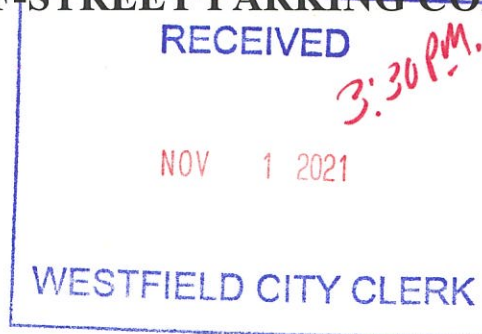


Eli Meyer, Chr
Joseph Golio
John Regan
Bridget Matthews-
Kane, Council Liaison

City of Westfield, Massachusetts ~~OFF-STREET PARKING COMMISSION~~



CITY HALL
59 COURT STREET
WESTFIELD, MA 01085
413-572-6202 x2

OFF STREET PARKING COMMISSION MEETING
Wednesday, July 28, 2021, 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Meeting convened at 7:00 PM

Chairman Meyer, Commissioner Regan, and Commissioner Golio were present.

The next Off Street Parking Commission meeting was confirmed for August 25, 2021, at 7:00 PM

Commission introduced themselves and position they held. New Commissioner, Joseph Golio introduced himself to Commission and shared a little of his background. He has been a resident of Westfield for over 35 years and was a Store Manager with Ames Department store, Owner of Crazy Moon in Westfield and South Hadley. Vice President of the Community Development Corporation for downtown Westfield. More recent, worked for Spirit of Halloween and helped bring the store to Westfield. He currently works for Bureau of Labor Statistics covering the Springfield and Westfield area. He has always been involved with Westfield. He was welcomed by all.

A motion was made by Chairman John Regan, seconded and unanimously VOTED to approve the minutes for the June 16, 2021, meeting.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Bridget Matthews-Kane, Ward 3 City Councilor and Off Street Parking Commission Council Liaison brought forth few issues:

1. Concerns with the old Soo's parking lot, people have been parking there.
2. Reported to her that there was major flooding in the lower part of the old Newberry's lot now known as Gravel lot. Someone sent a picture with the car door open and the water close to entering vehicle. Now they are nervous if there is a flood watch, they don't want to park in that lot and then worried if they park on street they would be issued a ticket.

Peter agreed there was probably flooding in the lot that day, he drove through town and there was flooding on just about every street and it was not just parking lots. Enforcement will not take place during hazardous weather conditions. Office Manager, Kim Sienkiewicz stated that there has never been flooding issues in the past. Westfield Redevelopment Authority owns the parking lot and allows us to use it. They have issued a Request for Interest (RFI) offering the land at the Gravel Lot for sale/development. The RFI was published July 21, 2021 and responses are due on September 15, 2021. Chairman Meyer stated that DPW has been going into lot and milling lot and it has been a lot better.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Peter stated that this is the first time in the last five years that the Off Street Parking Commission has had a full board. Originally we started as a seven member board. Council was petitioned and approved us to go to a three member board. We have been running with two board members and now are happy to have three. Tough time getting quorums.

Responsibilities are moving back to Parking & Licensing Department that were bifurcated. The parking permit sales were handled by Community Development and Licensing handled parking violations and with the departure of a staff member in Community Development it made a lot more sense to consolidate everything back in the Parking and Licensing Department much more customer service accessible. They sell dump stickers, business licenses, health licenses, they are used to having heavy traffic in their office. In the past, it has worked out extremely well with all parking issues handled in the Licensing Office. Kim Sienkiewicz has been involved with this department since she started 18 years and she comes not only with knowledge but a real passion for the lots and that is certainly something that has been lacking over the course of the past few years is someone who is really understands it and takes an interest in it and willing to do it. Lisa has been selling the permits and loves the customers.

Peter Miller took on a Semi-major project to go out and take pictures of lots to show where we are right now. Mostly because he wants to show a year from now that we have made major improvements to we are starting from the bottom and we are looking forward to putting a plan in place to where we can be proud of our lots and they contribute to what we hope is a more convenient and more estecially pleasing downtown. We pick I drive by them every day but when you get out of your car and look at them they are really bad, We are putting together a maintenance plan for the lots we are looking to put out for quote for fall under \$50,000 which is the state limit for competitive bid. We are required to go out and ask and receive 3 quotes from qualified vendors to respond to our scope of services with a price proposal and with that point we are generally required to go with the lowest bid for those services. We are hoping to do something in the \$15,000 – 20,000 annual neighborhood. That is what we are going to build our scope of services. Each lot will require a different level of effort, but the goal is for the lots to be clean I order to present a more attractive image for downtown businesses.

Asking vendors to do:

Spot liter removal

Remove debris leaves, branches, weeding, cleaning out flower pots that have been filled with all sorts of things.

General things that make the lots if you go through Thomas Street branches with wind storm

Goal is to have someone who is in lots preferably once or twice a week to check and clean up

We are expecting that once we get through our big overhaul big first go through that it shouldn't be the heavy lift. ? There are a lot of planting beds that need to be torn out.

Edging curbing, getting rid of weeds growing in between the curbing.

That is part of the scope of services. We will put together a specific scope of service that deals with each individual lot and the thought Kim and I were talking today and will put together a checklist for each lot and ask them to price out each lot and then they will go through and make the priorities clear as to what we want done first

Most visible vs most utilized and how to attack each lot. We are starting from scratch.

Kim and Peter will put together checklist for each lot and have them price out each lot and then review and make priorities to which lot needs the most attention.

Kim will talk to Purchaser junk in parking lots should be on this quote but Kim doesn't think that's right where we did them separately, Not maintenance just clean up, She is on vacation right now.

