

Town of Ridgefield
Parking Authority Special Meeting
Thursday, November 10, 2022 – 8:00 a.m.
Town Hall Lower Level Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT
MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED

Members present:

J. Wilmot, E. Burns, M. Recck

Members absent:

None

Present: L. Yarrish, Parking Enforcement Officer

Chairman Recck called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

1. Approval of minutes from 10/20/22. Mr. Recck moved, and Ms. Wilmot seconded, approval of minutes for 10/20/22. Motion passed 3 – 0.
2. 470 Main St. parking discussion. Although the PA voted to designate 2 of the 4 new parking spaces in front of 470 Main Street as 15-minute/loading zone at the October 20 meeting, it was subsequently determined that because Main Street is a state highway, the CT-DOT would also have to approve. Through many emails and conversations among First Selectman Marconi, Charles Robbins (Ridgefield liaison for the DOT Main Street project), the DOT and RPD Chief Kreitz, it was determined that the Ridgefield Police Commission would have to make the request to the DOT. Ms. Burns has written the request and submitted it to Chief Kreitz with a photo for distribution to the members of the Police Commission. They are meeting tonight (11/10) and Ms. Burns will attend.
3. Donnelly lot usage/configuration discussion. Ms. Burns received a call from Mary Jones, owner of Rodier Flowers (384 Main Street) who has had problems with parking in the Donnelly lot on the days that the Ridgefield Thrift Shop is open. She has 4 landlord permits but her staff, who have to make deliveries or run errands during the day, are unable to find a space in the lot on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays: the days that the Thrift Shop is open. Mr. Yarrish confirmed that there are no spaces available on those days from noon on. Rodier can use the alleyway next to their building for loading and unloading their delivery van, but sometimes employees use their own cars during the workday. Given the popularity of the Thrift Shop, it would seem that there is no solution the Parking Authority can provide. Ms. Burns will get back to Ms. Jones and recommend that she contact her landlord to see if he can come up with a solution.
4. Branchville Station parking discussion. An email was received from Joseph Buthorn regarding the shortage of daily parking spaces at the Branchville Station. Only 10 spaces are currently designated for daily parking vs. 140 spaces for permit only parking. He believes that people are driving to Cannondale where there are many more daily spaces available at no charge. There are currently 65 permits sold for Branchville, so many spaces go unused but are subject to a \$25 ticket for non-permit holders. Given that commuting is still down due to the pandemic and remote work, it makes sense to increase the number of daily spaces. It was decided to increase the number daily spaces. Mr. Yarrish said it will be easy to implement by just installing some additional daily parking space signs in the same row. Ms. Burns moved, and Ms. Wilmot seconded, the following motion:

To increase the number of daily parking spaces in the Branchville Station from 10 to 20, and reduce the permit only spaces from 140 to 130. Motion passed 3 – 0.

Mr. Yarrish will inform Laurie Fernandez and order the new signs.

5. CVS/USPS lots update. The new Main Street entrance/exit construction is progressing, and 9 new spaces have been created on the north side of the building. PA members discussed how the spaces should be marked, and determined that, absent a change in the existing agreement with Benenson, they should be designated as 2-hour/Permit allowed. Mr. Recck had distributed a proposed letter to Lisa Quatrocchi from the PA requesting her input/thoughts about usage of the spaces behind the USPS building that are no longer needed due to the relocation of the mail carriers base to Danbury. The spaces are now being used by employees of many downtown businesses since it is not being patrolled. It was agreed that he should email the letter to Ms. Quatrocchi and Kem Becovik with a cc to Mr. Marconi.
6. Town awareness and social media correspondences around parking. At Mr. Recck's request, the town distributed a text/email message indicating existing vacancies on all volunteer town boards/commission, including the Parking Authority. It wasn't known if any responses had been received. Additional information about parking (ownership/management, etc.) needs to be included on the town website and possibly through other channels like social media.
7. Other business.
 - a. 440 Main Street. Mr. Yarrish indicated that landlord permit holders at 440 Main Street are parking elsewhere in the lot rather than in the landlord only spaces behind Big Shop Lane. The landlord only spaces are frequently unoccupied, while the permit holders are parking in the 2-hour spaces behind the building. Ms. Burns will contact Bruce Beswick regarding this situation, and suggest that landlord permit parking no longer be allowed outside of the designated landlord permit only spaces.
 - b. Bailey Avenue lot: Going into the holiday shopping season, there is concern regarding the Bailey Avenue lot usage for outdoor dining, and as well as the adjacent Big Shop Lane parking area. Terra Sole is still using all but 2 of the spaces in front of Big Shop Lane for outdoor dining, which causes more crowding in the Bailey Avenue lot. The owner of the Big Shop had indicated that the agreement with Terra Sole for the use of those spaces would end on October 1. Ms. Burns will follow up with him. Bailey's Backyard is still using 6 or so spaces for their outdoor dining tent. This situation will need to be addressed with Mr. Marconi since that part of the lot is town-owned.
 - c. Mr. Yarrish reported that the new parking fines for non-overtime violations will be imposed starting on Monday, 11/14.
8. Adjournment. E. Burns moved, and M. Recck seconded a motion to adjourn at 9:20 a.m. Motion approved 3 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Burns