

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

Parking and Traffic Committee  
April 22, 2010

The Parking and Traffic Committee met in formal session at 8:30 a.m., Thursday, April 22, 2010 in The Alcazar Conference Room, City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Len Weeks and the following were present:

**1. Roll Call:** Len Weeks, Chairperson  
Richard Pinto, Historic St. Augustine Area Council Representative  
Ken Russom, Flagler College Representative  
Gerry Dixon  
Jannette Berk  
Phil Moan

**Absent:** Susan Burk, Vice Chairperson

**City Staff:** Ron Brown, City Attorney  
John Regan, Chief Operations Officer  
Darlene Kirkland, Recording Secretary  
Elizabeth Carter, Temporary Recording Secretary

---

**2. Approval of Minutes**

**The minutes of the March 25, 2010 Parking and Traffic Committee Meeting were approved as presented.**

Mr. Russom wished to have it noted in the minutes that Sevilla Street was also a concern regarding the one-way traffic congestion related to the horse drawn carriage routes.

**3. Discussion regarding Horse Drawn Carriage Routes**

Mr. Brown stated that a resolution had been adopted in 2005 allowing the City Commission to determine the routes for horse drawn carriages and a workshop would be scheduled in May for the Commission to discuss the related issues.

Mr. Brown presented a map that outlined the horse drawn carriage route. He indicated that in addition to the bayfront, there was an additional starting point at the City Marina that was not utilized.

Discussion continued on the carriage routes and the impact on traffic, particularly where it related to narrow one way streets and Flagler College.

A question was raised on pedestrian traffic congestion, and Mr. Russom indicated that was not an issue.

Ms. Berk asked if accident data was available, and she was advised by Mr. Regan that a report had been compiled for a traffic study grant, which he would bring to the next meeting. He believed however, that over a three year period approximately 20 accidents had been documented at Avenida Menendez and Charlotte Street.

Mr. Regan advised that the City had recently been approved for a Federal Transit Agency grant. He explained that the grant would specifically address vehicles (including carriages and trolley trains) and pedestrian movement along Avenida Menendez, Orange Street, Castillo Drive and the Bayfront. He also advised that the City was waiting to hear about a \$5,000,000 grant to rebuild the seawall. He indicated

that the City was ready to build the new seawall system that would span from the marina to the National Guard. He added that two bicyclist's deaths factored prominently in the consideration for approval of the grant and infrastructures were being designed to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Mr. Brown continued his presentation on the horse drawn carriage routes and pointed out a concern with King Street. He stated that the current route kept the carriages off the major traffic areas. He suggested that a start point would be Orange Street. He pointed out how reversing the route would create issues with one way streets.

Ms. Berk stated that specific target sites should be included on the map.

Mr. Russom addressed Sevilla Street and said that without a street light the horse drawn carriages had difficulty getting onto King Street.

Mr. Dixon engaged a brainstorming discussion on alternate routes to avoid King Street while still allowing the best views of historical landmarks such as:

- Flagler College
- The Oldest House
- Casa Monica
- The Churches
- The Fort

Mr. Regan reminded the Committee that there were ways to reroute street directions and he suggested:

- Right hand turn movements in a dedicated lane as previously suggested
- Change direction and flow of St. George Street at Bridge Street
- Remove on-street parking and make St. George Street a two-way street from Bridge Street north
- From Bridge Street, turn right on to St. George Street

- From St. George Street, turn left on to Palm Row
- From Palm Row, turn right on to Cordova Street
- Turn left in front of City Hall (tour train drop off) to Granada Street
- Remove on-street parking on Granada Street and make it a two lane road
- Turn right on to Granada Street to a combined intersection designed for pedestrian crossing and carriage right-of-way and a lighting system similar to that used on state roads in South Florida
- Carriages could turn left at the intersection and travel a short distance to Sevilla Street
- Turn right on Sevilla Street and change the direction and flow which would put them back on their loop

Mr. Regan indicated that the proposed route minimized travel time on King Street from Granada Street to Sevilla Street and a system could be created that allowed the integration of the carriage onto the travel lane through a right-of-way concept similar to that used for pedestrians.

Mr. Weeks questioned the ability to make St. George Street two-lanes and confirmed that all of the on-street parking would have to be removed.

A brief discussion followed on ideas for eliminating on-street parking and how to facilitate the matter.

Mr. Regan proposed an additional idea that would redesign the carriage business model with routes that ran north and south of King Street. He suggested that a cost-elasticity study could be performed to analyze any impact on ticket pricing, and he suggested that alternative ticket packages could be offered to offset monetary loss.

