

DUNEDIN, FLORIDA
MINUTES OF THE CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP
JUNE 23, 2015
6:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

City Commission: Mayor Julie Ward Bujalski, Vice-Mayor Heather Gracy, Commissioners Bruce Livingston, Deborah Kynes and John Tornga.

Also Present: City Manager Robert DiSpirito, City Attorney Thomas J. Trask, City Clerk Denise M. Kirkpatrick, Deputy City Manager Doug Hutchens, Director of Communications Courtney King, Communications Senior Technical Assistant Justin Catacchio, Interim Director of Finance Jeff Streder, Director of Planning and Development Gregory Rice, CRA/Director of Housing and Economic Development Bob Ironsmith, CRA/Special Projects Coordinator Trevor Davis, Program Coordinator Joan McHale, CRA Technical Assistant Maria Keeler, Transportation and Traffic Engineer Joan Rice, Director of Human Resources/Risk Management Theresa Smalling, Solid Waste Sustainability Coordinator Christina Perez, Library Director Phyllis Gorshe, and approximately one hundred thirty-eight people.

The press was represented by the Tampa Bay Times Reporter Michael Majchrowicz.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bujalski called the workshop to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Bujalski welcomed everyone in attendance for this important issue. She advised comment cards are available for anyone wishing to speak and asked everyone to be respectful of their neighbors regardless of their opinion on the issue. She noted the purpose of the meeting was to hear all opinions. She explained staff would make the presentation and requested Commissioners hold their questions until it is completed, then the Commission will ask questions and after that public comment will be open. Staff will be allowed to answer questions at that time. She noted the request is to limit comments and questions to about 3 minutes in order to provide equal opportunity to speak. Once everyone has spoken, staff has asked the Commission to give two of the five options provided to further review and bring back to the Commission at a later date. Mayor Bujalski emphasized no decisions would be made tonight.

1. DOWNTOWN PARKING

Mayor Bujalski stated there are two important issues being faced tonight which are how to get people to park in the right spots; short-term, long-term and employee parking and so forth and how to replace the parking that is known to be going away. She noted there are many development projects coming forward which will add more residents and more people into the Downtown and while that is a great thing, it will require more parking. Knowing that some of the parking lots will be going away over the next few years the questions are how to buy some lots, how to pay for them, how to build a garage or a combination of the two.

Mayor Bujalski explained there has been a parking committee and staff has reviewed some strategies from the parking consultant world and those are the things that will be presented

tonight. She reiterated everyone is learning this together and no decisions will be made and this is a good collaborative process in order to provide direction going forward.

CRA Director Bob Ironsmith read the PowerPoint presentation and commented that talking about parking downtown is a good situation to have and something everyone aspired to many years ago. The situation now is there is more demand. He commented that the discussion is about utilizing resources to have a parking management plan in place, getting the right people in the right places and Planning and Development Director Rice would talk about that. He introduced Walker Parking Consultants representatives John Martin and Tim Corbett who were present to answer any technical questions out of the realm of staff.

Mr. Ironsmith expressed appreciation to staff and volunteers who assisted in putting together the presentation including City Manager DiSpirito and Deputy City Manager Hutchens. He advised the Walker Parking Consultant final report, staffing and the PowerPoint are on the City's website for reference.

Mr. Ironsmith gave a special thanks to the Downtown Parking Advisory Committee (DPAC), well represented including Chair Greg Brady who would be summarizing the committee recommendations. He noted the committee had numerous meetings many of which were hosted by Peter Kreuziger at the Bon Appétit Restaurant and Kathy Carlson with the Blur and Chic-A-Boom Kelly's.

Mr. Ironsmith reviewed the topics in the presentation.

Downtown Dunedin Today

Downtown is a vibrant place with very well attended special events. People enjoy coming to the Downtown.

There are no vacancies on Main Street.

There are multiple investments by single parties.

Development and redevelopment are occurring including Victoria Place that is luxury condominiums and retail space under construction, the Gateway Project is gearing up and properties on Douglas are being planned.

The Downtown is very walkable and desirable.

The Pinellas Trail section of Dunedin is one of the most well used sections throughout the 47 mile trail. Dunedin sees up to 1,000 people during the week and 1,200 on the weekends on this section.

Downtown Parking Today

Total parking supply in the Downtown is 931 spaces documented by the Walker report.

On-street (Main Street Corridor) 260 spaces

Off-street (City owned) 255 spaces

Off-street At-Risk (Leased) 306 spaces

Off-street (Overflow – Gateway that will be going away soon) 110 spaces

Victoria Place overflow parking is already gone indicating that development is happening and parking lots will be going away.

Downtown Concerns

Planning and Development Director Rice continued with the PowerPoint addressing the Planning perspective.

He and Mr. Ironsmith are able to see future development plans which for the first six years of his tenure with the City were slow; however, he can report that the City is on fire and hopefully with many projects to come.

Staff wanted the City Commission to be prepared; everything is fine right now or at least livable; however, in projecting what things might look like as developments take place is why there are concerns:

One concern is parking turnover which is important for economic growth because at times and in certain places the city has the wrong people in the wrong places. All are wanted in the City; however, would like to move them to spots where there is a high turnover. City staff and the City Commission have spent a couple of years working with the downtown merchants and looking at the maps to make sure in planning for the future there is enough turnover.

Employees may or may not take up some of the prime parking spaces.

Some of the trail users take up prime parking spaces.

Some of the trolley users take up prime parking spaces.

The second concern is to have enough parking stock.

Right now there are many surface lots around the city which are the least efficient land-use, the least tax generating other than vacant land.

Pavement is not a great situation for the environment because of stormwater and the heat generated by black pavement and what is left on pavement to be washed away.

In an ideal world the desire would be to have less surface parking lots and more vertical parking which is very expensive.

