

**MINUTES
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE
PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES
VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS BOARD ROOM
MONDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2018 7:30 P.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: President Hayes; Trustees: Baldino, Blackwood, LaBedz, Scaletta, Sidor and Tinaglia

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Rosenberg, Glasgow

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Randy Recklaus, Village Manager; Diana Mikula, Assistant Village Manager, Village Attorney, Charles Perkins, Director of Planning and Community Development; Bill Enright, Deputy Director of Planning and Development; Kim Peterson, Recording Secretary

SUBJECTS:

A. Downtown Parking Study

Other Business

Adjournment

President Hayes called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

A. Downtown Parking Study

President Hayes began by first acknowledging the importance of this agenda item and then thanked Rich and Associates for the fine job they did preparing the rather lengthy and detailed report.

Mr. Recklaus explained how the downtown parking system is very complex and the needs of the commuters, downtown residents, downtown retail, entertainment and restaurant customers and employees, must be balanced. In an effort to efficiently manage existing and future parking demands, The Village Board, as part of the Strategic Priority Process, directed staff to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the downtown parking needs, according to Mr. Recklaus. As part of this study, a survey was made available to the various downtown user groups, which yielded over 1,400 individual responses with varying perspectives. The Village also hired Rich and Associates, who collected and analyzed large amounts of data about our current parking system and how it is being used. Mr. Recklaus clarified the intention of this meeting is to get some general direction from the Board regarding the recommendations that were made and to gain an understanding of the Board's

feelings about the findings of the study.

Mr. Recklaus introduced Mr. David Burr, of Rich and Associates, who would be providing an overview of the parking study. Mr. Burr explained how he will be discussing the detailed approach Rich and Associates took in conducting this study, some of the key survey results, their independent analysis of the North and South sides of the downtown area, more specifically parking supply and demand on each side of the railroad tracks, as well as some of their recommendations.

Mr. Burr stated that Rich and Associates began collecting data back in April and did an initial assessment of the existing parking accommodations in the downtown area at that same time. His company then went on to conduct some very detailed utilization counts beginning in May. Mr. Burr then described the unique conditions on both the North and South sides of the downtown area that create very different parking demands.

Mr. Burr next referenced some of the key points of the online survey; including the percentage of those who use Village parking resources, i.e. Village parking garages, Village parking lots and on-street spaces, which was 90%, how many visits an individual makes per trip, which was just under two, the average length of stay per visit, which was 3 hours and 22 minutes, although this total took into account those who stayed in the area for more than five hours, which led Rich and Associates to modify this total to two 2 hours and 47 minutes, as these individuals were clearly there for other reasons than to utilize the downtown services. Of those who responded to the survey, 325 were downtown residents. These residents were specifically asked if they have a designated parking spot, which 25% said they did. More than 50% said they use the residential parking permitted spots in one of the Village parking garages. These same residents were asked if their guests are able to find parking when they visit, which 50% answered that there typically is parking available for their guests. These residents were then asked where their guests park, which 62% replied on the street. Mr. Burr felt it was important to note that these spots are limited to two hour parking. Downtown employees were also surveyed in regards to their mode of transportation to work and where they park. Forty-seven responses were received and of those responses, 97% indicated they drive their own vehicle and 100% indicated they use Village parking facilities when parking their vehicle.

Mr. Burr discussed the South side of the downtown area and indicated that there are 2,800 parking spaces, with 62% of them being publicly available. This percentage meets the benchmark for what is considered adequate for community controlled parking. The majority of these parking spaces are located in the three Village parking facilities. Mr. Burr went on to explain how he and his team collected their data, which consisted of nine survey dates, three dates in May, three dates in June and three dates in July. The team studied the same days of the week each month, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, from 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. each day, which really gave them good insight as to how the parking operated. Virtually all on-street parking was counted, with the peak day being Friday from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. During this time, 80% of the available public parking spaces were

occupied and nearly 100% of the on-street parking spaces were occupied. There were parking spaces available in the Vail parking garage, however these spaces were located on the upper floors, which most likely indicated individuals were not willing to travel up to these floors to look for available spaces. The peak occupancy in general on the South side was in the evening, and when you look at the supply and demand factor, there is a demand for 2,409 parking spaces, with a surplus of 200 spaces, according to Mr. Burr. When looking at future demands for parking, the new restaurant Hey Nonny, was not open yet, and therefore not calculated into these totals. Also, if the Metropolis Ballroom were to host a larger event, the total demand for parking spaces would increase. Another demand on parking spaces could come from future development of the vacant parcel of land just west of the Vail parking garage, which could potentially bring the number of available parking spaces into the negative numbers.

