

Town of Ridgefield
Parking Authority Regular Meeting
August 17, 2023 – 8:00 a.m.
Town Hall Lower Level Small Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT
MEETING MINUTES - UNAPPROVED/UNREVISED

Members present: J. Wilmot, E. Burns, M. Recck

Members absent: None

Also Present: L. Yarrish, Parking Enforcement Officer

Chairman Recck called the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m.

1. Approval of minutes from July 19, 2023. Mr. Recck moved, and Ms. Wilmot seconded, approval of minutes for 7/19/23. Motion passed 3 – 0.
2. Parking enforcement officer's report. Mr. Yarrish reported that the town is in the process of upgrading the parking signs. The paving in the CVS lot is completed and will be striped soon. Ms. Burns suggested that the town needs to review the ADA audit parking site survey report before doing the striping, since it's likely that some changes will be necessary in terms of the locations of the handicap parking spaces. Mr. Yarrish will discuss with Laurie Fernandez. The 15 minute signs were installed in front of Village Wine and they seem to be helping.
3. USPS lot discussion.
 - a. Ms. Burns met Senator Blumenthal at the Historical Society US Park Service grant announcement, thanking him for his efforts and hoping that his office will continue to pursue this issue with the USPS.
 - b. License agreement amendment. Ms. Burns suggested that since the entire lot has been reconfigured, we'll wait until the lot is completed before preparing an amended Exhibit for the agreement. Ms. Quattrocchi had emailed her consent for the 15 minute change, so we're covered for that change pending the amendment being finalized.
4. Governor Street lot to Bailey Avenue sidewalk discussion. No progress has been reported. Mr. Recck said he was available to meet with Rudy on this issue. Ms. Burns will follow up.
5. Donnelly lot.
 - a. Ancona's Wines & Liquors. It was reported that Ancona's in the Donnelly lot has their own signs limiting parking to their own business which are put up periodically – probably when the Thrift Shop is open, which is Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from noon to 4 pm. This situation is similar to what happened with Village Wine in the CVS lot. Ms. Burns reported that the signs are a violation of the existing License agreement with Donnelly. The consensus was that we should propose changing the spaces in front of Ancona's to 15 minutes from the current limit of one hour, consistent with the limit in front of Ridgefield Cleaners. Mr. Recck will email Rex Gustafson to remind him that the Ancona's signs are not allowed under the agreement and to see if they would agree to changing the remainder of the spaces between Ridgefield Cleaners to Ancona's to 15 minutes.

- b. Donation bin. Mr. Recck heard from Laurie Fernandez that a clothing & shoe donation bin had been installed in a parking space in the Donnelly lot, adjacent to Governor Street, apparently without permission. The property owner contacted the organization and it was promptly removed.

6. Parking Enforcement officer duties.

- a. Saturday enforcement discussion. The PA was asked by Ms. Fernandez to discuss and consider Saturday enforcement. Mr. Yarrish spent some time walking the lots downtown on Saturdays to see how long cars remain in the lots. He reported that, on average, from 10 am to 1 pm, 30% of the cars exceeded 3 hours, from 11 am to 2 pm, and from 12 pm to 3 pm that increases to 50%. Mr. Yarrish reported that many of the cars he recognized as downtown employee vehicles, since they all know that there is no enforcement on Saturdays. There was an extensive discussion about the pros and cons of Saturday enforcement. Ms. Wilmot and Ms. Burns both expressed concerns about possibly ticketing people who are shopping/dining downtown who could, especially on a Saturday, easily spend more than 3 hours downtown. Ms. Burns suggested that we make a concerted effort to encourage business owners to have their employees park in the Governor Street lot on Saturdays before considering Saturday enforcement. She and Mr. Recck will try to coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Ridgefield to communicate this message.
- b. Discrepancy reporting. Mr. Recck asked Mr. Yarrish if he and fellow Enforcement officer Katie Knoche could inform us when they see any issues or problems that need immediate attention (such as the clothing donation bin).

7. Review DOJ Parking Lot violations list. Following the Department of Justice ADA audit of the town, there is now a Town of Ridgefield Parking Site Survey Report that was shared with Mr. Recck. This report will be discussed at a meeting on Thursday, 8/24 at 9 am at Town Hall. PA members will attend, and Mr. Recck will post a notice of a special meeting since 3 members constitutes a meeting. Many of the issues identified pertain to slopes, which will require relocation of the handicap spaces; others identify problems such as a lack of van accessible spaces, and a lack of spaces being dispersed in the lot. It was noted that the labels used in the report , “Town Hall/Donnelly”, “Bailey Avenue”, “CVS lot”, “Fairfield County Bank lot”, “Library and Prospector Theater lot” consist of multiple owners and many without license agreements with the Town. In addition, there were 5 issues raised with the Main Street parking space which were designed, striped and signage installed by the CT-DOT.

8. Parking data review.

- a. Mr. Recck shared data from Ms. Fernandez on parking violations issued during the 30 days ending 8/16. There were 122 tickets issued and 52 fees paid for daily parking at the Branchville Train Station. The 122 violations were just a 7% increase from the prior 30 day period, and 66% of them were for overtime violations.
- b. Permit sales. Mr. Recck distributed the data for permit sales for the period starting July 1.

9. Other Business: Mr. Recck welcomed a Ridgefield resident, Aisley Clancy, to our meeting. She is considering joining the Parking Authority. He suggested that she should contact Mr.

Marconi's office to interview for the position with the Board of Selectmen (and we all hoped that she would do so).

Adjournment. Ms. Burns moved, and Mr. Recck seconded a motion to adjourn at 9:17 a.m. Motion approved 3 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Burns