

PARKING AUTHORITY MINUTES

April 14, 2004

ATTENDANCE: Urban Mulvehill, Chairman; Luis Garcia, Stephen Bentkover
Burt Shatz, Todd Jellerette

STAFF: Ed Schmidt, Assistant to the Mayor; Frank Delmonaco, LAZ Parking; Harold Alvord, Director, Public Works

OTHER: Attorney Andrew Kordas; Alanna Kabel, Director of Marketing and Business Development; Candace Schaefer, Spinnaker Developers

1. Call to Order

Chairman Mulvehill called the meeting to order at 6:32p.m.

2. Public Hearing on the Proposed Rate Schedule for the Listed Parking Facilities

Chairman Mulvehill opened the public hearing at 6:35pm.

Chairman Mulvehill said that tonight's purpose was to get general input for the proposed parking rates. He said that he has been a resident of Norwalk for 30 years and has been used to not paying for parking. He said that if you have parking garages and structures that are available for municipalities then they have to be paid for. Chairman Mulvehill said that the idea is to have people that use the facilities pay for parking instead of hitting the taxpayers. He added that it requires some contribution from every parking area of Norwalk. Chairman Mulvehill introduced Frank Delmonaco of LAZ Parking Authority.

Mr. Delmonaco said that the focus tonight was on fees and management approach. He said that the parking system was fragmented, was operated and not managed. Mr. Delmonaco said that this was one of the aspects that LAZ has recognized since last year. He added that the off street and on street parking structure was out of whack. Mr. Delmonaco said that the Maritime Garage has a sizable debt and that the public parking system would not be subsidized any longer. Mr. Delmonaco said that the parking management plan would be put forth tonight. He said that the proposed parking plan tonight has been proven. He said that the plan was to use economic incentives. Mr. Delmonaco said that change was not easy.

Mr. Delmonaco said that LAZ has proposed to raise on street rates to be more that off street rates. He said that this was not purely about generating revenue. Mr. Delmonaco said that the generation of revenue was a beneficial by-product of a well run system. He said that the rates proposed tonight in the Wall Street area are the same rates that were in effect in 1988 in Norwalk. Mr. Delmonaco said that the bills have to be paid without taxpayers subsidy.

Attorney Andrew Kordas was representing Crown Theaters and William R. Finger Company. Attorney Kordas said that he was here tonight to request to table the Webster Street area because there are significant issues that the William R. Finger Company, Crown Theaters and the City of Norwalk need to address. He said that a Land Disposition Agreement was signed between the Finger Company and the city in 1994. Attorney Kordas said the agreement was to entice the theater to go to South Norwalk to bring in business and revitalize the area. He said that free parking for theater customers was introduced after 6:00 p.m. Attorney Kordas said that the survey that they have done shows a negative impact on the structure for the charges for the matinees when the schools are out of session. He said that there was a meeting recently with the city and the companies. Attorney Kordas said that there would be a meeting within the next two weeks between the city and the Finger Company and Crown Theaters. Mr. Schmidt said that the meeting was productive and the interpretation of the LDA agreement was referred to the attorney for the Redevelopment Agency. He said that he hoped to have an opinion by the next meeting.

Chairman Mulvehill asked how many spaces were allocated for free parking. Attorney Kordas said that there were 280 spaces allocated for this use but that all parking was unlimited after 6:00 p.m. Attorney Kordas said that the 280 spaces were allocated for zoning purposes. Mr. Jellerette asked what the capacity was for the attendance in the theaters. Attorney Kordas said that the capacity was 1600 seats. Mr. Bentkover asked what the usage numbers was. Attorney Kordas said that it was difficult in the theater business because of longer movies but that the information was being put together now.

Dwight Ellaman said that he owned 80 North Main Street, which was one unit of 10 unit condominium. He said that he wanted to make it clear tonight that the condominium association owned about 20 feet of land, which are 18 parking spaces behind the stores. He said that they gave up an easement for the theaters so that they could be built. Mr. Ellaman said that they have paid taxes on that land for all these years. He said that he was concerned that if a gate was installed it would inhibit his customers from coming and going.

Ms. Kabel read two letters into the record from the Fairfield County Savings Bank and the Maritime Aquarium. She said that the letters were in support of the proposed rates and were from Charles Bassos of the bank and Michael Widland of the Maritime Aquarium.

Candace Schaefer of Spinnaker Developers said that she commended the Parking Authority for the new proposal and the intent to alleviate the parking problems. She said that she believed that this would improve the quality of life in South Norwalk, which was necessary for the businesses in the area.

Chairman Mulvehill said that he commended LAZ for putting together the proposal and material. He said that a great deal of thought went into this material.

Chairman Mulvehill closed the Public Hearing at 6:50 p.m.

Chairman Mulvehill said that there would be a recess.

