

TOWN OF SOUTHTON
Parking Authority
Regular Meeting
October 2, 2008

The October meeting of the Parking Authority of the Town of Southington was held on October 2, 2008 in the town council chambers of the Southington Town Hall, 75 Main Street, Southington, Connecticut. The meeting was called to order by Rebecca Davis, Chairperson at 4:32 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was recited by everyone in attendance.

Roll Call

Mr. Myers, Ms. Zommer, Mrs. Zoni and Ms. Davis, present.

A quorum is determined.

Rebecca Davis, assuming the Chair:

Mr. Myers made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 4, 2008 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Zoni. A discussion requested a correction. Under the police communications section the word **overtime** in the final sentence will be stricken. All present were in favor of approving the amended minutes.

Police Communications

None

Public Communications

Matthew Florian addressed the commissioners. He requested a site walk with the Parking Authority members to discuss the placement of the parking spaces.

Ms. Davis advised that the two hour parking issue would be discussed under Usage and Signage later in today's agenda.

Commissioner Communications

The Chair reported that she had posted the minutes of the on-site meeting held at the Fireplace Restaurant and they are available for review.

Ms. Davis had a call from Sarah Mayo about an issue that appears on this agenda.

Mr. Myers' proposed informal commissioner's parking study has been stalled by inability to get up to date maps of the municipal lots. One is now available.

Mr. Myers noted that the overnight parking issue had been mentioned recently at a Council meeting in reference to the proposed S. Center Lot.

Mrs. Zoni reported on the dumpster overflow problem at the Riccio Way lot. It is evident that there is unauthorized use of the private dumpsters. This problem will be addressed by the involved owner and the waste removal contractor.

Submission of Bills and Payments

Mrs. Zoni made a motion that the stenographer be paid \$106. This was seconded by Ms. Zommer and the motion carried on voice vote.

AMJ Line Painting has presented a bill for \$100 for line striping behind the Fireplace. Mr. Myers noted that an excellent job was done. Mrs. Zoni made a motion to pay this bill, seconded by Mr. Myers and this was voted unanimously affirmative.

A bill from July was presented by AMJ Line Painting in the amount of \$250 for the placement of signs and poles in the No. Liberty Lot. Mrs. Zoni made a motion to pay this, seconded by Mr. Myers and it passed with a voice vote.

Presentation for Lot Usage of Popular Lot

Stephen Giudice of Harry Cole & Son, an engineering firm, spoke for Sarah Mayo regarding the renovation of her Center St building. A request was made for the temporary use of a few spaces during construction for dumpsters and the storage of equipment. The roof will be removed and two floors will be added above the ground floor. A timetable has been supplied to the Parking Authority along with a construction plan. Also needed are 30 parking waivers for the Popular Lot during business hours on an ongoing basis. It is projected that the two top floors will house professional offices.

Ms. Davis noted that the time line for the temporary waivers does not appear to conflict with the construction dates of the DelBuono project.

Commissioner's Commentary

Ms. Zommer spoke at some length about the increasing requests for parking waivers and her concern that soon the lots will become saturated, and discussed the potential negative effect that this situation will have on future development.

Ms. Davis worries about economic development in the downtown area if parking becomes a problem. She notes that there are more than 206 waivers than spaces presently in effect. Without a parking study the number being regularly used is evasive. She is concerned about parking being an escalating and far-reaching problem. She noted that the Parking Authority is trying to be creative, but limits must come.

Mr. Myers supports a professional parking study and wonders about near future projects that will be dependent upon municipal parking.

Lou Perillo, Economic Development Coordinator who was present asked to address the Parking Authority. There was no objection from the commissioners, therefore the Chair recognized him from the floor. He said that it should be noted that the recent development in the downtown area increases the town's tax base and he would project an additional tax revenue in the range of \$60,000.

He stated that he had a surplus in his budget last year that he asked be applied toward a parking study, but this request was not honored. Ms. Davis and Mrs. Zoni questioned him closely about this at some length. Ms. Davis commented that she did not wish to have business development suffer due to parking issues. Mrs. Zoni feels that a parking study is appropriate at this time but did voice her approval of the waivers as needed for Ms. Mayo's project to go forward.

Ms. Zommer agreed and approved of granting the waivers.

Mr. Myers moved to approve the waivers for the Mayo project as outlined, for 30 parking spots in the Popular Lot. Mrs. Zoni seconded and it passed on a voice vote.

Ms. Zommer made a motion to grant the three spaces temporarily needed for construction dumpsters and building supplies. Mr. Myers seconded her motion. During the discussion, Mrs. Zoni asked about proper safety measures and Ms. Davis wanted reassurance that the appropriate liability insurance would be in place. A December 1 deadline for use of these spaces was imposed. These concerns being satisfied, the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Riccio Way Fence

The Chair reported that Mr. Meade investigated the leaning fence in the Riccio Way lot in an attempt to determine the cause of the leaning, allegedly due to snow being pushed against it during the winter. The snapped wire wraps were not caused by the fence leaning, something pushed against it. Mr. Meade thought that it could have been placed a bit deeper. The Town Engineer opined that the fence had not been anchored deep enough. Rustic Fence Co. maintains that it was properly installed and the company has no liability. Mrs. Zoni asked if that had been secured in writing, in the event that legal action be entertained. (A letter has been requested but has not been received.) She wondered if it was a safety issue and thought it would be a good idea to take photos of the fence. The town says that it is not responsible to fix it and to go back to the fence company to fix it. The Parking Authority has a quote from Mr. Meade for \$1800 to fix the fence.