Mr. Burr next discussed the North side of the downtown area, indicating that there are 2,343 parking spaces, with 64% of them being publicly available. Commuters use the majority of these spaces, which coincides with the peak day and time, Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. During this time, 70% of the available public parking spaces were occupied and 50% of the on-street parking spaces were occupied. The peak occupancy in general on the North side was during the day, and when you look at the supply and demand factor, there is a demand for 1,489 parking spaces, with a surplus of 500 spaces, according to Mr. Burr.

Following the completion of the downtown parking study, Mr. Burr believes there is adequate parking in the downtown area; it just needs to be managed better. Rich and Associates offered several recommendations to achieve this goal, including improving signage. Signs are critical when it comes to directing individuals to where available parking is, other than the streets. There should be signs that light up attached to each parking garage indicating that public parking is available there and the signs should be large enough so they can be seen from several blocks away, according to Mr. Burr. The signage inside the parking garages should be clear and consistent so individuals know exactly what the parking rules are for any particular level and/or space. Another recommendation was to assign names to the various parking garages, i.e. the Vail Street Parking Garage, as it helps people remember where they parked. In addition, the installation of parking guidance signs, that indicate how many parking spaces are available and what levels these spaces are on, would be extremely helpful, especially for those individuals who do not want to enter a parking garage and drive up to the upper levels not knowing for sure if spaces are even available.

In regards to payment recommendations there are a couple of options available that would help streamline the payment process, including the installation of pay stations, which would eliminate the existing antiquated system, or partner with a pay-by-provider, whereby individuals can use a mobile app to pay their parking. The Village parking spaces are already numbered; therefore transitioning to a new system like one of these would be relatively easy and inexpensive.

Another recommendation is to extend the two-hour on-street parking limit until

8:00 p.m., which may make an employee think twice about parking in one of these prime parking spaces, and if this does not help manage on-street parking in the evening, consider a monetary system. In addition, periodic checks of the on-street stall markings should be made to ensure individuals are parking in the designated spots and not accidentally taking up more than one spot. Additionally, reducing the four-hour parking limit in the North and Vail garages to three hours might help alleviate any misuse by employees. Other recommendations included, changing the commencement of free parking to 3:00 p.m. from 12:00 noon and assigning commuter and merchant permit holders to the fourth and fifth floor of the Vail Parking Garage. During special events, seek opportunities to use church lots or other private parking areas, consider the use of shuttle buses and use signs to direct patrons to available parking.

Rich & Associates also recommended marketing the Village Hall garage, as it has nearly 200 parking spaces and would be ideal for restaurant employees to park in the evening, as well as Lot A for additional parking in the evening. In addition, the Village should look to collaborate with private businesses, particularly banks, to use their parking as public parking after hours. The Village should use the existing parking as efficiently as possible before adding additional parking, according to Mr. Burr.

Lastly, the Village should continue to monitor the use of handicap accessible parking to ensure compliance with ADA requirements, particularly for on-street parking. The Village should also consider shared use in the determination of parking needs, as well as encourage developers of residential parking to “unbundle” parking from the price of the units.

Mr. Enright indicated that the recommendations heard thus far, are entirely from the consultant and should not be misconstrued as the Village’s recommendations. There are, however, certain recommendations that the Village would like to implement fairly soon, depending on the budget. These changes would be classified as Phase One Improvements and would include installing additional pylon signs on the North and Vail garages, as well as a series of signs that are on poles adjacent to some of the surface lots the Village controls. Staff has come up with some preliminary designs and received quotes of what it would cost to do some of this signage. Mr. Enright provided an example of what the pylon/blade signs would look like and indicated that there is \$25,000 in the current fiscal budget that would cover the cost of these signs, which were quoted at \$22,000. If these signs were hung at the right height, the parking garages would be much easier to identify. Mr. Enright also provided some examples of what the entry signs to the surface lots would look like. Some of the costs involved to implement these Phase One Improvements, include two blade signs, one for the Vail garage and one for the North garage, at \$22,000 each and pole mounted signs for the entrances to the Evergreen garage and Lots A, E and H, totaling \$84,000. Mr. Enright also discussed the need to clearly indicate the parking garage levels by simply painting on the beams, columns and stairs. The cost for the parking guidance system is \$100,000, which staff is recommending only for the Vail garage right now. The use of electronic pay stations is something staff has been researching for quite some time;

therefore, they will continue to evaluate what system will work best for our Village, if the Board chooses to move forward with this improvement. The cost of an electronic pay system is approximately \$170,000. The final recommendation staff would like to implement involves marketing and re-assigning merchant parking spaces to the fourth and fifth levels of the parking garages. Staff is currently looking into different funding sources, as the total cost of these Phase One Improvements is \$420,000. Staff is not recommending charging for on-street parking at this time, although they may revisit this option at some point in the future. Staff is considering moving the enforcement time to 8:00 p.m., according to Mr. Enright.