Chairman Mulvehill reconvened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

3. Consider the Proposed Rate Schedule for the listed Parking Facilities.

South Norwalk Area

Maritime Garage

Description: Current Rates Description Proposed rates

Up to 3 hours \$ 4.00 Up to 1 hour \$ 2.00
3 hours to 6 hours \$10.00 1 hour to 3 hours \$ 4.00
6 hours to 24 hours \$15.00 3 hours to 4 hours \$ 5.00
Evening Rate \$ 6.00 4 hours to 5 hours \$ 6.00
(after 6pm) 5 Hours to 8 hours \$ 8.00
8 hours to 24 hours \$10.00
Evening rate (after 5pm) \$ 3.00

Chairman Mulvehill said that the proposed rate structure is graduated and much better than before but that he thinks there was an issue with straddling the time period. Mr. Delmonaco said that the rate was based on time of entry. He said that the evening rate could be changed from 6pm to 5pm for the evening entry and activities. He added that it would capture a greater segment of the population.

Discussion took place on whether or not the if the two times would be combined so that the customer was charged the proper amount. Mr. Delmonaco said that it would get complicated. He said that the time could be changed from 5pm to 6pm. Chairman Mulvehill asked if the computer could calculate as if the customer returned then charge both rates. Mr. Bentkover said that he agreed with Mr. Delmonaco. Mr. Schmidt said that it was proven to rely on actual data. He said that it could be approved with the understanding that this was a work in progress. Mr. Schmidt said that the Authority could get a better idea of what to charge. He said that the theory was to charge less and more people would come. He added that there are about 700 spaces in the evenings that are vacant.

Mr. Schmidt said that 93% of people park less than 4 hours. He said that the Maritime Aquarium was happy with the rates but that this also provides certainty. He said that LAZ could give a budget based on actual data.

Chairman Mulvehill said that he understood the observation but would get a better overview with the data.

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSED RATE STRUCTURE SCHEDULE FOR THE MARITIME GARAGE WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT WHEN DATA WAS AVAILABLE THE AUTHORITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CHANGE THE RATES.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Upper Haviland Parking Lot

Rates	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
Description	Description	

Monthly Permit	\$50.00	Monthly Permit Discontinued
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Meter Rate	\$.25/hour	1-4 hours	\$2.00
(2 hr limit)	4 hours plus	\$4.00	
After 5pm	\$5.00		

Chairman Mulvehill said that the rates looked good. Mr. Shatz said that he thought the rate was unfair for short time visitors. Mr. Delmonaco said that on street parking was for short time visitors.

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSED RATE STRUCTURE FOR THE UPPER HAVILAND PARKING LOT.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

North Water Parking Lot

Rates	Current Rates	Proposed
Description	Description	

Meter Rate (2 hr limit)	\$.25/hr up to 1 hour	\$1.00
2 to 4 hours	\$3.00	
4 hours plus	\$2.00	
After 5pm	\$5.00	

Chairman Mulvehill said that this was the most short term out of all the parking areas. He said that people do not park for a long time in this lot. He asked if the rate could be \$1.00 per hour instead of different rates for different time slots.

Mr. Delmonaco said that the strategy behind developing the rates was based on multiple demands. Mr. Schmidt said that they could propose \$1.00 for the first hour then \$2.00 for

the next slot of 2-4 hours. Mr. Mulvehill said that the bridge tender needed a spot for parking also and to make that proprietary.

Mr. Bentkover said that American Disabilities Acts as far as handicapped spots should be considered for all of the parking lots. He said that he would like more information on what's been done for the handicapped regulations at the next meeting.

Mr. Shatz said that Stamford does not charge for parking at the meters at night. He said that it should be considered for Norwalk. Mr. Delmonaco said that the nightlife in South Norwalk was considered when putting the proposal together.

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSED RATE STRUCTURE OF THE NORTH WATER PARKING LOT**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Webster Street Parking Lot

Rates	Current	Rates Proposed
Description	Description	Description

Meter Rates (2 hr limit)	\$0.25/hr	Up to 1 hour \$1.00
1-2 hours	\$2.00	
2-3 hours	\$3.00	
3-4 hours	\$4.00	
4 hours plus	\$5.00	
After 5pm	\$5.00	

Mr. Mulvehill said that this item would be tabled.

Mr. Shatz left the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Mr. Jellerette left the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

On Street Parking

Rates	Current	Rates Proposed
Description	Description	Description

Meter Rates	\$0.25	Meter Rates \$0.25/20 Minutes
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Mr. Bentkover said that the rates looked fair. He asked Mr. Delmonaco if the meters were installed. Mr. Delmonaco responded yes. He said that the internal mechanism on some meters would be changed. Mr. Delmonaco said that was included in the LAZ budget. Mr. Bentkover asked about discounts for senior citizens. He asked if it was feasible for the

purchase of a token to be used in the meter. Mr. Delmonaco said that there were a number of ways to do this. He said that there are a number of cities that offer the residents discounts based on age. He said that the cities sometimes would allow the residents to purchase a package of tickets at a discount. Mr. Delmonaco said that the proposals tonight could be accomplished by July 1, 2004. He said that it included the proposed purchase of new equipment for debit cards.

