

PARKING AUTHORITY MINUTES

October 2, 2001

PRESENT: Peter Nolin, Chairman - Common Council
Paul Jones - Redevelopment Agency
Judith Rivas - Common Council
Edward Musante - Redevelopment Agency
Allan Davis - Allan Davis Associates
Leonard Liss - Allan Davis Associates
William Grumman - Department of Public Works
Jack Miller, Finance Director

Mr. Nolin called the meeting to order at 6:45.

1. AREA OF AUTHORITY OF AUTHORITY

Mr. Davis distributed the attached general statutes to the Committee for their review.

2. FACILITIES INCLUDED AND EXCLUDED

Mr. Davis referred the Committee to the attached map and general statutes. He stated that from the discussions at the last meeting, this Committee wanted to focus its attention in South Norwalk and not the entire parking operations in the City. The attached map was drawn to give the Committee a starting point. Mr. Nolin confirmed the North boundary of Interstate 95, West Ave down by the Norwalk railroad station and asked Mr. Musante if the southern boundary was appropriate or does it need to be further south. Mr. Davis pointed that the southern boundary on the East side is Monroe Street. Mr. Musante stated that he would like to visit the smaller areas vs. the larger areas on the map.

Mr. Musante also stated that additional backup of the information Mr. Davis presented would be helpful in determining the cost. He also pointed that at least, from the outset, they are discussing a dual parking system.

Mr. Nolin noted that if they did not want to doom the Parking Authority to a potential deficit, then they should be given a choice parking. The city would subsidize North of 95 for a period of time and hopefully with redevelopment, "fold it in".

Mr. Musante inserted that he wanted to make sure information is available for a conscious decision, since there will be some implication on the City's budget.

Mr. Davis then referred the Committee to the attached Cost report that identifies each cost associated with each facility. Mr. Davis stated that these costs were estimates based on the financial data available to him (provided by the City) at that time. The attached report identifies each parking facility, revenue source, personnel/benefits costs (imbedded in line item DPW), security costs and number of parking spaces.

In perusing the Cost report, Mr. Musante then asked Mr. Davis if it would be reasonable to expect that the breakdown, of these costs, would be similar to the final cost if the Parking Authority took over the items outlined on Page 1 and the City took over the items outlined on Page 2. Mr. Davis responded that this would depend on how the Authority operates. Mr. Davis also indicated that, presently, the City has a system that is largely "meter-controlled". He pointed that it would make sense if the Public Works Department continue to be responsible for the meters and the fines, as well continuing to do the work; even in the authority area, and assign the money to the Parking Authority.

Mr. Musante asked if the Parking Authority would have to pay a fee to the City for the use of its employees? Mr. Davis responded that they could.

3. COSTS & REVENUES

This item was covered under Facilities Included and Excluded above.

4. TIMELINE FOR FORMATION OF AUTHORITY AND ISSUE BONDS

Mr. Davis referred the Committee to the attached report and also added that between the 4 and 5th meeting outlined on this report, an economic feasibility study would have to be carried out, as well as bids for construction. Mr. Musante added that due to the City's "bond issuing needs", timing might become a problem if this process does not move quickly.

Discussion among the Committee members took place regarding the Timeline report presented by Mr. Davis. Mr. Nolin and Mr. Musante stated that they should probably work backwards from this timeline; issue bonds, and sign the construction contracts no later than September 1, 2001. Mr. Nolin also stated that they should be looking at adding an ordinance resulting from this Committee by the end of this year, with focus on getting an authority established by April.

5. DUTIES OF THE AUTHORITY

Mr. Davis referred the Committee to the attached general statutes for their review and discussion at the next meeting.

Mr. Nolin added that a draft of this Committee's recommendation as well as DPW's, could be sent to the Ordinance Committee, preferably sooner rather than later.

6. MARITIME AQUARIUM GARAGE DESIGN/APPROVAL UPDATE

This item was covered under the following reports: Cost, Facilities Included and Excluded and the Timeline report.

