

DOWNTOWN PARKING TASK FORCE
Meeting Minutes – February 12, 2020 at 3:00 PM
Courtyard Conference Room

Committee Member

Ward Warren – Chair
Rob Pell – Vice Chair
Troy Yoho
Michael Holzinger
David Leverenz

Staff/Council Liaisons:

Dwight Faszer II – Council Liaison (present)
Lora Glover – Director PCD (present)
Michael Byrne – Property Management (present)
Sergeant Ed Burke – Public Safety (present)

Guests:

Sean Bassinger – Courier
Tyler Flaming – City Councilor

1. **Roll Call:**
 - a. Chair Warren opened the meeting at 3:04 p.m.
2. **Introductions:**
 - a. None
3. **Public Comment:**
 - a. None
4. **Approval of Minutes:** January 22, 2020

MOTION/VOTE

Vice Chair Pell moved and Member Leverenz seconded the motion to approve the minutes from January 22, 2020 as revised.

The vote resulted as follows: “AYES”: Chair Warren, Members Pell, Holzinger, Leverenz and Yoho. “NAYS”: None. Abstain: None.

The motion passed.

5. Action Items

- a. Ward discussed the JCT Bus Stop location with Commissioner DeYoung. DeYoung was concerned about relocating the proposed new location after all the work for the site. Ward explained that the task force was not aware of the proposed location. Ward felt the plan should have been submitted to the public sooner for the public to comment. DeYoung asked what alternatives the task force had in mind. Ward stated that the project would need to provide a Traffic Report, Economic Impact Study, and Parking Analysis on how this would impact the businesses in the area. Very tight parking, especially this area in the downtown. Ward listed a variety of impacts with narrow streets, large buses, and the loss of many spaces downtown. He suggested City and County work together for alternative locations, a more reasonable alternative. DeYoung asked what the County should do with their lot? Ward said maybe the City could purchase the site and partner with the County. He stated the Task Force did not feel the County’s existing plan was a good plan. DeYoung said he would discuss with Scott Chancey and would get back to Ward. Ward asked for input from the Task Force. Rob stated he agreed and wanted to expand on the comments. He felt that the existing depot plan would be quickly outgrown and just kicking the plan down the road. It would seem as though the City and County

don't always work together. He likes the idea of the City purchasing the two properties. There is no long-term plan, just a short-term plan to get the busses off 6th Street. David stated that the fact they own the property is a check mark in favor of that site. Purchasing another site would be a hurdle. David felt the site would be a good location for an additional customer parking lot. Troy agreed that the 5th Street location did not provide for expansion. He felt it was a neighborhood site, not a Grants Pass site. Ward asked for a motion: Ward moves that the DT task force is very concerned about the negative impacts of the JCT Bus Hub moving to the 5th and E Street location, multiple negative impacts and it is recommend the City communicate with the County and see if there is a more reasonable location for the Bus hub rather than creating additional parking problems in the CBD. Pell clarified that they demand the impact studies. Ward amended the motion to include the impact studies. Parking Study, traffic study and economic study on the impact on the neighborhood. It would be up to the City to have a workshop or the best way to communicate with the County. Ward is concerned with DeYoung's take of just wanting to get the project done without taking in their concerns into account. Rob seconded, unanimous.

6. Matters from Committee

- a. Ward asked Sgt. Burke if he had any new information on enforcement. Ward asked about the 2 vs. 3 hour parking limit. He is curious about the difference in trips are made by the CSOs. Burke stated 1 or 2 starting after 9:30 am. They return after 1:00 pm. If it went down to 2 hours there would be additional opportunities to go down and check. DJ discussed Strategic Planning there is interest to discuss contracting enforcement services, such as Diamond Parking. Ward stated this subject comes up every time there is a new police chief. Every time this comes forward at merchant meetings, etc., it is almost always 100% that they love the local people and they can see, detect and report other problems, not just parking. The CSOs interact with merchants and people. DJ stated that CSOs would still be available downtown. Ward stated that Diamond makes their money on the number of tickets they write. So, then downtown is the only place in the city where people get penalized for spending a little extra time downtown. Ward would rather go to 2-hr and have more enforcement rather than go to a private company for enforcement. Rob agreed with Ward's comments, but the survey they conducted last fall indicated that the 2-hour timeframe was not supported. Rob agreed that the merchants signed a petition stating that they did not want Diamond Parking, and wanted the CSO presence. He appreciated that the Police Chief and City Manager were interested because of the "revenue neutral" program. Rob stated however, that there would still be impacts. Rob doubted that Diamond would still provide the same "hometown" attitude. Rob discussed some history of CSOs and loss of coverage under Henner's time. It would be harder to hold them accountable. CSOs would have less to do. He felt that we would lose the presence of the CSOs, especially dealing with transient and nuisance issues. Ward discussed the positive impact when the parking meters were removed in the 1980s and how happy the merchants were over that decision. Michael stated he has experience with Diamond in Portland and the problem with them impounding peoples' cars. He stated Diamond is an anti-economic development factor. DJ said he recommended they provide some "Diamond" background for Council input. Troy said he does not like the idea of the City losing control over parking enforcement. Rob stated he felt CSO enforcement could end up being revenue neutral.

