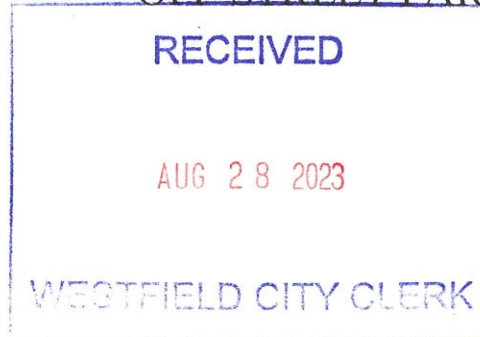


*City of Westfield, Massachusetts*  
OFF-STREET PARKING

Elli Myer, Chair  
Joseph Golio  
Ken Gustafson  
Bridget Matthews-Kane,  
Council Liaison



CITY HALL  
59 COURT STREET  
WESTFIELD, MA 01085  
413-572-6246

OFF-STREET PARKING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING  
Wednesday, May 3, 2023  
Municipal Building  
59 Court Street, Westfield, MA  
Room 315-A 6:00 PM

MINUTES

Commissioner Joseph Golio called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Commissioner Golio and Commissioner Gustafson were present. Also in attendance were Community Development Director, Peter Miller and City Counselor, Bridget Matthews-Kane.

Community Development Director, Peter Miller introduced the new Commissioner Ken Gustafson to the Commission. He added that Commissioner Joseph Golio is now the senior member of the Off Street Parking Commission. Commissioner Gustafson was welcomed by all.

The Commission introduced themselves and the positions they hold.

Commissioner Gustafson stated the following:

- Westfield Native
- Graduated from Westfield High School in 1983
- Was in the military for 21 years
- Worked in Homeland Security in Yuma, Arizona and El Paso, Texas
- Opened Chrissy G's bakery with his wife
- Repairs guitars and amplifiers



Commissioner Golio stated the following:

- Westfield Native for 45 years
- Owned a business in Downtown, Crazy Moon, for 25 years.
- Was a Vice President for Community Development Corporation
- Currently works for Bureau of Labor Statistics covering Westfield

The next Off Street Parking Commission meeting was confirmed for June 21, 2023 at 6:00 PM.

A motion made by Commissioner Gustafson, seconded and unanimously VOTED to approve the minutes for the February 15, 2023 meeting.

### **REGULAR MEETING:**

Peter Miller stated the following about the Elm Street/Gravel lot Update:

- The Construction Company has begun to mobilize on the Elm Street Plaza Project.
- Since the last meeting, Community Development has advertised, awarded and given a notice to proceed with their Contractor of choice, Jack Goncalves & Sons Inc. from Ludlow.
- The bids were place into three alternates.
- Base bid was the construction of the green space.
- Second alternative was the reconstruction of the parking lot.
- Third alternative was the reconstruction of the back portion of the parking lot, paving, stripping, etc.
- All three alternates of the project were approved during the bidding process.
- Right now the names for the project are Newsberry Plaza or Elm Street Plaza.
- The project is a long term temporary solution to a 35 year problem.
- The primary purpose of the project is to attract the public to the Downtown area and cleaning up the look of the entire block.
- Construction is set to begin Monday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- Had several pre-construction meetings to maintain the ability to use as much of the parcel as possible through construction because the public relies on the lot for overflow parking.
- Asked for weekly construction reports to update the public through downtown email database and/or flyers.
- Currently there are two challenges, struggling to procure materials, and in the middle of evaluation of the lighting for the site.
- City Ordinance now requires that the light fixture be downward facing not upward facing. The challenge is to find something downward facing but still historic looking.
- The goal is to have to the Plaza open by the end of summer.

Commissioner Gustafson asked if there is a plan on the website. Peter stated that he had not had the chance to upload it but will send him the plan.



Peter Miller stated the following about Food Trucks:

- Trying to formulate the right policies for Food Trucks.
- Wants to be ready for when the Plaza will be open so that there can be a policy for Food Trucks.
- Some of the concerns from local restaurants are about cleanliness, availability of seating and bathrooms, especially on weekends.
- During the day the PVTA is open for restrooms.
- The Community Development will not be proposing public bathrooms due to maintaining them appropriately.
- Vlad's Pizza has moved to River Walk lot while Elm Street is under construction.
- Will provide a more formal presentation for Food Trucks at the next meeting.

Peter Miller stated the following about the Spring Maintenance Update:

- Mulching quote for spring clean-up is \$18,000.
- There is a balance of \$50,000 in the Off Street Maintenance Account.
- When the City sells \$10 parking permits, those funds go to Off Street Maintenance Fund.
- Off Street Maintenance Funds are used for trash removals, weeding costs, etc.
- Snow plowing fees does not come out of the Off Street Funds but is paid by the Department of Public Works.
- The City collects around \$25,000 per year on parking permits.
- Plumley Landscaping has done landscaping for the City in the past.
- Plumley Landscaping is on the state contract and they've already been prequalified as a vendor.
- Will try to determine how often weeding of the lots need to be done.
- Monthly costs for lot maintenances ranges from \$250-\$275.

Council Liaison Bridget Matthews-Kane questioned who sets the fees for the parking permits. Peter stated currently the permits are \$10 per month and \$100 for the year. He added that they are set by the board and fees have been the same for the past 10 years. Peter expressed that there is no reason to raise the price for the permits when there are plenty of lots of available for the public to park.

Commissioner Gustafson observed that a lot of people are unaware of the parking lots, that people are paying attention to traffic and do not look around. Peter explained that is an ongoing issue that they've been trying to resolve so they've put up a Way Finder signage on Elm Street. He went on to state that the City also put signages on storefront windows to get the public aware of what parking lots are accessible in the area.

