

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA
Parking and Traffic Committee
January 28, 2010

The Parking and Traffic Committee met in formal session at 8:36 a.m., Thursday, January 28, 2010 in the Alcazar Conference Room, City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Len Weeks, Chairperson and the following were present:

1. Roll Call Len Weeks, Chairperson
Susan Burk, Vice Chairperson
Richard Pinto, Historic St. Augustine Area Council Representative
Ken Russom, Flagler College Representative
Phil Moan
Jeannette Berk

Absent: Jerry Dixon (Excused)

City Staff: John Regan, Chief Operations Officer
Ron Brown, City Attorney
Mark Litzinger, Comptroller
Carly Mason, Recording Secretary

2. Approval of Minutes



The minutes of the October 22, 2009, Parking and Traffic Committee Meeting were approved as presented.

Ken Russom noted that since the October meeting the college had purchased 500 parking passes.

3.(a) Presentation from Mark Litzinger, Comptroller regarding the amount of parking from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Mark Litzinger, City Comptroller, said the City would incur a yearly loss of \$100,000 if parking was free from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Ms. Berk said she was not in favor of changing the time. She said it was not a matter of money; however, she felt that policies should be consistent.

Mr. Pinto said he noticed a decrease in downtown traffic over the past 20 years

Ms. Berk suggested a parking decal system for locals for free parking from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Moan said he concurred with the policy being consistent.

3.(b) Discussion regarding data collection

Mr. Litzinger presented the committee with a data collection sheet regarding the number of utilized parking spaces. He said the Tolomato parking lot would not warrant additional meters, because the lot had not reached full capacity. He said additional parking spaces were available in the parking garage.

Mr. Weeks felt that additional meters would allow people time for a quick lunch or shopping trip.

Mr. Pinto said he would like to see data related to how often the nine handicap spaces were used.

Mr. Weeks asked that the nine handicap spaces be monitored for the next month and

a report be presented at the subsequent meeting.

Mr. Litzinger replied that he would provide the requested data at the next meeting. He said a letter would be sent out to notify people that exited the Tolomato lot after midnight that they could incur a charge of \$7.50.

Ms. Berk suggested offering a trolley service to encourage use of the parking garage. She said the frequency, visual aspect, cost and operation hours would be taken into account.

Mr. Weeks said the parking shuttle had not worked in the past; however, considering the increased parking costs, people might utilize the shuttle.

Mr. Regan said the previous parking shuttle had been funded by the City with yearly cost of \$300,000. He said Cathy Brown, from the Council on Aging had offered to assist the City, and he noted that the shuttle funding would be 90% federal and 10% local funding.

Mr. Weeks noted that Jeannette Berk would research different shuttle ideas and bring the ideas to the committee.

4. Other Business

Mr. Regan addressed the Aviles Street project and a new parking lot that would be located in West Augustine. His points relate to Aviles Street were as follows:

- Plan developed between the City and business owners
- Social Responsibility for street repairs
- Friendly pedestrian movement to create a positive flow
- Urban design principles were integrated into the project
- Outdoor dining to encourage economic revival

- Ideas for the project were adopted from South Beach, Miami
- Economic vitality
- Implement shared parking plan with Trinity Episcopal Church
- \$70,000 provided by private business donations
- Possible nighttime metering concepts in the future

Mr. Weeks questioned the number of available parking spaces, whether parking voucher would be offered and whether the lot would have an attendant to accept payment or a meter system.

Mr. Regan replied that the parking lot would be reconfigured to provide 60 units. He said the parking rates would be pay and display and consistent with the current rates. He said the City voucher would be available to the public.

Ms. Berk questioned the length of time to pay back the amount of money borrowed for the project.

Mr. Regan replied that the City projected a ten year pay-off timeframe. He addressed the West Augustine parking lot and stated that Commissioner Sikes-Kline suggested that the City work with the district to create a plan for a parking lot to assist the West Augustine business owners. He said road construction in West Augustine had taken away the on-street parking. He said land located between the Sailor's Exchange and the Pawn Shop would provide enough space for a parking lot. He said the lot would include lighting, landscaping and approximately 20 parking spaces. He said the lot would not be metered; however, staff would develop a payment plan, as the business owners would be responsible.

Mr. Weeks said he liked the project and felt that free parking for customers would help assist the business area.

Ms. Berk questioned whether the City would hire a consultant to design the Aviles Street project.

Mr. Regan replied that the Aviles Street design cost would be \$10,000, and they would hire someone to design the streetscape. He said the drawings were preliminary, and he noted that changes could be made to the design.

