



CITY OF CONCORD

New Hampshire's Main Street™

City Manager's Office

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Thomas J. Aspell, Jr.
City Manager

Parking Committee Minutes **April 26, 2021**

Attendees:

Byron Champlin, City Councilor, Parking Committee Chair
Linda Kenison, City Councilor
Nathan Fennessy, City Councilor
Brent Todd, City Councilor
Jim Bouley, Mayor

Staff:

Matt Walsh, Director of Redevelopment, Downtown Services, & Special Projects
Karen Hill, Transportation Engineer
Chip Chesley, General Services Director
Greg Taylor, Deputy Police Chief
Amanda Lombard, Fiscal Clerk Parking Division
David Florence, Parking Division Supervisor

The meeting was called to order by Councilor Champlin at 5:00PM.

Councilor Champlin read the Covid-19 public meeting procedures notice, which explained that, due to the Covid-19 "Coronavirus" Pandemic, and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, the Parking Committee is authorized to meet electronically. The City utilized the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting.

1. **Overview of Agenda:** Councilor Champlin provided an overview of the meeting agenda.
2. **Adoption of Minutes:** Councilor Fennessy moved to adopt the minutes from January 25, 2021. Councilor Kenison seconded the motion. The minutes were adopted on a unanimous roll call vote.
3. **Requests and Referrals:**
 - a. **Jackson Street (Franklin to Highland) request from Nathan Parker to establish Winter Parking Ban January 1st - March 15th:** Mr. Walsh provided an overview of this request. He explained that on-street parking on Jackson Street was evaluated in 2019/2020 as part of the Narrow Streets Project for the North Cemetery Neighborhood (i.e. Zone 4 of the Study Area). In accordance with public input received during that effort, the Parking Committee recommended that a Winter Parking Ban be established for Jackson Street between Tremont and Highland Streets. However, Ordinance #3064 approved by the City Council

on March 9, 2020 was in error as it only established a winter parking ban between Tremont and Franklin Streets. The error was discovered in February when the public contacted the City expressing concerns about on-street parking on the narrow streets during the winter months. Once the error was discovered, staff established a temporary Winter No Parking Zone. Like all winter parking ban zones, the temporary zone on this section of Jackson Street expired on March 15th.

Mr. Walsh asked the Parking Committee whether they wished to reaffirm their original recommendation to establish a winter parking ban annually, between January 1st and March 15th, on this section of Jackson Street. If so, staff would present the required Ordinance amendments to the City Council for approval prior to the upcoming winter season.

Discussion ensued. Several members spoke in favor of establishing a winter ban at this location. The Mayor also praised staff for installing the temporary no parking signs.

Motion: Councilor Kenison made a motion that an ordinance be prepared and submitted to City Council for public hearing to establish a winter no parking zone on Jackson Street between Franklin and Highland Streets. Councilor Todd seconded the motion. The motion carried on a unanimous roll call vote.

- b. Hoit Road: Request from Thomas Hopper to establish a No Parking Zone at corner near 210 Hoit Road and Tallant Road: The Parking Committee reviewed a request from Thomas Hopper to establish a no parking zone near 210 Hoit Road. Specifically, the no parking zone would be located on the south side of the road and extend for a distance of approximately 400' between 210 Hoit and Tallant Road.

Staff provided a brief overview and explained that the shoulder area on the south side of this section of Hoit Road was recently re-graded. Staff also explained that several delineator posts were installed along the edge of the roadway to deter vehicles from pulling off and parking.

Mr. Hopper attended the meeting and voiced his concerns. He praised the City's General Services Department and spoke in support of the recent road improvements at this location on Hoit Road. He noted that the newly installed delineator posts make it almost impossible for people to park on the south side of Hoit Road at that curve.

Fran Hopper then addressed the Parking Committee. She stated that the delineator posts were installed after her husband submitted his request to establish no parking at this location. She stated that the posts inhibit parking and, therefore, in her opinion, there is no need for the Committee to further consider this request.

Mr. Hopper then pivoted the discussion to his concerns about parking on the north side of the street along this section of Hoit Road. He stated that parking at this location, which is adjacent to a trailhead on private property, interferes with school buses. He stated that parking primarily occurs during hunting season. He requested that the City establish a no parking zone at this location as well. He also asked the City to consider regulating hunting near this property, and also suggested that the City consider reducing the speed limit on this area of Hoit Road.

Discussion ensued as to whether the City had used parking regulations to restrict hunting at conservation property. Staff responded that they were unaware of any such precedent.

Councilor Todd agreed that the concern for excessive speed should be looked into, although this is not within the Parking Committee's purview. He suggested that Mr. Hopper's concerns be referred to the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) to see if there are any appropriate measures that could be implemented to reduce speeds at this location. Councilor Todd also stated that if there are concerns about on-street parking at this location associated with the trail head, then any parking changes should be coordinated with the Conservation Commission. Councilor Todd discussed other locations where on-street parking near conservation lands were modified due to overcrowding at trail heads.

