

# Parking & Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

Tuesday February 28, 2017

1:00 pm, OM 340

## MEETING NOTES

**Present:** Mary Ann Armstrong, Lea Aune, Greg Hough, David Leaf, Chris Loar, April Markiewicz (Chair), Doug MacLean, Bob Putich, Darin Rasmussen, Brian Sullivan, and Kurt Willis.

*Ex officio:* Carol Berry and Paul Mueller.

### 1. Approval of February 3, 2017 Meeting Notes

Putich **Moved** and Mueller **Seconded the Motion** to approve the February 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting Notes. **Motion Approved** with three abstentions.

### 2. Parking Financial Plan Review and Discussion - Sullivan

Postponed until next quarter PTAC meetings.

### 3. Parking Improvements & Maintenance Plan

Sullivan reported the city has requested stormwater runoff capture and treatment improvements be made to lots 14, C, and 12A in addition to what was installed last year. Those improvements will be made this summer, in addition to paving the remaining gravel C lots along Bill McDonald Pkwy. Communication has already begun with potentially displaced permit holders and event planners who use those lots for visitors and guests. Permit holders will be offered parking in core lots with any differences in costs being addressed by the Student Business Office.

The paving of the Lincoln Creek Transportation Center (LCTC) is scheduled for next year and the city has already been in contact with the university regarding the need for signalization and sidewalks in response to rental housing construction in the area. The triangle shaped area above the LCTC has been rezoned for multi-residential development and once it is developed it will generate more traffic on Byron, as well as Lincoln Street. In addition, the large rental housing complex on Lincoln Street south of Fred Meyer has already generated more traffic on the street and additional pedestrians. Putich added that once paving begins, displaced permit holders will be relocated to the south campus lots that have capacity.

Costs for improvements and added infrastructure will need to be incorporated into the Maintenance Plan and the Financial Pro Forma.

#### **4. Zone Parking**

Putich reported that with the displacement of permit holders due to lot paving and improvements, he would like to conduct a test this summer of using zones to park in rather than specific lot designations. He would also be able to assess whether the LPR system can function correctly in identifying vehicles by the zone in which they are parked. Currently a vehicle must be parked in the specific lot assigned to it, otherwise it is flagged for a citation. If successful, he would like to see zone parking implemented by fall of 2018.

Armstrong stated that the proposal would have to be communicated to the classified staff unions since it would be a change in working conditions. Putich stated he has already held several discussions with the faculty union and will work with HR to meet with PSE, PTE, and WFSE to discuss his proposal.

Willis commented that guests and visitors to campus will be impacted the most if the university moves to a zone parking configuration. People attending classes offered at night, on weekends, and during the summer by Extended Education may also be impacted. That raises the question of which group or groups should be prioritized as changes are made to the parking system. This comment generated a lot of discussion by committee members.

Rasmussen reiterated the PTAC guiding principle that every parking space has a value based on location and time of day, month, and year (in addition to the infrastructure costs to maintain, repair, replace, and treat stormwater runoff that space, as well as enforcement costs to ensure the space is available for permit holders). He also reminded the committee that the PTAC has already approved the concept of moving to a zone parking system. The details of how that will look and be implemented still needs to be addressed by PTAC.

In terms of priorities, Armstrong stated that upcoming construction around the Physical Plant will displace Facilities Management employees who park on the street there since there is little or no other designated parking spaces. She stated addressing that issue should be given priority. Moreover, safety and convenience, especially for employees who work after hours (librarians, custodians) should be taken into consideration as well. The comment was made that Extended Education would prioritize guests and visitors. The point was made, however, that guests and visitors come to campus infrequently, whereas staff are here all year.

Willis stated that it appears there is not one single solution and requires a nuanced discussion. Putich stated that maybe we need to establish criteria, for example “Employees can find and park in a parking space 95% of the time.” Aune suggested setting strategic goals and providing guidance, but it is always going to be a challenge because there will always be the need for employees to be able to park near their job site. Maybe we need to identify the important concerns of each group of customers, how select customers use parking on campus, and the impression(s) we give them about our campus. That said, we have limited surface space for parking and we have to be strategic about what we can do with what we have. Alternative modes of transportation will have a role, but we need to find a balance of what Western wants and needs. Due to the high cost of living in Bellingham, more employees live in less expensive cities further from campus, resulting in more cars coming to campus.

Putich stated that seniority will still be used if/when zone parking is implemented. The zone could include several core lots, as well as subzones based on proximity to buildings. To get a subzone parking space adjacent to a building, seniority would be used just as it is now.

**5. WAC 516-12 Revisions Update**

Markiewicz reported that revisions are still being made and there is one more work session planned after which the draft should be ready for the PTAC members to review and provide feedback.

**6. Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations Update – Carol Berry**

Berry reported there is strong student interest in getting these installed on campus. Hough stated he had just provided estimated costs for installation. Putich added that 12A has been identified as a central location in which to have them installed. There is sufficient power and access/egress there would cause the least conflict with other vehicles traveling to and from campus.

Meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.

*Approved April 4, 2017*