- b. Ward discussed businesses with large number of employees in the CBD. Historically, businesses downtown were small mom/pop businesses. First Call, and now Dutch Bros have impacted downtown parking, which is overflowing into the residential neighborhoods. First Call has 200 daytime employees and Dutch Bros has approximately 150 employees having to park either in the Growers Market or the street. Ward asked how does the task force address that. The Growers Market is virtually full every day, even with the food trucks being moved out. Ward stated they should discuss how many employees a business could have without paying anything for parking. What would be reasonable? 15 employees? Then anything over would pay for a parking spot, just like employees that pay \$20 per month for other lots. Rob explained that areas outside of the CBD require parking. Rob gave background on when First Call came to a Council meeting and stated that their employees would all park in the Growers Market, but they did not follow through. First Call and DB do not have any walk-in traffic, so they don't feel the impact the way other businesses downtown which survive on their walk-in customers. Ward stated that payment for parking spaces should be dedicated to a fund for parking facilities. The number of employees could be set at 15 or 20, then they would pay \$20 monthly. David asked how the spaces would be dedicated? Ward said the City could sell a percentage of spaces for employees and the rest should be for customers. David said consolidated parking for the business would be easier. Rob agreed and said it might push the large employers to support a parking structure. Rob said that the businesses are not getting the benefit of Dutch Bros employees shopping or eating downtown because DB provides for lunch, along with beverage and snack machines. Ward said that Travis indicated he sends his employees to the Growers Market to preserve parking in the Towne Center Plaza for customer parking. Troy discussed having to go through a traffic analysis and paying SDCs for his business. Could businesses in the CBD be charged a parking SDC? David stated that he felt smaller employers probably know they need to park somewhere, probably for free. He briefly discussed a parking fee/tax but understood that would be a burden for downtown businesses. There was brief discussion about parking SDCs, Local Improvement District, purchase of the Owl Lot and maintenance costs for the various parking lots downtown. Urban Renewal District was also discussed as a possibility. Rob noted that the only free parking for employees was the Growers Market. It certainly is not enough. Rob stated that if there were a parking surcharge and people saw the fund grow for a parking structure may be supported. Rob discussed establishing a formula for existing businesses for charging for parking. Any new business could be charged, pay towards a parking fund/structure. He stated he would feel ok with paying into a fund for a structure. He felt there should be a policy restricting another large employer from moving downtown. Ward attributed parking problems to City policies. City and staff did not plan for the needed infrastructure. This complicated the problem by allowing employers with 200/300 employees without providing any parking. Troy felt all businesses should pay their equal share, regardless of the number of employees. David stated that one philosophy would be to target the larger employers. The problem is where is the parking for those employees? Discussion circled around a parking fund and a parking structure. Ward stated he feels the downtown is a special public gathering place similar to parks and that the City pays a lot of money on parks and that City officials should look at the downtown the same way and see the need to see the downtown with the same way and fund it the same way.
- c. Parking Structure ~ Ward said he concluded that modular parking structures have been refined and that maintenance issues are not as critical as in the past and that they can be

installed faster. Ward stated that the area most often discussed was the Growers Market. Ward asked if anyone had another location? David said the lot east of Safeway. Troy felt that anything east of 7th Street would be too far. The Napa lot was mentioned, but Ward felt there are other areas that are underserved and that the Growers Market would provide better service.

- d. Enforcement Issues ~ Rob discussed that there are some merchants that would be interested in establishing a neighborhood parking watch. Then they could note repeat offenders. Rob can develop a form for the merchant to document parking situations and then they would be turned over to Public Safety. This would provide specifics to Public Safety. This would allow them to identify repeat offenders. This needs to be an easy program for the merchants to follow. Rob discussed the CSO and Cadet programs.

Other Matters ~ Michael shared a 1970 picture of the Beaver Lot which displayed a large easily legible "Free Public Parking" sign.

Rob stated that the motorcycle spot on the corner of 5th and G, there was a picture of a Prius in that spot and then a Ford Truck was crammed into the spot. Could that spot be put on the hot spot list? Burke said they could request additional enforcement of that location. Rob asked about the dawn to dusk sign on the Owl Lot? The sign has been removed. Staff was uncertain of the origin. Rob questioned other signs that said 8-5, no employee, but what about Sat/Sun. Mike B. said the signs should say except "Sunday". Mike said staff would review and get them standardized.

7. Future Agenda Building for Next Meeting

- Parking Fund/Structure
 - a. Based on employees
 - b. Areas reserved for customers
 - c. What would a future structure look like? How many spaces would be provided?
Lora will research. Provide examples of attractive parking structures (Eugene).
- Merchant parking program (tracking form will be provided by Rob).
- D, E, F from current agenda – move over.
- Recommendation on Diamond Parking service

8. Adjourn

- a. 4:46 pm

Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday, February 26, 2020 @ 3:00 pm in the Courtyard Conference Room.

Minutes prepared by Lora Glover, City of Grants Pass, Parks and Community Development Department.