

# MEETING NOTES

**DATE:** October 20, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Burlington Residential Parking Management Plan: Advisory Committee Meeting #4

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## **ITEM 1: Introduction**

Chapin Spencer, DPW, introduced the meeting and explained the Residential Parking Study within the context of the other parking studies currently being conducted in Burlington.

## **ITEM 2: Work Done to Date**

Robert Chamberlin, RSG, reviewed the work that had already been conducted for the Residential Parking Study:

- Origins of the Residential Permit Program
- Origins and purpose of this study
- Project steps
- Public outreach
- Best practices in comparable cities

This project work had been covered in previous Advisory Committee meetings

## **ITEM 3: Recommended Strategies**

Robert Chamberlin gave a high-level overview of Chapter 5 of the Draft Plan. He highlighted areas where the recommendations had been changed to address public concerns.

## **ITEM 4: Next Steps**

Robert Chamberlin explained the next steps in the process:

- October 28 Public Works Commission Meeting - presentation of recommendations (discussion only)
- Revise strategies based on Advisory Committee/DPW Commission/Public Feedback
- Subsequent Public Works Commission Meetings to:
  - Vote on the Residential Parking Management Plan
  - Discuss specific revisions to City Ordinances

- Other coordination as needed

### **ITEM 5: Advisory Committee Comments**

Tony Reddington, Wards 2/3, approved of the new language stating that parking may not be the best use of the public ROW in some areas. He was concerned that removing residential permit restrictions required approval of residents. Consequently, converting parking to sustainable transportation facilities, e.g. bicycle lanes, could not be done in some areas without the approval of residents. He would like to see specific proposals about how to reduce the amount of parking including satellite lots.

Nicole Losch, DPW, responded that the process outlined in the report only applied to removing the residential permit restrictions in a particular area. If all parking along a corridor were to be removed, it would likely be a different process.

Caryn Long, Ward 1 Alternate, noted that she did not see changes to specific parts of the plan that she disagrees with. She disagrees with the fee structure, disagrees with using area instead of streets, disagrees with commuter permits, and thinks that 85% on-street parking occupancy is too high for a residential neighborhood. The biggest problem in her neighborhood is that single-family homes have been converted to multi-family homes, and there is now more cars than the street can handle.

She also asked to have the role of the Advisory Committee clarified. She feels like her comments have not been listened to.

Nicole Losch responded that her role is to represent her NPA and Ward, to bring information back to her neighborhood, and to bring comments back to the Committee. She also noted that there were changes to the fee structure and the commuter permit strategies in response to public comments.

Robert Chamberlin noted that the Plan does not recommend changing permit-restricted streets to areas everywhere. It is a tool that should be available to the City for times where areas would be more appropriate than streets.

David White, Planning and Zoning, noted that there may be places where designating an area as permit restricted would be more appropriate than designating a street.

Charles Simpson, Ward 6 Alternate, noted that his read of the plan was that the DPW would have the ability to remove residential parking restrictions, and he was opposed to that. He also noted that 85% on-street parking occupancy was not appropriate for the City. The 85% was about cash return, but the City streets should be about living. The streets should not be a parking lot. There is nothing specific about adding mass transit or new parking structures. He also thought that license plate reader technology was too intrusive for the City. It catalogues people like a department store. He was not comfortable with it and thinks it is inappropriate.

In relation to parking minimums, he thought that it was not fair for neighborhoods to have minimums while the downtown would not. He was happy to see it out of the Plan.

Emily Lee, Planning Commission and Ward 8, stated she lives on Bradley Street, close to downtown. There are not residential permit restrictions on her street, and there is often 100% occupancy. She can never find a place to park near her residence. She worried that, if her street was restricted to



residential parking and each dwelling unit received four passes, it would encourage students to use the street for long-term parking.

She also stated that there should be compensation to residents whose street has commuter permit spaces. She might be open to it if there was compensation. She noted that parking is valued at \$30,000 per space for developers. Residents should be compensated more than \$10. She would like to see a consistent number used when the City talks about parking. She thinks that the City could charge more for a space given the prices and long wait lists at downtown garages.

She was glad to see the lawn-parking ban mentioned, but she does not think increasing the fine will help. The issue is that people move out after one year, so the new residents do not know the rules when winter comes. The only thing that would actually stop lawn parking would be physical barriers such as boulders or fencing in yards.

She also noted that it would likely be impossible for this Plan to receive approval from the Public Works Commission without the approval of the Advisory Committee. As it stands, she does not think that the Plan has the Committee's approval.

Richard Hillyard, Ward 1, agreed that the Plan does not represent the feelings of the Advisory Committee. Comments from the 7/15 meeting were not addressed. The City noted at the 7/15 meeting that rental properties are more valuable to the City than single-family homes. The Plan will not work as long as that attitude continues. He noted that he lives on a street with 4 parking spaces and 13 properties and the residents on that street make it work. He worries that it would not work if his street was brought into a larger area.

John King, Burlington Police Department, noted that there was no mention of how to handle requests for passes from businesses located in residential permit restricted areas.

Nicole Losch responded that there was no consensus on how to handle commercial properties, so that will be dealt with at a later date.

Clare Wool, Ward 6, stated that the purpose of the Residential Permit Program is to protect the livability of the neighborhoods. 85% occupancy is not livability. The short-term goal should be to fix the problems that already exist, such as striping, not introduce a new program. She felt that the vibe of the study was "We don't own the streets" and that the City is selling the streets. Why is commuter parking being introduced before fixing what is broken?

## **ITEM 6: Public Comments**

Linda Risdy, lives in Ward 8, thanked the Advisory Committee members for their comments. She felt well represented. She noted that three years is not a pilot study, it's a change in policy. She found the 51% part complicated and did not understand it. She was very much opposed to parking meters in residential neighborhoods. Even New York City does not have meters in residential neighborhoods. She is opposed to the use of areas rather than streets. These issues were not raised in the Concerns and Responses sheet.

She asked if there had been any feedback from the residents of the cities in the best practices study. She noted a friend in Cambridge who lives in an area with a recently updated parking plan, and they are just as frustrated as they were before the plan. She is not sure what has been accomplished here

what will actually be fixed. She says that this process creates the illusion of doing something about spillover but it does not actually do anything.

Sandy Wynne asked about the status of guest permits in the Plan. She was sad that the meeting was not being filmed by Channel 17 and that there were no City councilors present. She would like the Public Works Commission to request that the City Council vote on the Plan, even though she knows it would not be a binding vote. She was also disappointed that more pressure was not being put on the University. UVM must provide more student housing and not allow students to bring cars unless they are stored on campus.

Barbara Headrick stated that she was disappointed in the study. UVM does not want to want to pay for its own parking needs and does not want to change the way things are. She said that, according to the JIPMP, the Gilbane lot is not in use as a satellite lot. The UVM Master Plan stated that UVM would build numerous satellite lots on the periphery of campus. This means that the lots would be on the residential streets just outside of campus and would bring cars through the neighborhoods. They should build lots on the outskirts of the City to prevent bringing the cars into the City.

She also noted that it makes no sense to have UVM bus students around campus when they can walk. The bus goes by her house over 100 time per day. She states that UVM does not allow trucks on campus streets so they end up on City streets, which leads to more maintenance costs to the City.

Barbara stated that developers will benefit from the Plan, and that it allows too many passes per dwelling unit. Ithaca allows 2 permits per single-family residence and 4 permits per multi-family building. The 85% occupancy is too high if commuter permits are instituted. How can a child learn to ride a bike on a street with 85% occupancy? She supported the changes proposed for corner lots.

Faye Barber, lives in Ward 6, noted that South Willard Street is already essentially a commuter lot and that the project team should look at it.

Caryn Long noted that this area is problematic. It is full between 9 and 5. It is patrolled by Champlain College, and they ticket students that park here. That means that Champlain College has been making money off the City streets. She also noted that the 85% goal was not right.

David White explained that the 85% number was not a goal but the industry standard for the optimal parking occupancy. It does not address safety concerns for walking or bicycling. That tension is part of the many competing needs for the public ROW.

Caryn Long asked if planning does not improve people's live or the environment, why do it? She also asked how Burlington benefits from the opinions of other Cities, how do they pertain to us? She noted that people have tight communities in Burlington and like to know who is parking on their street. If there is an issue with a parked car, residents know who to talk to about it. She is worried about narrow spots on the street and commuters' cars blocking access to emergency vehicles, among other things.

Nicole Losch closed the meeting by saying that she would bring these concerns forward to the Commission and City Council when the meet to discuss the Plan. She will note that the Plan does not have the support of the Committee. She also noted the City would receive more information over the 30-day review period.