Mr. Mulvehill asked if the 25 cents for 20 minutes discourage parking.

Mr. Delmonaco said that if someone parks for 8 hours, it's better to park off street. He said that the spirit of the plan was to not tell people what to do.

Mr. Delmonaco said that if the data does not get the results that we want, then he would come back to the Authority with a new proposal. He said that he would like to see how this works before any changes tonight. Mr. Schmidt said that turnover was critical at the meters. Mr. Mulvehill said that he would like to hear the report soon because he would be interested in raising the rate.

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSED RATE STRUCTURE OF ON STREET PARKING.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Mulvehill asked about the turn style type of meter. Mr. Delmonaco said that the electronic meter takes away the turn style. Mr. Bentkover asked how the meters would be enforced. Mr. Delmonaco said that there were more than enough people to enforce the meters. He said that the enforcer also has a greeting role.

Mr. Ellaman said that there has to be a time limit at the meters to force people to park in the lot. Mr. Delmonaco said that there was a two-hour duration now.

Mr. Delmonaco said that the enforcement staff would have public information available to them for people that ask about shows or dining.

Mr. Schmidt said that the rates allow LAZ to provide a better level of service, enhance security and maintain a schedule. He said that the enforcement staff would be able to multitask.

Mr. Bentkover asked how fines would be collected and if LAZ would know of any outstanding tickets. Mr. Delmonaco said that their partner, ACS, has records from 48 states. He said if the job were done correctly there would not be a need to tow. Mr. Delmonaco said that towing a vehicle was giving the wrong message. He said that education is keen.

Mr. Bentkover asked how a violation for parking in a handicapped spot would be handled. Mr. Delmonaco said that the fine would be collected when the ticket was given out.

Wall Street Area

Yankee Doodle Garage

Rates Current Rates Proposed rates
Description Description

Per hour \$.25/Hour Per hour \$.25/hour reestablished
\$2.00/12 hours

Mr. Bentkover said that 25 cents an hour was good. He said that the merchants along Wall Street used to complain that people had to park at the Yankee Doodle Garage and walk to their store. He said that this was a good idea to make money for the garage. He added that the garage needed to be refurbished.

Ms. Kabel said that the proposed rates tonight were the same rates in 1988. She said that the garage would be open extended hours in the evening and that merchants were pleased about that. She said that the merchants were satisfied with the rates and realized that this would be a benefit to their business.

Mr. Schmidt said that the fee structure of the Yankee Doodle Garage would allow LAZ to do maintenance, security and repair of deck and other repairs that are needed. He said that this would allow for capital improvements also.

Mr. Bentkover said that more signage was needed in the garage and to make the garage more user friendly.

Mr. Mulvehill said that the blue light system was needed. Mr. Delmonaco said that they are looking at how security would be provided in all facilities. Mr. Schmidt said that the Maritime Garage would be the new standard. He said that the camera was actually a dome light.

Mr. Mulvehill asked if the attendant would be able to have a conversation with someone inside the garage. Mr. Delmonaco said that the person that initiates the call, the attendant would be able to speak with the person. He said that the location would appear on the LCD exactly where the person was calling.

Mr. Delmonaco said that the voice on the other end becomes somewhat of a deterrent for the perpetrator.

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSED RATE STRUCTURE FOR THE WALL STREET AREA AND ISAAC STREET PARKING LOT.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Isaac Street Parking lot (includes Leonard Parking Lot)

Rates Current Rates Proposed

Description Description

N/A N/A Per hour \$.25/hr

\$2.00/12 hrs

Wall Street Parking Lot

Rates Current Rates Proposed

Description Description

N/A N/A Meter Rate \$.25/hr

\$2.00/12 hrs

On Street Parking

Rates Current Rates Proposed

Description Description

Meter rate \$.25/hr Meter Rate \$.25/ 30 min

Note: Existing rates not specifically revised would remain the same.

4. Approve the Operating and Capital Budgets and Rate Structure for Fiscal Year 2004-05.

Mr. Schmidt said that the budget would reflect the approval except the rates except for the Webster street lot.

Mr. Mulvehill said that this item would be tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Mulvehill asked Mr. Delmonaco if curbing and fencing would be installed at the overflow lot at the SNRR. Mr. Delmonaco responded that islands need to be constructed to organize people with parking and are still working out the details. He said that the fencing issue has not been addressed.

Mr. Mulvehill asked about the Maritime Budget and operating expenses. Mr. Delmonaco explained that there was a percentage of the salary listed in the budget. He said that the costs were spread out among staff because of multitasking. He said that the area would be staffed seven days a week, Monday through Friday and Wednesday through Sunday.

Mr. Mulvehill said that he would like a graph of how many people would be on duty and what days and nights would be covered and what the working hours would be.

Mr. Schmidt said that LAZ would put together a staff chart for everyone in all the lots and garages.

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jean lane
Telesco Secretarial Services

