

MINUTES
Troutdale City Council – Work Session
Troutdale City Hall – Council Chambers
104 SE Kibling Avenue
Troutdale, OR 97060-2099

Tuesday, June 21, 2011

1. Roll Call

Mayor Kight called the meeting to order at 9:40pm.

PRESENT: Mayor Kight, Councilor Ripma, Councilor Anderson, Councilor Thomas, Councilor White, Councilor Allen and Councilor Daoust.

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: Craig Ward, City Manager; David Ross, City Attorney; Debbie Stickney, City Recorder; Charlie Warren, Public Works Director; and Erich Mueller, Finance Director.

GUESTS: None

2. Downtown Parking

Councilor White stated normally we would have a recommendation from the subcommittee. This was initiated as part of our "Open for Business" plan in Troutdale. It was a charge to staff and the committee to look at any possible way of increasing our parking capacity in downtown. Charlie will provide us with some maps. I was just hoping that everyone could provide some input or suggestions on ways to increase our capacity for parking.

Councilor Allen asked is this in addition to possibly converting the existing police station into a parking lot?

Councilor White stated I think we were trying to get something for this season. We have the ability to accommodate temporary parking for seasonal events on an unapproved surface.

Mayor Kight asked what suggestions do you have for expanding parking in downtown?

Councilor White stated we talked about doing something behind City Hall to create a parking area for staff. That would free up a lot of street parking that staff is currently using. I know that will cost money and we have a more serious issue with our City Hall building. I also wanted to see a map of the piece of property we purchased along

Beaver Creek to see if there is a possibility of doing a trailhead approach for Drover's Trail, but apparently that property isn't going to be suitable for parking.

Craig Ward stated the property behind City Hall has had erosion control done and it is stabilized, but we didn't invest the money to be able to use it for surface parking. Charlie has done some staff work to identify the available spaces and the potential available spaces.

Charlie Warren stated we have put together a map that shows the existing parking spaces provided by the City and potential spaces (copy included in the packet). The City currently provides 146 public parking spaces for our downtown area. That is off-street public parking that the City has invested its own money to develop for our downtown businesses. In addition we have 25 spaces for our fleet parking for a total of 171 spaces in our downtown that the City has paid for and currently provides as open parking. The foreclosed lot (shown on the map in blue) would take quite a bit of work but we could fit approximately 7 spaces on that lot. The lot behind City Hall would create approximately 13 spaces, but the problem is that it exceeds 5% in grade and when that happens cars will slide sideways on ice. We would have to build a retaining wall, but more than that we have a very narrow access. We only have 10' between the building and the property line and right now any vibration next to this building causes a big problem. There is also an issue with the grade to the street. The cost to develop that may be \$100,000 or more. Continuing to the west, we have the parking lot where the existing police station is. We currently provide 17 spaces there for fleet parking which could be converted over to public parking spots. That has the potential to be a fairly large parking lot in the area next to Mayors Square with a total of 34 parking spaces.

Craig Ward stated when we remove the existing police facility we would have to build retaining walls there as well. Even though we tend to think of that as a surface parking lot, when you take the building out you have to replace it with a surface parking lot.

Charlie Warren stated once we tear down the building we will still have those 17 parking spots that can be converted over to public parking. That is a ready-made parking lot, however it is in such bad shape it needs some substantial rebuild and we don't have funds to do that right now. When you take out the old police station we are just going to level that area; it is not going to be a parking lot. We would need additional funds of approximately \$100,000 to make both of those areas into a parking lot.

At the new police facility there will be a total of 47 spaces with 22 spaces for the public. The new city hall location is a fairly small area. We have an existing 13 spaces there for the City Conference Building, but we are starting to realize that the location that we have identified for the new city hall doesn't have enough parking.

The total amount of potential and existing parking stalls is 281. Normally when a downtown already has this many spaces dedicated for it you would start looking at

some funding by the downtown merchants to construct their own parking lot and start assessing fees for them to help pay for parking. We already provide them with 171 parking spaces. We (or the county) also provide on-street parking.

Councilor Thomas asked do you have an approximate number of on-street parking spaces?

Charlie Warren replied it is probably close to being equal; it might be something less.

Councilor Thomas stated the Economic Development Subcommittee looked at this issue and we weren't really sure where to go with it. Is this something that the Council would like us to pursue further?

Council agreed to have the Economic Development Subcommittee look into this issue further.

Councilor Anderson asked Councilor White, did this exercise answer your questions?

Councilor White stated I was leaning a little more towards temporary parking for the summertime. I think the weddings that are occurring are good for our town but it is causing a parking situation in our downtown. We have always had a parking problem in our downtown. The more parking spaces we can put in our downtown, the more profitable everyone is going to be.

Councilor Anderson asked can we encourage the Troutdale House guests to use the area behind the stores?

Craig Ward stated they can be encouraged; they are probably encouraged now. The issue is can we discourage them from using the parking on the street. Do we have the legal authority to prohibit the use of the public right-of-way for parking for private events?

David Ross replied we have a two-hour limit that we don't enforce. Is that the thrust of your question?

Craig Ward replied that is an issue and a potential solution. I don't know how long wedding events take, but I would assume that they last a lot longer than 2 hours. None of us want our police out there doing parking enforcement and writing tickets to folks in weddings. Have we explored making our fleet parking lot up here available on the weekends?

Mayor Kight stated actually they do use it.

David Ross stated maybe we could have better signage for the parking behind the stores downtown.

Charlie Warren stated we do have signage at both entrances indicating there is public parking there.

Craig Ward stated we could talk to the owners of the Troutdale House to make sure that they know what the options are and encourage them to use all of those public parking spaces. Since it is a problem my guess is that they have already addressed it. I suspect that the problem isn't with the Troutdale House people finding parking; it is that the people that want to visit the other downtown businesses can't find parking. If we can't prohibit the use of our downtown parking by the Troutdale House customers, then I don't see any obvious reconciliation of that problem.

Councilor Thomas stated one of the driving factors of why Councilor White brought this up is that right now the business population is pretty sparse, but when there were more businesses open parking was a bigger issue than it is today. When the businesses all fill up and the Marino property develops we have to have places to park. Maybe when a property develops a portion of the property needs to be allocated for off-street parking. Those are things the subcommittee can look into.

David Ross stated Hood River and Salem have done is they have a downtown parking district. The other thing that could be done is to have the downtown businesses prohibit their employees from parking on the street.

Charlie Warren stated I live in Hood River and they have a parking problem. We want a parking problem because that means a healthy business community. That doesn't mean that we don't need to improve our parking. By comparison to some of these other towns, Salem, Portland and Hood River, we don't have any kind of a parking problem. One of our main problems is that our business owners are using most of the spots. They should be parking further away. We need encouragement for that. In order to enforce that you have to pay someone to do that and you have to suffer the wrath of disgruntled businesses that are being moved off of those spots. The temporary parking that Councilor White is mentioning is a good idea, but they have to be very temporary and we can't use that as a permanent solution.

Councilor Daoust stated Hood River has parking meters.

Charlie Warren stated parking meters, a parking enforcement officer and an urban renewal district in the downtown area that paid for those parking spots; so the citizens paid for those spots.

Councilor Daoust stated I don't know how many more ideas the subcommittee can come up with, but I hear that you want us to come up with more ideas.

Councilor Anderson replied prioritization I think.

Mayor Kight stated the police station is probably the most viable with 33 spots, so maybe we are ahead of ourselves a little bit.

3. Adjourn:

Meeting adjourned at 10:02pm.

Mayor Jim Kight

Approved September 11, 2011

ATTEST:

Debbie Stickney, City Recorder