

Parking Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes: July 13, 2010

Members Present: Tammy Mattson, Arnie Bockus (filling in for Tony DeCarlo), Bill Austin, Judy Eagleson, Craig Hammond, Linda Berry-Maraist, Dale Rudolph, Jeff Bauman (Chair)

Members Absent: Julie Krucek, Angela Bennink, Sally Kvam, Rick Cadwell

Staff Present: Alyse Nelson, Michael Bateman

Others Present: Janetmarie Valeja, Dan Hudson, Thomas Mengert, Loretta Sluys, Chad Solvie

Update Since Prior Meeting:

Michael Bateman reported that Kitsap Transit is in the process of moving their bus stop in order to accommodate additional on-street parking along the west side of Jensen adjacent to the Bank of America. Once the relocation of the bus stop is complete, Public Works staff will stripe the pavement for 5 additional parking spaces.

Continued Discussion of Downtown Parking Garage:

The focus of this evening's meeting was to translate the 10-year vision of a downtown parking garage into specific steps needed in Year 1 to accomplish this goal. Jeff Bauman suggested that a necessary first step is to get beyond the public misperception that it is solely the City's responsibility to construct and pay for a parking garage. Jeff invited the Committee to talk about how other organizations, property owners, businesses and individuals should participate in such a project. The following list of parking garage users/beneficiaries was noted:

- The City of Poulsbo

- The Port of Poulsbo

- HDPA

- Sons of Norway

- Martha and Mary

- Nearby churches to the extent their events might benefit from expanded public parking

- Downtown property owners (distinguishing between those who have already paid LID assessments for downtown parking versus those who have not)

- Future development that would benefit from downtown parking

- Users of a "piazza" that could potentially replace parking at Anderson Parkway

 - Such users might include the Farmers Market; tourism industry; day excursions in conjunction with the casino; a convention facility; others.

- Commercial parking interests (e.g., Diamond Parking, etc.)

- Users of the parking spaces (i.e., paid parking)

Jeff noted that at our previous meeting we generated an impressive list of potential funding mechanisms, and tonight we've identified an impressive list of potential partners. How do we move from brainstorming to committed participation? From the ensuing discussion, one approach would be to have an objective evaluation of users/beneficiaries and come up with a way to allocate costs accordingly. Another approach would be to rely on voluntary participation/commitments. Another approach would be to have one party front end the cost and be reimbursed over time. No conclusions were reached in this regard, but a couple of downtown business owners indicated they would be willing to have a portion of their HDPAs allocated toward parking in lieu of some of the other programs offered through HDPAs. Arnie Bockus mentioned that the Port has contacted the Mayor with preliminary thoughts of trading the Port's Armory Building for the City's police station. The Port would then consider developing a parking facility at the old police station site.

With benefit of all these thoughts, we returned to the challenge of identifying specific steps to be taken during the coming year if we are to have a downtown parking garage operational within 10 years. The following categories were identified:

- Initiate a structured planning effort.
Clarify who would use/benefit from such parking; establish site and design parameters; develop a financial plan; etc. This also requires an entity willing to take the lead role to coordinate these activities and managing the project over time.
- Initiate fund raising.
Potential sources include fines generated from parking enforcement; paid parking after the initial 3 or 4-hour free parking; a parking area for pre-paid employee parking; revive LID assessments for properties that have not yet paid for their share of existing parking; reallocate a portion of HDPAs dues for this purpose; establish a "fee in lieu of parking" mechanism for new development/redevelopment in the downtown area; seek grants; etc.
- Include parking and one-way street options in traffic modeling.
The City currently utilized a computer model to project traffic impacts of various transportation alternatives. The suggestion here is to see how parking lot options in conjunction with proposals for one-way streets would impact traffic flow in the downtown area.
- Retain a rectangular site for a parking garage at the current City Hall/King Olav location.
If the current City Hall property is sold in its current configuration it would reduce the efficiency and increase the cost of building a multi-level parking structure in this location. Some mechanism needs to be found to "make the City whole" financially if a portion of the current City Hall site is taken off the market.

- Better define/quantify the need.

The 2008 report indicated that parking capacity was exceeded only for brief portions of the day. Subsequent to that report, additional parking has been provided along Front Street. In the near future, more parking will be available along Jensen. And the new City Hall includes additional parking, particularly for evening and weekend use. How much additional parking is needed - - for whom - - and during what days/hours?

- Hire a grant writer.

At this meeting we did not have time to further discuss these ideas or reach consensus. We decided to think these things over and at a future meeting see if we can hone them into recommendations for the Committee's eventual report to the City Council.

Other:

Throughout the evening's discussion, the following points were also raised:

- Rather than a parking garage in downtown Poulsbo, an alternative would be to have parking at locations such as Viking Way (or at the old Town & Country Market location on 305 at Hostmark) with convenient shuttle service to downtown. This would enable prime downtown real estate to be used for higher uses, with parking located where land is less expensive and easier to develop for parking.
- Perhaps we don't need a large parking garage. We might be well served by adding a small parking area at one end of downtown (capturing motorists coming from the south) and another small parking area at the other end of downtown (capturing motorists coming from the north).
- Port Orchard is apparently partnering to seek funding for a downtown parking lot. How are they approaching this, and are there lessons we can learn?
- We shouldn't forget that one element of funding a parking garage could be donated services. An example was given regarding excavation services offered for a parking garage at the current City Hall/King Olav site.
- A parking garage needn't be an all-or-nothing affair. There are ways to proceed in phases or modules which make it easier to pay as you go.

Next Steps:

The next Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, July 27th, at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. There was Committee consensus that the July 13th meeting should be devoted to continued discussion of how to efficiently utilize the existing inventory of downtown parking spaces, and the associated role of enforcement. Kathleen Barrantes will also be invited to give her views regarding potential grant support for a downtown parking garage.