

**Town of Mansfield Parking Steering Committee for Storrs Center
Tuesday, March 2, 2010
Mansfield Downtown Partnership Office
1244 Storrs Road (behind People's United Bank in Storrs Commons)**

5:00 PM

Minutes

Members Present: Karla Fox (Chair), Paul Aho, Martha Funderburk, Manny Haidous, Meredith Lindsey, Ralph Pemberton, Michael Taylor

Ex-Officio Members Present: Matthew Hart, Andy Hill, Lon Hultgren, Carrie Krasnow, Macon Toledano, Cynthia van Zelm

1. Call to Order

Chair Karla Fox called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2. Approval of Minutes of January 12, 2010

Matt Hart made a motion to approve the minutes of January 12, 2010. Meredith Lindsey seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Remarks from the Chair

Ms. Fox introduced Carrie Krasnow from Walker Parking who will be taking on Andy Hill's role as parking consultant to the Town. Mr. Hill has accepted a position at a different firm. Ms. Krasnow has worked for Walker for over 12 years. The Committee members introduced themselves.

4. Review of Parking Expenses

Ms. Krasnow referred to a Power Point presentation and copies were given to Committee members.

With respect to the preliminary Phase 1 Program, Michael Taylor asked about the location of the surface lot. Macon Toledano confirmed that this would be in the Bishop Center lot, if needed, for Phase 1. He said this would be a private lot and, thus, expenses for surface parking are not being considered as part of the current discussion.

Ms. Krasnow said she would go over preliminary operating expenses related to the various parking options (garage, on-street). She said that the type of equipment or lack of equipment (meters) will affect cost. And, within equipment, there are several options such as single or multi-space. She said that labor considerations are the largest cost of operations.

With respect to the garage, Ms. Krasnow said the costs are largely related to the cashiering operation. On-site management can also be part of the costs and that personnel would assist with any problems that arise. Manny Haidous asked if an attendant is needed 24 hours a day. Ms. Krasnow said that typically an attendant is not there in the late night and early morning hours. The system can be set up for automation so people can get out at those hours. She does not recommend staffing the garage at all times.

Ms. Krasnow noted that the preliminary labor costs for the garage are based on contracting with a 3rd party operator. Matt Hart reiterated that the Town would most likely be looking at 3rd party management, in response to a question from Mr. Taylor.

Ms. Fox said that it will need to be determined if the garage parking is profitable or at least breaks even. Mr. Taylor suggested that, if needed, the developer guarantee a certain amount of revenue to the Town to ensure costs are covered.

Ms. Krasnow reviewed the Conceptual Garage Expenses slide. She said the current thinking is to focus more on “pay on foot” vs. paying at the gate. It requires less staffing and it is frequently seen at airports.

With respect to the conceptual overhead expense targets for the garage, Ms. Krasnow said this assumes an approximately 550 space garage, full-time staffing (see above re: not 24/7), and a 3rd party operator (not the Town).

Mr. Haidous asked if there was a mixed model (municipal and private). Andy Hill said the estimated staff costs were taken from the Hartford MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) labor rates for parking attendants. He said these costs are most likely a representation of staff costs for private and publicly operated garages. Ms. Krasnow said there are more efficiencies to the operations being done by one of the other – public or private entities.

Ms. Krasnow noted that the breakdown of estimated costs is included on a daily, monthly and annual basis. She said it is based on 25 days as Mondays and Tuesdays tend to be slower retail days/ a conservative analysis.

Ms. Fox asked Mr. Toledano how many people are expected in the housing units. Mr. Toledano said the majority of the parking spaces will be dedicated to residents who will pay a monthly fee to the operator. He said the estimate is 350 units in Phase 1. The zoning regulations require 1.25 spaces for each unit which approximates to 440 spaces. Mr. Toledano said spaces can be allocated to residents in the surface lot and the garage. This leaves approximately 200 spaces left for commercial activity. He said once the square footage is determined for Phase 1, a decision will need to be made whether some temporary parking would need to be developed on site.

Mr. Taylor noted that his lot and Mr. Haidous’ commercial lot are filled during the week. He expressed concern about whether there are enough spaces. Mr.