At this time of the meeting, Peter Miller handed out a color copy of his presentation for reference and presented a slide show to the commission showing & discussing in detail the existing condition of each of the Municipal Lots:

1. Depot Square
2. Riverwalk
3. Railroad Avenue
4. Franklin Street
5. Reader Lots & Gravel Lot
6. Central Street
7. Thomas Street
8. Main Street

Peter indicated that he is proposing to use Off-Street Revolving Fund revenues for this effort. We collect approximately \$20,000 a year. We have been as high as \$25,000 and as low as \$17,000. We have a balance of about \$39,000 so on a rolling basis we have the ability to spend down. We don't need to spend all \$39,000, we would like to keep it at \$8,000 to \$10,000 in case something big comes up. Kim indicated that we should always leave \$9,000 for start of the new fiscal year. We do have the ability to spend it down. If we have the need to address the fees, we could. We could also go ask for general fund money if we had too, but we don't have to do that now. The maintenance plan would use funds from the revolving account from permit sales.

A lot of planting beds that need to be torn out and replaced figure out if we are going to pull things out, mulch or DPW can put in cobble stone islands try to figure out how

Bridget Kane-Matthews mentioned she would love to put trees along Central Street lot. Issue is have to commit to water them for two years. She has Tree for every location. They are all free once you prep area.

Every time Garten came in to dump the trash, he would also maintain the lot. Patrolled the lots two times a week on a non-scheduled clean-up for non-trash and they then would go in and do the weeding during trash times too.

Franklin Street lot snow—

Peter is working with the IT department to put cameras in Franklin lot to identify illegal dumpers. DPW is paying about \$400 every six weeks or so to remove all the junk that has been dumped in the dumpster coral. SNOW (?)

5 or 6 years since flowers were planted. Used as barrier

DPW has piles of cobblestone things rather than have planting beds. We have pervious soil in downtown as we possible can so we are trying to balance into between hardscape and soft scape Jay Vinsky who is passionate about these things is going to assist Peter with these things.

After presentation, updates

Westfield State University will be back in September.

Peter indicated a request has been made by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to allow for their mobile vaccination-mobile to utilize Gravel Lot to set up their operation for one or two days in August and September. Schedule is to be determined and there is sufficient space and visibility in lot. Will keep board updated. 2nd shot is September 1st, August 11th 1st shot Elm street visible for citizens to come in and get their vaccine.

Commissioner Meyer asked the question about, "selling a spot for Food trucks" in one of our lots. Wickedly wild waffles called at one point expressed some interest. Peter asked commission how aggressive we want to be they add something to downtown and PJ all for new diverse offerings but he doesn't feel we should have a debate on

Kim indicated that we have a few mobile food regulations are strict on how far they can be from brick & motor building. There is a whole ordinance on that can't jump the hoop and talk with Law Department. We tried once before and law shut it down for now until there is a real ask we will just try to steer them to more private property. Bridget Kane-Matthews asked if City Hall was trying to bring Mayor has an initiative for Friday's. Kim indicated that we have had no interest, but Health Department doesn't want to issue license since they have had issues with that particular food truck in the past. Vendors have indicated that if there is not enough interest

Health Department sign an agreement no one wants to come in. Worth their while. Ice cream truck NO Interest.

Peter indicated that Myers Information Systems staff is returning in late July. They have purchased their required permits and will be using primarily the Franklin Street lot with overflow in the Gravel lot.

The WhipCity Brewfest is scheduled for Saturday, August 28th. They have been licensed to use the Central Street Lot beginning at 12 midnight on August 27th. Peter will reach out to the Courthouse Square Apartments and the Westfield Police Department to let them know that the lot will not be available from 12 midnight on August 27th through Sunday, August 29th at 12 noon.

Downtown development, Lambson Square (the old Lambson Furniture/Bentley Billiards) CPC just gave them \$100,000 additional funds for the project. They will be going in front of city council to get more money. Front of their building is starting to look like things are happening.

Peter continues to field calls from investors interested in redeveloping the former Bank of America building. Commissioner Meyer asked how much they were asking for the building. Peter Miller indicated \$500,000. He stated that it would seem to be super easy to sell building if Bank America would agree to relocate their ATM machine bound by the community investment act to stay in that census track to find another location remain in that location. Nothing is imminent. They won't agree. Eli asked Is the safe still in building? Yes

Santander Bank is set to close in late August. We will be watching closely to determine whether that re-use will impact our parking demand.

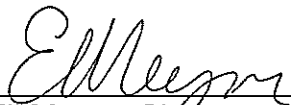
The Columbia Greenway Rail Trail is set for a fall 2021 completion. It is anticipated there will be interest/movement on development of a new off-street lot at the northern terminus of the trail near the Great River Bridge, Southside side.

Peter stated that he is working with the Engineering department Purchasing office has put a bid out for capital needs and for off street parking is putting is 1. formalizing gravel lot squaring off where bus station is and have it paved and turned into an actual lot. 2.. Figuring River Front and the Soo's lot whether or not we decide to keep that and turn into an off street parking lot or widening effort on Emery Street so that people know that would be the entrance to the back section where GE property that's behind Whip City Whip factory. Curb cut in front of the angles don't work. Discussion..????? Pave it as a municipal lot sign it as a widen Emery Capital Ask to accommodate

Westfield State University will not return to Landsdown, their lease has expired so 75 onsite but there were 120 that lived there. Overflow was money came from for so many years
Eli asked what happening with Falcone Properties owns building and have started renovations looking at it as market rate apartments. No subsidies.

A motion was made by Commissioner Meyer, seconded and unanimously VOTED to approve the monthly bills as presented.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:26 PM.


Eli Meyer, Chairman _____ Approved:

