

Approved
PARKING ADVISORY BOARD
December 16, 2009

Randy Hafer√
Scott Wetzel √
Don Olsen √
Leticia Moore √

Steve Bruggeman √
Bruce Simon√
Nick Blake (esc.)

NOTES:

The meeting was called to order by Randy at 4:07 p.m. Those present were: Jane Crowder, Bruce McCandless, Greg Kruger, Lisa Harmon, Chris Mallow and Kelly Cox.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

HRDC:

Jane Crowder from H.R.D.C. was in attendance in regards to their request from the October 2009 that was rejected by the Board.

Information:

Staff received a written request from Carl Visser, CEO of District 7 Human Resource Development Council, regarding converting two 10-hour meters into two 10 minute zones in front of their office located at 3116 1st Ave. North, for a total of three 10-minute zones. Mr. Visser states that this building has considerable traffic during daytime hours to pickup and drop off paperwork, especially for their energy assistance program. In September 2006, the PAB received a request, from HRDC, to created two 10 minutes zones on 1st Ave. between N. 31st and N. 32nd Streets. The PAB agreed and located these zones on the northwest and southwest corners of this block face in order to maintain consistency of zone locations throughout downtown. Currently this block face contains a total of three 10-minute zones. Staff contacted the surrounding businesses and they do not object to any changes in the 10-minute zone with the exception of Alternatives who did not return my calls. Donovan Kelly, CPA, requests that the 2-hour meters in front of his business stay for his clients use. The existing 10-minute zone policy states:

Policy:

- *PAB will place all new 10-minute zones at the end of a parking lane. This will make the frequent turnover of the space safer for passing traffic and would bring consistency to those visiting downtown.*
 - *A parking lane is defined as a section of adjacent parking spaces without a break among them.*
- *PAB will not charge a fee for the creation of these spaces.*

- *PAB decided against this in the past.*
- *The City Council agreed that this is not what they would like to see.*
- *PAB will limit the number to 10-minute zones on any given one section of street, in between the two closest cross streets, to two 10-minute spaces.*
 - *Existing 10-minute spaces that are not in compliance with this policy will be allowed until such time that a change in the nearby business demographic warrants a change.*

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends not creating two new 10-minute zones but instead relocating the two 10-minute zones, not already adjacent to HRDC, to the front of HRDC. The displaced 10-hour meters will be relocated to where the 10-minute zones used to be.

Chris stated that in September 2006 HRDC requested and was granted two 10-minute zones immediately adjacent to their building. Chris informed the board that HRDC has since bought more property around their original structure and currently have a lot for their employees to park in thus freeing up the 10-hour meters in the direct vicinity.

Scott motioned that the board accept the recommendation as requested by Staff, Steve seconded the motion. Bruce S. stated that he felt this would be “over-kill” in this area and that he did not feel it was needed. Don also agreed that he not only did not feel it was necessary but that it violates the Parking Board Policy in regards to the number of 10-minute spaces per block face. Randy agreed with that and stated that in the future it would be a good idea to have a representative of the requesting business to be present in order to fully understand their needs and to answer any questions the Board may have in regards to the request. Randy advised Chris to let HRDC know that if they were not happy with the decision of the Board to have them come in and speak with the Board, that the Board would be willing to listen to their needs and readdress this issue.

The vote was taken and all members on the Board were against the recommendation to approve the request and the motion was denied.

Jane explained to the Board the reasoning behind the request of the two ten minute zones in front of their business. She stated that this business is used by their clients solely for pick-up and drop-off of paperwork only. She states at this location they process the paperwork for the L.E.A.P. program and they do not keep people at this location for long term processes. She stated that many of their clients are elderly and it would be best for their clients if there was an area close so they wouldn't have to be walking far since they would only be picking up or dropping off paperwork. Jane stated from October to current they have received somewhere in the area of 2000 people at this location and they expect another four to five thousand before April 1, 2010. Additionally she stated that in the summer months this office is used for the youth program which has

approximately 168 people. At this time they use the location for picking up and dropping of time cards and related paperwork.

Jane also explained that H.R.D.C. employs 130 staff members. At this time they have only 40 parking spots for their staff all other staff either park several blocks away or move their vehicles every two hours, many times this leads to tickets and sometimes booting. Bruce S. asked if it would help if the Board removed the two hour signed parking on Montana between N. 31st and N. 33rd streets and on N. 32nd between 2nd Ave. N. and Montana if that would help with their staff parking needs and clearing up space around their business. Jane stated she felt this would help greatly.

Bruce S. motioned that all 2-hour signed parking be removed on Montana from N. 31st to N. 33rd and on N. 32nd between Montana and 2nd Ave. N. and that the two 10-hour meters in front of H.R.D.C. be changed to two 2-hour meters. All members were in favor and the motion passed. Jane asked when this would go in to effect and Chris explained that he would have to contact the Street Department to remove the signs but that he would have his maintenance replace the meters right away, so they could probably expect all the changes by the beginning of the year.

Deputy Chief O'Connell:

Deputy Chief O'Connell was unable to make the meeting.

REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS:

Approve minutes from November meeting:

Don motioned to approve minutes as written from November. Bruce S. seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion passed.