Toledano said it is a balancing act between creating enough spaces but not too many and recognized the issue.

Mr. Hultgren noted that the parking analysis assumes shared parking and so this needs to factor into the discussion. Mr. Toledano also noted that the goal is for Storrs Center to be a transit oriented project. The hope is to incentivize people not to drive, especially students who might drive over from campus.

Mr. Taylor expressed concern about the location of parking for “grab and go” items. Ms. Krasnow said that on-street parking is typically priced more expensive than lots or a garage as it turns over more quickly. This is the type of parking that makes sense for “grab and go.”

Mr. Toledano reiterated the goals of Storrs Center – to create a downtown where a person parks once and uses the commercial venues as well as the Community Center, Post Office, Town Hall, etc. The focus is on creating a pedestrian-friendly area and providing access to local (UConn and WRTD) and regional (Peter Pan) bus service.

Mr. Taylor said that his current leases do not allow for him to charge for parking.

Ms. Krasnow said that multi-space meters print tickets for recipients. They tend to be more expensive than one meter per space but less of them are needed.

Ms. Krasnow said that the conceptual on-street expenses assume paying by space through some type of metering systems (vs. time limited spaces) and 3rd party management. She said it also assumes central meter hardware. She said that private companies can do meter collection. Mr. Hill said that a company such as Central Parking can conduct on-street enforcement and management. He said that the revenues go to the owner of the entity, not the private company.

Ms. Lindsey asked about the location of on-street parking. Mr. Toledano said it would be on Storrs Road, Village Street and a few on Dog Lane. Ms. Lindsey asked if she would have to pay if she was in a space for a few minutes while she purchases an item (“grab and go”) Mr. Toledano said that some spaces could be stipulated for short-term parking. The number is key. Mr. Hultgren said that stores could also validate tickets.

Mr. Toledano said the goal is for parking to be concentrated and convenient. He noted that the Town had actually requested more funding for the garage than it received. Number of spaces, and expense and cost revenues are being based on \$10.5 million in state and federal funding.

Ms. Krasnow referred to the last page of the Power Point presentation which assumes preliminarily that each space costs about \$2.00 a day.

5. Update on Grants

Ms. van Zelm referred to the grant the Town had submitted to Congressman Courtney as part of the appropriations process. She said the grant was for hardware and software related to Storrs Center parking. She noted that copies had been e-mailed previously to the Committee. She said the Town Council had approved submittal of this request but there was some concern raised about any assumptions about enforcement at surrounding lots. Ms. van Zelm said while the goal was to have a placeholder for items that may be needed in the future, at the Council's direction, specifics were pulled from the applications submitted. There will need to be more discussion by this Committee, the Town, the University of Connecticut, and surrounding property owners before any decisions are made on enforcement. She said that once the design is completed on the garage, this will also inform what the needs are for parking software and hardware. Ms. van Zelm said the request had been subsequently submitted to Senators Dodd and Lieberman.

Mr. Toledano said the goal is to use the land available as efficiently as possible including managing the stormwater run-off. He said that surface parking with its impervious surface contributes to run-off as opposed to a garage. He said the current planned system will improve the wetlands toward the back of the property.

6. Topics for next meeting

Ms. Fox suggested reviewing conceptual revenues for Phase 1 parking; operation management; and adjacent lot issues for the next meeting.

Mr. Hultgren suggested to Ms. Krasnow that it would be helpful to have information from other communities/models on how they address the management of project parking with adjacent other parking.

7. Discussion of meeting time

Ms. Fox suggested meeting at 5:30 for the April 13 meeting and then changing the meeting time to 5 pm going forward.

8. Public Comment

David Freudmann, 22 Eastwood Road, expressed concerns about the conceptual labor costs and suggested the Committee conduct its own research on the labor costs.

Ms. Fox asked Ms. Krasnow to bring additional information on the basis for their estimated labor costs.

Ms. Fox said the discussion she heard was labor costs were based on a 3rd party operator, not the municipality. She said her understanding was that if a 3rd party is operating the garage, they would not be hiring an additional person if someone got sick. The cost is set. Ms. Krasnow concurred.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.