Karen Hill stated she did some research on the trail on the north side of the road. There is conservation land that abuts the private property on which the trail is located. However, this trail is posted as no public access on the City's trail maps. There is a gate at the trailhead that restricts motorized vehicles. Ms. Hill believes that the land is in current use and the public is allowed to access it but it is not an official City trail. Parkers accessing the trail are parking within the Hoit Road rights-of-way.

Mayor Bouley noted that speed is an issue on Hoit Road, as is truck traffic going between I-93 and Route 106. He supported having the issue referred to TPAC.

Motion: Councilor Champlin moved that Mr. Hopper's concerns about the speed limit on this section of Hoit Road be referred to the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC). Councilor Kenison seconded the motion. The motion carried on a unanimous roll call vote.

4. **Financials:**

- a. FY 2021 Year to Date Financial Statement: Mr. Walsh provided an overview of the Year-to-Date FY 2021 budget through March 31, 2021.
 - I. Revenues: Actual total revenues for FY 2021 through March 31, 2021 were \$1,671,784.40, or 54% of budget, and approximately \$396,9623 less than the same period in FY 2020.
 - II. Expenditures: Actual total expenditures for FY 2021 through March 31, 2021 were \$2,393,036.87, or 77% of budget. This figure is approximately \$248,858 more than the same period in FY 2020, primarily due to increases in debt service.
 - III. Gain/Loss: Through March 31, 2021, expenditures are outpacing revenues, and the Parking Fund is currently running a deficit of approximately \$721,252.

5. **Capital Improvement Projects Update:**

- a. School Street Parking Garage (CIP #433): Mr. Walsh stated that the School Street parking garage project is officially done and a final walk through is scheduled for April 27th. The

only outstanding items are cages which will be installed the stair tower alcoves later this spring.

Mr. Walsh also reported that neither Capital Plaza Concord, L.L.C. (a.k.a. the Duprey Company) nor PRM Holdings (a.k.a. Inex Properties) accepted the City's proposals to transition from leases to a permit system. Therefore, the City shall restore assigned lease spaces held by Capital Plaza Concord and PRM Holdings.

In accordance with the long-term lease agreements, Capital Plaza Concord and PRM Holdings shall be responsible for the prorated cost share of the \$5.8 million renovation project, which shall be invoiced to these parties annually over a 15 year period starting this fall. The annual payment will be approximately \$137,000, combined, which shall be in addition to base rent and taxes these parties pay for their lease spaces.

In accordance with the recommendations of the 2017 Strategic Parking Plan, all public leases controlled by the City shall be permanently transitioned to a permit program. The final reorganization of the garage shall occur in June.

- b. Storrs Street Parking Garage (CIP #529): Mr. Walsh reported that the City recently completed various improvements to the Storrs Street Parking Garage. Improvements included concrete and masonry repairs; replacement of all caulking, sealants, and membranes; installation of LED lighting; repainting structural steel in stair towers; elevator improvements; and installation of pigeon control devices. Excluding design, construction oversight, special inspections, and contingency, the available project budget for construction was \$825,000.

Bids were received on March 30, 2021. A total of three bids were received, which ranged from \$687,000 to \$1.373 million. Due diligence is being conducted on the low bidder to determine whether they meet minimum qualifications for the project. The project schedule will be determined once a contractor is selected.

Mr. Walsh also reported that like the School Street Garage renovations, the City will likely need to suspend assigned spaces and implement an interim permit program to facilitate the repairs and renovations.

6. Other Business:

- a. Metter Expansion Zone Subcommittee Update: Councilor Fennessy reported that the subcommittee held its initial meeting on April 23, 2021. The subcommittee consists of Councilor Fennessy, Councilor Kenison, and the Mayor. The initial meeting was attended by Councilors Fennessy and Kenison, as well as Matt Walsh and David Florence.

Councilor Fennessy stated that the subcommittee discussed a variety of potential ideas regarding the meter expansion zones. These included potential residential permits for dwellings located on newly metered streets, as well as adjacent time zone streets. The subcommittee also discussed the concept of a permit which could be sold to the general public and would be valid for certain 10 hour meter streets (including some in the meter expansion zone). A similar permit is sold by the City of Manchester for on-street parking in their Mill Yard District. However, it was noted that the location of permit areas must be

chosen carefully to avoid competition for leases and permits in the City's three municipal parking garages. The subcommittee also discussed the potential of discounting meter rates in some expansion areas, such as Storrs Street (south of Theatre) and Pleasant Street (west of Spring Street).

Councilor Fennessy noted that, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and prohibitions on in-person public meetings related thereto, the Parking Committee has been unable to complete its review of narrow streets within Zone 1 of the Narrow Streets Study Area (i.e. the Wall Street Neighborhood). He stated it was the subcommittee's preference to wait on making any adjustments to meter expansion areas until the Study is completed for Zone 1.

