley Plaza configuration including the 11 free spaces and the 7 most southerly one hour metered spaces to become part of the monthly Zone 1 pass program.

Mr. Story seconded the motion.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that he would still like a representative from the Planning Department to come to a meeting.

Mr. Caggiano suggested amending the motion to include authorization for the Parking Director to increase the monthly pass sales limit from 75.

Mr. Sullaway suggested adding 20 for now.

Mr. Oosthoek amended his motion to include authorization to increase the monthly pass sales limit from current 75 to 95.

Mr. Story seconded the amendment; all were in favor and the motion so carried.

Mr. Caggiano stated the he or Alan will reach out to Lynn Duncan.

4. REPORT ON REVENUES

There was no report available.

5. ONGOING DISCUSSION REGARDING PARKING AND TRAFFIC BOARD CREATION

Mr. Caggiano stated that he had assumed that everyone had got the invitation for the City Council meeting, but apparently that was not so.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that he had his monthly meeting with the Mayor and was told that the City Council and the Mayor's office are still negotiating the language, particularly whether the City Council gets to veto or gets to approve whatever the new Commission proposes.

Mr. Caggiano asked if it is still in committee.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that he believed so.

Barry Neely, 15 Lynde St., stated that he felt the new commission will finally get some legs to do something. He stated that he has been hearing the frustration from members of this board about not being told anything or suggestions made not going anywhere. He stated that he hoped that people who have experience from this board get filtered in to the new Commission at least in the beginning and that it will not be just rookies. He stated that he could see the benefit of having a police officer. He stated that he feels getting enforcement is too difficult and that the way the ordinance is written, one has to go to the Treasurer's Office to get parking enforcement. He noted that the visitor pass issue has died in committee every time. The City Council does not want to touch it. He did not feel the new Commission was a slap in anybody's face on this board.

Mr. Caggiano stated that part of the restrictions the Board has are due to the when the ordinance was enacted to create this board. The responsibilities are to assist the Parking Director with lots and garages. There is no authority for on street parking. The board can suggest rates. The Commission was also a recommendation of the consultant's parking plan.

Mr. Neely stated that, as a Commission, it might be easier to get the right answers or get the ball rolling. He stated that he thinks it will be an improvement, because it will provide leverage.

Mr. Oosthoek suggested asking Sarah Stanton the status, even if it is by email. He stated the he was sure she or Dominick Pangallo would be willing.

Mr. Caggiano stated that she will be reached out to.

6. NEW/OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Oosthoek stated that with the new Passport parking app, you are supposed to be able to pay by phone for the 4 hour limit. He noted, however, two minutes later after expiration, you can renew for another 4 hours for the same spot, so can effectively pay for 8 hours. He stated that the software should prevent that; you are supposed to move and park somewhere else. He stated that someone can also renew the same space a few minutes after paying for the initial 4 hours.

Mr. Sullaway stated that he spoke to Matt Killen in IT, and they are having a phone conference with the application company tomorrow. One solution may prevent the application from allowing renewal for the first hour after expiration, which will give time for meter maids to come around and tag for being over 4 hours.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that you can also get around the maximum parking time by paying cash for first the first hours and then from the application, pay for the next 4 hours.

Mr. Caggiano stated that the application usage is tremendous.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that, apparently the police department does not really know that the pay by phone exists and that they do not have access to the data. He stated that someone needs to find a way to teach the officers. Mr. Oosthoek stated that he also has questions for Ms. Stanton about modernization and the construction.

Mr. Caggiano stated that this can also be put in an email.

Mr. Oosthoek questioned if all construction pass requests are always approved and asked the process.

Mr. Sullaway stated that each construction truck pays \$15 per day to tie up a meter. They usually only give up a couple meters for 4-5 days and they use common sense if multiple requests are received.

Mr. Neely stated that Newburyport asks for a picture of the vehicle to make sure the trucks are actually needed for construction, and are not just personal vehicles.

Mr. Sullaway stated that he thought that was a good idea.

Mr. Sullaway stated that he got an email today from Dominick Pangallo, regarding the kiosks that were moved from the Universal Steel lot to the MBTA lot. The City now wants to put a kiosk back in the Universal Steel lot. It initially had never gone to the City council to eliminate the kiosk, so they want to put to back at \$4 per day. Mr. Sullaway stated that he will be ordering another kiosk.

Mr. Neely stated that one thing that the neighborhood is screaming about is that badly they need the lot and they have been taking pictures showing it full. He asked if there is enough empty spaces in the MBTA garage to take all those cars. There is enough room at the MBTA to put every car that parks at the Universal Steel lot every day. He noted people are cheaper than they are lazy.

Mr. Sullaway stated that a kiosk will probably drive people to MBTA lot.

Mr. Caggiano suggested that the Parking Department have a twitter account, to announce lot closings, etc. and it can be called @salemparking.

Mr. Oosthoek stated that the City has a subscriber for which you can sign up.

Ms. Guy stated there are emergency alerts as well as Code Red.

Mr. Neely stated that the only way to enforce resident and visitor parking passes is with a sweep. He stated that he recently did a sweep and found that 55% of the cars on Lynde Street were visitor passes, and that most are in violation. He stated that the meter maids know it, but can't do anything about it. He stated that the Salem Police doesn't want to do anything about. He noted that Bonnie Celi does a good job with the stickers. He stated that the loophole in the law is the visitor pass, which is \$1 for two years.

Mr. Ooesthoek stated that it is visitor pass misuse.

Mr. Neely stated that the 10 streets between Washington and Derby are unbelievable. The closer to the business end, such as Hawthorne Hotel and bars on Derby Street you will see nothing but visitor passes.

Mr. Caggiano stated that during the parking review, this was the hardest part to find a solution.

Mr. Neely stated that the Ordinance says that the Parking Department shall enforce.

Mr. Sullaway stated that any person who gets a resident sticker can get two visitor passes.

Mr. Neely stated that you can get a visitor pass without a sticker if you don't have a car but show your lease. You can have multiple cars with only one registered car in Salem, and use the visitor pass as a parking pass. People also sell them for profit. He stated that he has seen actors on Lynde Street parking with visitor passes. There is no enforcement whatsoever. He stated that he does a sweep a few times a year and brings it to Bonnie, who then enforces, but that basically he is providing the enforcement. He stated that he knows of a lawyer with an apartment in the cllar

who put in their lease that the landlord had to get two visitor passes. He stated that when he did a sweep at 4:00am, he found 50% were visitor passes. They have been saying they will be taking up resident parking for two years. He stated that he felt the City should get rid of visitor passes or at least cut it down to one. He noted that this has gone to City Council twice and it died both times.

Mr. Caggiano stated that this board does not manage or enforce visitor passes.

Mr. Neely stated that the Ordinance says it is the Parking Department, but noted that they don't have the information. The information is at the Collector's Office. He stated that he would like to have the City Council look at it.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 4, 2016.

There being no further business, Mr. Oosthoek made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Alleman seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion so carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane A. Guy
Clerk