7. EXPERIENCE OF OTHER CITIES

a. Stamford

b. Hartford

Mr. Davis stated that he has spoken to the first director of the Stamford Department of Traffic and Parking, to ascertain his impression concerning why Stamford's parking authority was closed down. Mr. Davis indicated that the director basically agreed with his "wave theory" ("you need the authority to do something, then it loses interests and then it becomes pretty sloppy").

Mr. Davis continued on to point out that this director emphasized the "sloppy part" in terms of controlling the money, which was being collected by the Stamford's Parking Authority at that time. Mr. Davis continued, stating that it is the director's view, this was one of the main reasons Stamford Parking Authority was made into a department. Mr. Davis also stated that Stamford was going through a charter process at that time. Stamford was changing its Charter to create a department of traffic and instead, made it into the "Department of Traffic and Parking". Mr. Davis also indicated that there might have been other reasons for this decision as well.

Mr. Davis continued, stating that he has also communicated with the new executive director of the Hartford Parking Authority, Frank Delmonaco. Mr. Davis indicated that Mr. Delmonaco is a professional parking executive who was recruited to work in Hartford from an authority he previously managed in Florida. Mr. Davis also stated that Mr. Delmonaco is an example of someone who is a typical authority executive, who also expressed an interest in talking to Norwalk regarding what is involved in running a parking authority. Mr. Davis pointed, of the two, he would recommend the Committee talk to Mr. Delmonaco.

Mr. Davis continued, stating that he read an article in, perhaps, Parking Professional (he was not certain of the publication) about two garage situations on the West Coast; one of which is a success, the other a financial failure. Ms. Rivas indicated she would try to ascertain this article from the Library's database.

Mr. Davis was asked if had a sense for their preference; i.e., an "authority or department". Mr. Davis responded that the director in Stamford is very much opposed to an "authority", but also thinks they have a useful purpose in getting things done. Mr. Davis also indicated that this director came on aboard just about when the Stamford Parking Authority was about to be dissolved.

Mr. Nolin commented that it would be helpful to talk to Mr. Delmonaco, but he is not certain if the experiences shared by Stamford and Hartford are going to make a

difference. Mr. Nolin continued, pointing out that Norwalk has a unique need from the point of view of Bonding. Mr. Nolin stated that Norwalk's parking authority could be whatever they wanted it to be as long as it meets the State's guidelines. Mr. Davis inserted that it seemed meeting once a month is dragging this process. Mr. Jones commented that he agreed and pointed that now that they have gathered all this information, they should probably meet more often or establish a sub-committee. Mr. Jones also inquired where this project was going and if any one on the Committee has received word regarding this project going forward.

Ms. Rivas inserted, at this point, that she did not want her main concern to be dropped - which is, the kind of people they should get on this authority. She referred the Committee to Hartford's ordinances and pointed that if they practiced something along that line, perhaps not as detailed and sweeping, she would certainly be willing to go with it. She also noted that it could not hurt to have Mr. Delmonaco give the Committee some ideas. She continued, stating that this would not have to take a special meeting, something in writing would suffice. Mr. Davis pointed out that the situation in Hartford was very similar to Norwalk; in that, Hartford was about to build its first municipal garage and that is why they formed a Parking Authority.

Mr. Musante, at this point, referred to Mr. Jones earlier question/comment: "where is this project going". Mr. Musante commented that although there are several people not present at the meeting tonight, but when the Committee was put together; it was chosen very carefully. Particularly with elected officials so that there would be a cross section of views. Mr. Musante continued, stating that from what he had heard at the last meeting, they were more concurrences about this project then what he had heard before.

Ms. Rivas re-inserted that she was not opposed, she is being cautious. She continued, stating that she did not want to make mistakes because there is a lot of money involved and she doesn't want this Committee to be locked into a situation that they will be sorry for later. She pointed that she is being fiscally conservative.

Mr. Nolin noted that this Committee is advisory. Recommendations will be made to the full council for adoption.

**** MR. JONES MOVED FOR A RESOLUTION TO THE COMMON COUNCIL THAT THIS COMMITTEE BE FORMALLY APPROVED AS THE PARKING AUTHORITY**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Nolin also added that if at the next meeting, those who were not present for this motion oppose, then it will be reconsidered.

This meeting was adjourned at 7:42.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerda Adonis
Telesco Secretarial Services

