

**DOWNTOWN NEW WESTMINSTER
PARKING COMMISSION**

**Wednesday, May 1, 2013; 11:30 am
Committee Room #2, City Hall**

MINUTES

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bruce Clark	Community
Alexander Csizmadia	Community
Patti Goss	Chamber of Commerce
Karen Maynes	Douglas College
Nancy Puri	Community
Richard (Dick) Spring	Community
Harm Woldring	Downtown New Westminster BIA

NON-VOTING MEMBER PRESENT:

Jeff Pearson	Impark
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STAFF:

Mark Allison	Senior Planner, Development Services
Catalin Dobrescu	Utilities Engineer, Engineering Services
Kathy Prothero	Recording Clerk, Engineering Services

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 11:36 am.

1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the agenda be amended by adding:

- 5.3 Request for Free Parking at the Parkade from the Purpose Society
- 5.4 Request for Free Parking at the Parkade from the Girl Guides of Canada

THAT the agenda be approved as amended

CARRIED

All members of the Commission present voted in favor of the motion.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of Minutes of February 21, 2013

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the Downtown New Westminster Parking Commission meeting held February 21, 2013 be received and adopted.

CARRIED

All Commission members voted in favor of this motion.

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Downtown Parking Study Update – Mr. Mark Allison

Mr. Allison updated members on the Downtown Parking Study, connectivity with the waterfront and access to the new Westminster Pier Park.

- A study was commissioned in support of the Downtown Community Plan and the waterfront vision. Mr. Allison reviewed the attached presentation and stated that there is currently a surplus of parking (weekends at 20-25% capacity and weekdays at 50% capacity). New developments are expected to handle parking within their buildings and a modest increase of demand on the Parkade is anticipated over the next 20 years.
- There are a number of places to park Downtown with either a private or public operator. If we remove the Parkade what will the situation be? There will be adequate parking but some destinations may be further from public parking than they are now. Monthly parking on the Parkade will need to decline over time, as stalls in a replacement structure could cost up to \$300/month to construct and operate, which is not sustainable in the long run. We are encouraging cash in lieu by developers at a cost of \$35k per space to help build additional publically-accessible parking structures.
- On-street parking is currently cheaper than the Parkade. One of the study's first implementation tasks will be to adjust on-street parking so that there is a healthy turnover of short-term parking and the Parkade is a more attractive option for longer-term parkers, e.g., those parking for the day or evening.

The following questions were asked by members after the presentation –

- Why is there such a disparity between the Vancouver parking rate (\$22k) and New Westminster's (\$35K)?
 - The City's policy is currently based on the actual cost of constructing a replacement parking stall. In Vancouver, there is the expectation that the actual demand for shared, publically-accessible parking is lower, so only a fraction of the actual cost of constructing a stall is required.
- When Larco was going to build on the waterfront they were going to provide two levels (of parking?). If/when they build, are they going to be held to that number?
 - The previous development permit for the site would require a multi-storey parking podium with an average of 1.2 stalls/unit in addition to approximately 150 publically-accessible parking stalls. The development permit has expired and new requirements for parking may be in place if the developer was to reapply for a permit.
- Fire Department Access – If we eliminate the Begbie Street crossing, would we have to rebuild to accommodate emergency vehicles?
 - There is no current plan to close the Begbie crossing. Emergency vehicle access would clearly be a major consideration if a closing was to be proposed in the future.

