

MINUTES
PARKING AND TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – Thursday, September 12, 2013
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Ken Smith called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Councilor Ken Smith, Chair
John Bohenko, City Manager
Corey MacDonald, Deputy Police Chief
Carl Roediger, Asst. Fire Chief
Peter Rice, Public Works Director
Ronald Cypher, Member
Ted Gray, Member
Harold Whitehouse, Member

Member Absent:

Shari Donnermeyer, Member (Excused)

Staff Advisors Present:

Mark Nelson, Parking Division Director
Tom Cocchiaro, Parking Operations Supervisor
Juliet Walker, Transportation Planner

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Mr. Gray moved to accept the minutes of August 8, 2013, seconded by Assistant Chief Roediger. Motion passed.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mr. Cypher moved to accept the Financial Report and place on file, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse. Motion passed.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Discussion Item: Sharrows on Marcy Street

Transportation Planner Juliet Walker gave an update on the installation of sharrows on Daniel Street, State Street and Marcy Street. She stated the Public Works Department have been installing the sharrows on Daniel Street and State Street and are planning to add similar markings along Marcy Street in the near future as the Marcy Street Streetscape Improvement Projects nears completion. She stated that Marcy Street is part of the NH Seacoast Greenway and is also listed as a recommended bicycle route by NHDOT. She concluded stating that these sharrows are intended to reinforce that these are shared roadways and will also provide wayfinding guidance for bicyclists traveling along the designated route.

Mr. Whitehouse asked how this policy is designated. City Manager Bohenko stated it is not an ordinance but is a national federal standard which we are following similar to road lines, etc.

Public Works Director Rice stated that there is nothing being taken away from vehicles but this promotes safety for bicyclists which are also vehicles. City Manager Bohenko stated this is to alert people that the roadway is shared.

Mr. Whitehouse asked if bicyclists have to obey the same road rules as vehicles. Deputy Chief MacDonald stated that bicyclists do have to follow the same rules and need lights on at night etc. He stated the enforcement usually is regarding lane control, stop signs, etc.

Mr. Gray asked if they are required to ride single file. Transportation Planner Walker stated if there is room for them to safely ride 2 bikes side by side, then they are allowed to do so.

No action needed on this item.

B. Discussion Item: Speed Complaint from Clinton Street Residents

Parking Division Manager Nelson stated that there is a 20 mph speed limit sign on one end of the road and a children-at-play sign as well, but the neighbors feel that more is needed as people continue to speed on this road. He stated the Stealthstat will be set up to gather data in this area with a report back.

C. Discussion Item: Crosswalk on Parker Street

Parking Division Manager Nelson explained that the crosswalk has been installed to address the safety issue concern of a resident on Parker Street.

Chairman Smith asked if any parking spaces were lost. Parking Division Manager Nelson stated no spaces were removed.

D. Action Item: Driveway Permit – 244 Marcy

Mr. Gray stated a second site walk was conducted and the same concerns as expressed previously were found to exist.

Attorney Sharon Cuddy Somers stated she was asked by the owner of the property, Christopher Cronin, to address this issue on their behalf. She continued that the issues that were of concern the last time this was heard have been addressed by an engineer and there is a revised plan.

Alex Ross of Ross Engineering reviewed the handout of the map of the property showing the existing conditions and the proposed layout. He stated they are aware that an easement will be needed but have not yet obtained it pending approval. He reviewed the other revisions including; gas and electric meters for Lot 50 to be removed and relocated to allow for adequate width of driveway, shrubs to be removed to allow for adequate site distance, removal of existing concrete wall and install approximately 18' of granite curb, etc. He concluded by stating that they performed a test of the driveway configuration with

several various vehicles and found they were able to enter the site, turn around in the back parking area and exit.

Discussion ensued regarding issues that remain to be of concern to the committee members.

City Manager Bohenko asked when the owners purchased the property and are the residing in the house. Mr. Cronin stated it was purchased in June and they will not be living on the property. He stated that he was told that they would be able to put in a driveway.