One of the leading experts in the United States conveyed his entire premise is that parking is not free, someone is paying for it. Right now every taxpayer is paying for the existing parking through leases, maintenance, paving and repair.

Not all residents should pay for parking if some do not use it; if they choose to walk or ride a bike they should not have to pay.

For merchants, having parking available all the time with no restrictions discourages turnover and does not put the right people in the right places.

For tourists, it may reach a point where they say it is too difficult.

Transit is an important element of any major metropolitan statistical area and this is the 10th largest metropolitan statistical area yet it has the worst transit of the 10.

The failure of Greenlight Pinellas was a disappointment as it would have helped with economic development and congestion; it would be great for young people who love transit

and would shift the burden from ad valorem taxes over to a sales tax, some of which would be from tourists.

He felt the same in this situation that there is the opportunity to take some of the burden of parking management and parking supply placing it on tourists who will look at it as a minor point in their visit to the City instead of adding the cost and potential new costs, and even the cost of structured parking on all of the citizens of Dunedin.

He hoped the citizens would be able to provide answers to solving turnover and increase parking stock, two problems with many ways to solve and that the recommendation would be the best for everyone involved.

Mr. Ironsmith commented during the downturn in real estate and the overall economy the City was successful in leasing parking lots which was a great move at the time.

Mr. Ironsmith continued the PowerPoint (Page 10).

Examples of Parking Concerns

Douglas Avenue – 90 paved parking spaces will be lost on development at the Keller Site.

Main Street and Douglas Avenue – 40 parking spaces will be lost at Ocean Optics as it has a lot of interest.

200 Main Street/Victoria Place – 100 event spaces are gone.

First Baptist Church parcel – 67 parking spaces that are City owned, some paved and some grass will have plans for some type of development; however, can be controlled and vertical parking could be a component.

Scotland & Douglas Avenue/Station Square – 64 parking spaces that are dirt with wheel stops will be at risk and subject to upcoming development =.

Page 11 of the PowerPoint is a map of Downtown Public Parking (Today)

The green parcel is Victoria Place that is currently building.

Page 12 shows the Downtown Public Parking (When At-Risk Lots are Lost)

Not a lot of parking is left to support the Downtown.

Page 13 shows the Downtown Public Parking (At-Risk Parking Areas).

Eight areas are at risk and it will happen quickly.

The First United Methodist Church site cannot be taken for granted although there are no immediate plans.

Many of the properties have plans and will be moving quickly which is a great trend for the Downtown but there is a parking situation that needs to be addressed in the near future.

Downtown Parking Goals

The Walker Parking Report and the previous report mirror each other in terms of the need for 300 to 400 additional parking spaces downtown.

A Parking Management Plan needs to occur.

There is a need to get the “right people to the right places”; Trail and Jolley Trolley users should not use up the prime parking on Main Street or the prime parking lot areas.

Creation of Parking Turnover is important and not having the same people in a space for hours and hours: for example, employees.

A Revenue Stream for Additional Parking needs to be provided.

The numbers for vertical parking are significant from \$20,000 to \$25,000 per space and \$400 to \$500 per year per space for maintenance and management.

Prime downtown real estate is now approximately \$1 million per acre; a huge increase from where it was 5 years ago during the downturn.

Recent Parking Added (Page 15)

The list indicates properties just worked on to bring parking on board at a low cost and efficient manner including:

20 spaces at the Bushnell Lot leased across from Edgewater Park.

10 spaces on the leased lot adjacent to City Hall.

Downtown Parking Options (Pros & Cons listed on Pages 17 – 21)

Option A – Do Nothing

Staff sees no viability with this option, thus this meeting for input.

Option B – Free Enforced (3-Hour) Parking for 12 months, then assess

Enforcement Costs of \$125,000 per year.

Not data on the revenue generation is produced to use in seeking bonding and/or financing.

Option C – Hybrid Pilot Plan, 3-Hour Paid in Hot Spots, Free Elsewhere

Pros

Hybrid provides paid and free to public.

Revenue is generated for future parking from day one.

Hybrid allows for reevaluation (all options provide for reevaluation).

Cons

Cost, lease and acquisition for pay stations.

Perceived notion that paid lessens the ambience of the downtown.

Cost for installation.

Option D - Paid Parking Throughout Downtown

This is a strong option for the downtown.

Several of the owners of the at-risk parking areas have said they will not do paid parking.

Option E – Free Enforced (3-Hour) Parking – Transition to Paid/Free Parking in 6 months

Pros

Represents a phased-in approach

Move with certainty to paid parking program within 6 months

Creates turnover of parking spaces

Cons

Cost of enforcement for 6 months without offsetting revenue stream

Little revenue for the first 6 months (citations only)

Delay in ability to secure financing for a garage with no revenue data readily available

Proposed Pilot Program- Free/Paid Parking (graphic on Page 22)

All can be modified or revised.

The example is used in order to determine cost and revenue estimates.

Range of Expenses/Revenue Pilot Hybrid Plan (based on Option E)

Enforcement - \$125,000

Start up costs and two employees for downtown

License Plate Recognition Program

Leasing pay stations - \$35,640

Installation cost estimated at \$25,000

Parking Management Operations - \$105,000

Parking Manager and back room support

Interim Finance Director Streder reviewed the Table on Page 24 of the PowerPoint.

One-Year Pilot Program Enforced Free vs. Paid Parking Financial Comparison

The table takes revenue estimates from the consultant and expenses from quotes received in discussing various scenarios with parking vendors.

The table is based on \$1.00 per hour charge for parking for 295 spaces.

The hybrid area would be composed of 295 on street spaces and 170 off street spaces driving the revenue in that table.

The enforcement is 12 hours a day from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

The table assumes 30% loss of maximum revenue due to non-compliance.