Mr. Recklaus reminded the Board, that at this point, staff is simply looking for direction to develop an implementation plan.

President Hayes thanked Mr. Enright for explaining how the parking guidance signs work, and thanked Mr. Burr, and Rich and Associates, for the detailed report along with the very comprehensive list of recommendations. President Hayes commented on how frustrating it is for him when he receives complaints from non-residents who come into Arlington Heights to enjoy a movie or dinner and then receive a parking ticket mainly because they misunderstood the current signage. President Hayes definitely thinks this was money well spent.

Trustee Tinaglia asked Mr. Enright what he believes to be the most significant finding that came out of the downtown parking study. Mr. Enright first acknowledged how successful the downtown area is, which is reflected in the parking demand, specifically on the South side, but the key point of this study is that although there is sufficient parking in the downtown area, it needs to be utilized more efficiently. The Village needs to articulate where the parking is and when it is available to everyone, as well as do a better job promoting some of the parking lots and the Village Hall garage during special events.

Trustee Tinaglia asked Mr. Burr the same question in regards to what he feels is the most important finding from this study, which Mr. Burr stated that the key to a successful parking system is how it is managed. All parking systems must have rules, and different user groups need to park where they should be parking in order to allow the parking system to operate as efficiently as possible.

Trustee Tinaglia was very happy that this study was conducted, as he too occasionally struggles with where he should park in the downtown area, even though he's lived here all of his life. Trustee Tinaglia was pleased with the recommendations Rich and Associates, and staff, made. Referring to the study results, Trustee Tinaglia was quite surprised with the number of available parking spaces during the peak day and time in the Vail garage, and questioned if the two-hour time limit should be increased to three hours, since the modified average stay is 2 hours and 47 minutes. Mr. Burr stated that the two-hour time limit for on-street parking is appropriate, as you want those parking spaces to continue to turn over, and anyone visiting the area for more than two hours should be parking in one of the garages or lots.

Lastly, Trustee Tinaglia liked the idea of reassigning and relocating, the pay-by-phone system, as well as the parking guidance sign, which he feels alone would be a huge improvement.

Trustee Scaletta asked if the pay-by-phone system would only be used for the daily fee spaces, which Mr. Recklaus stated that is correct. Trustee Scaletta thanked Mr. Burr for the study his team conducted and for the subsequent report. Trustee Scaletta next asked if the daytime surplus spaces on the South side of town would disappear if the AT&T building were to become occupied. Mr. Burr indicated that if the AT&T building were to be redeveloped into office space, there is an agreement with the Village for 187 permit spaces, which would most likely be in the Vail garage. Even if these spaces were to be taken, there is still capacity during the daytime hours. The issue with available parking on the south side is in the evening, according to Mr. Burr. Trustee Scaletta expressed his concern with the parking surplus being reduced with the opening of Hey Nonny, as this study was conducted before it opened.

Trustee Scaletta asked Mr. Burr how the Village could potentially use the private parking lots in the downtown area, and Mr. Burr suggests the Village start a dialogue with the business owners and ask what it would take to use their lots during the evening and weekend hours.

Trustee Scaletta also asked about valet drivers and the possibility of these services utilizing private lots. Mr. Burr only observed one valet operation in the downtown area, but does believe that could be a practical option. Mr. Enright noted how some of the downtown business owners proposed the idea of a community valet service, whereby an individual could leave their car in a designated area and then a valet service, most likely contracted by the Village, would park these cars, either in the Vail garage or Lot A.

Trustee Scaletta asked if moving some of the commuters from the South side to the North side makes sense. Mr. Burr stated that there is capacity on both sides of the downtown area during the daytime hours; therefore, there is currently not a need to explore this option. If the AT&T building were to re-open, this then might be an appropriate move.

Trustee Scaletta asked if the fifth floor of the Vail parking garage is out in the open, which Mr. Burr replied that it is. Trustee Scaletta is not necessarily comfortable moving the commuters to the fourth and fifth levels of the garage, as Mr. Burr suggested, because anyone who parks on the fifth level would be subjected to the elements, including rain and snow.

