

CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

Standing Committee on Sustainability and Transportation
Councilor Spencer Thibodeau (D2), Chair
Councilor Belinda Ray (D1)
Councilor Brian Batson (D3)

Minutes
June 13, 2018

Members Present: Councilor Thibodeau, Councilor Ray, Councilor Batson
Staff Present: Troy Moon, Melissa Graffam, Bruce Hyman, Chris Branch, Jeremiah Bartlett, John Peverada, Jeff Levine, Nelle Donaldson, Jen Ladd

Meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM.
Councilor Ray made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 16, 2018 meeting.
Seconded by Councilor Batson. All in favor, 3-0.

Report on the Park Avenue Separated Lane Project

Jeremiah Bartlett, Public Works' Transportation Systems Engineer introduced the project to the committee. Currently Park Avenue has inconsistent bike lanes; this project would give a separated bike lane. Have \$100,000 in CIP money for this project. Working on best practices for snow removal and maintenance. Staff has worked with City staff, Metro and Bike/Ped Committee for their input on the design. This design has been used in a lot of other cities; such as Cambridge, MA, Burlington VT, Washington, DC and Montreal, QC.

Jeremiah also mentioned that this will be a test and staff will be monitoring the area to see what works and what doesn't.

Jen Ladd, Project Engineer, presented a powerpoint presentation to the committee. Jen mentioned that currently there are 150 parking spaces along Park Avenue. This plan will reduce that to 140 parking spaces, a net loss of 10 spaces.

An example of the intersection treatment would be that there will be green crossings for bicycle visibility through intersections. Bicycle stop bar in front of motorized vehicle stop bar. Two-stage left turn queue box for bikers taking a left turn off Park Avenue.

Councilor Batson asked about safety studies of having green crossings. Public Works is still looking into the green crossings in regards of the cost, wearability, and staff ability. Chris Branch, Public Works Director, mentioned that the department has to be careful of our general fund budget, as it is tight this year. Need to be careful as to how we spend our money, thus the need to look further into the green crossings.

There will be about 220 bollards along Park Avenue. They will be spaced 20-25 feet apart. These will be removed in the winter; as requested by the Public Works staff. The pro to this is it will allow the Public Works staff to plow curb to curb; the con is the staff time to remove the bollards.

Councilor Ray asked if High Street will be the same as State Street and what kind of signage will be implemented? Jen responded, yes it will be the same. They will be installing appropriate signage at the curblines for parking/no parking.

Councilor Thibodeau asked what the lead time was for the project. Jeremiah responded that they plan to start on this as soon as possible.

Councilor Thibodeau asked that once this project was completed for staff to come back to the committee to update them on how everything is going.

Discussion of the Peninsula Parking Study and Related Parking Issues

Jeff Levine, Planning and Urban Development Director introduced the Peninsula Parking Study of the Downtown, Old Port, and Eastern Waterfront by Fort Hill Infrastructure. Nelle Donaldson from Planning spoke about how the city worked with GPCOG, Portland Downtown and Metro for their considerations on this parking study. At this time; still looking into how it would be structured and financed. Some thoughts are fee-in-lieu, land use and TDM requirements.

Casey Gilbert, Executive Director of Portland Downtown briefly spoke of the Downtown's involvement in the study, and how happy they are that this has happened. In March 2016, they allocated funds to the study and marketing campaign. Their Parking/Transportation Committee worked with the city on the study.

Jeff introduced Bill Lyons from Fort Hill who went over the powerpoint presentation. The study showed that the highest demand is on weekdays between 10am-2pm due to high demand for office parking. The study results overview stated the following: Weekend and night time parking demand is well below capacity overall. However, on-street parking occupancy is actually higher on weekends. The study showed that summer visitors are significant. The study stated that the competition for off-street parking with employees puts the study area at effective capacity on weekday daytime during the peak summer season.

Future development of offices, retail, restaurants and housing over the next ten (10) years will put a strain on existing parking supply. Fort Hill and their study suggested four (4) strategy options in their presentation. They are satellite parking site with shuttle, transit and rideshare options for workers and visitors. Along with study employer-funded private shuttle through a Transportation Management Association between employers and public agencies. Private partnership for new supply. Recommended parking structure design to be repurposable. TDM and enhanced transit service.

Councilor Ray asked if the recommended strategies are in any particular order or timeline? Bill Lyons, replied no, they are not.

Councillor Ray asked if there were any parking garages that were in the works to be built in the future. Nelle, responded that there were.

Councilor Ray asked how much money was in the Sustainable Transportation fund. Bruce Hyman, responded that there was very little in that fund. What is available currently is being used for lights and sidewalks for the Washington Ave (Fox and Walnut) and Cumberland Avenue areas.

Councilor Ray mentioned that Metro should be partnering in the TNC's as they can apply for federal funds; whereas the city cannot. Also, there is still the Islanders and other groups that need parking. Jeff Lyons mentioned off site lots and transporting them to their vehicles.

Councilor Thibodeau asked if parking lots need licenses. Looking at an inclusionary zone parking ordinance. Set aside parking spaces for island parking or you pay in-lieu fund (example 25 spaces =1, 50=2) Is this legal? Is this a good idea? Do we need to change current laws to make this work?

Nelle Donaldson will give the Committee a written update on where they are with this as soon as they are able.

Committee needs more time to work on this and came up with a list of ideas. They are: Work plan on specific parking issues; Remote parking pilot; TMA; Bicycle Infrastructure.

Motion was made by Councilor Ray to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 pm. Motion was seconded by Councilor Batson. All in favor. 3-0.