The table assumes 40% revenue loss to resident discount to be determined.

Enforced free parking alone is a net loss to the City.

With Option C, the hybrid program it can be seen there is enough revenue in the first 2 years to pay for all operating, enforcement and machine rental.

At the end of a 12 month trial period the vendor has suggested the City would be able to purchase the 33 pay stations for a total cost of \$211,530.

From the net income from the first year, if you add less than half of the Operating Revenue from the second year, there will be enough money to purchase the pay stations. In the third year, it reaches a point where there is a fairly healthy revenue stream and a financing mechanism to do things such as lease land, if available, for surface parking or pay debt on a bond that builds a parking structure.

At the end of the third year it can be seen that approximately \$300,000 is being brought in per year.

When the parking goes away there will have to be a financing mechanism to be able to react when land might not be available and then the decision must be made regarding a parking structure. Historical revenue will be able to be shown to investors for a bond and potential financing for a parking structure.

Mr. Ironsmith pointed out the at-risk parking areas; the agreements have 60 to 90-day breaks so a developer can terminate quickly.

City Manager DiSpirito added revenue is set; all the revenues would be fenced off for parking and would not be going into the General Fund for any other purpose than investment in future and current parking needs, whether it is the purchase of a lot or cost participation in a garage. It would be like an enterprise fund with revenues generated by the program to maintain and for future parking needs.

Gregory Brady of 580 Skinner Boulevard #4 and Chair of the Downtown Parking Advisory Committee advised he is a resident of downtown Dunedin and the CRA. He is also a business owner and has worked in downtown Dunedin since 1984 when they had parking meters on the streets and it was parallel parking and they could not wait to get rid of them because at that point they were not needed. The surprising thing that he has gone through over the past year in attending the meetings first was everyone was willing to work together toward a solution. The majority of the people he has received comments from, hearing from city staff are the same people who have failed to attend these meetings which he finds ironic because he is experiencing the problem both at his home and in his business.

Mr. Brady provided the following information.

“Mayor and Commissioners:

A meeting of the Downtown Parking Advisory Committee (DPAC) was held last evening, June 11th at 5:30 p.m., at the Bon Appétit. The meeting was well attended and we had a sign-up sheet circulated to give you an idea of the mix of attendees. Surprisingly there were not any attendees who opposed any management plan through paid parking. The public Facebook page created an event page for this meeting to invite anyone with questions, comments or concerns. This page has been used to post comments by the public. The majority of comments have been rather abrupt and made by individuals that have failed to attend DPAC committee meetings and there have been over 20. The solutions and suggestions were items that have been considered and discussed at those meetings. We have reached out to many organizations and given presentations to following:

The Chamber of Commerce

The Downtown Dunedin Merchants Association and their board

Dunedin Council of Organizations (DCO) - The largest comprehensive gathering of Dunedin's Organization, committees, homeowners groups, condo associations; etc.

The Marina Advisory Committee

The Community Redevelopment Area Advisory Committee (CRAAC)

The Monroe Park mixed-use development in downtown on Grant Street

The neighboring residents of the downtown streets like President, Aberdeen, Albert, Broadway because of the need to protect them as parking is lost.

Residents of Edgewater Arms

The last three events were held at Bon Appétit or Blur nightclub in downtown.

*Note many attempts were made to reach organizations, committees/boards and residents.

This workshop has been published in Water bills and on the City's website, Downtown Merchants Facebook page, as well as the Downtown Dunedin Parking Facebook page.

City staff had a well prepared presentation that was sent to all regular members and then furnished in printed form for all to follow. Also, there was a well participated Q and A forum. During this process we came to a consensus on the following:

1. Option "C"- was chosen by the large majority. No other option was chosen.
2. No time limits on the paid or free parking areas
3. A tiered approach in the paid parking hotspots
An example is the west end of Main Street, the Marina and up to Douglas where there are real parking problems.
4. No discount to residents on the Main Street parking, but reduced on off street paid lots.
5. Free lots with signage to direct Jolley Trolley and trail parking (Park and Ride).
6. Implement a resident permit program for nearby surrounding residential streets.

The reason for not going with option B, was that though there is turnover, there is no revenue stream and the parking problem is not going away with all the recognition the city has had; it is a place where people want to live, work, retire and open businesses.

This approach seemed to fit the directive by the Commission to go with a "phased approach" and to protect any concern by residents abutting the downtown area.

Mr. Ironsmith advised there were letters of support from the Downtown Merchants Association and the Dunedin Chamber of Commerce. He noted this has been an outreach of various businesses in getting support for looking at this process.

Conclusion

Parking is a good problem to have.

An additional 350 to 400 parking spaces are needed.

There is concern for the heavy reliance for Downtown parking on the at-risk parking areas that can go away very quickly.

A Parking Management Plan is needed to get the right people in the right places.

The request for the Commission is to provide the top 2 choices from the options.

Commission Questions

In response to the question from Commissioner Tornga, Mr. Rice advised:

The census looks at Metropolitan statistical areas across the country and Dunedin's is Pinellas and Tampa together.

Looking at the transit advancements that are going on in the top 10, this area is 10th of the top ten in the country for a number of reasons which he feels will be a detriment to the city's future potential.

Mr. Ironsmith added the downtown is doing so well because it is highly walkable and there are golf carts and the Trail. What is being seen is the trend where for years people wanted a home on a cul-de-sac with a block wall and a pool in the back with a big yard and now it is going the other way, people want to live downtown and get a cup of coffee attend a special event and they don't want a big yard to take care of and that is one of the reasons the downtown will continue to do well and that is why a parking management plan needs to address this trend.

Commissioner Kynes verified with Mr. Ironsmith the cost of the vertical structure in terms of \$20,000 to \$25,000 per space depending on the exterior façade.