Ms. Somers clarified they are not asking for restrictions on the types of cars allowed stating the test cars were for illustration purposes and feels the analysis stands on its own. She stated that this would be like any other property located on the South end, people would have vehicles that are appropriate for the area.

Mr. Gray moved to deny the amended driveway permit request for 244 Marcy Street, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse. Motion passed.

E. Action Item: Driveway Permit – 439 Islington

Public Works Director Rice explained that a site walk was held and it was the consensus that this request be granted. He stated that this request will require additional signage and extending the existing no parking an additional 180' to Dover Street. He stated we would be losing 6 parking spaces.

Public Works Director Rice moved to approve the driveway permit request for 439 Islington Street as a head-in, head-out turn around area onsite and eliminate on-street parking by extending current no parking zone an additional 180' to Chapter 7, Section 7.330 No Parking, Islington Street (e), seconded by Mr. Gray.

City Manager Bohenko asked when they purchased the property. Suzanne Spaulding, owner, replied that they purchased the property in June 2013. She further explained that this will be a rental property with two separate units and they will not be living at this address. City Manager Bohenko stated that this has become an issue that people are buying properties and then requesting these driveways after the fact. He stated that this should be explored prior to the purchase of the property.

Public Works Director Rice moved to table to further evaluate the impact on public parking and to address the process of coming to the committee after the purchase of property for exceptions, seconded by City Manager Bohenko.

Mr. Whitehouse stated that the recommendation of the committee after the site walk was to approve this request.

Ms. Spaulding stated she takes exception to Mr. Bohenko's objection and comments. City Manager Bohenko stated his comments were not meant to be personal but to address a larger issue. He stated he will withdraw his objections to the approval of this request. He stated he would like this Committee to discuss this issue at a future meeting as it affects property value as well as public parking.

Motion to table withdrawn.

Public Works Director Rice stated that the entire process of driveway permitting should be reviewed as a whole.

Deputy Chief MacDonald stated that he feels this particular driveway request and resulting additional no parking restrictions will make the area safer.

Motion to approve passed. (This Item is enacted as a temporary regulation and will be considered for inclusion in a future omnibus ordinance.)

F. Action Item: Request for 4-way Stop @ Bridge and Hanover Streets

Mr. Cypher stated a site walk was held and it is unclear if this area would meet the requirements of the warrants to add a 4-way stop.

Mr. Cypher moved to refer to the Works Department for a report back, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse. Motion passed.

G. Action Item: Loading Zones on Daniel Street near Memorial Bridge

Chairman Smith asked if there had been a request for this Loading zone. Parking Division Manager Nelson stated that it was brought to our attention by staff working in the area but he feels that more information is needed.

City Manager Bohenko moved to table for further review, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed.

H. Action Item: Valet License Agreement for Portwalk

Public Works Director Rice explained that the agreement had been received the day prior to this meeting and there had been no time to review it.

City Manager Bohenko stated that this has been an ongoing issue for several months and feels that we need to move forward.

Public Works Director Rice stated that he has briefly reviewed the agreement but wants the Legal Department to make sure the language is correct.

Tim Levine, Old Harbor LLC, representing 3 entities for valet parking on Portwalk, stated they have had several discussions regarding this agreement and feels that all of the requirements have been met.

Public Works Director Rice moved to refer to the Legal Department to finalize the review of the agreement and to authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement for a 90 day initial period, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse. Motion passed.

- I. Action Item: Leary Field Parking Lot **(This Item is enacted as a temporary regulation and will be considered for inclusion in a future omnibus ordinance.)**

Parking Division Manager Nelson explained that there had been a report of an abandoned vehicle on this lot which brought to his attention that this lot was not listed in the City ordinance.

Public Works Director Rice moved, seconded by Mr. Gray, to establish the existing Leary Field Parking area into Chapter 7, Section 7.402 as follows:

Leary Field Off-Street Parking Area:

The following area to be known as the Leary Field Off-Street Parking is hereby established for off-street parking of motor vehicles said area being more particularly bounded and described as follows:

The approximately 90' x 90' fenced dirt lot that is at the address 161 Rockland Street. The lot number of the property is 0129-0045-0000.

