

Town of Ridgefield
Parking Authority Special Meeting
Thursday, June 20, 2019 – 8:00 a.m.
Town Hall Upper Level Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT
MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED

Members present:

J. Wilmot, E. Burns, S. Lussier, R. Murphy

Members absent:

A. Ippoliti

Chairman Wilmot called the meeting to order at 8:16 a.m.

1. Approval of May 9, 2019 minutes. S. Lussier moved and R. Murphy seconded a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Motion passed 4 – 0.
2. Willett Properties license agreement and current issue update. Ms Wilmot brought everyone up to date with respect to issues raised by Bruce Beswick (Willett Properties) with respect to their lot and a complaint from one tenant. She spoke with L. Fernandez to request increased enforcement in the lot, and learned that on June 12 there were 30 tickets issued in town, with 10 of them in the Willett lot – most of them for parking in the landlord only area. Ms. Burns reported that she had met with Steve Zemo to discuss the situation, since it has been reported that many of the violators are employed at Big Shop Lane restaurants. Ms. Wilmot requested that continued strict enforcement occur in the lot, in the hope that the violators will start parking in the Governor Street lot. The license agreement with Willett was discussed and finalized, with 16 spaces at the easterly end of the lot (both sides) designated as “Landlord only” and the remaining spaces designated Town permit or 2 hour parking. 11 permits will be sold for the lot, and the landlord will receive whatever number of landlord permits he requests. Ms. Burns will finalize the license agreement and attachments and send to Mr. Beswick for his review. Ms. Lussier will get the Assessor’s field cards for the area so the attachments will accurately reflect the property lines.
3. Update and discussion of P&Z’s June 4 meeting & discussion re: CBD Zoning regulation: Ms. Wilmot and Ms. Burns attended the meeting and listened to the discussion. Despite the information the PA provided, the consensus of the P&Z members was that there is no parking problem downtown and that there was no interest in reconsidering the current parking regulations in the CBD. Commissioners Katz and Robbins cited their personal experiences in “never having a problem finding a parking space.” The only member that agreed there is a problem was Commissioner Hanlon, who has a downtown workplace. Ridgefield’s Planner R. Baldelli and Assistant Planner Daniel Robinson distributed some literature on how downtowns are ending parking minimums (meaning parking required for new construction or change of use) but admitted those places are generally urban areas served by mass transit. Mr. Baldelli also distributed a document reflecting counts they did on various weekdays indicating the number of empty spaces in the Governor Street lot at different times of the day. This information did not agree with the experiences of E. Burns and S. Lussier, who park in the lot regularly and often find just a small number of spaces available around 9:30 or 10 am. The Planners did not, however, do any counts of empty spaces in the Bailey Avenue lot or the Donnelly lot. This data will be collected by the PA in the coming months. P&Z Chairman R. Mucchetti mentioned that they have not yet received the application for the Governor Street lot expansion. Timing is critical since the P&Z does not meet in August, and to get the lot completed this year the approvals will need to be obtained before August.

Ms. Wilmot will follow up with Mr. Marconi. It was noted that it has been more than a year since the voters approved the funds for the lot, and that its completion is critical to our plans to move employees out of lots to open up spaces for patrons and customers of downtown businesses.

4. Ballard Park events report. Ms. Wilmot reported on how the first few Ballard Park concerts have gone with respect to parking enforcement. The new parking agent seems to be able to direct concert goers to areas where they are allowed to park. The owner of Village Liquors again put up his own parking signs during the concert and Ms. Wilmot spoke to him, explaining that such signs are not allowed under the License Agreement with his landlord. Ms. Wilmot reported there was a problem with parking during the June 15th Pride event in the park because no enforcement was in place. The organizers only expected about 40 or 50 people, but many more than that showed up.

Adjournment. Mr. Murphy moved, and Ms. Lussier seconded a motion to adjourn at 10:05 a.m. Motion passed 4 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Burns