

City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire
CITYWIDE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEE MEETING
FEBRUARY 5, 2019
CITY HALL conference room A

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 by President Kathy Bergeron
In attendance: Kathy Bergeron, Rick Becksted, Kathleen Boduch, Chase Hagaman, Cliff Lazenby, Paul Mannle, Larry Cataldo (by phone), neighborhood reps and other residents. Absent: Kelly Weinstein (excused)

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING PILOT

The South End committee has withdrawn from the pilot, choosing not to pursue it at this time. The vote on the pilot has been tabled until February 19. Amendments for the Islington Street corridor are moving forward.

LARRY CATALDO—The issue of net Parking is likely to be dropped. However, the issue of employee parking in timed zones remains a problem. Their choices are use the parking garage (too expensive for some), park elsewhere (which might drive employees deeper into the neighborhood and cause other problems), or continuously move cars when the time limit (2-3 hours) expires. Employees need to get relief somehow. Parking permits will help residents and short term shoppers/customers. The City Council will have to deal with that dilemma by determining what the neighborhood wants and if the status quo is acceptable. Larry sees the pilot moving forward in his area. The next step will then be to get 75% approval from the neighborhood for it to be tried.

PARKING IN GENERAL

On March 25 there will be a work session meeting on parking principles throughout the city. It will be open to the public. It will focus on commercial rather than residential issues. After that follow-up steps will be considered.

What can CNC do?

Larry— there is a conflict here between residents and employees/businesses. We can attend those meetings and encourage our neighbors to pay attention, to advocate for the solutions that will best serve the neighborhoods. Not all the neighborhoods are in need, but for those that are the CNC's representation is important. The status quo is not sustainable. Employee parking has to be addressed. Cliff and Rick could get seats on that committee. Cliff feels they have to take a neutral stance, looking at all neighborhoods, to be effective.

Community input:

Beth Margeson: with no mass transit and a town environment, the neighborhoods are feeling the parking pressure. PPAF uses spaces on Water Street during their season but pays no fees for the section that has been closed for them. The area suffers from the parking loss. May 1-October 1 there is no extra parking in the South End.

Mary Lou McElwain: of the Parking/Traffic/Safety Committee said the city needs to work on packages for employees, including lots, the new garage, whatever. It also needs to enforce parking violations, e.g. trucks are all over.

Chase: the City report of 2012 needs to be looked at. Businesses need to address employee parking issues. A holistic approach, including residents and employees alike, needs to be encouraged.

Cliff: statistics are being kept regarding use of the new garage.

Kathy will attend the February 19th City Council meeting and will send out an email afterwards.

SOUND BARRIERS

The issue of noise abatement on the I-95 corridor has been discussed for over 30 years, but it is now moving toward resolution. In order to qualify for help Portsmouth had to change zoning and has applied to the State for DOT money/funding. A bill was enacted to increase registration fees to pay for the funding. Portsmouth has had to guarantee resources. It was hard to find funding but it is now available and included as part of the CIP. It will not affect just one neighborhood but the whole I-95 corridor and also routes 4 and 16 and the route 1 bypass.

Community input:

Christy Carduso: beyond funding, any neighborhood, e.g. Panaway Manor, had to pass qualifying tests determining whether decibel levels were above State standards.

A question: If a neighborhood has a noise problem and it has not been addressed, where can they seek relief. The City is the starting point. Eric Eby in the Department of Public Works is a good contact. City government can address the issue with the State Legislative Committee.

Recap

The Ward 2 Forum was held at the library. In attendance were CNC members and City officials. Several issues were raised and discussed: bike lanes on Middle Street, safety and lighting issues on Chevrolet Avenue, crosswalks on Islington Street, Rock Street Park design progress and improvement timing, the parking pilot, the Islington Street corridor improvement project.

NEW BUSINESS

Pedestrian safety

Tom Morgan presented a map of pedestrian mishaps on/near the Islington Street corridor. He discussed that the street is wider than most, leading to greater hazard in crossing all lanes. It is particularly wide at the Bartlett Street crossing. He would like the city to examine the plan and determine how the street will be viewed, as either a pedestrian street with safe crossings or as an out/in town thoroughfare. Speed is 30 mph on Islington and 20 mph in other parts of the city. As a result, people speed through it. He suggested 10' wide lanes vs. 12' widths and calming measures. Additionally, the neighborhood is watching the Borthwick Avenue development "like a hawk," to avoid "expansion without permission."

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORTS

Kathleen reported that a neighbor had used Click n Fix in reporting snow removal issues. They were taken care of. Other neighbors had called DPW regarding snow clogged intersections that made turning into streets hazardous. DPW cleared them.

THERE WERE NO FURTHER REPORTS

REMINDERS

2/11—brief Parking/Traffic/Safety Committee Meeting—work session and planning. No public comment.

2/19—City Council Meeting: vote on NPP

3/4—CIP public hearing

3/5—McIntyre Building development meeting with 3D models, interactive groups, small group discussions, in-depth follow-up. Levenson Room at the library

3/25—Parking Principles Meeting-6:30 Levenson Room at the library

Future meeting ideas

Recycling —facts, fiction, and the future

Plastic bag initiative

Area Volunteer opportunities

State Legislative update

Online town hall—involving those neighbors who cannot come to a meeting to be involved

There being no further business, Rick moved and Paul seconded a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Kathleen Boduch

Secretary