Bike Transit Discussion with Joe Stout:

Joe was introduced by Lisa Harmon as their new head of the B.I.D. Lisa explained that Joe previously worked at the Bike Shop and is an avid biker himself. Joe will also be running the Loan-a-bike program that the DBA is looking to start in the spring.

Joe stated that he felt that it wasn't necessary to have any elaborate set up for bikes. He said that a chain-link area with racks that people could chain their bikes to with a common key would work. He agreed that more bicycle racks are needed around the downtown area. Bruce S. brought up the problem of snow removal with the racks during the winter and wondered if they could be removed. Joe stated that there are racks that have only two points of contact and have clearance under them so it would be easy to slide a shovel under.

Lisa explained that there is a program that gives awards to cities that are bicycle friendly. Chris stated that Billings is rated as a bronze city and Missoula is rated as a silver city. Chris said that he would look into what the gold and platinum status entails. He also said that it would be possible to set up a card reader system somewhat like what the garages have and the City could do some sort of rental for a minimal fee to recoup costs associated with the program.

Some areas that were discussed that could house caged areas were in the alley behind the Park 3 garage, on the no longer used loading dock behind the Hart Albin garage or the stepped area in front of Park 2 garage. Chris stated that now was a good time to get this program going with budget planning in the works for 2011.

Steve suggested that a consensus to where these areas should be should be agreed upon first before any decision is made. He stated that this information should come from people who are avid riders in the downtown area or from Cities that are gold or platinum status. Randy stated that inside the parking garages seems to be a good idea as the Board and the Parking Division already manage these areas. Chris and Joe agreed to get together sometime in January to come up with a solid plan of action.

Downtown Parking Study Discussion:

Randy started this discussion stated that he had not had time to read the whole report but from what he had read so far he found that it read well and that he looked forward to finishing the report.

Steve asked what the goal was from this point on. Chris stated that he was hoping to have the Board dig in and see if they could implement the recommendations, get behind the report and give it to the City Council or find out if there was anything glaringly wrong with the report. He also explained what he believed to be the mitigating factor in regards to the difference in the numbers of vehicles on the streets in December 2008 and October 2009. He said that he believed that other than holiday shoppers, patrons in downtown know that when it is very cold outside we do not send out Enforcement therefore; more cars were on the street in December when it was cold than in October when the weather was nice. Additionally he added that he has asked his Enforcement to patrol on the cold days on a semi-regular basis to make sure and show a presence in the downtown area to help reduce this type of activity.

The Board as a whole felt that they could accept the report and work with it. Several members stated that they felt the report could be used but that they did not necessarily agree with everything in the report. Bruce M. pointed out that Rich and Associates were asked to give their professional opinion of what they believed should be done even if it went against what they were told, specifically concerning the Montana Ave. area. Greg stated that he believed that the

numbers they gave were as accurate as possible even though they stated they did not take counts between noon and 1:00 p.m. Bruce S. stated he didn't like the idea that they lumped all parking together and that he would've liked to see the parking data split out as on street and off street, 10-hour, 2-hr, ect.

It was discussed that the only problem that was really seen with the report was the lack of information in regards to the proposed garage site "3". The Board asked Chris to inform Rich and Associates of this and that it is added in to the report.

Leticia stated that she felt it was important to come up with a comprehensive plan as a whole and not band-aid a solution. She also wanted it specifically mentioned in the presentation to the City Council how the tainted data was fixed.

Don moved to accept the study as written with the addition of the explanation about the proposed site "3" information. Steve seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion passed.

It was agreed upon that the board would go through the recommendations one at a time with a possible second meeting held in January to discuss only items regarding the study. Randy would like to see these items be worked in to the "New Downtown" plan that includes chip sealing all the streets, changing one way streets to two ways, new street lights, ect.

Don felt it was of utmost importance to figure out where a new parking garage should go as he believes as does Chris that the City Council is going to want to know what the Board's idea is on this.

It was suggested that at the next meeting the Board come up with a ten month plan to be able to give to City Council to show them where the Board plans on going with the information they received from the study.

Monthly Report – November 2009:

No comments to report.

Park 1 Conversion to Monthly Only:

This item was tabled due to lack of time.

OLD BUSINESS:

Map of Medical Corridor Diagonal Parking (handouts):

Chris stated that the program that he needs to get the handouts is not working on his laptop yet so he did not have the handouts yet.

NEW BUSINESS:

Parking Division Business Plan:

Bruce McCandless stated that the business plan has already been given to the City Council and reviewed by them. Bruce explained that all departments did a business plan as directed to do so by Tina Volek. Bruce explained that this is the first time a business plan has been done by the departments and he expects that it will become common practice every year or two. He stated that for now the City Council is using these documents as informational only and may in the future use them more in depth.

Chris stated that as part of the business plan he was directed to do a rate review. Chris said that it is a good time to do and include along with the budget for 2011.

DBA Report:

No information to report.

DBP Report:

No information to report.

Informational Items:

Chris has two new Parking Advisory Board Members who will officially be appointed by the Mayor on December 21st. These members are Scott Godfrey from Western Security Bank and Mitch Goplin from the Billings Clinic.

Chris also informed the Board that this meeting was Scott Wetzel's last meeting as a board member. At this time there is still one seat open on the Board.

Leticia and Nick have finished the terms they were covering for and are both now on their first terms.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.