Commissioner Kynes referred to the comments regarding paid lots and the environmental impacts of pavement by using lot structures rather than some kind of vertical design and asked the differentiation and the environmental factor.

Mr. Ironsmith stated there are numerous paved areas throughout the downtown which are environmentally unfriendly whereas with just a couple of vertical structures is much better for the environment for runoff, oil, grease and all those aspects. Also for the consumer it offers certainty by not having to search for these little parking areas and it is an economic stimulus.

Commissioner Kynes commented there has to be a source of funding to invest in that kind of endeavor, a standalone revenue source in order to gather data as to whether to bond something out or go to a lease arrangement. There still has to be a revenue source and the question has to be who's going to pay that revenue source.

Vice-Mayor Gracy advised one of the questions she receives is why millage will not work for creating a garage, why not just raise taxes and build a garage.

Mr. Ironsmith explained raising millage is considered to be the best equitable way and terms of why should a resident pay if they are not using the downtown. City Manager DiSpirito mentioned to him that typically raising millage is more for general operations and not for a capital expense.

Vice-Mayor Gracy inquired if any vacancy rates were done on a garage. Mr. Ironsmith deferred to John Martin on this question; however, noted Walker has occupancy counts in December, May and June.

Mr. Martin advised they reviewed the previous study and then verified how it is today. He performed that task in December, May and June on a week day and a weekend and the occupancy counts were consistent as far as the areas that were occupied. For example, in December the counts were done on a weekend and the peak was that 66%, but that was at a

large area; and looking at just the on street that was 70% including all streets. Typically they would say that people consider it a problem when it gets to 85%. On the absolute peak in May it was 83% overall, that is all the spaces combined; so at that time the spaces were at the level where they were full and people could not find a space or would say it is was too frustrating. He noted in the report there are maps that color code occupancy and that it is easy to see where there are constant issues the times that they looked at it. The secondary counts were done every hour on the hour on two weekdays and two weekends on Saturday and Sunday so it was very consistent.

Mr. Rice requested Mr. Streder explain the differences in bonding from different revenue sources as compared to a paid parking system, millage versus The Penny.

Interim Finance Director Streder explained the Penny is a funding source that has a finite life and has to be renewed; therefore, when investors look at the revenue source they look at the certainty of it and the duration and how it aligns with the term of the bond.

If the City is bonding with a source of revenue that is only in place for half the duration of the bond maturity, additional or secondary revenue would need to be pledged.

In terms of using millage to bond, a cornerstone of good budgeting is that ongoing revenues are used to cover ongoing expenses. The incremental millage increase required to finance a decent size garage would be between .25 and .30 mills; for a \$4 million garage in today's interest rate environment would require approximately \$325,000 annual revenue. From 1/10 of a mill currently the City's total tax value is approximately \$1.9 billion which raises \$190,000, 1/10 of a mill.

City Manager DiSpirito commented there would be a concern in raising millage for capital projects such as this, that it would get to a point where it would be needed for General Fund purposes of basic services. The ad valorem goes to the General Fund which supports the Sheriff's contract, Fire & Rescue Department, Parks & Recreation Program, Dunedin Library, Planning & Development, Economic Development and a number of other critical services; some direct and some indirect. If the City got to the point of having to raise the millage appreciably for capital projects, it would find itself fairly comparable and possibly even. What would be the ease of coming back when there was truly a need for ongoing support for basic services and yet found that raising the millage to accommodate would put the City out of sync with other communities? The millage is charged to residents and does not capture tourists and visitors who are using infrastructure and heavily at certain times of the year, maybe even the majority; in essence it would be subsidizing all of the visitors strictly with money from residents.

Commissioner Livingston expressed concern at either over or underestimating the cost of a vertical structure, because if the goal of the parking plan is for between 350 and 400 spaces at \$20,000 to \$25,000 per space it would be an \$8 to \$9 million project which would put more pressure on the millage increase to cover something like that and to attempt to bond.

Commissioner Livingston inquired if the occupancy rates and special events are standalone or if they are factored in because that could skew the occupancy numbers.

Mr. Martin explained when they looked at occupancy they asked for times that were not special events. In December, when they initially did this study, there was an event in the evening, but their last count was at noon and 2:00 p.m., well before the event and the other times there were no special events.

Mayor Bujalski opened the meeting for public input.

Note: Before each name there is a letter: S = support, O = opposed and U = undecided.

S Lynn Wargo, President of the Dunedin Chamber of Commerce at 301 Main Street commented they are in a good place in the community and the downtown, their storefronts are filled, the stores and restaurants are busy. They are getting great press and people of this community and other communities look to the downtown as a shining example of redevelopment in progress. At the Chamber's visitor center they hear multiple times daily about the quaintness of the downtown, what a charming city we have been and many reasons why people want to live, visit or do business here.

Ms. Wargo stated when they hear that 50% of the parking is at risk, they know that a decision needs to be made to protect the thriving downtown. No one wants to pay for parking but parking spaces are being lost and unless something is done, there will be much more frustration in the long run. We need to establish a funding stream to be able to pay for the parking structure or structures or additional surface parking. City staff has been very creative in meeting our growing parking needs over the past few years, but time has run out on many of these spaces. We can't put our downtown's economic health on borrowed or leased spaces that will be developed into other projects at some point. Doing nothing is not an option; there never is a perfect solution, but a hybrid or phased approach including a revenue stream must be considered as a viable solution.

There was talk of a tax increase as a solution that puts the burden on every property owner in Dunedin, whether or not they take advantage of the downtown amenities. Thousands of people are using these spaces and Dunedin cannot exist just on the support of the community residents; visitors are a huge part of the economy and should share in this investment for our future.

