

VILLAGE OF CHAGRIN FALLS

PARKING COMMISSION

July 6, 2015

Members present: Justin Herdman, Susan White, Jay Schach
Also present: Mayor Brick, Himes, Evans, Lutz, Muscenti, Brosius

Mr. Herdman asked for a report on the areas with the most parking problems from the parking enforcement officer. Chief Brosius reported that for weekdays most of the concentration is around 12:00 p.m. and that includes the plaza lot and the West Orange Street lot. The West Washington Street municipal lot is at capacity by 10:30 a.m. Mr. Herdman asked about weekends. Chief Brosius said they only do enforcement on Saturday and the officer doesn't work seven days a week. As far as the enforcement on Saturday, they are at capacity about the same time.

Mr. Himes said they recently reinstalled parking meters on Bell Street from Main Street to the east of Plaza Drive. That is an area that was authorized for meters in the ordinance but did not have meters replaced after the streetscape project. Prior to metering those spaces they were typically full all day long; I think mainly employees were parking in those spaces. Since metering those spaces, they are largely empty. Unfortunately right now there is so much other "free" parking in the core down town so we are simply pushing them over to the plaza or the West Washington Street lot. Chief Brosius said there are five two-hour meters and ten four-hour meters.

Mr. Himes explained that the current problem is that the plaza parking lot is full at the noon hour with cars circulating to find a space. Noon also happens to be one of the peak hours for a grocery store. Noon is the peak hour for parking as identified by the 2000 parking study as well. In 2000 the parking supply was at 96% capacity in the central sub area which includes the plaza. 85% is considered ideal to allow enough space for turnover and avoid circulating to find a space.

The current proposal for a lease on parking with the plaza reserves 197 parking spaces for plaza only use. This leaves 95 spaces for municipal parking (55 two-hour spaces and 40 all-day spaces). It is clear that the lot is currently saturated with employees and visitors to establishments outside of the plaza. Where will these people park when the Giant Eagle space is leased to a successful grocer?

One potential solution is to add parking capacity as was discussed at the last meeting. The proposal to expand the Riverside Park lot is likely to be a subject of a ballot issue this November.

Using remote parking with a shuttle service is frequently cited by residents as a solution. The problem with this solution is that it conflicts with human nature. Every driver parks as close to their destination as possible. This includes parking illegally if they have little fear of being ticketed. Widely available "free" parking in the core of the business district is a disincentive to parking remotely or riding a shuttle. Shuttles have failed to be effective even during blossom time as the Jaycees have experienced. Shuttles are simply too inconvenient unless there are absolutely no

other alternatives. Mr. Himes reported that Integrity Parking was consulted on the feasibility of using a shuttle and it is their opinion that a full-time employee shuttle service would be too expensive on an ongoing basis to be considered a reasonable parking solution for the Village of Chagrin Falls at this time.

Mr. Himes said that a parking garage is also frequently cited as a solution. The Village has asked Integrity Parking Systems for their opinion on the feasibility of a parking garage. The consultant is of the opinion that the hard and soft costs related to construction of a parking garage is estimated to be approximately \$17,000 per car space excluding land costs. Consequently, building a 200 car parking garage would cost approximately \$3.4 million dollars. To amortize this cost the Village would have to generate \$30,000 per month in revenues to be revenue neutral which equates to \$150 per month per car space. The Village currently generates about \$80 per month per space. It is Integrity's opinion that this overhead requirement makes a parking garage venture not feasible for the Village of Chagrin Falls under present conditions.

There was discussion regarding charging for all public parking to provide an incentive to park at "free" spaces that might be provided remote from the downtown. Charging would help recoup the cost to maintain the parking supply that is currently borne generally by the tax payer. Charging for parking will also discourage "park and ride" that occurs in the "free" lots and encourage it to move to remote lots.

Integrity has calculated revenue for the three public parking venues to be about \$176,000 based on the current 50 cents per hour charge. An additional 90 spaces of "on-street" parking are available on Main Street and North Franklin Street adding \$86,400 to the gross revenue. Increased enforcement and meter/kiosk maintenance costs would be paid out of these proceeds. The installation of three kiosks (for the plaza lot, the West Washington Street lot, and the East Orange Street lot) would cost about \$60,000.

Mr. Himes explained that the Village should be aware of consequences of charging for parking and strict enforcement of the two-hour limit and plaza only parking zones. This will displace parkers and modify their behavior. Without expanding the supply of parking the question remains, "where will these people park?" The residential side streets will likely be used by some to avoid paying for parking and being ticketed. Residents on some streets will object and may request "resident only" zones. The village can offer "free" remote parking at the Cleveland Street armory site for up to 40 cars. Unpoliced private lots will be used and this may trigger increased protection of private parking with the posting of "tow away" signs.

Mr. Herdman acknowledged the initiative petition effort and said that he is not willing to consider expanding the Riverside Park lot until residents have had a chance to vote on the issue.

Mr. Herdman said his immediate recommendation is to increase parking enforcement, whether it is the addition of a part-time employee or the addition of hours for a current part-time employee.

Mrs. White asked if there is somewhere else that they can put in meters? Mr. Himes said the only other places that are currently authorized for meters, but does not have them, is Center Street and 200' east of the Stepnorth area on Orange Street.

