

**PARKING AUTHORITY REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 26, 2018**

- ATTENDANCE:** Richard Brescia, Chairman
Michael Harden, Vice Chairman
Eric Rains
Jud Aley
Tom Vetter
- STAFF:** Kathryn Hebert, Director of Transportation & Mobility
Vanessa Valadares, DPW Senior Civil Engineer
Dilene Byrd, Secretary
- OTHERS:** Gail Lusardo, Liberty Square
Bill LaRose, Liberty Square
Jim Blair, Liberty Square
Anthony Neave, Liberty Square
Brad LaRose, Liberty Square
Johnnie Weldon, Liberty Square
John Hannifin, State DOT, Project Manager for Facilities and Transit
Stathis Manousos, LAZ Parking
Rocky Legesse, LAZ Parking
Tim Sheehan, Executive Director, Redevelopment Agency

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gail Lusardo

Ms. Lusardo stated that installing meters in Liberty Square will be a hardship for the businesses and the tenants that live upstairs. We have gone without meters for all of these years and I do not understand why they need to be installed now and what the cost will be to install the meters versus leaving it the way it is. She asked if the Parking Authority will be making money by installing the meters forcing their tenants out because this is a big burden for them and she is very concerned about keeping her tenants and she does not want the meters.

Bill LaRose

Mr. LaRose stated that the businesses do not need parking meters and it will chase their business away. He said that the owner of 99 Bottles complains about people drinking in the parking lot in which he serves the drinks, he also complained about the abandoned vehicles and that a police officer should be sent to have the car ticketed or towed. He said he has no complaints on his side of the lot and it's only the other side of the lot that are complaining and is only the owner of 99 Bottles. He said the meters are not needed and as far as the snow plowing either or the owner of Valentinos plows the lot and they

have never asked the city to plow the lot and they have offered to carry the liability insurance if the meters don't get installed.

Jim Blair

Mr. Blair stated that he has been there when the meters started and he has been there without the meters, and the tenants have nowhere else to park and it is not like South Norwalk where people can go to Webster Lot or the parking garages unless they walk across the bridge and you do not want to walk across the bridge in the middle of the winter. He said a lot of the parking problems are due to Parks and Recreation closing Veterans Park which used to be open. He said if the city would just plow the middle just like the do with the streets and get a little of the snow out there would be no problem because the store owners clean the sidewalks. It's going to be a burden more so on the tenants then it is on the owners of the building. He understands the 99 Bottles problem but he also contributes to that and he doesn't clean the lot and it is littered with liquor bottles all the time. He said he understands that parking needs to be turned over as part of the process but installing meters will not help and will drive everyone out.

Anthony Neave

Mr. Neave said that he owns the tattoo parlor in Liberty Square and by installing meters will definitely drive his business out. He has talked to the other business owners and nobody wants the meters and he does not see any benefit to the tenants or the business owners and it will make the tenants leave and eventually the businesses.

Brad LaRose

Mr. LaRose stated that he does not want the meters installed and it is not the way to do business there and there are enough problems there and he does not think this will help anything and everyone in the area is saying the same thing. He said he knows South Norwalk has that situation but he has owned property at Liberty Square since the 1960's and the city has not done anything in the lot since then so with all of the money that the city saves by not maintaining the lot they should be doing something better with the money rather that installing parking meters. There is not enough parking in the area and it creates a problem for the tenants that live and work there and he is totally against installing the meters and that there were meters there in the past which the city removed because they did not work out.

Ms. Walker

Ms. Walker stated that she is lived in Liberty Square for 11 years and everyone likes beautification but her problem is having to pay for parking. She said that as a resident it is crucial that as tenants they get better treatment than what they are receiving, and that there is a lot of things to be looked at and not just the beautification of the front of the building.