Ms. Wargo commented the leadership of the Commission is critical to the future of the City and they need to ensure there are adequate places for customers and employees to park today and in the future and they are the only ones who can do that. Dunedin is and will continue to be a desirable destination for residents and visitors. Mr. Brady spoke in support of Option C. Free parking in the downtown will continue to be available within a short distance to Main Street. Change is difficult for most of us. The Commission is considering this change for progress and to create additional parking that is needed.

O Dennis McGreen of 1689 Hamilton Court a two-year resident stated he disagreed with everything he has heard so far and made the following points:

He did not know how putting in parking meters would make this town any better.

He thought it was nice to be able to go into town whenever you want; there is plenty of parking, delicious restaurants, nice stores and the Pinellas Trail. What he is hearing tonight is come in, shop and get out.

The idea of building a parking garage because one day last year there was only 82% available parking does not convince him it is going to get worse any time soon.

He read parts of the Walker report and Mr. Ironsmith's report and sees no reason to do anything right now.

He was not aware of any meetings except the last one which he could not attend.

He urged anyone who does not agree to stand up and think before making a decision.

- S** Wade Davenport of 316 San Jose Drive, a new resident stated:

A parking management program is needed.

In terms of return on investment, how do you know the right people are getting to the right spaces?

The proposal sounds like it would be a pilot and then a multiyear agreement, but where is the inflection point to see a return on investment.

He felt the numbers needed to be looked at more.

- S** Peter Kreuziger, owner of Bon Appétit Restaurant spoke in support of Option C.

- S** Dan Zucker of 1029 Michigan Avenue spoke as a business owner, a resident and current President of Visit Dunedin and made the following comments:

Visit Dunedin promotes the City as a tourist destination.

The City needs to behave as a tourist destination; progressive and forward thinking.

The numbers they are seeing at the visitor center and the Chamber are steadily increasing annually and numbers on the website are reaching one million views.

There needs to be a plan and not have a broken and dysfunctional parking system.

He supported vertical parking which would organize everything and make it easy and consumer friendly.

- U** Deanna Warner of 602 Oakwood Drive stated:

She was very upset at the thought of paid parking; however, if that is the direction being taken, the hybrid sounds like it would be a way to adjust to it.

She liked the idea of having some free spaces and for tourists to pay their share.

In terms of economic development, she was aware there has to be a vibrant economy, but would appreciate consideration of maintaining the quality of life enjoyed in Dunedin.

- S** Joseph Kokolakis of 134 Buena Vista Drive North stated:

This is a no win situation to consider charging people for something that has been free for a hundred years.

It is not to promote development or to raise money; it is having the foresight to anticipate changes in the community and what will be needed to adapt.

Essentially the whole purpose of charging for parking is to develop either a revenue stream that the accountants can use to underwrite a bond or some sort of private development investment in a garage and to manage the parking today.

The fee aspect is to discourage parking on Main Street and encourage people to turn over those spaces frequently so everyone in the community can enjoy them over the course of a day.

It is important to have paid parking so that in 3 to 5 years there can be a track record of revenue in order to underwrite a parking garage.

It is important for employees of merchants in the community and residents of the community to have free parking within a relatively close distance from Main Street.

The hybrid seemed to be the best solution and he was in support.

O Deborah Bushnell of 645 Loudon Avenue stated:

She did not favor paid parking and felt free parking was very important for the downtown community.

She wished to clarify the leases are for 2 to 3 years and are renewable.

She owns the Bushnell lot and that is not going away anytime soon as she purchased it so that there would not be a large structure built next to her property and she would make it available to the City for as long as they want for free parking.

S Jim Graham of 1231 Royal Oak Drive a business owner on Main Street stated:

He has been involved in this committee since the beginning.

He commended the past commissioners and planners for creating and developing what there is today.

This is the opportunity to continue at this pace and parking needs to be considered in terms of the loss of spaces. He supported Option C.

There is a concern for the parking becoming saturated and spilling over into the neighborhoods.

O Bob Brotherton of 2192 Marquita Drive stated he has a long-time working relationship with the City of Dunedin as he served for 18 years as the Dunedin City Engineer, Director of Public Works and Utilities, and City Manager when John Lawrence was out of town. During those 18 years, he does not remember the City Commission ever going against one of his recommendations. He listed his many accomplishments as a City employee.

With a history of success and a positive relationship between the City Commission of Dunedin, he was there to make another important recommendation. Please do not install any type of parking meter system on the downtown streets of Dunedin.

He retired from the City in 2003 and has continued service to other cities and private developments in Pinellas County by contracting to serve as a Consultant. He enjoyed helping communities with improvements to their Public Services as well as beautification improvements. He serves on the Arts Council and Beautification Committee for the Town of Indian Shores.

In recent years, the success of the Dunedin Downtown has been quite evident with more events and business desired by the Downtown Merchants. At the same time, a good thing can turn into a problem if the context of the issue is not properly recognized. The downtown is at its capacity as represented by the current parking concerns.

The primary problem is that development has been allowed to happen in the downtown without proper parking code requirements. Dunedin used to have more conservative parking code requirements, but the Planning Department relaxed these codes a number of

years ago to encourage more development in the Downtown. The idea was, and continues to be, that more development is a good thing which then increases the tax base which then funds the Community Redevelopment Agency budget. This process does not fund the City General Fund but rather funds this CRA Budget.

The parking then becomes a problem with the citizens of the City who try to then find parking in their downtown.

