

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. in the 2nd floor Conference Room at the Town Offices. Present were: Shawn Carroll, John Fenton, Marlene Hoyt, Andrea Leary, Steven Leed, and Jeffrey Spagat; also present were: Planning Director Paul Materazzo, Senior Planner Lisa Schwarz, and Selectman Alex Vispoli.

Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Fenton seconded by Ms. Leary, the Council voted to approve the May 21st minutes by a unanimous vote.

Update on Parking Study

Mr. Leed introduced Nelson Nygaard Senior Associate Lisa Jacobson along with William High who gave a Power Point presentation with initial observations, ideas, and possible opportunities resulting from the comprehensive Downtown parking study being conducted. The study reflects on- and off-street private and public parking, payment mechanisms, regulations, enforcement, permit program and signage. There are about 3000 spaces with different types of parking offered in different areas that range from free to paid parking, and some with 2-hour to an unlimited parking timeframe.

A parking usage survey was conducted on a Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, and Ms. Jacobson presented some issues and opportunities after analyzing the parking utilization data as part of the comprehensive Downtown parking study as follows:

1. *Signage*: lacking and inconsistent. Ms. Jacobson showed some examples of signage that could be utilized and suggested adding names to various lots to identify them.
2. *Pricing and time limits*: there is a mix of time limits. Availability vs. turnover should be considered when pricing is set. Pricing should not deter the consumer from parking.
3. *Employee and permit parking*: three quarters of Downtown employees do not know that this program exists. Perhaps consider a daily transaction vs. an employee parking permit. New employees could receive a map reflecting convenient all day parking availability. If technology is improved, then parking should still be more convenient than it is currently.
4. *Parking technology*: currently there is a mismatch of various types of technology. Consider consistent technology which is simple and easy to use. One example is the ability to add time from one's cell phone.
5. *Shared parking*: at peak times, 600 privately owned spaces were unused; suggestions can be made to better utilize these spaces.
6. *Optimize supply*: additional spaces could be added to the Park Street East lot if the spaces were reconfigured.
7. *Downtown environment*: currently, gaps in the walking environment exist; ideas can be given for improving walkways and keeping them more level which would reduce hazards to pedestrians.

Next steps: Power Point slides will be sent to Community Development and Planning staff to review along with the EDC parking sub-committee. Then a meeting will be scheduled with Nelson Nygaard and the sub-committee to discuss details. Suggestions for short and long-term improvements with cost estimates will be made. This meeting will be open to the public and will demonstrate the value of the work done by the Town Planning staff along with Nelson Nygaard. A final presentation should be ready by end of August/early September in time to be included in the CIP.

Alignment of Objectives

EDC needs to determine objectives moving forward. A S.W.O.T (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis will be done at the next meeting. Refocusing on Downtown is needed. A suggestion was made to invite Downtown property owners to a subsequent EDC meeting. Council members should bring their objectives and ideas to the next meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.