Discussion ensued. It was the general consensus of the Parking Committee to delay any changes to meter expansion areas until the Narrow Streets Study was completed for the Wall Street Neighborhood and the Covid-19 Pandemic (and parking related disruptions related thereto) subsides. Many members of the Parking Committee also spoke in support of trying innovative parking management strategies in select areas of the meter expansion zones.

The Mayor thanked the subcommittee for their report and suggested that the subcommittee consider removing meters in some areas of the expansion zones.

Following additional discussion, it was the consensus of the Parking Committee to delay further review of meter expansion areas until the Narrow Streets Study is completed for the Wall Street Neighborhood.

- b. Staffing Update: Mr. Walsh reported that Chris Perry, Parking Technician recently submitted his resignation. His last day will be April 30th 2021. Mr. Perry was responsible for maintenance and repair of parking kiosks and meters.

Mr. Perry's departure, coupled with the recent resignation of Parking Enforcement Officer Angela Christie, has afforded the City an opportunity to review a possible reorganization of parking field staff, whereby the duties of Parking Enforcement Officers and the Parking Technician would be combined into a single job description.

Mr. Walsh stated that this approach would be advantageous for the City, as cross training employees would allow for more efficient operations, as well as the opportunity to potentially reduce the number of field staff needed for operations. Currently, the City has 7.6 full-time equivalent positions for parking field operations (6 Parking Enforcement Officers and 1.6 Parking Technicians); however, only 3 positions are currently filled and only 5 are funded in FY 2022 due to financial challenges stemming from the Covid-19 Pandemic.

He also noted that cross trained staff would allow the City to no longer rely upon a single individual for these tasks, and could also potentially improve customer service. He also suggested that a potential reorganization could benefit employees, as well, as new skill sets and responsibilities could warrant additional compensation and changes to labor grades.

Discussion ensued. Mayor Bouley thanked Chris Perry for his years of service and spoke in support of the concept of reorganizing Parking Division field staff as presented by Mr. Walsh. After additional discussion, the Parking Committee expressed support for the proposal in concept. Mr. Walsh stated that a full proposal would be presented to the City Council shortly.

- c. May 24th Parking Committee Meeting: Conflict with City Finance Committee Meeting: Mr. Walsh stated that the next Parking Committee Meeting will conflict with the City's Finance Committee Meeting. The Committee agreed to have the next Parking Committee meeting set for June 28th.

Potential agenda items include a request from Interchange Development L.L.C. (Laurie and David Rauseo) to modify and expand a no parking zone on Whitney Road. Specifically, Interchange Development is concerned about inappropriate activities within the public rights-of-way associated with rubbish trucks hauling materials to the Wheelabrator Waste to Energy Facility, which abuts their property.

- d. St. Mary's Bank Parking Request: Mr. Walsh briefly discussed a request from St. Mary's Bank asking the Parking Committee to examine options for managing on-street parking near 204-208 North Main Street. He stated that this request might be formally presented at the Parking Committee's June 28th meeting.

Mr. Walsh reported that this property is currently home to the Gas Lighter Restaurant. St. Mary's Bank is planning to acquire the property in order to develop a new bank branch. However, due to the size of the lot, it is unlikely St. Mary's can achieve sufficient supply of parking on-site. Therefore, the Bank has contacted the City about options for employee parking. Specifically, the Bank has suggested creating a 10 hour meter zone near 204-208 North Main Street, or a permit program for on-street parking spaces in the vicinity thereof. Mr. Walsh reported that City Administration suggested to St. Mary's that their request might be premature, and that it might be appropriate for the Parking Committee to take up this request once St. Mary's undergoes the City's development permitting process.

Discussion ensued. Several members of the Parking Committee expressed concerns about the proliferation of banks and financial institutions on ground floors of buildings within the Downtown Area, and potential negative impacts to downtown vitality associated therewith. It was also noted that 10 hour metered parking is available on Court Street and North State Street, both of which are a short walk from 204-208 North State Street. After additional discussion, it was the consensus of the Parking Committee to take up this request once St. Mary's Bank proceeds with the development permitting process.

- e. West Street No Parking Zone: Councilor Kenison asked about the newly created No Parking Zone on the south side of West Street near the South State Street intersection. She suggested adding additional signage to better inform the public of the regulations, or potentially pavement markings. Mr. Walsh stated that signage recently installed at this area had been vandalized. He stated that he is currently working with General Services on various alternatives, including potential pavement markings. Mr. Walsh stated that, anecdotally, it is a handful of repeat offenders that are violating the ordinance and that the Parking Division is working to improve overnight enforcement of the area.

7. **Adjourned:** Mayor Bouley moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Fennessy seconded. The meeting adjourned at 6:53 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Lombard
Parking Division Fiscal Tech III