- If they eliminate the parking ramp to access the Parkade over the railway, what are other options?
 - It is expected that access to the parkade would be maintained at Sixth Street and Fourth Street if the western portion was deconstructed. Currently pedestrians are using the Parkade to access the River Market and Fraser River Discovery Centre at Begbie Street and in the fall, a new pedestrian bridge to Westminster Pier Park will be provided via the 4th Street access.
- Fourth Street pedestrian and cyclist access to Westminster Pier Park is being reviewed by staff. Drawings provided to members are showing a bridge over the rail tracks with a staircase/elevator and provision for a ramp in the future. For access to the Parkade coming down Columbia Street the sidewalk will be widened where the booth currently is or to cantilever the sidewalk. Lighting will be replaced with white light fixtures and the dumpsters will be moved. An entry feature will be to replicate the bridge structure which will not rest on the Parkade as that may not be around forever. Signage will be similar to Westminster Pier Park and will be subtle. A concept will be sent to the Commission for information prior to the September meeting.
- One member felt the crossing would be best closer to the Army and Navy which would draw shoppers to the Downtown core. Mr. Dobrescu provided a technical summary to members as to why this connection would not work. Primary consideration for the design is safety and convenient access to the park's amenities, particularly for those coming from SkyTrain and living in the east side of the Downtown.
- A three-way stop configuration will be used at the east end of C-Deck to accommodate pedestrian movements to the new bridge to the park. Two handicap parking stalls will need to be relocated and they will be moved next to a parking stall. The plan is to have a total of six accessible parking stalls to serve the Downtown and park.
- Regarding pricing rates, Mr. Dobrescu confirmed that the rates at the Parkade can only be purchased in hour increments. One member commented that the night rates begin at 6pm and perhaps this should be reconsidered.

Moved and second this committee recommends

THAT Council direct staff to consider offering both fixed evening and hourly evening rates at the Parkade, with the hourly rate available from 6:00 pm until midnight to encourage usage and provide additional parking options.

CARRIED

All members of the Commission voted in favour of this motion

Mr. Allison left the meeting at 12:15 pm.

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4.1 Investigation of issues from last meeting – Mr. Dobrescu

Mr. Dobrescu updated members on the following issues:

- a) Status of vehicles on the Front Street Parkade representing the Police -

- Mr. Dobrescu enquired around and no one has approved a special rate for the Police at this location. The Police are purchasing bulk parking on the Carnarvon Street Parkade and there is no concession for them at the Front Street Parkade.
- b) Senior Services Society status of reduced parking offer -
 - Mr. Pearson did an inventory of all reduced rate parking that the Commission has approved. The Senior Services Society have 10 stalls at the reduced rate located in a less desirable area of the Parkade.
- c) Information on criteria and restrictions of the Parkade reduced parking rate. A handout was provided to members for information -
 - A minimum of 20 stalls for regular requests and 10 stalls for non-profit groups has been set but is subject to location and availability in the underutilized areas of the Parkade. The group involved would be responsible for paying for signage to have the stalls identified, and the stalls have to be billed to one account.
 - Full price reserved stalls pay a premium and they get to pick their stalls.
 - Mr. Spring stated that Senior Services Society should be moved to a location that is closer to their facility. They are currently located on the top deck at the west side of the Parkade. If there are any issues, these should be brought to the Commission by the organization.
- d) RFP for replacement of Parkade railings and membrane -
 - RFP for the design of the railings is with the Purchasing Department. The tender will go out this year and work will be done in 2014.
 - The membrane is being delayed because of the construction of the Fourth Street Overpass.
 - One member asked why we wouldn't use the Parkade west end design for the east end work. Mr. Dobrescu advised that we still need to hire an Engineer because these designs are now 10 years old.
- e) Army and Navy pedestrian overpass and legal opinion / plan of action -
 - Mr. Dobrescu reviewed the original agreement to build and maintain the overpass. The last attempt to contact Army and Navy was not successful (messages were not responded to) and staff are trying to arrange a meeting with their head office.
- f) Update on information letter sent to businesses on proceeding with the column painting from Sixth Street to Begbie Street -
 - Staff have drafted a letter advising local businesses that the columns will be painted and if there are objections, that the City be contacted. Once the contract is awarded, businesses will be notified of the work schedule.
 - A copy will be sent to Ms. Kendra Johnston, Executive Director of the BIA for information.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Dobrescu updated members on the recent requests for free parking received and a discussion ensued. A member suggested that in future, perhaps requests should be

granted based on past approvals by the Commission (e.g., the Show & Shine) so that these do not have to be reviewed annually.

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Downtown Parking Commission approve a policy granting free parking on weekends and statutory holidays for non-profit community events that have been approved in past years by the Commission.

New applications must provide 90 days notice in order to be considered by the Commission. This policy will be posted on the City's website once it is finalized.