Trustee Scaletta does not believe it is realistic to expect downtown employees, especially those working near Vail and Campbell, to park in the Village Hall garage, because of the distance. Trustee Scaletta was surprised to learn that the majority of the downtown businesses do not have parking policies in place for their employees, nor do they inform patrons of where to park on their websites. Trustee Scaletta would like staff to encourage business owners to have a parking policy for their

employees and to include parking options on their website.

Trustee Scaletta questioned the recommendation Mr. Burr made regarding the Village encouraging building developers to unbundle or sell residential units and parking spaces separately, as he believes this may not even be permissible by Code.

Trustee Scaletta asked how the Village plans to fund these recommendations. Mr. Recklaus indicated that the Parking Fund will have a three million dollar fund balance, which is where the money may come from. The Parking Fund is also used to maintain the garages and lots, therefore other funds may be looked at to pay for these improvements. Trustee Scaletta supports the parking guidance system and blade sign for the Vail garage. Trustee Scaletta needs some more information regarding the pole mounted signs and the pay station systems. Trustee Scaletta believes the Village should do everything they can to work with the owners of the private parking lots to utilize that parking resource, which may be through valet agreements.

Trustee LaBedz agreed with Trustee Scaletta in that we need to look into using the existing privately owned parking lots.

Trustee LaBedz understands that the complaints she hears about the lack of available parking in the downtown area is more about perception.

Trustee LaBedz is not sure if she would support on-street paid parking, as she believes this would push individuals into the surrounding neighborhoods to park.

Trustee LaBedz is in favor of improving signage and installing blade signs in the Vail garage. In addition, the signage in some of the surface lots needs improvement, as the existing signs are quite confusing.

Trustee LaBedz thanked Mr. Burr, and Rich and Associates, for their comprehensive study. Trustee LaBedz was thrilled that they did not recommend the Village build another parking garage, as she does not feel it is necessary.

Trustee Blackwood asked Mr. Enright if the blade signs will be lit up at night, which Mr. Enright replied yes they will be.

Trustee Blackwood is in favor of the recommendations and thinks the Village should start first by installing the blade signs and the parking guidance systems, as well as color-coding the signs in the parking garages. Following these improvements, the Village could then consider the pole signs.

Trustee Baldino agrees with what Trustee Blackwood said regarding signage, which is something he has been discussing with the public for a long time.

Trustee Baldino noted that if the Village does consider moving commuters from the Vail garage to the North garage, additional permit parking will be needed, as the

North garage is typically the first garage to sell out.

Trustee Baldino is not in favor of charging for on-street parking downtown.

Trustee Sidor thanked Mr. Burr for his report and expressed his concern with the public's perception of there being no available public parking in the downtown area. Trustee Sidor believes that improving the signage in the downtown area is a good place to start, if the Board wants to change this perception.

Trustee Sidor asked Mr. Burr if he spoke with the Village's Parking Enforcement Officers to see what they would do to improve the parking situation in the downtown area. Mr. Burr stated that he did not ask the Parking Enforcement Officers this specific question. Mr. Recklaus explained how they did not direct Rich and Associates to interview staff, as this is something that can be done internally, at anytime. Mr. Recklaus advised that discussions regularly take place with the Parking Enforcement Officers, regarding parking concerns.

Trustee Sidor asked Mr. Burr if there was a follow-up question to the original question that asked residents if their guest parked in an on-street parking space, would they move their car to another space when the two-hour time limit was up, or was their visit less than two hours, as the survey suggests. Mr. Burr indicated there was no follow-up question.

Trustee Sidor does not believe it would be a good idea to change the time limit from four hours to three, on the first floor of the Vail garage.

Trustee Sidor was very pleased with the parking study presentation and the information the study provided.

Trustee Sidor asked if the extended parking times that were recorded by Rich and Associates could perhaps be guests of downtown residents, which Mr. Burr replied yes.

Trustee Sidor then asked Mr. Burr what his thoughts were in regards to handicapped parking on the street. Mr. Burr indicated that there are many communities looking into offering handicapped parking on the street, specifically on the ends of the street. Mr. Burr indicated that the ADA has been discussing the possibility of mandating handicapped parking on the street. Trustee Sidor would like to see some handicapped parking on the streets, as he often hears people talking about it.

Trustee Sidor is concerned that even if the Village makes all of these parking improvements, people may still not utilize the parking facilities, as they would rather park on the street as close to their destination as possible, and not have to walk a distance from one of the parking garages or lots. Mr. Burr acknowledges this dilemma, however, for the system to work, there have to be rules and the rules need to be followed, and individuals will need to walk whether they want to or not.