Mr. Schach said if they are going to have the kiosks they really need to meter the downtown area such as Main Street or install kiosks there also. Mr. Himes said if we were to meter everything we would want to go to meters that took credit cards because the big part of the problem with our meters now is that people just don't have a pocket full of change anymore.

Mr. Herdman said he is uncomfortable moving forward with peppering downtown with meters and not providing at least the alternative, however it is that we figure it out, for some flexibility for our residents. Mr. Himes said Integrity suggested that for all-day parkers, particularly the work force in the downtown, we could offer to sell monthly passes and they would be available here at the Village Hall. Mrs. White said when we did have meters on Main Street and Franklin Street everybody paid.

Lydia Champlin, 100 Pheasant Run Drive, suggested trying to control the "park and ride" situation in the West Washington Street parking lot. Chief Brosius said they do not have any law that prohibits it. Mrs. Champlin mentioned eminent domain and a taxing district.

Kathryn Garvey, 70 East Washington Street, asked what the original reasons were to remove and not replace the meters in the downtown? Mr. Himes said at the end of the streetscape project everything was done except for the reinstallation of the meters. Lydia Champlin was Mayor at the time and she looked at it and said it looks great, why not go ahead without the meters and see how it goes and Council agreed. That was in 2005 or 2006.

Craig Bauman, 46 East Orange Street, asked will stepping up the parking enforcement in the plaza solve the issue? Mr. Himes said Heinen's is satisfied that there is sufficient parking in the plaza if those 197 parking spaces are reserved for plaza only use, which will require enforcement.

Jo Neff, 57 Church Street, said she does a lot with the Chagrin Valley Little Theater and it is a nightmare down in that end of town especially on the weekends. What is being suggested really doesn't solve the long-range parking problem.

Anne deConingh, 50 East Orange Street, asked if there is a count of how many employees are using the three main lots? Mr. Himes said the last parking study did inventory employees. They did a use study in 2000 and they calculated 1,120 employees in the downtown and 1,093 off-street parking spaces. They said peak demand for employees was about 935 so in the interim I think that has increased significantly.

Linda Shuster, 92 West Washington Street, said since you have some two-hour parking in the plaza parking lot and some all-day parking, why don't you temporarily apply that in the West Washington Street parking lot at least during the day. She said that in the evenings when the town is full of people the West Washington Street parking lot is somewhat empty. We do have parking people just

won't walk to their destination. Mr. Himes said our biggest deficit in parking is all-day parking for the downtown workforce so I don't recommend that we crunch that down any further by putting two-hour parking in the West Washington Street lot. This lot is not well used on weekends and evenings.

Diana Nazelli, 40 Hastings Lane, said every map shows that parking is available in the plaza for everybody so we shouldn't be surprised that people go there to park. She recommends a parking garage or a parking deck. She said the East Orange Street parking lot is zoned parks and institutions so by virtue of zoning it is for the park but because the village did not put up signs and by not enforcing it, it is deferred to general usage.

Janine Bauman, 46 East Orange Street, said she does not think that they can move forward and start policing parking spaces without improving the signage everywhere you are going to be monitoring. She said she thinks it is a huge issue that they allow employees to park for free.

Shirley Ashby, 501 Solon Road, questioned why the vacant lot across from the postoffice hasn't been used for something. She said she asked the Mayor who owns it and he said the railroad does. Why couldn't it be used for a parking garage? Mr. Herdman said I don't know that we have an answer because it is not our property.

Bobbi Wheeler, 4 Church Street, also commented on the vacant lot across from the postoffice. Mayor Brick said we are having Integrity look at that property. It is kind of a longshot because Norfolk Southern is a very difficult organization to deal with and the property could cost a million dollars. Mr. Herdman said my objection to it is that I think it has been said several times that we need more spots and I agree with that but there are steps we have to take before we get to a point where that makes sense and we can do it smartly and efficiently.

Patty Baker, 49 East Summit Street, suggested that they consider re-striping the plaza parking lot and the West Washington Street parking lot.

Donna Murphy, Chagrin Falls plaza, said she would be all for the re-striping of the plaza lot but you have to remember that there are four poles in the lot. They are structures and to reconfigure the lot it would not be as simple and simply taking the paint off and re-striping. We would probably have to relocate those four poles, which would mean new footers, new electrical lines, and it would be rather costly.

Rich Gaudio, 361 Hickory Hill, asked if they could ask the Chamber of Commerce to do whatever study that needs to be done about the employees? Mr. Himes said we can ask them.

Anne deConingh, 50 East Orange Street, said she has spoken to Ralph Stanek, who does the parking enforcement, and he is not interested in adding more hours to his schedule.

Lydia Champlin said she does not think they can put a parking garage on the back burner.

Janine Bauman thanked the commission for acknowledging the citizens initiative. She suggested that this commission talk to people in other cities or villages to find out what they have done with parking issues.

Mr. Herdman suggested that they leave it up to Ralph and his representatives to interface with the Chief on his labor issues. Chief Brosius said right now they allow for 24 hours for parking enforcement and they could possibly go to 32 hours.

Moved by Mr. Herdman, seconded by Mr. Schach that we recommend to Council the addition of 8 hours of labor, whether it be from a current employee or some future part-time employee, for parking enforcement. Carried. Ayes: Herdman, White, Schach. Nays: None.

Mr. Herdman announced a meeting for Monday, August 3, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.