Peter wondered if there is ever a good time to raise the fees and how much would be appropriate. Council Liaison Bridget Matthews-Kane stated that it is best practice to have the fees cover the costs of maintaining the lots.

Commissioner Gustafson questioned if the Elm lot will be a free parking space area for the public and if the workers can park there during the week.



Peter stated that the lots around the restaurants do not allow for sticker parking and only allowed for a two hour limit for a quick in and out. These lots are the Reader 1, behind Two River Burrito lot, backside of the Hanger and Main Street lot, behind the Tavern.

To name a few, Peter Miller stated that Reader 3 lot, Thomas Street 60t, Franklin Street lot, Depot Square lot, River Walk lots are all open to permitted parking, and up to 3 hours without a sticker. He added that the new lot would allow both stickered parking and 3 hour free parking without a sticker. Peter Miller stated that the lots are routinely checked by a hired parking personnel that checks for parking stickers on all the lots.

Peter Miller stated the following about Amelia Park Children's Museum, Whip City Brewfest:

- Vote to approve Amelia Park Children's Museum wants to occupy the Central Parking lot for Whip City Brew Fest for June 2<sup>nd</sup> – June 4<sup>th</sup>
- They've received their Licensing from the License Commission and other necessary Licenses.
- They've done their Brewfest on Central Parking lot in the past for the past two years and it worked really well for them.
- Prior to Central Parking lot, they've done them in the Westfield News Parking lot, and since that has been under a different owner, they are unable to do it there.
- License Agreement for Amelia Park Children's Museum is attached in the packet.
- At this time, there is no fee for the lot to encourage people to use these lots for things other than parking on certain circumstances.
- Asked the Commission to allow for him to proceed into signing the License Agreement with Amelia Park Children's Museum.

Upon motion of Commissioner Golio, and seconded and unanimously VOTED to APPROVE the License to allow Amelia Park Children's Museum, Inc., to occupy the Central Street Parking lot on weekend of June 2<sup>nd</sup> – June 4<sup>th</sup> for the Whip City Brew Fest.

Peter Miller stated the following about Jack Symmons Hot Dog and Sausage Cart:

- Vote to approve Jack Symmons to occupy the Reader lot or other parking lot locations to conduct a food cart operation.
- Jack owns a Barber Shop, on Church Street Commons.
- Wants to get into Hot Dog and sausage cart business, the traditional push cart.
- Jack Symmons is excited to bring the Hot Dog cart into the Downtown Area.
- Is working on putting together a License Agreement for Jack Symmons to allow him to use other lots with the Commissions permission.
- Planning to put him in an alleyway between Church Street lot and Elm Street.
- Jack Symmons would need all the appropriate licenses from the Health Department.

Commissioner Gustafson asked if Jack Symmons has a timeframe of when he wants to set up his cart. Peter stated that the Licensee would like to have his cart every day during lunch time.





Commissioner Golio asked if there should be a committed hours of operation written down to which time he was going to have his cart out. Peter Miller agreed to have that on the agreement like they have set for other Food Trucks.

Commissioner Gustafson asked if the Commission controls the menu items at this time. Peter Miller said the Health Department would be the one issuing the Food Class Licenses, inspections, and regulate menu items and its requirements.

Commissioner Golio asked if the Commission can control the Food Category to which Peter Miller replied that they could include it to avoid future Conflict of Interest with other establishments.

Upon motion of Commissioner Golio, and seconded and unanimously VOTED to APPROVE Jack Symmons to occupy the Reader lot or other parking lot locations to conduct a food cart operation.

Peter Miller stated the following:

- Vote to Approve License to Allow Amber Champagne-Matos to occupy Reader 3 lot on Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, Friday July 14<sup>th</sup>, and Friday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, to conduct commerce and business activities.
- The owner for Champagne Apothecary, Amber Champagne-Matos, was present to represent her application.

Amber Champagne-Matos stated the following:

- Head of Westfield Merchants Association
- Asking for Reader 3 lot to set up a Food Truck for 3 Friday nights in the summer.
- This would be beneficial to Downtown with more foot traffic to the local shops on the School Streets.
- Would like to set up by 11:00 AM then from NOON until evening, 6:00 PM.
- Artworks would also be part of the event as a tandem from both Westfield Merchants Association and Artworks.

Peter Miller stated the following:

- Loves the idea and stated that's what he wants these type of events at the new lot.
- Offered the hours from 9:00 AM – 9:00 PM as a bumper time just so they could clear out the lot more smoothly and have the parking lot available for people to park overnight if needed.
- License Agreement will conduct series of One Day Open Festivals that will include Retail Commerce, Food Services and Musical Entertainment.
- A great way for Reader lot to be used in the summer time.
- Will probably not close down School Street out of respect to other local business.

The Commissioners all agreed that having the food trucks at these type of events would bring foot traffic to the Downtown shops and noted that they work great for both the food trucks and the people because Food Trucks are so in demand.




Upon motion of Commissioner Golio, and seconded and unanimously VOTED to APPROVE to Allow Amber Champagne-Matos to occupy the Reader 3 lot on Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, Friday July 14<sup>th</sup>, and Friday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, to conduct commerce and business activities.

**ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS**

1. Approval of monthly bills.
  - a. A motion was made by Commissioner Golio, and unanimously VOTED to approve the monthly regular and revolving bills as submitted.

With no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Golio to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 PM.

  
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Elli Myer, Chair

6/21/23  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved

