

PARKING AUTHORITY MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING JULY 26, 2006

ATTENDANCE: Urban Mulvehill, Chairman; Stephen Bentkover, Burton Shatz, John Federici, Victor Cavallo

STAFF: Hal Alvord, Dept. of Public Works Director; Kathryn Hebert, DPW Administrative Service Manager, Frank Del Monaco, LAZ Parking

OTHERS: Munro Johnson, AICP; Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, Attorney Liz Suchy, Tierney, Zullo, Flaherty & Murphy, PC

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mulvehill called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. and announced that there was a quorum present.

2. WELCOME NEW PARKING AUTHORITY MEMBER – VICTOR CAVALLO

Ms. Hebert introduced Attorney Cavallo, the newly appointed member of the Parking Authority to his fellow board members.

PRESENTATIONS

3. Presentation by the Redevelopment Agency regarding the development project on Main/High Street Parking Lot.

Mr. Johnson gave a Powerpoint presentation to the Board on a proposed redevelopment project for the Main/High Street Parking Lot. This would involve the City selling the lot to the Redevelopment Agency for \$100,000. The Agency in turn, would allow the preferred developer for the Head of the Harbor project, M.F. DiScala, to develop the lot into a five story parking garage with retail space on the ground level. The current 91 spaces that exist for the Main/High Street Parking Lot would be guaranteed. The remaining spaces would be for the development. The rates charged at this garage would be the same as what LAZ charges on other City garages, however, the money would not go to the City, but to the developer. Currently, the lot operates at a loss. The City would gain the \$100,000 and no longer have the responsibility for maintaining the lot. During the construction phase, temporary parking would be provided for those who have permits

for the lot. Ownership of the lot is required in order to secure additional State funding to complete the project.

Mr. Johnson then reviewed the development of the project, which began with the Cecil Group's Master Plan for the Head of the Harbor section of Norwalk. There has been long standing dissatisfaction with the status of the Wall Street area and the Redevelopment Agency has found blight in the area. Mr. Johnson stated that it would be ideal for the City to start the redevelopment by using some City property as a catalysis for the project. He then reviewed the premise for the Redevelopment Agency, which grew out of concern for urban blight in the late 60's and early 70's.

Following the conclusion of the report, Chairman Mulvehill wanted to know why there was no clear drawing of the proposed garage. Mr. Johnson explained that the project was still in the early stages and the site plans had not been finalized. Mr. Shatz wished to know exactly where the garage would be located. Mr. Johnson indicated the location on the map and reiterated that it would be a five story structure with retail space on the ground floor. Mr. Bentkover asked for clarification as to where the money from the sale of this parcel would go. Mr. Johnson replied that currently the money would just go to the City. Ms. Hebert commented that it would be possible to have a caveat that the money go to the Parking Authority as part of the Option Agreement.

Mr. Bentkover wished to know how the price of \$100,000 was determined. Mr. Johnson stated that two different appraisers had viewed the parcel and assessed it at a negative one million dollars. This meant, explained Mr. Johnson, that no developer would ever make money off the project. Since the Redevelopment Agency was sponsoring the project, the State funds would help make up the difference. He also said that it was decided to put more than a token price on the parcel.

When asked by Mr. Bentkover where the temporary parking would be located, Mr. Johnson said that it would be on the site of the old Smith Street. Mr. Bentkover commented that currently that area is very run down and that residents would not wish to park there.

Mr. Bentkover and Chairman Mulvehill expressed concern about the transfer of the lot from the City to a private developer. Mr. Johnson reviewed the steps involved in the process. Chairman Mulvehill also expressed concern that the City would only have 91 spaces if the redevelopment catches on and there is growth in that section of the City. He said that the City has a "payment-in-lieu-of-parking" plan for business owners who wish to expand their businesses but can't expand on the parking. Mr. Johnson gave a lengthy discussion regarding the details of the plan and the possible impact on the Wall Street area.

Mr. Johnson stated that he had hoped that the Parking Authority would give approval to the program at the meeting so the project could proceed. Chairman Mulvehill stated that some members of the Board had not had a chance to fully read the proposed development

and draft Option Agreement yet and recommended that they further discuss and take action at the next scheduled Parking Authority meeting.

RECESS

Chairman Mulvehill announced a recess at 9:10 p.m. The Board reconvened from recess at 9:18 p.m.

APPROVALS/AUTHORIZATIONS

5. Authorize the Chairman of the Parking Authority, Urban Mulvehill, to execute Amendment to the Lease Agreement between the Parking Authority and Fairfield County Savings Bank in order to construct and operate a Drive Up Teller inside the Isaacs Street Parking Lot for a term of 2 years and then month to month thereafter for a sum of \$65,280 including the reconfiguration of 16 spaces and relocation of 2 handicapped spaces.

Mr. Bentkover stated that he has some concerns about the Isaacs Street lot being returned to the original condition if the Bank decided to move from its present location. Ms. Hebert directed his attention to the Terms of Agreement dated 7/17/2006, which states under the paragraph heading of "Construction of Site":

"The bank will be responsible for all the costs associated with the construction of the site related to the license agreement and restoration of the site and removal of improvements on or prior to the end of the Term. The bank will completed the project within a timely period with minimal disruption of traffic and parking flow to surrounding businesses and operations as determined by the City of Norwalk and the Parking Authority."

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARKING AUTHORITY, URBAN MULVEHILL, TO EXECUTE AMENDMENT TO THE LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARKING AUTHORITY AND FAIRFIELD COUNTY SAVINGS BANK IN ORDER TO CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE A DRIVE UP TELLER INSIDE THE ISAACS STREET PARKING LOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AGREEMENT DATED 7/17/06 WITH THE AMENDMENT IN THE PARAGRAPH ON "CONSTRUCTION OF SITE" AS STATED BELOW:**

"THE BANK WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SITE RELATED TO THE LICENSE AGREEMENT AND REMOVAL OF IMPROVEMENTS ON OR PRIOR TO THE END OF THE TERM AND RESTORATION OF THE SITE. THE BANK WILL COMPLETED THE PROJECT WITHIN A TIMELY PERIOD WITH MINIMAL DISRUPTION OF TRAFFIC AND PARKING FLOW TO SURROUNDING BUSINESSES AND OPERATIONS AS DETERMINED BY THE CITY OF NORWALK AND THE PARKING AUTHORITY."

FOR A TERM OF 2 YEARS AND THEN MONTH TO MONTH THEREAFTER FOR A SUM OF \$65,280 INCLUDING THE RECONFIGURATION OF 26 SPACES AND RELOCATION OF 2 HANDICAPPED SPACES.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. Approve the Minutes from the Parking Authority meeting held on Wednesday, June 28, 2006.

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2006.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. Authorize the Chairman of the Parking Authority, Urban Mulvehill to execute a License Agreement for the use of the Eastbound South Norwalk Railroad Station on Saturday, October 28, 2006 by Metro North for a staging area for their staff in connection with the State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management emergency drill training event.

Mr. Bentkover asked Ms. Hebert if the agreement contained "Hold Harmless" waivers. Ms. Hebert replied that it does and is standard language in all City of Norwalk contracts.

**** CHAIRMAN MULVEHILL MOVED TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARKING AUTHORITY, URBAN MULVEHILL TO EXECUTE A LICENSE AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF THE EASTBOUND SOUTH NORWALK RAILROAD STATION ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2006 BY METRO NORTH FOR A STAGING AREA FOR THEIR STAFF IN CONNECTION WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT EMERGENCY DRILL TRAINING EVENT.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. Approve the use of the Webster Parking Overflow Lot (88 parking spaces) by the SoNo Arts Celebration from Saturday, August 5 until Sunday, August 6, 2006 for an amount payable of \$880.00 (\$5.00/day per parking space).

