

MONTCLAIR PARKING AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
July 22, 2009

Chairperson Matthews called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and read the Open Public Meetings Notice. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Present: Commissioner Church, Commissioner Powell, Commissioner Silverman, Commissioner Storms, Chair Matthews, Executive Director Teubner, and Attorney Bakari Lee

Absent: Commissioner Jacobs, Commissioner Typaldos

After three changes were made, the minutes of the June 24, 2009 meeting were adopted on a motion by Commissioner Storms, seconded by Commissioner Silverman and unanimously approved by all present.

Executive Director's Report

Paving Updates

Executive Director John Teubner reported that repairs were scheduled to begin on Monday, July 27th at the Grove Street Parking Lot. Work would start on the Oxford Street entrance with milling and paving. The businesses and First Montclair House have been notified; since only one exit would be temporarily closed at a time, it is anticipated that the work should only create a minor inconvenience to customers and residents in the area. Workers will be on-site to direct traffic. When the repairs are finished, the work will be inspected by Director Teubner and Tom Calu and then striping will be considered after the infra-red treatments are completed.

Borings are scheduled for the Upper Montclair Plaza on Friday, July 24th. Bids will go out in August with work scheduled to begin in October as per our schedule. It has been determined that pay stations will work best in this lot.

Dodge Foundation Poetry Festival

The Dodge Foundation which had formerly held its poetry festival in Waterloo Village is looking for a new site for the 2010 festival which is a three to four day event drawing over 20,000 people. They had been looking at sites with infra-structure already in place and Montclair had made the short list of finalists. In addition to the Township Manager and representatives of the Cultural Affairs Department, Police and Fire Departments and the BID, the MPA is involved to assure that parking demand can be met since it is a major component of the suitability of a potential site. The MPA's existing relationship with Propark is a plus since various parking plans need to be considered including shuttles, use of commuter lots, etc. The Dodge Foundation is fully prepared to finance whatever parking arrangements need to be made to assure a well-run festival. Mr. Teubner will continue to update the Commissioners.

Crescent Deck – Herod Payments Due

Attorney Bakari Lee agreed that this item could be addressed in open session. Earlier in July meetings had been held with representatives of Herod who had presented a financial plan which called for a payment schedule, insuring that they would be current by the end of 2009. The MPA agreed to the payment schedule after some minor tweaking but with the proviso that if Herod fails to make the payments parking rights will be terminated. Herod refused to sign the letter with this provision. After discussing our options with Mr. Lee, the Commissioners agreed to send a letter that does not call for Herod's signature agreement but simply states our proposal, assumes payment will be made but noting that if payment is not made we would exercise our right under the original agreement to take away their rights to use of the deck. If they do not make a payment by July 30th they will be in default. Attorney Lee agreed to circulate a draft of the letter, which will come from the MPA's counsel, to the MPA before sending it out tomorrow.

Bay Street Deck

Mr. Teubner reported on the pigeon invasion at the Bay Street deck. This may be partly attributed to the food which is sold in the deck. No Fly Zone, a company we have used in the past to clean up the Fullerton deck, has given us an estimate of \$12,000 which includes ledge modifications, installation of netting and spikes, and clean up. The Commissioners agreed and it is estimated that the work will take five to seven days including a power wash. Mr. Teubner was asked to check if the work can be accomplished while still allowing access to the lot.

Mid-Year Financial Report

As requested, Director Teubner distributed a mid-year financial report. As expected due to the economic downturn, sales of permits are down, meter revenues as well although not as significantly. The Wellmont Theatre which was expected to create a large parking demand is not doing the business they anticipated. Additionally, the parking arrangement anticipated between the Wellmont and the MPA has not been adhered to by the Wellmont and the projected event revenue is significantly down. The MPA is managing to keep our expenses down with the exception of the cost for snow removal which cannot be controlled although our plan is to do more in-house removal. Salaries and administration expenses have already been cut for '09. The possibility of snow fall in November and December must be considered. Night time permits have not been selling as expected but now that overnight enforcement has been increased we expect to see an improvement in those sales.

Chair's Report

Chairman Matthews announced that the amended Intralocal Agreement has been signed; parking enforcement has been officially transferred to the MPA. A new agreement is due in January that will address financial aspects. It was agreed that it would be best to prepare the new agreement sooner to give us more time to think about what the Commissioners wish to include such as towing, etc.

Enforcement is moving along although we have not spoken to the Parking Enforcement Officers because they have yet to receive formal notification by the Township. Chair Matthews said he would speak with Manager Joseph Hartnett on Thursday, July 23rd to discuss notification.

Committee Reports

Commissioner Silverman, who is the chair of the Parking Advisory Committee, reported on the special public meeting held on the evening of July 15th to discuss the issue of a bike lane on Grove Street. Third Ward Councilor Nick Lewis and Township Engineer Kim Craft were also in attendance at the well attended meeting. Ironically, the day before the meeting, the County informed the Township that they did not support the installation of bike lanes because of the liability factor. A compromise was suggested that would create shoulders allowing people to park and bike. 90% of the people in attendance at the public meeting had been opposed to the bike lanes. However, the Authority recognizes the need to promote alternative strategies to car travel. It was suggested that it would be helpful to provide maps identifying three or four east/west and north/south routes through town that would be bike friendly. Bike lanes also act as a natural traffic calming measure. Enforcement is also a key to traffic calming and employment of radar was suggested along with possible placement of police officers in driveways which is apparently a tactic used in Glen Ridge. Installation of red light cameras was also discussed. These cameras which unlike speed cameras, are allowed in New Jersey; installation was suggested for the intersection of Watchung and Grove Street. Commissioner Silverman will make a presentation to the Township Council in the upcoming months to discuss these suggestions.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public present.

Prior to adoption of the bill resolution a discussion began concerning the status of solar panels. Bakari Lee updated the Commissioners on the various issues involved in this new pursuit such as the need for public bid or competitive contracting and duration of the contracts. A thorough discussion followed including the downside which is that we could move forward and risk another interpretation being made by the Local Finance Board or Department of Law which could find that we are in violation. However with that caveat, it was agreed that the MPA move ahead and become a test case. Bakari can begin by getting an energy expert to calculate the energy savings by using solar panels. It was agreed that the MPA would have the calculations done.

Action Items

The bill list was presented by Mr. Teubner and after a brief discussion, concerning cost savings and revenue enhancements which it was agreed should be put on for the next meeting, a motion was made by Commissioner Church and seconded by Commissioner Jacobs. The resolution of the Montclair Parking Authority authorizing payment of bills was adopted by unanimous voice vote.

Before adjournment Mr. Teubner reminded everyone that a meeting with DCH is scheduled for the morning of July 30th to discuss possible dormitory construction.

At 8:35 p.m. on a motion from Commissioner Powell, seconded by Commissioner Church, the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by: Annette Speach

Next Meeting: August 20, 2009