

DRAFT

City of Middletown, CT

Economic Development Committee

Parking Advisory Committee

Draft Minutes from the meeting of October 24, 2007

<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Also Present</u>
G. Daley, Chair	D. Bauer	R. Kearney
R. Santangelo	P. Szewczyk	T. Nigosanti
J. Bibisi	I. Greenberg	
	T. Cheeseman	
	C. Elkin	
	M. Saraceno	
Jennifer Alexander, Nilesh Patel, Patrick McMahon, Marie Kalita-Leary, Arthur Meyers, Trevor Davis, Nick Zullo, Vincent Amato, Jeff Pugliese, Harry Evert		

Minutes

A Call to Order: Bibisi called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM

B Organization

C Minutes

D Communications

E Old Business

1) **VHB presentation:** none

F New Business: Alexander presented notes from the 10/17/07 Parking Advisory Sub Committee meeting and discussed parking issues including: the immediate need for parking signs and a group to implement the study. Alexander noted the sub committee recommended an independent parking authority (PA) be established. Bibisi stated the PA was independent but moved to the Police Department (PD) and now there is a big, positive difference in finances. Santangelo stated the PA was mismanaged. Santangelo stated too many studies have been made and never implemented noting 5 studies on the North End. General discussion of North End ensued. Bibisi noted the PD has not mismanagement parking. Alexander noted the lack of attendance at this meeting and hoped the next meeting would be better attended. Bibisi stated the PD managed under the Chief of Police with traffic and enforcement divisions is the perfect marriage. Amato noted the PD wanted out of managing

parking. Bibisi noted the PA director was bad. Santangelo stated the need for some group to enforce and some group to carry out the management. Alexander stated the sub committee noted the need to manage the existing parking well and spend the federal funds wisely relative to other needs, terms, pricing, management of monthly parking and the need for muscle and good judgments. Santangelo questioned what the consultant's view is on an independent PA. McMahon stated the structure of the PA is the Chief of Police, Supervisor, enforcement and questioned whether an independent PA would be more effective. Bibisi stated the PD is able to cite and enforce. Alexander asked how the enforcement was done before. Santangelo noted too many studies have not been implemented and noted someone needs to push this study forward. Daley noted the issues are not mutually exclusive. The PA financial and management problems and whether an independent PA would have the muscle and be meaningful. Bibisi noted the parking management is more than before and more aggressive. Amato noted the PA did not lose money and the funds were kept separate from the city funds. Alexander stated there is a surplus of parking revenue, which should go to parking improvements rather than the PD budget. McMahon stated the PD is looking into new technology meters. Amato stated the PD did not want to manage parking in 1954. McMahon stated favoring whatever works best for the city. Bibisi stated the Chief is looking at new meters. Davis stated control of parking by an independent would increase revenues. Daley stated what went wrong with the self-sufficient PA was that it went in the opposite direction resulting in a financial mess so the city put the PA under the PD to save it. The PA had poor management. Daley asked that the consultants report what other towns do and their opinion on a self sufficient PA. Daley noted the PD is doing a good job at administering the collection of funds. Daley noted the city wants the report to address both the long-term brick and mortar and the short-term recommendations along with better management practices. Kalita-Leary asked who do you bring parking related issues to now stating how difficult getting sign requests approved noting how the PD and Public Works both approved signs that were subsequently denied. Bibisi agreed the PD and Public Works have this authority. McMahon stated the approval was wrong since the signs were wrong. Kalita-Leary stated it is not easy to work on getting approvals and noted that many people had to be contacted to get signs approved. McMahon stated he could not tell the committee who handles issues other than enforcement. Kalita-Leary questioned what are the monthly parking rules and how are they applied to new applicants and lots. Davis stated the system doesn't work and the PA needs to be connected to the business community since decisions take too long. McMahon asked whether the charter would have to be changed to create a PA. Daley & Bibisi stated the change could be through ordinance. Bibisi noted the signs are governed by State of Connecticut statute. Santangelo stated the PA was abolished by ordinance. Daley asked staff to research the issue of how the PA was abolished. Bibisi asked that staff and the consultants review how other towns establish PA. Daley requested that the consultants prepare and distribute in advance of the next meeting a draft report for the committee.

Brewster questioned establishing a temporary parking lot at the bottom of Green Street. Alexander suggested having the developer do this. Daley asked the consultant to look at creating a parking lot there. Bibisi noted the city owns the land-a former playground. Alexander discussed creating a lot across from the library to the back of Main Street buildings. Daley asked when the draft would be ready. Kearney stated the consultant would prepare the draft for the next meeting on a date TBD. Daley noted the city is faced with two issues: 1) creating a plan for the federal earmark funds, 2) creating a parking plan to support the downtown. The report will need a committee to take charge of the recommendations.

Santangelo made a motion seconded by Alexander to accept the sub committee report and submit to the consultant. And in addition, to ask the consultant to include in the report research on PA of comparable cities to include: West Hartford, Bristol and Manchester. Meyers asked if this is included in the scope. McMahon stated the Chief traffic authority funds to the PA commit executive director to mayor and council. Daley noted the need for a long-range business minded organization to manage the PA. The committee voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Daley asked that the consultant address of the sense of the need for scattered parking sites and to readdress the North End parking needs and the idea of below ground parking at Melilli Plaza. Amato noted the merchants had contributed to the creation the Melilli Plaza lot and he could produce letters from the city to the merchants regarding this. Daley noted the issue should be pursued. McMahon asked if the city had considered selling air rights on top of new garages. Daley related the YMCA redevelopment plan. Brewster asked if the Tine site and the railroad land abutting Rapallo were under consideration. Alexander questioned whether the playground site would have an ownership to the neighborhood and asked about the back of the Schlien's building.

Daley asked that a draft report be distributed prior to the next meeting and that no final report be issued prior to committee review and approval.

G Other

H Adjournment: Daley adjourned the meeting at 6:50 PM