GUEST SPEAKER- WALK BRIDGE TEAM

Mr. Hannifin presented an update on the Bridge Project and said that the Walk Bridge is a major corridor for rail and has 125,000 passengers per day, and roughly 175 trains cross the bridge per day and it is a very important link to the northeast corridor. The reason why we are replacing the structure is because they want a safe structure that is reliable and will maintain rail and river service throughout the project to keep passenger service moving and want to minimize disruption to the community. The cost of the project is currently estimated at \$1.2 billion dollars, and they are currently at 60% design for the Walk Bridge progressing towards 90% and are at the permitting stage. The Walk Bridge construction will begin at the end of 2019 and are hoping to be finished in four years. There will be a construction coordination plan

throughout construction and there are a series of documents of commitments from the State to address safety and security, recourse protection and community concerns that outline the commitments to the city, the residents and the stakeholders within the Walk Bridge area, and the drafts will be completed at the 90% design stage and will be implemented during construction. They intend to start the work in the fall of 2019 and the cost of the bridge construction alone is \$510 million dollars. They expect to submit the permits in late 2018 and will have them in 2019 to start construction. We are also going to be doing a test pilot program this fall to gather criteria for noise and vibration and verify the assumptions to be included in the documents. Eversource will be doing their relocation of their power lines and will they will begin the removal of the wires and high tower during construction operation.

He presented a full rendering of the project and said that the East Norwalk Bridge will also be replaced as part of the Walk Bridge Project as well as the Fort Point Street Bridge, Ann Street Bridge and the Osborne Avenue super structure. Mr. Harden asked if the bridge height on Fort Point Street will stay the same because it's the only bridge for tall trucks to get in. Mr. Hannifin said "yes" and it will also be wider. He discussed the work for the fall and winter and said additional work will be done for the slope elevation, complete the foundation work, begin drainage installation and remove the ballasts and begin installing new ones.

Mr. Hannifin concluded his presentation and said that updates are available on their webpage at www.walkbridgect.com and is a great resource and tool. He said that they are also on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

NEW BUSINESS

1. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 2018.

**** MR. VETTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.**

**** MR. ALEY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

A. CHAIRMAN REPORT

Mr. Brescia reported and said that in October the Parking Authority will have to deal with a few major issues and there will need to be a good discussion on the management plan for Liberty Square but that it will require a good dialogue and he will be recusing himself from those discussion because of his ownership of one of the buildings. He said that the Parking Authority also needs to start discussion the budget for next fiscal year and asked that the members of the Parking Authority itemize what their priorities are. He discussed the study that was done regarding the extra day per week of the courtesy card program and suggested that whatever is decided regarding the courtesy card program or Liberty Square that it does not get implemented until January 1, 2019, so there is time to have a discussion and it will also allow for any preparation work that may need to be done and will also allow for quarterly reports to be done. He provided a background and said that when he began with the Parking Authority he had spoken to Mr. Hayward and Mr. Harden to see what the biggest problems were for the Parking Authority and they had both said perception, and he had made the recommendation that they

become a little more aggressive in outreach with the public and a lot of good things came from the outreach and one was that he had met the current members of the Parking Authority and that the outreach had become the culture of the Parking Authority. He said the following year they had received a report back from Desman Associates had also done a study on how to manage parking both on-street and off-street and had make recommendations on the rates and there was a vigorous debate on how the rates should be done and they were implemented in July, 2016 and prior to implementing the rates they had done an open house with the business's in SONO as part of the outreach to explain what was being done. We had failed in the outreach to take the consideration of the Common Council because the people who are also working to do the best they can for the city like we are members of the Common Council and he had met with Mr. Kimmel at the time and what came out of that discussion was to assign a couple members of the Common Council to sit in on the Parking Authority meetings and he had assigned Mr. Kydes and Mr. Hempstead and the communications have improved. He said we have a lot of targeted audiences that the Parking Authority has to concern itself with beginning with the public and the business's. He said he knows some of the members of the Parking Authority are concerned about the financial impact of expanding the courtesy card program would have and there was a study done by LAZ showing the month that the extra week was added in July to a similar month which was October and he would like to add another week from January until the end of June 2019 as a test period and his assumption is that what will happen will only be good and there will not be a major impact on the revenue, but there will be a substantial impact on compliance and perception. Mr. Harden said he was surprised to see that in the study it stated that people are beginning to see the program as policy and that concerns him. Mr. Brescia said that he disagrees that it is being demanded but he does agree that people expect it. Mr. Aley said that he agrees that it is a good program but that there are other things that should be discussed and it may be worth speaking with the constables to see if people are now demanding the courtesy cards. Mr. Rains said that if outreach is the umbrella he suggested that all of the outreach programs work together rather than the courtesy cards being its own thing and that a public relations person may be needed to measure this.

B. NORWALK NOW

Ms. Hebert distributed the draft quarterly report, analytics and the updated status report and said there are now 30 participants that range from restaurant, entertainment and retail. She said there is an event scheduled for October 16th through October 21st called Crush beginning at 5:00PM.

