

Town of Ridgefield
Parking Authority Meeting
February 16, 2023 – 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 8:04 a.m.

1. Approval of minutes from 1/17/23. Mr. Recck moved, and Ms. Wilmot seconded, approval of minutes for 1/17/23. Motion passed 3 – 0.
2. 440 Main Street parking update. Ms. Burns did not yet email Bruce Beswick to request that he instruct his tenants to not park in the spaces immediately behind the building but will do so before the next meeting. Ms. Wilmot spoke with one of the tenants in the building who said there is no parking available when the real estate agents have happy hour gatherings.
3. CVS/USPS lots update. Mr. Recck reported that on February 8, he and Ms. Wilmot met with First Selectman Marconi and ECDC member Geoffrey Morris regarding the status of discussions with the USPS. Mr. Recck and Ms. Wilmot received the contact information for the USPS from Mr. Morris. Mr. Marconi suggested that, since the overall proposal for reconfiguring the lot for more public use has apparently been rejected, that we start with the plan that was drawn showing additional parking and a pocket park on the vacant lot and an altered entrance to the post office building. Mr. Marconi has been unable to locate that document in his office. Mr. Recck will contact Jake Muller and Ms. Burns will contact Charles Robbins to see if either of them has a copy.

Wayne Addressi joined the meeting and “Other Business” was discussed next. See Item 8, other business.

4. CBD Amendment discussion. Mr. Recck distributed the final version of Zoning regulation Section 7.3.C.1 – Parking in the CBD Zone which was approved by P&Z on February 7. The language is clearer and basically requires a change of use to residential in the CBD meet the regular parking requirements, rather than the reduced requirements in the CBD. This was a commission-initiated amendment that was provoked by the approval of a special permit application for 34 Bailey Avenue. The change will not impact that project since it was enacted after the approval of 34 Bailey Avenue. All PA members were pleased with the amendment.
5. Stationary vehicles discussion. Ms. Wilmot reported that there was a vehicle in the back of the CVS lot that hasn’t been moved in months. She will raise the issue with the property owner/landlord. There is also one that belongs to Melillo’s located in the Bailey Avenue

lot, also parked there months or years, and appears to be inoperable. Mr. Recck will send a letter to Melillo's to request that they remove the vehicle which is located in the town-owned lot.

6. Governor Street to Bailey Avenue sidewalk discussion. There has apparently been no progress on this proposed project, and Mr. Recck pointed out that now is the time to try to get it moving, so it could be completed before next winter. He will contact Jake Muller to ask if he has prepared a formal plan based on Ms. Burns' Google map document.
7. Charter review discussion. Mr. Recck received a request from the newly-organized Charter Revision Commission for input/suggestions. Ms. Burns pointed out that the Parking Authority is included only in the town ordinances and not in the Charter. For now, the PA will monitor any recommendations made by others regarding the PA.
8. Other business. Wayne Addressi discussed the parking situation as he sees it in the Central Business District. He believes that the town should view parking as a business, and that all lots should be pay lots, using a PayByPhone system. He said that New Canaan and Greenwich have such a system, which generate substantial income for the towns. Such income can then be used to make improvements in the lots and other parts of downtown. He distributed copies of the New Canaan system and a marketing brochure from PayByPhone. Ms. Wilnot expressed doubts that people who shop downtown would accept having to pay for parking. Ms. Burns pointed out that the town owns very little of the downtown lots, which would mean obtaining agreement from multiple property owners. She also expressed concern that most stores are competing with online sellers, and we don't want to provide another incentive to people to buy online, and that the parking at the Danbury Mall is free. The new town lot on Governor Street is underutilized and we need to get the landlords and business owners to get their employees to stop moving their cars and just park in the all day lot. Mr. Addressi pointed out that the Chamber now has a Restaurant members organization, so we might be able to reach out through the Chamber. Mr. Recck thanked Mr. Addressi for the information and suggestions.
9. Adjournment. Ms. Burns moved, and Mr. Recck seconded a motion to adjourn at 9:25 a.m. Motion approved 3 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Burns