



**Meeting  
Notes**

Attendees: Thomas Cheeseman, Middletown Transit  
Lynn Baldoni, Chief, Middletown PD  
Craig Elkin, Middletown PD-Traffic  
Phil Caccila, Middletown ADA Coordinator  
Michiel Wackers, Middletown Planning Dept.  
Richard Kearney, Middletown Planning Dept.  
Bill Warner, Middletown Planning Dept.  
Mario Saraceno, Parking Authority  
Bill Cranshaw, VHB  
Ryan Malloy, VHB  
Matt Blume, VHB

Date/ Time: April 19, 2007  
3:30PM

Project No.: VHB: 41290  
State Project No: 82-297

Place: Municipal Building Room 208  
245 deKoven Drive  
Middletown, CT 06457

Re: Middletown CBD Parking and  
Traffic Study –  
Stakeholder Meeting

Notes taken by: MCB/RM

---

A Stakeholder Meeting was held for the Middletown Parking and Traffic Study for the CBD on April 19, 2007 at 3:30 PM in Room 208 of the Middletown City Hall. The purpose of this meeting was to describe the project to the stakeholders, to discuss current deficiencies and anticipated needs, and to brainstorm potential solutions.

The stakeholders at this meeting generally represent public safety and transit, and included the Police Department, the Fire Department, and the transit operator.

**Middletown Area Transit (MAT) - Tom Cheeseman**

- The transit district began in 1968 by city referendum, but was dormant until 1980. The current facility was constructed in 1982. Mr. Cheeseman oversees bus operations and runs a transit station downtown. In addition to transit service, the MAT took over a lease of a garage approximately a half a mile away from the station.
- The Middletown Area Transit and the bus station provided transportation services as follows:
  - 300,000 trips per year to urban areas.
  - 23,000 rural trips per year.
  - 36,000 trips to the Meriden area.
  - 31,000 trips per year in evenings.

- 30,000 paratransit trips per year.
- Land Jet operates two trips to casinos per week
- Peter Pan – two trips per week Friday & Saturday
- Greyhound 1 trip per week
- The MAT buses operate on a flag stop basis, with no designated bus stops. The drivers pick up and drop off where they deem it to be safe. This came to be as no one wanted a bus stop in front of their establishment or residence. It would, however, save time if there were bus stops as it is common for people to be 20 feet apart requiring a second stop.
- The buses have a good safety record in the downtown area, with most reported incidents in private parking lots.

### **Police**

- The Middletown Police Department (MPD) is responsible for traffic enforcement, and is the Legal Traffic Authority for the City. In addition the Police Chief is in charge of parking authority. The Parking Commission is under the Police Division.

### **ADA Coordinator – Phil Caccila**

- The ADA Coordinator is the City's advocate for accessibility and in the past has worked a lot with MAT to increase ADA accessibility. In addition, the ADA Coordinator reviews curb cut compliance with State code and reviews signage.
- The City has been cracking down on illegal/invalid handicapped parking permits. This year alone 500 parking tickets were issued for ADA violations.
- The City is in the process of increasing fines associated with ADA violations.
- The City has been installing audible signals at pedestrian crossings. The goal is to have audible signals at all intersections.

### **General Discussion**

- If anyone wanted to raise fines, the Middletown Police Department (MPD) would have to recommend the increased parking fines to the city council for their approval.
- The MPD and the ADA Coordinator like pedestrian count down signal heads and would eventually like the signals upgraded.
- There are a large number of senior citizens in the downtown area, more than the disabled population. The elderly need to be accommodated. People with young children also need to be accommodated (stroller set).

### **Safety concerns downtown**

- Angle parking (backing out) causes many incidents downtown. SUV's make it difficult to back out safely as they block the drivers line of site. [a review after the meeting showed just under 2 crashes per month involving backing vehicles].

- 30 percent of all Middletown crashes (100 total accidents per month) occur in the downtown area. There are also many near misses resulting from the angle parking and left "U" turns into parking spaces. A new law (local) prohibits "U" turns into parking stalls. Back-in angle parking was discussed to reduce the sightline issues.
- Trucks take up spaces for delivery. There are many tractor trailers with no place to park while making deliveries.

## **Parking**

- Businesses do not have employee parking, many park on Main Street.
- There is a perception that there is not enough parking in the downtown area, and many would like to see more parking in the downtown core. There is a need to increase supply for all parkers including: employee, visitors and residential.
- Fire apparatus maneuvers around parked cars needs to be considered.
- The existing Arcade Garage was discussed. It was suggested to concentrate parking in that garage. There is a perception that a majority of people parking there are for the court house.
- The Parking Authority is under the control of Police Department and is organized as follows:
  - Police Chief
    - Parking Authority
      - Parking Commission
- Crossing guards work for the Authority. They can also relieve attendants and enforce parking.
- Fines are \$5.00 which is not a deterrent. Fines need to increase. Primarily for repeat offenders. The Authority is looking to create turnover. Meters and time restrictions not for revenue but for turnover.
- The Authority sells monthly spaces. \$45.00 per month from 6:00AM – 6:00PM with no overnight parking. This fee will be raised to \$55.00 shortly.
- It is believed that the Parking Authority can now cover its own costs.
- The reserved parking spaces in Middletown was discussed. The Parking Authority will provide the number of reserved monthly parking passes for each parking area to the Study Team. How would we be able to get monthly parkers into a garage? Will people next to the garage be the only ones to use it? Some sort of transit service would be required.
- If a trolley is used, once the novelty wears off will ridership?
- The property behind Corino Tile was discussed as a potential garage location.
- Overnight parking on Main Street is prohibited.

- The potential for a median in the center of Main Street was discussed, with parallel parking on both sides. Could trucks park in the median? Also, public works plow snow in the middle of Main Street, and there is a special removal machine that loads the snow into dump trucks.
- MAT offered Wesleyan a deal for unlimited access - \$10.00 per semester, but the idea was eventually rejected.
- The Middlesex Garage causes significant AM delays due to the influx of traffic. They only use one of the entrances.
- The Salvation Army's adult daycare has closed, opening a child daycare.
- A potential deck behind Kid City was discussed, as was one in the lot next to the Middlesex Mutual garage, and one behind the police department. The police department lot is not a good area to deck due to security concerns, unless they can be addressed.
- The City has 50 spaces in the court house garage, can police employees be located in that garage?
- Is there a way to increase parking behind MAT? Is there potential to realign Melilli Plaza access drive and to reconfigure or deck the lot? Could the deck be built over the access road? Any relocation of the MAT would require the MAT board and the FTA administrator's approval.
- Monthly parking is at its capacity. Commitments are permanent for leased parking spaces, as long as the lease is active, and the reserved spaces are month to month.
- A deck over a city street was discussed from brooks over Metro Square.
- Could parking be combined with the transit station?
- Monthly parking is provided at the following locations:
  - Arcade
  - Mellilli
  - Eli Cannon's
  - Gilletts
- The Dialysis location has 25 spaces as part of their lease agreement, which is committed for length of lease. Dialysis may be moving to larger location, at which time the 25 spaces would free up. First & Last Restaurant also has committed spaces, for the length of their lease.