All of said area shall be used for off-street parking not to exceed 72 hours at any one time.

Motion passed.

- J. Action Item: Water Street regulation

Chairman Smith explained that this came from the City Council with Councilor Kennedy requesting handicapped parking at this location.

City Manager Bohenko stated we will need to speak to the Trustees to find out what type of parking etc. can be established at this location.

Mr. Gray moved to table for further review and report back of potential availability and usage of Water Street, seconded by Mr. Cypher. Motion passed.

- K. Action Item: 135 Gate Street – Request from Jane Nelson for Handicap Space

Mr. Whitehouse stated that a site walk was held at this location and it was determined that the need does exist for the requestor.

Mr. Whitehouse moved to approve the request for a handicap parking space at 135 Gate Street with the stipulation that there is a handicap placard or license plate on the requestor's vehicle and that it is non-transferable, seconded by Mr. Gray.

Chairman Smith stated he would also like a report back as to how these spaces are monitored administratively. Public Works Director Rice stated there is an annual evaluation conducted.

Motion passed.

L: Action Item: Atlantic Parking Services:

1. Request for Additional Valet Agreement for Portsmouth Music Hall
(There were no copies of the agreements available prior to the meeting)

Brian Slovenski of Atlantic Parking Services explained that they previously provided valet services for the Music Hall which was discontinued due to financial issues. Chairman Smith suggested that this be granted for a 90 day trial period.

City Manager Bohenko stated he has concerns with the narrow streets and doesn't feel that they will be able to stack the vehicles.

Mr. Slovenski explained that they had done this previously even in the winter with snow on the streets. He stated that there is an area within the Music Hall which people will wait for their cars to be brought forward.

City Manager Bohenko stated he is also concerned with the placement of A-frame signs at this time. He asked what is the timeline of beginning this service at the Music Hall. Mr. Slovenski stated as soon as possible.

Chairman Smith suggested a 30 day trial period.

City Manager Bohenko asked if there are any events in the 30 day period so that we can observe how this works out. Mr. Slovenski stated yes.

Pending review of the agreement by the Legal Department, Public Works Director Rice moved to grant the City Manager authority to execute agreement for a trial period of 30 days with stipulation that there be no sidewalk signs allowed at this time, and to be revisited at the October 10, 2013 Parking and Traffic Safety Committee meeting, seconded by City Manager Bohenko. Motion passed.

2. Renewal of Bow Street Valet Agreement

Brian Slovenski explained that they have rectified the previous issues at this location with new managers and a new group of parkers and feels there will be no more problems going forward.

City Manager Bohenko moved to extend the Bow Street Valet Agreement with Atlantic Parking Services through June 30, 2014, seconded by Mr. Cypher. Motion passed.

3. Proposed City Valet Program

Chairman Smith explained that this program has been suggested in several parking reports and feels that the conversation needs to be started. He stated there had been a valet service previously at 18 Congress Street that was not specific to any business. He requested that the feasibility of a City Valet Parking Program be researched administratively and would like Mr. Slovenski included in the conversation. He stated that his involvement would not mean that they would get the contract as there would be an RFP process.

Mr. Whitehouse asked if the current valet parking programs are working well. Mr. Slovenski replied yes and that they create approximately 130 extra spaces an evening and utilize otherwise unused private lots.

VI. OLD BUSINESS: NONE

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no speakers.

VIII. INFORMATIONAL:

- A. DPW replacing 40 single-space-coin-only meters on Russell and Market St w/ Pay & Display machines

Parking Division Manager Nelson reported that DPW is replacing 40 single space coin-only meters on Russell and Market Street with Pay and Display machines. He stated that almost all of the metered spaces have coin and credit card capability.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Whitehouse moved to adjourn at 9:25 a.m. Seconded by Mr. Cypher and voted unanimously.