

# DERBY MUNICIPAL PARKING AUTHORITY

## Minutes

(meeting taped)

Special meeting: Tuesday, March 4, 2014 in the Derby City Hall lower level lounge.

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

By roll call, members present: Joseph Moore, Jack Moran, Delphine Krezel and Anthony Szewczyk. Richard Bartholomew was excused.

Parking Authority Director Leo Moscato and Bookkeeper Angela Borrelli were present. Mayor Anita Dugatto was also in attendance.

PUBLIC PORTION: Mark Anthony Izzo of 328 Olivia Street and an employee at the Parking Garage stated that the residents approaching him as he redirects them from the garage are upset and confused. He questioned why the meeting was being held tonight when the Board of Alderman will be receiving the engineering report tomorrow. He understands that there are things to be fixed and fixes are ongoing for potholes, etc. There is rust but that does not indicate a structural failure. He felt the actions should have been done in a controlled manner with advance notice being provided to the tenants and users of the garage. He enjoys working at the garage and is hopeful that it will reopen quickly.

Mr. Moore indicated that the meeting was called this evening in preparation of any possible further action from the Board of Alderman. Alternative planning must be made if the decision is to close the garage. He further explained that the concerns are to the deterioration of the concrete spanning the rebar reinforcement. What is being seen is the supporting structure of the concrete is deteriorating. He noted that there are open parking lots on lower Caroline Street.

Vincent Minardi of 36 Lewis Street, an employee of the garage stated that upon working at the garage he came to realize how very important the garage is to the downtown. He hopes the solution will come quickly.

Richard Kaliszewski of 50 Olivia Street stated that he needs and enjoys the safety of the garage. Due to health issues it is difficult for him to shovel and having his vehicle within the garage saves him that task.

Glenn Connan of MCCA 100 Elizabeth Street stated that his employees have parking passes for the garage. The closure has caused chaos. The employees are not coming in due to the parking difficulties. There appears to be a parking ticket blitz since the closure. He questioned whether this was intended to be a money making action.

Rich DiCarlo, an employee for the Parking Authority stated that there is no blitz and the tickets issued are not much above average. There has been no change in enforcement.

Martha Hinkson of 304 Caroline Street stated that she has worked for the Authority since 1975 and does not know what she will do without the garage employment.

No one else came forward and the public portion was closed.

Status of the Parking Garage - Mr. Moore indicated that the Authority has the obligation to continue to operate. There are still bills to be paid. Management of on-street parking continues with oversight of the

meters and the ticketing of parking violations. The Authority does have to discuss the effects of a closure. Employee status would be discussed. Tenants of the garage will have to be relocated. Thoughts are to provide alternate parking in the lower Caroline Street lot. Currently, the Mayor has established a shuttle provided by Valley Transit to travel between the lot and the garage area.

The engineering report from Prime AE Group, Inc. of Rocky Hill, CT requested by the Mayor, obtained this evening through the local on-line media, indicates 63 spaces as dangerous in the garage. The structure appears to be in fair condition and does not appear to be in danger of immediate collapse. However, areas where falling concrete debris can occur should not be used, to avoid vehicular damage and personal injury. Their conclusion based on the preliminary site visit is that it appears the City can safely reopen the garage if the recommendations noted in the report are followed. They recommend installing physical barriers to prevent use in the identified areas of concern.

Mr. Moscato noted that a number of identified areas of concern in the engineering report are within the pathways of the structure. Netting installed between the structural steel could provide a barrier to falling debris. He questioned whether there should be a charge for parking in the lower lot. Further, he understood that the arrangement for the shuttle was temporarily free but questioned the longer term cost that would be charged from Valley Transit. Mr. Szewczyk noted that the lot on upper Caroline Street could serve 24 spaces and 6 more if the sink hole was repaired. Mr. Moscato noted the empty lot at the corner of Fifth and Olivia that is City owned. Mr. Moran agreed that forethought is needed but also felt that the Authority would have to see what actions the Board of Alderman intend to make and what would they set as a timetable for reopening of the garage.

Ms. Borelli noted that the Authority does not bill in advance. The bills that will be going out this week are for last month's usage. There is nothing owed or in need of refund.

Mr. Moscato indicated that he has spoken with the State in regards to the agreement with the Authority and courthouse usage of the facility. He indicated that the feeling was that a many other courthouses have parking even further away than the lower Caroline Street lot and did not feel the shuttle was a necessity. The shuttle will generally service the senior center more than anyone else.

Mr. Moore noted that several months ago the Authority had been exploring alternative parking scenarios in anticipation of the referendum passing and the need to vacate the garage during construction. The lower Caroline Street lot was the most viable solution and a shuttle had been considered.

Ms. Krezel stated that before the recent events, no one seemed to know that the garage existed. It should be noted that even if the garage was closed and demolished, it would cost more than \$2 million to knock it down. She stressed the need for the State and Federal elected officials to realize the importance of this structure to the downtown and requested that they help with the financial costs. The project was shovel ready and there were hopes for stimulus money but that never materialized. The Authority has been raising the issue of renovation for many years now but the cries have fallen on deaf ears. The financial burden to be carried by the taxpayers of our small community can not be supported being that there are also other pending demands upon the taxpayer.

Mr. Moscato noted that in the past few years more than \$400,000 has been spent in engineering studies, repairs and general maintenance while awaiting a decision on the how to move forward. The 2003 report noted the deficiencies of the structure and the expected lifespan of the structure being reached at that time. The garage is an asset to the downtown. The Authority has always provided a safe and friendly environment to the patrons. Even with the temporary closure there are still residents that walk through the structure. The Planning and Zoning Commission approved many developments with the expectation that parking would be provided at the parking garage.

Motion was made by Delphine Krezel and second by Anthony Szewczyk. Move that the meeting be adjourned at 7:20 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully prepared,

*Karen Kemmesies*

Karen Kemmesies, secretary

*"These minutes are subject to the Authority's approval at their next scheduled meeting."*