Mr. Myers is reticent to accept this expense. Ms. Davis will discuss it again with the Town. Ms. Zommer suggested that at this point the project could wait until spring, since another winter of snow plowing looms.

Municipal Lot Usage and Signage

The Chair reported that she and another commissioner have spoken with the Town Attorney about the legalities of sign placement for the enforcement of limited parking. He spoke with the Police Chief about the use of the new islands for additional two hour parking in the Riccio Way Lot. This opinion has been forwarded to Parking Authority commissioners in writing. It deviates from previous information. Ms. Davis mentioned that two hour parking in other lots should be discussed.

Mrs. Zoni reported that she had investigated the issue as well, and spoke strongly in favor of adding repositioned two hour parking in the Riccio Way Lot as soon as possible.

The Chair cautioned that it would take time to implement any new plan since legally it was necessary to post changes in regulations in the newspaper. The Town Attorney will be consulted to verify procedure.

Mr. Myers suggested adding two hour parking at the first island as soon as possible on a temporary basis, to be revisited at a specific time.

Mrs. Zoni made a motion that two hour parking signs be added, rather than moved, a double row at the first median and at each end, on a trial basis; that this parking plan be reassessed in six months and a public hearing be scheduled, if needed. The cost should not exceed \$1500. The motion was seconded by Mr. Myers and passed unanimously on voice vote.

Ms. Zommer made a motion that the Parking Authority schedule a walk at the Riccio Way Lot and invite anyone interested to join them. Ms. Zoni seconded this and it passed on a voice vote. The Chair will set this up as soon as feasible, notify commissioners and interested parties, and post it to the public.

Matthew Florian requested permission to address the Parking Authority from the floor and expressed several personal thoughts informally and with the permission of the Chair. There was no objection expressed by commissioners present and voting. He suggested that some of the present parking problems stem from the increasing enrollment at Branford Hall and the additional need for all day parking. While it is positive to have the students here, in retrospect, he wondered if it would have been wiser to locate the school elsewhere, where parking could be convenient and ample without infringement on a burgeoning downtown economy. He thanked the Parking Authority for pursuing the two hour parking issue and applauded them for their foresight in granting the Mayo project its request.

Mr. Myers responded that he had noticed that Branford Hall students were being forced to park in several public and private lots on an all-day basis in and around the downtown area. The school reports 75 more students this semester. They have not sought additional parking waivers.

Ms. Davis reiterated the necessity for a professional parking study in light of the overwhelming success of the Renaissance movement and the role that public parking plays in it. She suggested that perhaps a meeting with other boards and commissions to see if enough funding could be cobbled together to get this done. She commented that it is apparent that there will come a time quite soon when no more parking waivers can be granted without it. This could affect the near future decisions of other permit-granting town commissions and potentially curb economic development which the Parking Authority doesn't wish to do.

Dumpsters

Ms. Davis reports that it has come to her attention that there might be a question about property lines, in relation to the planned repositioning of dumpsters on a concrete slab in the Fleet Lot. She suggested that this be seen on site at the same time as the Riccio Way Lot is walked.

NEW BUSINESS

Fleet Lot

The Chair has received a call from the Bank of America. There have been complaints from bank customers about the lack of available parking.

There was an interactive discussion about remedies. Ms. Davis will keep the bank manager abreast of Parking Authority efforts to alleviate this problem.

Ms. Zommer recapped that 30 waivers have just been issued for the Mayo project and Ms. Davis adds that Branford Hall uses at least 75 more spaces this fall and there were 206 waivers more than spaces allocated before this meeting. It is not known how many are regularly used on a regular basis.

Mrs. Zoni wonders if there is some creative answer, perhaps a shuttle or tram system. She suggests that the Fleet Lot be added to the walking agenda for the planned on-site meeting.

Vote of Confidence - D'Angelo Lot

A motion was made by Mr. Myers to grant the Congregational Church one overnight use of the D'Angelo Lot as requested. Mrs. Zoni seconded his motion and it carried on a voice vote.

Vote of Confidence - Apple Harvest

A motion was made by Ms. Zommer to grant the Apple Harvest Festival the use of municipal lots as previously approved for one additional day as a rain date. This was seconded by Mrs. Zoni and passed on a voice vote.

Adjournment

Adjournment was called for the Chair at 5:55PM and proposed by Ms. Zommer, seconded by Mr. Myers. All were in favor of adjournment at that time.

Rebecca Davis, Chairperson
Town of Southington
Parking Authority