C. PARKING CAPACITY AND STRATEGIC PLAN

Ms. Hebert said that the public participation meeting will be held next Wednesday, October 3rd at 6:00PM in the Community Room at City Hall and the Walker Consultants will be providing a presentation. She said it is an opportunity for them to receive input from the public. Mr. Brescia said that Ms. Hebert will also be scheduling the Walker Consultants to present an update to the Parking Authority.

D. LIBRARY PARKING

Mr. Legesse said that the lot opened in July and that there have been 2100 transactions and most were done by the costumers without any issues. There was some confusion with the signage which they have now changed and is now clear.

E. FINANCIAL, TRANSIENT ACTIVITY, COURTESEY CARD AND OPERATING REPORTS

Mr. Manousos reported and said that they are in the second month of the fiscal year the revenue year to date is up 3% and the expenses are favorable to budget at 16% and compared to last year is 11%. He said that transient activity is up 4% systemwide and 78% of system revenue is from credit cards, and the transactions for Pay by Cell compared to last year is up 81% and represents 9.4% of total transactions and is up 8% from last year, and year to date revenue is up 70% from last year. He said that ticket issuance year to date compared to last year is down just over 4% and the revenue is down just over 5%. Mr. Sheehan asked if the decrease in ticket issuance is due to more compliance or from the courtesy card program. Mr. Manousos said the will have to look into that but that the value of the citations that were issued from the courtesy cards year to date totaled \$28,600 and for August 600 courtesy tickets were issued, \$300 in complimentary metered time was added to expired meters and if the courtesy tickets were citations the value would have been \$13,250 in fines. Mr. Brescia said that the courtesy cards have been an educational factor which spread and helped with the impact. Mr. Sheehan said that the courtesy card program has been great and has worked well and prior to the program there were many complaints regarding enforcement and you don't hear much of that anymore. Mr. Manousos said that the ticket issuance decreased from the past two months was 174 tickets and the tickets that were issued after the courtesy warning was 151 tickets which equates to 87%. Mr. Harden said that the courtesy card program should continue but it is only one spoke in the wheel in changing the reputation of the parking enforcement and of the Parking Authority.

F. BUSINESS INTELLIGENT DASHBOARD, AMBASSADOR ROAD ASSISTANT PROGRAM, CUSTOMER SERVICE SYSTEM, SENSOR PROJECT

Mr. Manousos said that they are still working with the vendors on the Business Intelligent tool.

Mr. Legesse said that they are projecting the ambassador project to begin in mid-October and they are conducting interviews now.

Mr. Legesse said that the customer service app has been up and running and that an e-mail blast has gone out to all of the permit holders and waiting list customers and they are starting to see the usage in the app.

Mr. Legesse said that Streetline went above and beyond to get the sensors and they now have them all for Norwalk and he is now working with Ms. Valadares on the permitting process with SNEW.

G. CAPITAL PROJECT REPORT

Ms. Valadares presented her report as follows:

Maritime Garage:

- Drainage improvements on the roof level to be finalized soon.

SNRR Garage:

- Most of the work completed during the summer months.
- Pending drain repairs.

Haviland:

- Upper level has been closed since September 17th so waterproof membrane can be replaced.
- Closure should last about 4 weeks

Yankee Doodle Conference Room/Office Renovations

HVAC finalizing rough-in and equipment installation.

Electricians finalizing installation of lighting fixtures.

ADA ramp being installed this week.

In-House Projects

Liberty Square Parking Lot

CMJV has started the work on the drainage (municipal and State) portion. Schedule varies due to weather and tide.

Grasso is planning to start right after drainage is completed on the lot area. Full closure will be implemented. Work to start week of 24th or 31st.

Arrangement s are in place at Veterans Park to accommodate Liberty Square parking.

LIBERTY SQUARE

Mr. Brescia said this will be discussed at the October meeting.

H. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Sheehan said that there was an issue brought up at the Wall Street meeting and it was asked if someone left prior their two hour limit and then came back if they would be in violation with their two hour limit and asked if that is a policy. Mr. Brescia said “no” and if that in fact happened and they received a parking ticket they should dispute it.

I. NEXT PARKING AUTHORITY MEETING: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2018 AT 6:00PM AT 11 NORTH WATER STREET, NORWALK CT.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. VETTER MOVED TO ADJOURN**
- ** MR. HARDEN SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:05PM.

Respectfully submitted, Dilene Byrd