Parking Garage Energy saving lighting:

Mr. Regan said that on February 12, 2010 the City would apply for a grant to replace the current garage lighting with LED lighting as part of an energy saving concept. He said the installation cost would be \$300,000, and they should be in place by next year.

Temporary Bridge of Lions:

Mr. Regan said the City would like to save the riprap from the temporary bridge and recycle the material into construction material for the Riberia Street landfill closure. He said the cost savings would be between ½ a million to \$800,000 dollars.

Parking Meters and the Business District:

Mr. Russom said he would like the City to evaluate the number of parking meters placed around Flagler College and consider a reduction.

Update regarding the accessibility for traffic and parking:

Commissioner Nancy Sikes-Kline said she was a member of the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), which was the Metropolitan Planning Organization, which related to the funding stream from the Department of Transportation. She said parking and traffic accessibility issues had occurred in the Lighthouse Park area, and the TPO had provided a \$25,000 study.

Commissioner Sikes-Kline reported that the new Greyhound Bus parking at the Historic Downtown Parking Facility would be a great addition to the City and hopefully it would create a multimodal transportation system that would combine the Parking garage, Visitor Information Center, and a bus station.

Mr. Regan explained that the City had worked with the Greyhound Bus company to create a bus stop at the parking garage. He said the garage would see up to five buses per day for a monthly payment to the City of \$1,000. He added that the average person that rode the bus also purchased trolley tickets and spent money.

Mr. Pinto suggested that the City create a transportation plan that would better assist people traveling from St. Augustine to Jacksonville.

Ms. Sikes-Kline noted that the TPO planned to consider a commuter rail study in the year 2030.

Mr. Regan said he would have Cathy Brown, Executive Director, Council on Aging, attend the next meeting to make a presentation regarding a potential express shuttle program from St. Augustine to Jacksonville.

Ed Sax, business owner expressed concern regarding parking and felt that the City had setup a barrier for locals. He questioned the commitments made by tenants for the work on the Aviles Street project.

Mr. Regan replied that Cellar Six and Madres restaurants offered late evening hours. He said the Eatery Café and dress shop might consider changing their hours of operation. He said that as leases came available the City would see different businesses occupy the buildings, and he concluded that outdoor dining would change the nighttime traffic.

Mr. Litzinger said citizens would receive a notice regarding the different options for purchasing the park-now cards included in their monthly water bill. He said people could currently call and purchase a Park-Now card with a credit card.

Mr. Pinto said the ultimate card solution would be to allow customers to recharge the cards from a machine. He concluded that anything to help residents and merchants would be a positive step.

Mr. Litzinger said if he received positive feedback from the City residents, he would expand the offer to County residents.

Mr. Moan suggested that a crosswalk should be added between Aviles and King Streets.

Mr. Regan said the City had applied for a crosswalk between Aviles and King Streets from the DOT, but they were denied three times.

Overview of the Parking and Traffic Meeting:

Mr. Weeks provided an overview of the meeting as follows:

- Mark Litzinger would make Park-Now cards available for purchase by mail or phone
- Suggestions for a version to shuttle to and from the parking garage would be brought back for discussion
- An article in the St. Augustine Record regarding the different ideas the committee would be working on

Mr. Regan said staff would contact the Record to submit a press release.

Mr. Pinto questioned whether the park-now cards could be purchased online.

Mr. Litzinger replied that he would create a paypal service to allow residents the option to purchase the Park-Now card online.

Mr. Moan questioned whether free parking around the plaza would be available during bike week.

Mr. Pinto also questioned bike week and the parking. He noted that the bars and restaurants made the most revenue during the events.

Mr. Weeks said the parking was consolidated during bike week to avoid spaces being used throughout downtown. He said bike week generated a positive revenue for merchants and encouraged bikers to visit downtown.

Mr. Moan suggested free parking during bike week, but charging \$4.00 for parking during Biketoberfest.

Mr. Regan noted that staff worked with Florida Power & Light to replace the downed light at Castillo Drive and U.S. 1.

Mr. Weeks said locals should be made aware that parking was free on Sundays and after 5:00 p.m. weekdays and Saturday.

Mr. Regan noted that Flagler College had reported an increase in bicycle use.

5. Discussion Topics for Subsequent Meeting

- Cathy Brown would provide a presentation regarding the COA shuttle
- Mark Litzinger would provide a presentation regarding the usage of nine handicap spaces in the Tolomato parking lot

6. Consideration of Next Scheduled Meeting – February 25, 2010

(So acknowledged)

7. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:21 A.M.¹

¹ Transcribed by Carly Mason