

**PUBLIC WORKS & FACILITIES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
ROOM 208
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT**

Members Present: Chair Carl R. Chisem
Councilman David Bauer
Councilman James B. Streeto
Councilwoman Sandra Russo-Driska

Staff Present: Robert Dobmeier, Deputy Director, Public Works
Tina Gomes, Chief Management Analyst
Geen Thazhampallath, Director of Parking

Absent: Councilman Thomas Serra

Others Present: Lee Osborne
Trevor Davis

Chair Chisem opened the Public Works and Facilities Commission Meeting at 7:03 p.m. He requested a motion to approve the minutes dated March 12, 2014. Minutes were seconded and approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Trevor Davis, representing First Church, inquired about the parking at the Russell Library. It was requested that item 5b be moved to the top of the agenda for discussion. Motion was seconded and approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Discussion on Palmer Field Concession Stand Agreement and Sign Advertisements – Tina Gomes stated that she is trying to update agreements. The concession stand agreement needs to be renewed since it expired in November of 2009, which was only a one year term. The legion asked if it can be extended to a three year term because the stand is for exclusive use only. The representative wanted to make sure that the legion is the only merchant that will be selling food and drinks so that schools don't try to sell there too. The agreement was sent to the Legal Department and was then approved.

David Bauer stated that in order to simplify things, the proceeds were reduced to 2.5% gross. A parks employee or police officer will be on sight to tend to any issues. A motion was made by Councilman Bauer to approve the amendments as discussed and forward them to the council for

their approval. The motion was seconded by Councilman Streeto. Motion was approved unanimously.

The commission agreed that the sign advertisements look good and have the right to sign a 3 year contract. Commissioner Streeto made a motion to approve the sign advertisements. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Russo-Driska. Motion was approved unanimously.

- b. Overview of Main Street Walkway Project - Geen Thazhampallath, Director of Parking, stated that he has asked Lee Osborne to be the architect for this project and that he had maps to go over with the commission. The plan to interconnect the lots and make use of the space has been in the works for about a year. It became more of a pedestrian connection project on how to bring out the modernized lights, security, amenities, and aesthetics to this location. In October of 2012 the Common Council and the parking department came across \$150,000.00 in bond funding.

Geen turned the walkway project presentation over to Lee Osborne, designer. Lee gave an overview on the project which includes modernizing of the lighting. All of the old wiring and lighting will be removed along with the chain link fencing and barriers. The new lights will have higher intensity and decrease the out lighting into the atmosphere. All of the new wiring for lighting and security will be underground. The fencing will be made of wood similar to what is on the Merrit Parkway to give the area more of a sophisticated look.

A vehicular and pedestrian connection will need to be developed with new spaces thru the church and St. Luke's, and exit through Broad Street. The north driveway will be a pedestrian only access way with the exception of funerals.

A Kiosk similar to the one at the pedestrian underpass tunnel will be constructed in between the lots which will provide visual continuity in the city.

The existing wall at St. Luke's will be reconstructed and new concrete steps will be installed along with a handicapped accessible ramp that comes close to the handicapped access to the church.

There is a big space in the library parking lot between the back of the parking spaces and the back of the driveway. The suggestion is to move the parking up five feet to put a seven foot sidewalk in its spot, instead of having to walk down the traffic way. There is a turn-around that will be closed up so that two more spaces will be gained along with better traffic flow.

There is a parking lot owned by the Mills family which is currently entered from the south side. The intentions are to close that lot while adding two more spaces and enter through the new opening in the wall on the east side of the property; the city will then lease that lot. Currently they are leasing the spaces mostly to employees of the Chamber of Commerce. Not much will change as far as parking, except the gaining of two spaces. The city will manage these parking spaces which might mean the charges will increase over time. The Mills family will not have to collect the money, but will still intake the same amount.

Concerns regarding single lane traveling were introduced keeping in mind the incoming trucks traveling towards Pedal Power. Three of the spaces near the retaining wall will be removed. The parking will be moved down about fifteen feet, so that the area will be increased to two normal sized lanes. Parking will be added and increased to five spaces from the north facing south.

There is a two-walled structure that is a retaining wall with nothing on the down side of it. It was proposed that they create a wall on the down side, filling it and then adding a couple trees. Some parking spaces may have to be taken to add more trees into the lot as requested from the Design Review Board.

Security is being addressed by installing a number of cameras throughout the area which will feed back in to the City Hall and the Police Department. Lighting that goes along the edge of the building at the Chamber of Commerce and lighting throughout the entire lot would also increase the security. Blue lights will be sprinkled throughout the area as well. A new pedestrian walkway will be grinded, repaved and stamped, similar to the pedestrian walkways on Main Street so that pedestrians will be directly connected to downtown.

There are 2x2's of polished granite in 20' intervals in the area. Those pieces of stone will be engraved with a number of things such as events and/or individual's names that have made historic contributions to downtown as recommended by William Warner, Director of Planning, Conservation and Development.

Various manholes flow downhill to a main line that goes out to the street. A civil engineer was brought in to review the size of the catch basins and pipes. Recommendations in the specifications were made to double the number of pipes of the same size or increase the size of the pipes in some cases. This should significantly improve the drainage issues when heavy rainfall occurs.

A request for a right of way through St. Luke's was brought up to enhance the flow of traffic. Geen Thazhampallath stated that currently no one has asked for right of way use. The area will be kept as a pedestrian walkway with no vehicular connection between the two lots. There is a new flow of traffic on Main Street on the south side of holy trinity church into the St. Luke's parking lot exiting to the kid city parking lot.

Trevor Davis indicated that at the Central Business Bureau meeting, Geen had mentioned the parking revenue generated downtown is to enhance the downtown so that everyone has a better experience including the visitors at Kid City.

Geen specified that he is expecting to bid this summer and start construction around August. There will be no added bike racks but there are some that exist behind the library, Pedal Power and Kid City. It is also intended to add charging stations for electric cars.

Trevor Davis mentioned that he personally supports the project and the church does as well. The issue is that the private areas are being used as public access from the church to Middle Oak to Kid City. He would like the city to contribute to some of the clean-up so that it can be done together.

OLD BUSINESS

- c. March 2014 Overtime Report – There wasn't much snow in March so there was little plowing completed.
- d. March 2014 Building Permits – The commission reviewed their packets of March building permits.

Councilman Bauer requested that he would prefer the activity reports to be in WPCA format because they are a lot easier to digest and understand. He'd like to bring some in to share with the staff to gain opinions.

OTHER

- e. March 2014 Monthly Report, Highway Division – The commission reviewed their monthly reports.
- f. March 2014 Weekly Reports, Parks Division – Parks Division's weekly reports will be submitted at the next Regular Public Works & Facilities Commission Meeting.

One of the commissioners asked about the process with a lighting situation on Saybrook Road at Windy Hill Road. There is a flood light on a private building that is causing a public hazard. He wanted to know what the process is to fix this issue and whether or not it is a CL&P utility pole. It was assumed that it is a public safety issue or a traffic hazard. An email will be sent to Bob Santangelo from the Public Safety Committee asking how to fix the issue so no incidents or further accidents occur considering the fact that it is a traffic hazard on private property.

One of the commissioners stated that a few years ago, the city purchased higher glass for the counter as a security upgrade in the Tax Collectors office. He wanted to know if the glass was ever actually purchased. Commissioner Russo-Driska stated that the mayor didn't want the glass up so the project was stopped because he felt it was too confined. Further safety precautions are still under discussion by the Public Safety committee.

As there was no further discussion, the Public Works & Facilities meeting was adjourned at 8:09 P.M.