Mr. Regan made a third suggestion of providing carriages a dedicated lane for

travel, but the plan would remove on-street parking in certain areas.

Ms. Berk suggested allowing on-street parking during certain hours. She felt a more detailed map showing the right-of-way and road space and attractions would allow the Committee to make a better assessment of the recommendations.

Mr. Weeks urged that a replacement parking plan be developed before parking was removed considering parking was an issue for the City.

Mr. Regan stated that King Street and Avenida Menendez had the most critical problems that should be addressed first due to safety concerns.

Mr. Brown summarized the key points of the discussion as follows:

- Avenida Menendez – A safety concern and most critical street to address – A dedicated lane on the street would be preferred
- King Street – Had traffic flow interference and recommendations included the reroute of carriages to avoid the street or the development of alternative solutions to avoid congested areas

Mr. Pinto recommended that the carriages be limited during peak traffic hours and eliminate carriages during rush hour traffic.

Mr. Regan proposed an additional option to minimize traffic issues on King Street. He said the carriages could stay with the counterclockwise route and he offered the following changes:

From King Street:

- Turn right on Granada
- Turn left on the brick system in front of the Lightner
- Turn right on Cordova
- Turn left on Palm Row

- Turn right on St. George Street and go to Bridge Street

Mr. Regan pointed out that the route would eliminate carriages on Aviles Street, but quickly moved the carriages out of the traffic light cycle.

After a brief discussion it was determined that an updated map that included street direction, right-of-way routes, parking and key sites would be presented at a future meeting.

Mr. Regan also suggested that design criteria be adopted for staff to work with. Some suggested design criteria included:

- Minimize travel time on King Street
- Time each street segment
- Impact to traffic
- Times of day

Mr. Weeks opened the meeting to public comments.

Kim Drozd, The Kadie Group, Inc., suggested that input from the carriage companies would be beneficial, and it was pointed out that the carriage companies would be included in the Commission Workshop.

#### **4. Other Business**

##### **Riberia Street Project:**

Mr. Regan indicated that the City was scheduled to begin construction in August or September. He said a detailed maintenance and traffic plan had been developed involving the removal of on-street parking in areas with higher travel counts. He added that he did not believe the Committee had ever been briefed on the plan, and he suggested a presentation to detail how the engineering team had approached the traffic planning issues.

### **LED Lighting Project:**

Mr. Regan advised the Committee that Staff had not been successful obtaining grant money for the LED project. He stated that the City Commission had authorized staff to move forward to self-fund the system based on a two-three year payback plan, however, a new grant had been discovered and new opportunities were currently being explored. He concluded that the project would not move forward until the City knew if they qualified for funding.

### **Department of Energy Grant:**

Mr. Regan reported that the City would be launching a complete system analysis of energy conservation including street re-lighting as it prepared for the Department of Energy's next grant stream scheduled for late 2010. He advised that the topic might be a consideration for the committee in late summer. He concluded that LED lighting in the garage would enhance crime prevention.

Mr. Russom noted that crimes had been reported in the garage and on route to the college in the past; however, no crimes had been reported in 2010.

### **Parking Spaces:**

Mr. Weeks expressed concern that private property was being used for parking lots. He indicated that many of the properties were scheduled for development and once that happened, the parking would be eliminated. He asked if a current survey or map of all parking spaces in the City was available for review, and he suggested developing a plan to address possible future parking loss and replacement solutions.

Following a brief discussion it was determined that the parking garage was the solution to parking issues, however, in addition to the garage, transportation to shuttle visitors to the southern part of the City should be addressed.

Mr. Regan stated that it had been approximately 5 years since the last parking inventory. He advised that a map was created identifying all available parking lots and spaces, as well as the loss rate through the years. He suggested that for the next meeting, the Committee put together a current map identifying the following:

- Number of spaces
- Current garage usage
- What was at risk
- What was public
- What was private
- Plans for future spaces
- What was under a 30-day lease
- What was under a 1-year lease

Following an informal discussion concerning parking issues the floor was opened to public comment.

Kim Drozd indicated that she had received calls concerning parking availability and had directed them to the parking garage. She said that based on the volume of calls there was an interest in a shuttle system moving visitors downtown, and she suggested a limited, weekend basis.

Allen Drozd added that he would be interested in hearing more information on the parking study.

Following a brief discussion on parking studies conducted over the years, and having no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjournment.

### **5. Next scheduled meeting – May 27, 2010**

So acknowledged.

### **6. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Transcribed by Elizabeth Carter