Solutions to the problem:

- 1) Stop trying to pour a 55 gallon drum of water into a 5 gallon bucket. You are breaking the 5 gallon bucket. Recognize that the Downtown is primarily for City residents and services to be provided to them and not a Convention Center that may benefit the merchants with negative impact on the City residents.
- 2) Immediately fix the development codes to: (a) require the "Types" of new business to be a business that serves City residents and (b) return to "Proper Parking Code Requirements" to be provided for any new development. If proper parking cannot be provided, then do not allow the development or redevelopment and protect the downtown.
- 3) Consider a parking garage funded by leased space by merchants for them and their employees. This can be constructed on the property located in the downtown behind Casa Tina. This would open up about 100 parking spaces for citizens to then provide more business to the merchants. This could be financed by the City with debt service guaranteed by lease agreements with merchants. If the merchants would benefit from more customers they should be willing to pay for a parking space for themselves and their employees and not compete with parking spaces for customers.
- 4) The City of Dunedin downtown no longer qualifies as a "Slum and Blighted" area as required by State Law. Eliminate the CRA and return the tax money to the Dunedin General Fund and to Pinellas County to the benefit of Dunedin and Pinellas County taxpayers.

S Lynn Thorn of 354 Main Street local business owner and soon to be resident stated:

She sees people every morning parking and riding their bikes on the trail. She has observed that hours and hours later they return not spending any time in Dunedin.

This is a problem now; it is not a future problem. Almost every day local regular customers indicate that they have not been able to find a parking space and have just left and come back another time.

U Eric Peterson of 1336 Lotus Drive North stated:

Some of his questions have already been answered.

His opinion of this issue has changed dramatically in the two days.

He would like more information on the parking that the City does own.

He would like more information on increasing the millage rate where he felt a near view has been taken. He would be willing to pay a little bit in his taxes for vertical

parking and more so if the tourists were paying for part of it and if residents had free use of the parking.

He would like more information on other grants that would be available to offset the cost of vertical parking.

Another concern is for increased traffic and he did not think surface parking would solve the problem.

He would not be against street level paid parking to prevent all-day parking.

- O Cathy Greenwood of 2239 Watrous Drive expressed appreciation to Mr. Ironsmith for providing her with information and answering her questions and stated:

She was concerned for the consideration of narrowing this to two options when many residents have not reviewed and been able to carefully weigh the options.

She indicated her agreement with the comments by Mr. Brotherton. She noted the comments regarding relaxed parking requirements for downtown development and asked if there are plans to institute these types of guidelines or consideration of a parking fund if the developers cannot provide the required parking.

She expressed the spirit of the city is to first serve each other, the residents and the community.

It was not a perceived notion, but a fact that paid parking downtown would change the ambience of the Downtown. It would become less of a leisurely place to stroll and relax once people have their eye on the time and the shiny pay stations.

In terms of the comparison to St. Petersburg, Dunedin is not like St. Petersburg.

The mention of the use of Penny funds is of concern for the priorities of future projects and why the parking structure is not one of the priorities.

Her strong recommendation is for Option B, mostly what Mr. Brotherton said; continue free parking, revise signage dramatically and begin to enforce time limits with a grace period and warnings and at the end of the year see where the point of inflection is and assess. During the year continue research and develop options and look for other funding resources. It would not be doing nothing but would do no harm.

No more allowing developments and then the City deal with the parking generated.

Installing parking meters right away is a big change and the City may never get back what they now have.

- S Nancy Carney of 2361 Armour Drive a merchant in Downtown Dunedin and a resident of Dunedin did not believe that paid parking would do harm and that it is a necessary step and if not taken not only the business owners will suffer. She supported Option C.
- O Jim Riley of Fairway Estates at 2220 Watrous Drive thanked the commission for letting him share his thoughts on the Parking Management Plan.

He said there has been a lack of communication with the city residents about the parking situation. Meetings have been held by "invitation only" and most input has apparently been by the downtown merchants only. He felt the City residents are the most affected but they seem to have been shut out. He found absolutely nothing on the Dunedin website

about the issue. He managed to get a draft of a report sent to the City Commission dated June 10th which of course wasn't publicly available. He noted the full report from Walker was posted to the website on Friday, June 19th.

He can only conclude that some sort of paid parking has been decided from everything he has heard from the Commission and from the Walker report. In the opinion of many residents, who have been ignored up to this point, paid parking is a terrible idea. One comment kept coming up; it would ruin the ambiance of downtown.

The real question is what is the purpose of a Parking Management Plan? Is it to create turnover in the downtown parking spots, which is mentioned endlessly in the report and in public comments, or is it mainly a revenue source? The draft report mentioned numerous times that one of the main problems is lack of turnover of the parking spaces. He stated to make parking on Main Street a 2 hour limit and on the side streets 3 hours and then enforce it. The paid parking option may or may not resolve this problem. He had seen no mention of a time limit with the paid options. Therefore, he concluded that you could simply pay for 6 or 8 hours of parking and stay there all day.

If the thought is that paid parking would discourage people from parking for long periods, then you also have to conclude that paid parking would simply discourage people from coming downtown altogether because of the cost. Here are some reasons that paid parking is a terrible idea:

- A) Taking the time to physically go find the pay station, do the actual payment and any follow-up needed like placing a receipt in the car is a hassle.
- B) Most people don't want to pay for any longer than needed which many times will result in an extra trip back to the pay station to pay again because your business or pleasure is taking longer than planned which is a double hassle.
- C) Even a minor cost will keep people away. How many people will pay to come downtown to window shop or simply enjoy the downtown area? From personal experience, window shopping many times turns into actual purchases and a stop at the bars and restaurants.
- D) Adding the parking fee directly to the cost of a beer or dinner; a \$6 beer would cost \$7 or more. In talking with other residents, they agree that most will likely quit visiting the downtown merchants in the case of paid parking. There are a lot of places closer to them that will see increased business. He could also easily drive to Palm Harbor, Ozona, Safety Harbor or further down Main Street to businesses with free parking.

