

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA  
Parking and Traffic Committee  
June 28, 2007

The Parking and Traffic Committee met in formal session at 8:30 a.m., Thursday, June 28, 2007 in The Alcazar Conference Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Daniel Sullivan and the following were present:

**1. Roll Call**

Daniel Sullivan  
David Toner  
Richard Pinto  
Phil Moan  
Ken Bryan  
Gerry Dixon  
Ken Russom, Designee, Flagler College

**Excused:**

Len Weeks  
Les Thomas  
Nancy Sikes-Kline

**City Staff:**

John Regan, Chief Operations Officer  
Maria Carlin, Recording Secretary  
Billy Triay, Visitor Information Center

**2. Approval of Minutes**

**Minutes of the May 24, 2007 Parking and Traffic Committee Meeting were approved as presented.**

**3. Report by John Regan**

Mr. John Regan, Chief Operations Officer, offered an update regarding the new downtown metering system. He said that the team selected the meter that was presented at the last meeting and advised the following:

- ◆ Combining the single-space meter technology with the new multi-space meters
- ◆ Working on compatibility of single-space smart card technology with the parking equipment
- ◆ Addressing spacing and signage issues
- ◆ Reviewing intermediate signage for the parking garage with

International symbolism for parking fees

Mr. Dixon questioned how the new system was functioning.

Mr. Regan responded that they were still in the early stages but one of the biggest concerns was the revenue control system. He explained that they were presently using a hybrid system that allowed for pay on exit through multiple forms as follows:

- ◆ Pay on foot
- ◆ Pay on exit by machine
- ◆ Pay on exit by cashier

Mr. Regan said that the system required a high level of staffing, plus they were experiencing some technological problems. He stated that the machine was slow, which resulted in an unacceptable queuing problem. He said that emphasis was on customer service, and when they anticipated a high level of traffic the system was taken off-line to use the pay on entry system. He said that they were currently

working with the vendor and consultant to address the problems. He said that they were also addressing the following:

- ◆ The elevator's hydraulic oil system had a tendency to overheat and shut down
- ◆ It was more financially feasible to contract landscape maintenance for the garage

Mr. Regan said that the parking garage had accommodated quarter of a million cars in the first year of operation. He said that the structure was functioning as desired, and it won an honorable mention International Design award. He explained that it was an honor, as the parking structure was in competition with other structures around the world.

Mr. Dixon said that his staff used the parking facility and he received positive feedback from them about the structure. He questioned how the bus system was working.

Mr. Regan said the bus system was working as desired.

Billy Triay, Property Management Supervisor, Downtown Parking Facility, advised the Committee that they received positive feedback from the public regarding the facility. He said the bus drivers and tour bus operators had become accustomed to the additional loading.

Mr. Dixon said the design team had neglected locating a dumpster in the area. He enquired how the shuttle service was operating.

Mr. Triay replied that the shuttle was popular with the college students, and the staff of a local construction company used it on a daily basis. He said the shuttle operated to meet demand, although he did not have any figures to support the usage.

Mr. Regan said they received a monthly usage report, and although the number was not large it was an important aspect to the garage. He said that he had received positive feedback from the handicapped users, and during the first year of operation they wanted to determine how many people used the shuttle and how efficiently it operated. He said that Federal Transit Administration funding for the shuttles and public transportation should be considered in the future. He concluded that public transport systems were usually subsidized.

Mr. Toner requested an update on garage security.

Mr. Triay explained that although there were no cameras installed, a security guard was on the premises between the hours of 4 p.m. to 8 a.m. He said that the security guards used a Deggy, which was a pen that was tapped over buttons established at check points throughout the facility. He explained that the pen collected data throughout the guard's shift to confirm specifically where they inspected throughout the facility.

Mr. Russom enquired whether the City published any information regarding the new security system. He said that Flagler College was in the process of sending out the bills, and they wanted to encourage the use of the parking garage. He said they anticipated receiving questions from the parents regarding safety in the parking garage.

Mr. Triay said it would not be difficult to obtain literature on the new system.

Mr. Regan suggested creating an informative brochure with photographs of the parking facility.

Mr. Russom agreed that it would be a good.

Mr. Toner suggested that the brochure could be developed for the general public. He said it would be a good way to address

the safety concerns that some people might have.

Mr. Regan said there were discussions between the Visitor Convention Bureau, the City and the County regarding how well the Visitor Information Center was working at a county level. He said the County would be staffing kiosks to accommodate visitors.

Mr. Triay explained that the virtual version of the visitor's guide should be functional by July 2<sup>nd</sup>. He said it would contain information on hotels, restaurants, golfing etc. He added that it would be high tech, useful and interesting.

Mr. Sullivan questioned how many people parking in the garage passed through the VIC.

Mr. Triay said he did not have an exact number but he estimated 65% to 75%. He said that many of the visitors used the garage's bathroom facility.

Mr. Pinto said that people generally chose the most comfortable option, and they generally chose a person over automation for assistance. He said that some residents expressed concern that they would be 'trapped', but one way to avoid that was to educate them how to exit and enter the garage with little to no wait time.