Trustee Sidor asked Mr. Burr to explain the “unbundling” of resident parking spaces concept again and then asked Mr. Enright to explain why the Board is just seeing the cost analysis worksheet tonight. Mr. Recklaus stated that staff did not include this information in the Board’s packets simply because it was not ready. Staff wanted to get the report to the Board as soon as possible and knew they were not asking for formal approval during this meeting. Mr. Enright did note that the two biggest expenditures were included in the Board’s packets. Trustee Sidor would have liked to have this cost analysis included in their packets. Mr. Perkins explained how even though the cost analysis was not ready last week to include in the Board’s packets, staff worked very hard the past few days, to at least have this information ready for the Board tonight.

Lastly, Trustee Sidor asked President Hayes if a Village Trustee could be put on the Parking Committee. President Hayes replied by saying that he is always open to “out of the box” thinking.

President Hayes clarified with Mr. Recklaus that the Board is not being asked to authorize the expenditure of any funds. Mr. Recklaus explained how staff is just looking to see if the Board is generally interested in pursuing the Phase One options, and if so, staff will then develop an implementation plan and a revised budget. If there are options the Board does not want to pursue, staff will not waste their time pursuing those.

Trustee Tinaglia asked if the price is different for commuters to park in the garages versus the surface lots. Ms. Mikula replied that the commuter pricing in all of the garages is the same, which is \$40 for a monthly permit for residents and \$50 for nonresidents. The cost to park in one of the surface lots is \$2.00 per day. Trustee Tinaglia stated that he will always lean towards accommodating the business owner and the shopper as far as parking convenience and availability goes, and opt for reassigning the commuters to the top floors of the parking garages. Perhaps the pricing can be adjusted then to be fair.

Trustee Tinaglia believes the “unbundling” concept is brilliant, and went on to explain the reasoning behind this idea and how the Village could benefit from it.

Trustee Scaletta stated that the commuter fees partially fund the maintenance of the garages and some of the improvements; therefore, he does not support the idea of relocating them to the upper levels of the garages. Trustee Scaletta also stated that if he were a merchant in the downtown area, he would park further away as to allow his customers to park closest to his establishment.

Trustee Scaletta does not agree with how the motion is written and thinks it would be best if staff returns to the Board at a later point with what the Phase One Improvements would actually be. Trustee Scaletta believes this process is moving way to fast. Mr. Recklaus stated that staff is only looking to commence the Phase One Improvements and suggested that staff come up with a more detailed plan regarding the improvements, and then meet with the Board at another Committee-of-the-Whole meeting, to discuss those ideas. Trustee Scaletta believes this is a

very important topic, but does not want to commit to spending any money at this point. Mr. Recklaus explained that the only item staff has been actively pursuing is the "pay by phone" system, which Ms. Mikula is currently involved in discussions with some vendors who offer this service.

President Hayes is also concerned with language of the suggested motion, particularly the words "and commence", therefore he suggests dropping the later part and replace it with "to develop an implementation plan to consider phase one or initial improvements."

Trustee LaBedz indicated that there is a significant amount of commuter parking that is out in the open, and because most of the commuters are residents too and spend money in the downtown area, as well as help fund the maintenance of the parking facilities, by way of their parking fees, she does not feel it's right to put them at the bottom of the priority list when it comes to having the ideal parking conditions.

Trustee LaBedz is also concerned with the number of employees who utilize on-street parking near their places of employment, instead of parking in the garages.

Trustee Sidor asked Mr. Burr how much of the available parking he projected in the study, rests upon successfully negotiating agreements with private property owners to use their lots for public parking when they are not using them. Mr. Burr suggests having business owners, who do not have their own parking lots, negotiate with other business owners who do, to possibly use some of their spaces for their employees, when their business is closed for the day. Mr. Burr also strongly encourages the Village to market the Village Hall parking garage.

President Hayes asked if any members of the audience wished to address the Board. Seeing none, President Hayes then asked staff if they have enough direction to move forward. Mr. Recklaus stated that depending on the motion, he thinks they do.

Trustee Scaletta moved, seconded by Trustee Tinaglia, that the Committee-of-the-Whole recommend to the Village Board the acceptance of the downtown parking study and authorize staff to develop an implementation plan.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

None

Adjournment

Trustee Tinaglia moved, seconded by Trustee LaBedz to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 p.m. Upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.