

## **PARKING ADVISORY PANEL MEETING**

The PARKING ADVISORY PANEL (PAP) met on Tuesday, July 19, 2022, at 3:30 p.m. as a virtual Zoom meeting.

The meeting was opened by the Chair, Joan Fenton. The meeting was opened with Danny Yoder and Jake Mooney in attendance. City staff in attendance were Rick Siebert and Chris Engel.

Based on a lack of a quorum the Panel was unable to approve the prior meeting's minutes and the Chair indicated that no official business could be done.

The members present did, however, talk informally about the lack of meeting attendance. Fenton suggested that perhaps there is a better time for the meetings. Mooney did not think the time of the meeting was an issue. Yoder agreed and suggest instead that issues simply come up at the last minute that might preclude an individual's attendance. Fenton asked that staff prepare a spreadsheet that documented attendance. Further, she suggested that is if the issue was one or two individuals that the other members talk to them about whether they really want to participate. If individuals were identified who did not usually attend the meetings, the Panel could ask for them to be removed and replaced. She brought up Jamelle Bouie as a possible example. Mooney said Bouie is highly engaged in these issues and he was reluctant to discuss this without Jamelle having an opportunity to respond. Siebert agreed to provide the requested spreadsheet to all the members before the next meeting. Mooney and Fenton continued to discuss the issue. Fenton said she brought this issue up to simply suggest this may not be the ideal time for the meeting and she simply wanted to try to accommodate everyone's needs. Mooney suggested that perhaps what should be discussed is "what are we doing here?" He went on to say that in his opinion parking policy was being made without Panel input, so just how important is this Panel?

Fenton asked that the Panel move on to an explanation of the purchase of the parking lot at 921 E. Jefferson Street. Engel provided a synopsis of the reasoning behind the purchase that mirrored his public testimony to Council before the purchase. He also explained that the city had not brought up the issue before this Panel in advance because of the need to keep negotiations confidential until the purchase was assured or cancelled. He indicated that was a standard past practice for many years for all property purchases and its aim was to try to obtain the best price for the city. Mooney said that, in his opinion, the spending of \$1.5M by the city on a parking lot was not the best use of the city resources when there are so many other un or under-funded priorities. This led him to again say that the lack of consultation with the Panel put into question whether it is really worth anyone's time. Yoder said he essentially agreed with Mooney regarding the question of the purpose of the Panel. He did say he would be interested in having discussions with city staff regarding the long-term parking policy of the city with special interest in issues of supply and demand and city employee parking.

Yoder went on to ask what the status was of discussion between the city and county regarding meeting the city obligation to provided county court parking since that seemed to have played a role in the decision to buy the Jefferson Street property. Engel reminded everyone of the two options that are the prerogative of the county based on the city's breach of the court parking agreement. He indicated that the new land was not purchased because of this agreement but did provide the city additional options in its negotiation with the county. He further said the city is

trying to present options to the county other than those specifically described in the agreement to better meet the needs of the court parkers and the public in general. Fenton suggest the city could simply move city employee parkers out of the Market St Garage and into the Water St Garage to make room for the county court parkers.

From here the discussion moved from the purchase of the new lot to what tools are available to move parking demand from the Market St Garage to the Water St Garage. Yoder reiterated that this seemed to be at the core of any solution to parking supply issues downtown. Siebert did not disagree with that analysis but suggested that actually moving people from where they had habitually parked to any other location was, in his experience, very difficult. A number of strategies were suggested by the Panel members including: creating a dramatic price difference between the two garages and eliminating the employee subsidy for the Market St Garage. Again, Siebert questioned whether these strategies really move people or simply annoy them. Yoder reminded the Panel that Transportation Demand Management (TDM) was a strategy recommended in the last parking study. He then acknowledged that the Parking Division is not charged with responsibility for TDM, but he suggested that such a program may be necessary. Siebert said that, in his experience, TDM was less effective than some have suggested. Yoder said that even incremental change would help and Siebert acknowledged that. Fenton returned to the recommendation to eliminate the parking subsidy at the Market St Garage for city employees. Mooney said he agreed with that recommendation.

Mike Rodi joined the meeting at 3:40 PM. Mooney then brought the fact that the Water St Garage is a perfectly adequate place to park although it is further from city hall.

Based on the fact that there was now a quorum, Fenton returned the meeting to the original agenda and the draft minutes of the last two meetings were approved by unanimous consent of the members present.

Siebert then provided a summary of the planned operations for the new garage. He said it is planned to be operated in exactly the same manner as the 7<sup>th</sup> St Lot. For the right price, Mooney suggested there may be an ability to market to S&P Global employees, although he acknowledged that many employees are still teleworking most of the time.

Rodi returned to the subject of why many do not want to park at Water St. He brought up the difficulty of access based on the street network. Siebert suggested that it could have been better designed and the design should have included a primary entrance/exit on Water St. Rodi suggested that better street wayfinding could help. There was then a discussion of the limitations of the city sign code in being able to add more effective signage. Fenton suggested coordination on possible sign code changes with the new Friends group. Siebert promised to do so.

Fenton asked for public comment and there was none.

It was then decided that the next two meetings would be on Sept 20<sup>th</sup> and Nov 18<sup>th</sup>. Outlook meeting invites to save the date would be sent right away. One agenda item would be a discussion of the purpose of the Panel.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.