**** CHAIRMAN MULVEHILL MOVED TO APPROVE AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE WEBSTER PARKING OVERFLOW LOT (88 PARKING SPACES) BY THE SONO ARTS CELEBRATION FROM SATURDAY, AUGUST 5 UNTIL SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2006 FOR AN AMOUNT PAYABLE OF \$880.00 (\$5.00/DAY PER PARKING SPACE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DISCUSSION

8. Monthly Financial Report

Ms. Hebert presented the monthly financial report and reviewed it with the Board Members.

9. Monthly Operation Report

Mr. Del Monaco reviewed the report for June 2006 and stated that the use of the Maritime garage had increased by 4.8%, and the Webster Street Lot by 26%. Mr. Del Monaco then reviewed the other parking sites handled by LAZ for the City and reviewed the numbers for the Board Members.

10. Capital Projects

a. Webster Parking Lot Phase II Reconfiguration Project

Mr. Alvord reviewed the status of the Webster Street Lot Reconfiguration and stated that the installation of the new curbing was going well.

b. Yankee Doodle Garage Improvement Project

There was some discussion about Chairman Mulvehill signing the contract for the Garage Improvements at the Yankee Doodle Garage, as Chairman Mulvehill scheduled to leave town soon.

c. SoNo Lighting Under the Bridge Project

Mr. Alvord explained to the Board Members that the only funding that was approved for this project was for Anne and Marshall Street, but the design for North Water Street was included in the original plans. The historic lightpoles along North Water are too close to the curbing and have been repeatedly knocked down by school buses. Therefore another \$90,000 will be needed to complete that phase of the project. Mayor Moccia has spoken to Mr. Hamilton and requested that this be presented to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for approval.

11. Other Business

a. Virgin Atlantic Maritime Garage parking lease update

Ms. Hebert reported that Virgin Atlantic Airways wishes to increase its original parking request from 20 spaces to 40 spaces. Mr. Del Monaco said he would find those additional spaces.

b. East Norwalk Railroad Station parking update

Mr. Alvord reported that the contract with St. Thomas Church will not be renewed by the State. There are ninety spaces in that lot which has been leased for commuter parking. Mr. Alvord said that the City needs to investigate sharing the revenues less expenses with the Church.

Mr. Mulvehill commented that St. Joseph's in South Norwalk may be interested in leasing some of their parking to the City. There is a lengthy list of people waiting for parking spaces at the South Norwalk Station.

Mr. Alvord said that the parcel at 215 East Avenue may become available Third Taxing District is considering how to close down the substation on that parcel. This project is in the very early stages. The City would have to purchase the parcel, with the terms of agreement that the Third Taxing District demolish the structures. However, if this is possible, a number of vehicles could be parked there.

c. Liberty Square update

Ms. Hebert reported that the occupants of Liberty Square are not interested in purchasing the lot from the City. Ms. Hebert suggested to them that they consider parking permits for the residents and business owners and a few pay by the space for shoppers. There are about 60 spaces in the lot. The tenants seemed amenable.

d. Monroe Street – on street parking

Ms. Hebert reported that the Traffic Authority had approved her request to change the on street time limits to 2 hours on Monroe Street which is consistent with all other on street parking limits in the SoNo Area.

OTHER

Mr. Shatz had some questions about an article that appeared in the paper regarding the Farmer's Market in the IMAX theater parking lot. Ms. Hebert explained that the Parking Authority already established and approved a paid parking policy for all the facilities in the citywide parking system. The Farmers Market owed the Parking Authority \$525 from last Fiscal Year but did not pay. This year, the vendors are paying for their parking spaces for their vehicles, but setting up their stalls on the decks. The Mayor believes this is under the responsibility of the Recreation and Parks Department.

ADJOURNMENT

There is no meeting in August. The next Parking Authority meeting: Wednesday, September 27, 2006/7:30 p.m., Public Works Conference Room.

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretary

