

MISSOULA PARKING COMMISSION

Minutes

May 21, 2019

A **Special** Board Meeting of the Missoula Parking Commission was held on **Tuesday, May 21, 2019** at the **Jack Reidy Conference Room, 140 W. Pine**, Missoula, MT 59802 at **1:00 p.m.** Those in attendance were Board members Matt Ellis, John Roemer, Joe Easton, Pat Corrick, and J.R. Casillas. Representatives from the consulting team were Jason King and Robert Piatkowski with Dover, Kohl and Partners, Mark Bellon with Territorial Landworks, and Spider McKnight of 6 Pony Hitch. Members of the public included Mike Sweet with the Missoula Senior Center, Nancy Greenfield with 4 Ravens Gallery, and Christine Liddick. Linda McCarthy and John Corbin from the Downtown Missoula Partnership as well as Ellen Buchanan from the Missoula Redevelopment Agency were in attendance. Lastly, from the Parking Commission office were Tiffany Brander, Interim Director and Zoe Walters, Administrative Assistant II.

1. **Call to order** – John Roemer
2. **Introductions** -
3. **Public Comments & Announcements** - None
4. **Adjustment(s) to the Agenda** - None

Communications and Presentations a. Downtown Master Plan meeting with parking stakeholder group – Dover, Kohl & Partners: Jason King, Victor Dover, and Robert Piatkowski.

Jason King indicated that Dover, Kohl & Partners has been working with Dennis Burns of Kimley Horn for four months who has created a 600 page appendix parking chapter for the Downtown Master Plan. This report will be public after the community draft presentation on May 22, 2019, when the draft plan is presented to the public for the first time. Jason stated that after the presentation there will be time to make changes to the parking chapter.

The Downtown Master Plan project started in January. Nearly 2,000 people have attended events and meetings for this project. This is a large representation based on the size of this town. At a previous event, community members were asked to state one word that represents Missoula. The most common words were “affordable”, “green”, “livable”, and “people-oriented.” These results were developed based on the most common responses.

The plan is broken down into five chapters created from five big ideas: 1. Downtown Needs to be More Than One “Postcard” Street 2. Improve Mobility, Health & Safety 3. Stay Original. Stay Authentic. Be Green. And Create Opportunity. 4. Better Utilize the River & Enhance Parks 5. Downtown for Everyone. The plan shows the Downtown in multiple pieces and talks about recommendations for streets, public spaces, strategies, buildings, policies, action items, etc. for each area.

The Illustrative Plan shows new buildings, existing buildings, new streets, parks, parking recommendations, transit, and new public spaces. The scope for this ten year plan is 2019-2029.

Jason King asked for questions about the timeline or public process. Hearing no questions, Jason continued with his presentation.

The former library location has been dedicated to the city. This location has a lot of potential. The plan shows ideas for how to use this location.

In the parking chapter, three new garages have been proposed. Potential garage locations are: 1. East Spruce Street, 2. Caras Park, and 3. Hip Strip. The Hip Strip garage would be about 1,000 spaces and could solve the parking deficit in the Hip Strip area. The parking problem in the Hip Strip is now a city-wide problem. This problem could be solved by metered parking and residential parking permits.

Jason stated 30% of trips in Missoula do not involve a car. He indicated hiking, biking, transportation, destination alleys, improving trails, streets, sidewalks, and alleys can all increase the number of people walking.

Parking Management:

Parking inventory and utilization studies show where people are parking and for how long. The data represents every day of the week and any hour of the day. The studies showed that most parking is under-utilized and operating at 64% occupancy.

John Roemer noted that the study was performed during cold and snowy weather in early March. There were snow piles in many locations. John asked to what degree this weather may have impacted the study. Jason stated that he is not familiar with local conditions and asked John how he thinks this may have impacted the study. John explained that there were many spaces that a vehicle could not park because snow was piled alongside streets. John believes it is possible that the numbers we are seeing are understated. Jason explained that there is a degree of error that can be adjusted to account for weather.

Joe Easton is concerned about a potential disconnect between the word “occupancy” and “availability.” 64% does not imply that MPC needs to build another garage to address occupancy. Joe stated that the Downtown needs more parking. Joe asked, “Where do we put more parking and how do we make it more available?” Ellen Buchanan wondered if the inconvenient parking is affecting these numbers.

Matt explained that within the triangle streets, W. Front Lot is the most difficult to lease because of its location. St. Patrick Hospital’s parking is private and is 100% utilized. Matt Ellis asked, “What is our occupancy for public parking?” Jason does not know the answer. Jason suggested that they break down the occupancy for public/private parking and create tiers for different zones. Joe does not see in the report justification for expanding jurisdiction south of the river. Joe would like to see a bigger emphasis of how the Hip Strip can benefit from being managed by MPC.

MPC would like to see the number for public occupancy. Matt explained it is important for MPC to know this number because this is the parking that we manage.

Joe asked what entities do when they agree or disagree with some of the recommendations or conclusions. Matt explained that this is a draft and we have to look closer at the parking chapter. This

is a working document. Matt asked what the timeline for a final draft. Linda McCarthy answered September. Linda stated that the draft plan does not need to note that it is not revised and endorsed by MPC because we are not asking for it to be endorsed or approved today. Matt again confirmed that this is a working document.

Joe asked Jason if any members of the public tomorrow think that this plan comes from anyone other than DK&P as a consultant. Jason explained that they only give advice and recommendations. The city and the policy makers get to decide what to do with the provided information.

Matt is concerned that this plan is being presented tomorrow without it being revised. Matt and Joe want the public to know that this plan has not been revised by MPC and board. The public should know that there is still a lot of work to be done.

The plan creates district-wide parking solutions in order to create a Downtown for everyone. Reintroducing parking requirements in the Central Business District is essential to accomplish this. Matt stated that surface parking needs to be highlighted as a central point because it justifies parking garages.

Pat Corrick pointed out that even with parking requirements, there are exemptions. By exempting buildings under 2,000 sq. feet or historic buildings of 5,000 sq. feet, this exempts every small developer. This could lead to more hotels and residential parking complexes. Missoula does not want one story buildings. Robert Piatkowski explained that there are different ways to look at exemptions and requirements. Other cities have exemptions based on transportation and lot size. Joe asked to remove parking requirements as a way to pay for parking garages as the number one solution to parking. Jason said that this would put Dennis in a difficult position.

Ellen stated that new development will have to provide parking or pay the fee per parking spaces in order to not provide parking. Jason responded that he has seen many cities waive parking requirements and then add them back. Ellen asked why you would not create a solution that is more functional for business Downtown. Pat disagreed. For example, he explained that we do not have a great mass transit system or street cars. ROAM added 360 parking spaces. While building ROAM, they felt that it was important for their tenants to have parking spaces. Pat does not think that Downtown should be built without parking.

Matt would like to remove the numbers from the priority list and just have them as bullet points. Linda suggested that we have a MPC strategy session that focuses specifically on parking. Tiffany will reach out to the board to set a date.

6. Action Items – N/A

7. Non-action Items – N/A

8. Reminder of next meeting (June 6, 2019, Jack Reidy Conference Room) and adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Zoe Walters
Administrative Assistant II