CARRIED

All Commission members voted in favor of this motion

5.1 Request for Free Parking at the Parkade from the Downtown New Westminster BIA; May 18 and July 13 & 14, 2013

Moved and Seconded

THAT the request from the Downtown New Westminster BIA for free parking at the Parkade be granted May 18 and July 13 and 14, 2013 from 8am to 8pm. The BIA will be responsible for erecting directional signage and the City will arrange to have free parking signs posted at both entrances of the Parkade.

CARRIED

All Commission members voted in favor of this motion

5.2 Request for Free Parking at the Parkade from the Hyack Festival Association; July 1 and 13 August 3 and December 7, 2013 – Mr. Dobrescu

Moved and Seconded

THAT the request from the Hyack Festival Association for free parking at the Parkade be granted July 1 (4pm to 11pm), July 13 and August 3 (4pm to 10pm) and December 7 (3pm to 8pm), 2013. The Hyack Festival Association will be responsible for erecting directional signage and the City will arrange to have free parking signs posted at both entrances of the Parkade.

CARRIED

All Commission members voted in favor of this motion

5.3 Request for Free Parking at the Parkade from the Purpose Society for June 8, 2013 – Mr. Dobrescu

The request was reviewed by members and a discussion ensued.

Moved and Seconded

THAT the request from the Purpose Society for free parking at the Parkade be granted June 8, 2013 from 9am to 5pm. The Purpose Society will be responsible for erecting directional signage and the City will arrange to have free parking signs posted at both entrances of the Parkade.

CARRIED

All Commission members voted in favor of this motion

5.4 Request for Free Parking at the Parkade from Girl Guides of Canada for the Evening of June 12, 2013 – Mr. Dobrescu

The request was reviewed by members and a discussion ensued.

Moved and Seconded

THAT the request from the Girl Guides of Canada for free parking at the Parkade be granted for the evening of June 12, 2013 (5:30 pm to 9:00 pm). The Girl Guides of Canada will be responsible for erecting directional signage and the City will arrange to have free parking signs posted at both entrances of the Parkade.

CARRIED

All Commission members voted in favor of this motion

6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

6.1 Parkade Operator's Report – Mr. Jeff Pearson

Mr. Pearson updated members on the March 31, 2013 report circulated with the Agenda -

- Two electric car charging stations installed by the City;
- Letters will be sent to monthly parkers requesting license plate numbers as the City will now be monitoring by plate number;
- Pay parking stations have been moved closer to the edge of the Parkade for better reception and visibility;
- Ongoing issues with patrol enforcement (which have been stepped up);
- Discussion regarding moving the student parking down to A Deck, which is an underutilized area (they were previously parking on the top deck); and
- Once the overpass has opened, one pay station may be moved.

6.2 Parkade Maintenance Report – Mr. Catalin Dobrescu

Mr. Dobrescu updated members on the Parkade maintenance:

Front Street Parkade:

- Painting of columns will be done if no objections are received from local businesses;
- Construction for the overpass will be done at the east end of C Deck which will necessitate us making some improvements. Railings will be designed this year but will not be built until next year. Signage changes; we are currently looking at wayfinding signs at both entrances to the Parkade and within (the Commission will only pay for the signage related to parkade business);
- On Begbie Street the paint on the stair treads over the rail tracks is wearing. Mr. Dobrescu advised members of the problems encountered with the contractor. It is the second coat of paint that is wearing off because it was painted too late in the Fall; and

- EV Charging Stations are now available at the Parkade -
 - One member asked if there was consideration given to advertising them. Mr. Dobrescu advised here was a lot of media coverage when the stations were officially opened. Staff will investigate whether there is an on-line resource available for electric car drivers.
 - The directional sign on Columbia Street will be enhanced to show that the EV Charging Stations are available in the Parkade.
 - Members would like to see a policy put in place when they become more popular and there is more frequent use.

Carnarvon Street Parkade:

- Issues with the gate require the replacement of some parts.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the following correspondence circulated to members be received:

- 7.1 Spring Cleaning Event at the River Market; April 13th

CARRIED

All Commission members voted in favor of this motion.

8.0 NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, September 4 @ 11:30 am
Committee Room #2, City Hall

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:08 pm

BRUCE CLARK
CHAIR

KATHY PROTHERO
RECORDING CLERK