Mr. Regan said they were working on the issue. He said that the City negotiated with the School Board to remove the parking lot on the east side of their building. He said that they agreed to allow the School Board to use validated parking in the garage for overflow parking. He explained that they would be using the facility for the upcoming school year, and the City would publish a schedule for the days the school board required the garage.

Mr. Toner enquired whether there was a staff member at the automated payment location at the garage.

Mr. Regan explained that it would require a significant increase in staffing.

Mr. Toner said it would take some time for the public to adjust to the system.

Mr. Marples requested the status of signage in the garage.

Mr. Regan replied that their emphasis had been on the metering for the garage and once that was resolved they would focus on the signage.

Mr. Marples said that once school resumed they would have a traffic issue on King Street. He said that the traffic that was diverted down King Street should go to the garage.

Mr. Toner suggested that they prepare a project status spreadsheet to be presented at the next meeting.

Mr. Pinto suggested a regular progress report on the garage. He enquired whether Mr. Regan received any similar reports.

Mr. Regan replied that he received comparative charts and generally they reflected that the numbers were double what was expected.

Mr. Pinto said business had been slow downtown and increased parking rates would have a negative effect.

Mr. Regan said that the City was working with the Visitor Convention Bureau regarding funding. He said that tourism was on the decline, but the City should have some basis of comparison and performance indicators to track how the system affected the community.

Mr. Dixon said when parking was free it was utilized by Flagler College students, leaving no spaces for the tourists. He said that the meters encouraged turn-over.

## MOTION

**Mr. Sullivan motioned that the Committee postpone July and August meetings and would reconvene in September. Motion SECONDED by Mr. Marples. MOTION APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.**

Mr. Pinto said he would be interested in the economic impact of the parking fees.

Mr. Sullivan enquired whether the carriages would be relocated to the garage area.

Mr. Triay said that the carriages used the area more frequently. He said the average was two carriages on weekends and one per weekday. He said he was unsure why they had not completely relocated, but it appeared that fares were slower at the parking facility.

Mr. Sullivan said he enjoyed the view of the carriages on the bay front.

Mr. Dixon said the horses had been located on the bay front for years making them part of St. Augustine scenery.

Mr. Moan enquired when pay and display pilot program for would go into effect.

Mr. Triay advised that he was not associated with the project, but Tara Bennie, Parking Coordinator would be able to give him more information.

Mr. Moan questioned who was in charge of the horse and carriages. He said that he regularly observed them driving through the stop signs and traveling closely behind each other. He said that they did not operate in a safe manner.

Mr. Pinto said he noticed increased parking in private parking lots.

Mr. Triay explained that the lots were controlled by Central Parking System. He

said that the turn over rate was usually high making it a profitable venture.

Mr. Marples recommended the horse drawn carriages as a future agenda item, because they were a concern. He said that carriages were not adhering to their routes, as he had observed them in residential areas.

Mr. Pinto questioned whether they had regulated routes.

Mr. Toner said he wanted to address the tour buses and their routes. He enquired whether the City had control over the tour buses.

Mr. Triay asked if he referred to the buses that hired the step-on guides.

Mr. Toner said they were empty buses that were lost or taking shortcuts through the neighborhoods.

Mr. Triay said they recently discussed including brochures at the bus unloading areas providing information on availability of bus parking, overnight parking and other issues that related to the bus drivers. He said it was hard to keep track of every bus.

Mr. Marples said the buses were allowed to park next to Flagler College, on Cordova Street, and off-load passengers at The Oldest House. He said that he had observed them driving past his house on St. George Street, which was a restricted vehicle area, and they regularly drove on Cordova Street; a narrow street. He stated that the new drivers were not given directions around the City; therefore, they were lost regularly.

Mr. Russom said that currently King Street was very difficult to navigate.

Mr. Pinto pointed out that the sign at the end of King Street was misleading.

Mr. Toner enquired whether the City had authority over the buses that stopped at the

Visitor Information Center it was a good idea to provide them with information on approved routes.

Mr. Triay said the City tried to be proactive by making information available to the bus drivers.

Mr. Moan suggested that the police were responsible for enforcing traffic problems concerning buses. He enquired whether the shuttle stop could be changed from the Slave Market to the Cathedral.

Mr. Pinto said he had received different feedback from business owners. He explained that the City should be pedestrian oriented and tourists should not be encouraged to take the shuttle. He stated that it would have a negative impact on the businesses in that part of town. He said the shuttle was created for regular users like the Flagler College students and not for visitors.

Mr. Moan said he disagreed because the stop at the Slave Market was dangerous as there were no pedestrian lanes on Charlotte Street.

Mr. Marples recommended that the tour buses stop at the VIC to discharge passengers, as they would have a better experience in the downtown area.

Mr. Sullivan suggested that Mr. Triay provide a copy of the flyer to be distributed to the bus drivers at the next scheduled meeting and Mr. Triay agreed.

Mr. Sullivan recommended inviting a shuttle bus driver to the next meeting to address some of the committee's concerns.

#### **5. Discussion topics for subsequent meeting**

Horse and carriage routes.

#### **6. Next scheduled meeting**

The next meeting date will be September 27, 2007.

#### **7. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:53 a.m.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Transcribed by Maria Carlin, Recording Secretary