The draft report mentioned that St. Petersburg hasn't had any negative effects from paid parking. St. Pete is bigger in both population and land area, plus there are many more things to do in St. Pete than in the small downtown area of Dunedin; they are not the same.

Perhaps a survey of residents should be done to see how many want paid parking. See if the results match up with the Downtown Merchants Association and the Chamber of Commerce's.

He addressed the capacity problem, meaning building a parking deck and how to fund it.

He understood concerns about the aging Highlander pool and the need to replace it, but does not believe we should spend \$6 million dollars on a full-fledged water park. Commissioners Livingston and Tornga have pointed out that this project didn't even make the top 5 in a resident's survey. Some of that money could be used to help pay for a proposed \$8 million parking garage.

He felt the new stadium is a drain on the City's resources. The Toronto Blue Jays play 16 games over a one month period at the stadium that holds 5,500 people. He has never seen the City economic impact study on the Blue Jay Stadium. Most economic impact studies are highly flawed in their revenue estimates. Most studies assume that the money spent at a game is revenue but actually if you remove the entertainment factor people will spend their money elsewhere. That could be a plus for the downtown merchants. The analysis found that virtually all publicly financed Major League Sports stadiums are money losers when this is taken into account.

He believed the Canadian tourist must come here for other reasons outside of the stadium as they are here for many months. It's because Dunedin is simply a great place to live and vacation. Spring rentals are hard to come by for that reason. Don't shortchange the value of our great city other than having spring baseball.

A parking garage would benefit all Dunedin residents year round where baseball is seasonal. According to the Walker report it is perhaps the only way to create the additional parking spaces that will be needed in the coming years. We could use the stadium money and the aquatic center money to create a free parking garage that all Dunedin residents could use rather than spending it on things relatively few residents use.

In conclusion, having free parking, including a parking garage are goals easily achievable financially. Let's hope that Walker Parking and the Downtown Parking Committee, both without resident input, didn't guess wrong on the residents reaction to paid parking. If you destroy our great downtown, it will take a very long time to get it back. On the bright side, you will have solved the parking problem.

Mr. Ironsmith advised the base 2009 Parking Study has been on the City's website for some time.

S Thomas Riedl of 148 Marina Plaza and a lifetime resident who also works in Dunedin stated:

He was in favor of Option C.

He suggested that those opposed to consider that there would be some free parking available in close proximity. Also there was discussion of a discounted cost for residents.

With the technology there are many options available for the parking stations including discounts and adding additional time with your smart phone.

Much of the process will be education.

U Ken Harrison of 1743 Sutton Place made the following comments:

He does not like to pay for parking; however, he does see a need and questions how to balance that.

He just made a trip to Portland where they are in a close situation. One thing he liked that they did was put in parking kiosks instead of meters; one per block.

The problem with charging for parking is the option of shopping at the mall instead, free parking for residents creates a caste system.

The report has been a great effort and everyone is going to have a problem with which option, he agreed Option A is not an option; Options C and D, maybe.

He has never seen a nice-looking parking garage. No one wants to build next to a parking garage and when they are empty at night they are just big empty eyesores.

He was still undecided; however, would prefer free parking for residents and visitors help out, that he does have concerns about that.

- S** René Johnson of 479 Main Street a business and property owner who lives downtown stated:

A decision on this issue has been put off for a long time because there is no popular decision. No one wants to pay for parking or a parking garage but we must look forward and someone has to vote on the issue.

A decision must be made for the City to be able to fund a bond in order to be able to afford to buy property and have vertical parking. Vertical parking does not mean an end to quaintness.

As a business owner there are many options for paid parking and changes can be made as necessary. An option is to validate/pay for a customer's parking and also for employees.

With technology today a part of the plan is to allow residents to have guests accommodated.

It will be impossible to educate everyone in the city to come to one decision, the day of waiting for everyone to get on board to say they agree will never come.

She did not think developers coming to Dunedin were looking to change it negatively and have thought it out well and do so at greater expense than it would be somewhere else.

She urged the Commission to move forward with a vote and get something moving on this issue.

- O** Pamela Armentano of 1186 Jackmar Road a new resident made the following comments:

In terms of funding she has noticed that business owners for whom the parking has been free have enjoyed the benefits but there is no tax or contribution.

Inquired if there has been consideration of purchasing the land that has been leased and suggested if each household paid \$100.00 it would be \$1 million toward purchasing land.

Also, there is the possibility of people donating funds since it is their home and parking would remain free.

Also, bonding out \$1 million for 5 years would come to about \$20.00 per household which she thought everyone would be willing to do.

- S** Donald Polmann of 2251 Colonial Drive commented:

The need for more parking is a reasonable conclusion, but is it?

He would ask as a matter of policy if the Commission agreed with staff.

He noted a series of questions for the Commission to consider rather than just jumping to the 5 options.

Is it the City's position there is definitely a need for more parking and if yes, then when?

Is building a parking garage the right solution and if so is that the right position to take now and if yes, when would it be constructed?

If a parking garage is going to be built how is it going to be paid for, what data and information is needed in order to determine how it will be paid for and how will that data be collected?

BREAK 8:19 P.M. TO 8:28 P.M.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Mayor Bujalski discussed with the Commissioners which options could be removed from the list and determined that Option A and Option D were not considerations. A straw poll of the Commission determined they would like staff to move forward on Option C and Option E for further consideration.

Further Information requested by the Commissioners

Vice-Mayor Gracy:

Requested more information from Walker Parking Consultants on case studies as to other cities comparable in size and population which have tried paid parking and perhaps failed; if those situations exist and what was the resolution.

Requested more information in regard to the resident discount as to any benefit that can be added to the taxpayers of the city who underwrite the current parking.

