

PARKING AUTHORITY MINUTES

**CITY OF NORWALK
PARKING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 26, 2008**

ATTENDANCE: Stephen Bentkover, Chairman
John Federici, Vice Chairman
Victor Cavallo
Burt Shatz
Joe Santo

STAFF: Kathryn Hebert, Administrative Services Manager
Hal Alvord, Public Works Director
Frank DelMonaco, LAZ Parking
Dilene Byrd, Secretary

OTHERS:

EXECUTIVE SESSION- Pending Litigation
Executive session began at 6:30PM
Executive session ended at 6:35PM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bentkover called the meeting to order at 6:36PM

APPROVALS/AUTHORIZATIONS

**1. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2008**

Chairman Bentkover said on Page 2, Item 3, Line 5 & 9 to change "back log" to
"backlog"

Chairman Bentkover said on Page 3, Item 4, Line 9, to change "at the beginning of
Presidents week" to "during Presidents week"

Chairman Bentkover said on Page 3, Item 4, Line 12, to replace "they" with "had"

Chairman Bentkover said on Page 3, Item 4, Line 17, to delete "on that"

Mr. Bentkover said on Page 3, Item 4, Paragraph 2, Line 1, to change "are" to "is"

Mr. Federici said on Page 4, Item 4, Line 11, delete "that"

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM WITH CORRECTIONS**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

2. AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS OR THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES MANAGER TO SIGN AND PROCESS ANNUAL OUTDOOR DINING APPLICATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE PARKING AUTHORITY

Ms. Hebert said that Chocopologie would be the only restaurant applying for the annual outdoor dining application at this time.

**** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Hebert said that a lot of money would be spent in the spring on long over due maintenance on the system. Mr. Shatz asked if the capital maintenance programs would still be moving forward due to the current economic down turn. Mr. Alvord said what has been recommended for a capital budget by the Planning Commission, the Finance Director and now the Board of Estimate and Taxation there have been no changes up to this point.

4. MONTHLY OPERATION REPORT

Mr. DelMonaco said it has been demonstrated that there will be plenty of spaces available for commuter parking at the Maritime Garage. Mr. Bentkover said there needs to be a way to fill this garage because the debt service that is being paid on the garage is going to increase next year. Mr. Shatz asked what the current debt service cost is annually. Ms. Hebert said \$650,000 and next year will increase to \$800,000. Mr. Shatz said that the Redevelopment Agency has planned for multiple story garages in various areas throughout the city and said they should be made aware that these large structures are in residential areas and the fact that the garages may not pay for themselves and a level below grade may be considered. Mr. Alvord said he has been involved in lengthy discussion with the Redevelopment Agency on the LDA's and parking requirements and the greater concern is ensuring that the LDA's include language that gives the Parking Authority options after public parking has been constructed to allow the Parking Authority to set the parking rates across the city consistently and in some cases the opportunity to contract with the developer to manage the operation of the garages at the option of the Parking Authority. Mr. Bentkover asked if there had been any recent meetings with representatives from the Maritime Aquarium. Mr. Alvord said there was a meeting held with the aquarium staff and they came to the meeting thinking there would be a signed agreement that 469 spaces would be guaranteed to them at the Maritime Garage everyday. Mr. Alvord said at that point he had stopped the meeting and suggested each going back to their respective principals to confirm the marching orders. He said that he had met with the Mayor this morning and he had confirmed that the marching orders were what we understood them to be. He said he would be sending Jennifer Herring an e-mail stating that the Mayor has confirmed our understanding of the results of the meeting and are ready to meet again with the understanding that we will never

recommend that the City commit any number of spaces in the Maritime Garage. Mr. Bentkover asked who from the Maritime Aquarium's staff attended the meeting. Mr. Alvord said Jennifer Herring, Bob Griesmer and Marcia Bittner. Ms. Hebert said she had requested and received from Marcia Bittner an attendance projection for this summer. Their projection was based on the money that they had spent for advertising, which was 13%. She said that their numbers projected an additional 10,000 people for July and August. Mr. Bentkover said that during the days of the Sono Arts Festival that the attendance in the Maritime Garage is higher and asked if that has impacted the aquarium. Mr. DelMonaco said "no" and that the Maritime Garage has never been filled to capacity. Mr. Alvord said there are plenty of opportunities to assure them that they have ways to effectively and efficiently accommodate people who want to attend the aquarium and they will need to work with us and not demand a certain number of spaces and if they are going to be their approach there will be no further meetings.

Mr. DelMonaco said that the demands at the Webster Lot have begun to level off and are now becoming more consistent. He said that North Water and Haviland trends continue to increase. He said that the shelters were installed yesterday at the North Water lot and the shelters for Haviland will be installed within the next couple of days. Mr. Bentkover said that during the renovation at Haviland Deck there needs to be a plan in place for the residents of Haviland Deck that are handicapped permit holders. He said his suggestion is that at the end of Haviland Street there is a building that has parking that is sold and said an arrangement should be made with them so there are no issues with the permanent residents who have handicapped permits. Mr. Alvord said an arrangement can be made with the owner's of the old Amberjacks Restaurant to use that lot for a couple of spaces for the handicapped permit holders during the term of the construction.

Mr. DelMonaco said that commuter demands continue to be consistent and that the automatic controls for the overhead doors have been installed and are working well. He said the security system is approximately 90% installed. He said that roof repairs had begun today and that the dollar change dispensers were installed on March 11, 2008. He said he is waiting for the new seating that will be installed on the New Haven side, which should be completed some time in May. He said he is making the arrangements for the installation of the bike racks at the South Norwalk Railroad Station on both the east and west bound sides. He said he is continuing bureaucratic efforts with various state agencies regarding the installation of the bike racks at the East Norwalk Railroad Station because the cost estimate to install the bike racks is approximate \$10,000. He said the trends at the Yankee Doodle Garage are doing very well and that Isaac Street lot continues to decline. He said that permit sales are up 16% compared to this time last year. He said that parking enforcement revenue continues to do well and that long overdue maintenance at the various facilities has begun.

Mr. Bentkover said he has received complaints on North Main Street that people were getting ticketed and it was misunderstood that those hours of operation were different than those hours of operation anywhere else in South Norwalk. He said it has been decided not to change the hours of operation because it would defeat the reason for putting those hours into effect but would be installed better signage in that area. He also

said there were a series of people who had received two tickets within the span of three hours and that practice will no longer be happening and that should alleviate any complaints from that parking area.

5. CAPITAL PROJECTS

Ms. Hebert said that the award letter was sent to All Phase Construction Company for the stair towers on the westbound side of the South Norwalk Railroad Station. She said that phase two of the Yankee Doodle Garage project will begin this spring.

6. SOUTH NORWALK RAILROAD STATION-TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Ms. Hebert said that she, Mr. Alvord and Mr. Linnartz attended the Traffic Authority meeting last week and have received approval to move the taxi's to the other side and are now in the progress of writing a letter from the Mayor to the taxi cab companies and are looking at an implementation date some time in May. Mr. Bentkover asked once implemented if there would be police presence. Mr. Alvord said he doubts there will be any support from the Police Department but will have a starter person to control the cabs and would also be relying on Laz's security staff for a period of time. Mr. DelMonaco said that the new cameras that will be installed will have the ability to read license plates and will have the ability to issue tickets days later. Mr. Federici asked how much authority we have if the cab companies don't comply. Mr. Alvord said a named taxi cab driver can be barred from picking up fares from the train station. Ms. Hebert said another means of enforcement is that there are rules the taxi cab drivers need to follow for their state license and they can be enforced and if the rules aren't followed the state will pull their license. Mr. Alvord said that Ms. Hebert has been working with the Department of Transportation so that the program that is proposed to the Parking Authority will be in sync to what the state is doing at the stations that they own.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Alvord said that he sits on the Advisory Committee for the Intermodal Transportation study of the South Norwalk transit oriented development study and have selected a firm to conduct the study and the first meeting was held yesterday and now have a detailed scope of work and sometime between now and the end of May they will want to interview Ms. Hebert along with the members of the Parking Authority. Mr. Alvord said he thinks the approach will be good to come up with a concept and a twelve percent design on how the city should pursue developing in that area.

Mr. Alvord left at 7:30PM

Mr. Shatz asked what the status of the legal action with the property owners is. Ms. Hebert said it is still ongoing and there has been no change at this time.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Bentkover said the parking and appeals office is currently in a small cubicle located at the Maritime Garage and said there is currently unused space inside the Maritime Garage that was originally planned for the ticket window for the Maritime Aquarium which never happened. Ms. Hebert said it originally cost \$250,000, paid for by the City of Norwalk, to fit out the space specifically for the Maritime Aquarium. They have no intention of using that space for their ticket operation. Mr. Bentkover suggested using that space for the Parking Authority office and the functions of the office would include permit sales, parking tickets, customer service and would also be used for the Parking Authority's monthly meetings. Mr. Federici asked how much it would cost to renovate the space. We are developing those numbers. Mr. Bentkover asked Ms. Hebert to provide a cost estimate for next months meeting. Mr. DelMonaco said he had met with Mr. Robert Cavello, Westview Group, LLC., yesterday and he would have some conceptual ideas along with a cost estimate for next months meeting.

Ms. Hebert said in November she had met with Mr. Hamilton and had agreed to put out an RFP to have a consultant do a management audit review of the parking system. She expects the RFP to go out at the beginning of April with it returning at the end of April.

9. ACTION ON ANY ITEM DISCUSSED HEREIN

No discussion.

10. ADJOURNMENT

** MR. BENTKOVER MOVED TO APPROVE

** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 7:55PM