Inquired regarding hotspots, whether that is specific to Main Street and if there is going to be free parking on other lots; she would like to see those lots defined. Mr. Walker noted their report has maps where it is clear as to the full lots including Ocean Optics and lots along the Trail always being full; more cars are there than there are marked spaces.

Noted she does not want to "keep paving paradise" with respect to surface lots.

Thinks a structure is probably needed; however, the question of how to get there is the question among the Commission right now.

Agreed with the comment about surface lots and digging deeper being something staff should review.

City Manager DiSpirito reiterated the question of the duration of these leases.

Mr. Ironsmith advised most of the leases are until 2016/2017 with possibly the First Methodist Church lot running to 2020. He noted sometimes if the City has made significant capital contributions to improve the lot then there might be a little bit longer time for the callback.

Mr. Rice explained staff would not have considered the lots as at-risk had they not had people coming into their office with development plans, they have seen multiple plans on some lots.

The City put out a Request for Proposal for the First Baptist Church site. He noted in looking at the Marina there are successful businesses and it is being considered for additional parking.

Vice-Mayor Gracy inquired regarding a policy when developers come in.

Mr. Ironsmith advised all the projects meet current code requirements which are a little less in the downtown than the rest of the City because of taking into consideration the internal capture with people coming downtown via the Trail or golf cart or other alternative modes of transportation. The parking restrictions are more flexible downtown than other parts of the City; for example, State Road 580 which is all car destinations.

Mr. Rice advised there were no relaxed parking requirements for residential; therefore, the 200 Main, the townhomes on Highland and the Gateway project do not have a relaxed code. Mr. Rice added Donald Shoop stated the market should determine what is needed, because requiring too much ends up with vacant asphalt.

Commissioner Livingston:

Stated there has been a lot of great feedback and a lot to absorb.

Suggested it might be prudent as a Commission to take away all of this information and come back possibly at the next Commission meeting with some of their questions for staff and possibly discuss those so the community is aware of them. That might provide a forum to answer some questions heard tonight.

He felt the citizens have answered the question that there is a parking problem and that Option A is not a consideration, which is a big step.

He supported Options C and D and to expand upon those.

Stated the tipping point discussion with both of these in one-year they need to discuss if any changes need to be made.

Commissioner Kynes:

Stated she has been thinking a lot about the concept of "do no harm"; however, sometimes the most harm you can do is to do nothing and not adapt.

Commented on the hard work over the years to make Dunedin the vibrant city it is today.

Stated she liked the idea of free and hot spot parking because it's not saying you cannot come downtown and park for free, just that you may not park in the main area.

Commissioner Tornnga:

Commented on his passion regarding this issue. His personal research of going around town, identifying parking spaces and seeing the need to move forward.

Observed the situation is not getting better and the loss of one of the large parking lots right now indicates that there needs to be parking management; there should not be a waiting period as it has been talked about for a very long time.

Stated what needs to be done is to make sure all of those currently parking are directed by telling them what the City wants them to do.

Noted the Downtown Parking Advisory Committee, staff and the consultant are all into the nuances regarding parking; there are many options they have been working on for years.

Noted the people making these recommendations are the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Merchants Association.

Noted the studies are on the City's website. The first study has been there for a period of time and the new one is on there. He suggested anyone with questions call someone and noted there has been no attempt to keep people away from the various meetings and many residents have attended.

Reiterated tonight is just giving some guidance and giving staff authority to begin work and start moving forward.

Mayor Bujalski made the following points and comments:

How do we get more parking stock and people to the right places while maintaining our sense of place and ambience?

Investigation on funding options as paid parking is not the only way to build a garage.

The County in 2020 will be putting out approximately \$200 million to be spread among the cities for additional funding and that has not been examined as to how that will trickle down to Dunedin and how that will affect all projects, not just parking.

Consideration must be given to where in the City the Blue Jays will be permanently and what that means to other projects like the Municipal Services Building. With the 6-month plan there might be that answer which will help with this issue.

Consider establishing of an Impact Fee or Parking Fund if a developer does not have room for parking.

The top priorities in the Penny list have to be considered; right now, as projected, there is enough for three projects on top of the normal projects; they include the stadium, the pool, Municipal Services Building and a parking garage.

Further investigation regarding leasing more lots and finding out of others like Ms. Bushnell who have no intention of developing their property.

Investigate the resident discount because they have already paid for the existing parking.

Consider the unintended consequences, for example, in an email Mr. Peterson brought up a study about a paid parking system that worked on the surface, but turned out people with no plan who would have just come down and wander around and end up in various restaurants and businesses were not coming for that whole day trip anymore; what about the businesses off of Main Street? Will people meander after lunch or dinner or rush back to their car because of the paid parking. All these things need to be investigated to reinforce or adjust paid parking as necessary.

There are residents who do not realize this is happening; therefore, taking time and steps to find out what is important. She wanted to know what the education system would consist of and how effective would it be.

What would the wayfinding program be and what would the signage be like?

Expressed concern that this be done the right way, covering all bases so we can say with certainty there is no other way to pay for a parking garage than this.

She was aware the parking garage is needed.

Today she received an email about something she never thought about. The Moms Meet Up go to the playground at Edgewater Park and might have to pay for parking. These things must be considered and think about how it affects why people live here.

Public input is very important and very smart because the residents have to buy in.

Mayor Bujalski summarized she felt staff had direction and advised City Manager DiSpirito indicated he could provide an update at the City Commission meeting on July 9th, 2015. She thanked everyone for coming and the Downtown Parking Advisory Committee for their hard work and objectives and noted it is incumbent on the Commission for the other side to take part in the discussion.

The workshop adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

NOTE: The meeting was completely recorded and the recording is in the official file. This meeting was also broadcast by *Dunedin TV*.



Julie Ward Bujalski
Mayor

Attest:



Denise M. Kirkpatrick
City Clerk