

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING – MAY 3, 2021

Mayor Brantley called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. In addition to live attendance, the Mayor announced that video and audio access to the meeting is available via townhallstreams.com/towns/neptune_nj.

The Mayor requested the Clerk to call the roll. The following members were present: Keith Cafferty, Robert Lane, Jr., Nicholas Williams, Tassie D. York, and Mayor Michael Brantley.

Also present were Richard J. Cuttrell, Municipal Clerk; Vito D. Gadaleta, Business Administrator; and Gene Anthony, Township Attorney.

Mayor Brantley announced that the notice requirements of R.S. 10:4-18 have been satisfied by the publication of the required advertisement in The Coaster and the Asbury Park Press on April 22, 2021, which indicated the ability to attend the meeting in person and included instructions on accessing and participating in the meeting virtually through townhallstreams.com. The Notice was filed with the Municipal Clerk and posted on the Township web site (www.neptunetownship.org), along with the meeting agenda.

Mayor Brantley stated that the purpose of this special workshop meeting to review and discuss the Kimley Horn Parking Study in Ocean Grove as commissioned by the Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association. Kimley Horn will present the study followed by questions from the Township Committee. The Camp Meeting Association will then have the opportunity to present their response to the study followed by questions from the Township Committee. The public will then have the opportunity to provide comments to the Township Committee; however, there will be no questions or interaction between the members of the public and Kimley Horn or the Camp Meeting Association.

Copies of the Parking Study and Camp Meeting Association responses were provided to the Township Committee and the public in attendance. This information was also provided via a link on townhallstreams.com and the Township web site

Representatives from Kimley Horn reviewed the Study via conference call. They indicated that they reviewed prior reports and studies on parking and provided study goals/guiding principles and areas of examination. They looked at, but did not recommend, a parking garage just outside of the Main Avenue entrance. They reviewed the entire report including recommendations for 2021 which were revising the closing time of the Wesley Lake footbridges, review the results for three months and if there is no impact, create residential parking permit zones. They suggested parking meters in the business district and on the east side of Ocean Avenue. If conditions permit, they recommended an expansion of residential permit zones. Residential Parking Permit zones could be created by petition if 60% of the residents of a particular zone approve, the zone is 70% full of vehicles and 20% of the vehicles are from people who do not live in the zone. They reviewed the program costs and revenue projections which anticipate a deficit for the first five years and a residential parking permit cost of between \$420 and \$1,050 each. They recommended parking meters to offset the cost of the residential permits. They also suggested a shuttle service to parking located outside of Ocean Grove.

Mr. Cafferty asked if residential permit parking zones would shift the parking issues further into Ocean Grove. Kimley Horn replied that it depends on the issue. Asbury Park visitors could move a block further into Ocean Grove. Mr. Cafferty asked how metered parking on the beachfront would impact hotels. Kimley Horn replied that hotels would register guest's license plates and include the fee in the price or simply have them hunt for a non-metered parking place.

The Mayor asked if meters should be located in residential areas. Kimley Horn stated that their thoughts are for parking permits in residential zones, not meters.

Mr. Cafferty asked if shuttles can make it through the narrow streets in Ocean Grove. Kimley Horn replied that if no parking was strictly enforced near intersections, the shuttles can make it. They advised that shuttles would run Friday to Sunday in the summer months. There would be a need for 8 to 10 shuttles at a cost of \$90 to \$125 per hour. Mr. Lane asked about the cost of parking permits. Kimley Horn gave their estimates and stated the costs would be lower with more participants. Mr. Cafferty asked about stripping the roads to delineate parking spaces. Kimley Horn recommended that only be done at intersections to identify no parking zones.

Ms. York asked if the cost estimates included law enforcement costs. Kimley Horn replied yes, they met with the Police Chief regarding enforcement costs.

Mr. Williams asked for the cost of the parking garage. Kimley Horn replied that they looked at a 500 space garage and the cost would be \$25,000 to \$30,000 per space. A parking garage

does not make sense because Asbury Park is building one across the street, a garage is not really necessary, and costs continue into the future.

The Mayor asked for the Camp Meeting Association to present their response to the study.

Michael Badger, Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association President and resident at 127 Broadway, stated that the CMA commissioned the study because they were interested in being a good neighbor and ensuring that the public access doctrine for beach access is met by providing access to the beach for everyone. The CMA spent over \$50,000 in this endeavor and agrees with a three hour parking limit in the business district and establishing loading/unloading zones at various corners. They have concerns about residential permit parking, but are willing to discuss. The CMA performed an Initiative-Benefit analysis and offer the following additional recommendations: time restricted parking in the business district without costs, restrict practice of saving parking spaces, create motorcycle/scooter parking at some Main Avenue intersections, and limit AirBNB rentals based on parking.

Mr. Badger stated that parking in Ocean Grove is a problem three days a week over the three summer months. The CMA disagrees with reducing greenspace on Ocean Pathway to create angle parking, parking meters, timed parking on residential streets, rapid expansion of parking permit zones, closing bridges at 4:00 p.m., CMA funded shuttles, and forcing Ocean Grove workers to park outside of Ocean Grove. Mr. Badger added that the study overestimates the revenue from parking meters because it is based on 80% occupancy rates which will not occur.

Mr. Badger stated that the CMA did a study using video and found that residents were already taking 90% of the parking spots located in Zone 2 of the study. In conclusion, he supports timed parking in the business district, corner loading zones and a Residential Parking Permit survey in the suggested zones along with an expense evaluation.

The Mayor stated that he has been a member of the Township Committee for 15 years and has reviewed the parking issue through proposals, committees, and surveys.

Mr. Cafferty asked if the CMA had any information on the number of cars per house. Mr. Badger stated there are 2,000 lots and on one block with five houses, seven or eight cars can park. Mr. Cafferty asked if the CMA is willing to pave on which a parking garage was studied to utilize for surface parking. Mr. Badger responded that the CMA is not interested in pursuing that concept. Ms. York stated that she is very familiar with Ocean Grove since her childhood and knows of the parking problem. The Mayor extended his appreciation to the CMA for incurring the cost of the study.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Mayor asked for public comments regarding the topic of this special workshop meeting.

Andy Levine, Better Parking Alliance member, 98 Mt. Tabor Way, distributed the Better Parking Alliance's review of the study and their comments and recommendations. He highlighted a better approach to parking in the business district and the Residential Permit Parking. He added that the Kimley Horn expense projections of the Residential Permit Parking Program, specifically payroll costs, are way overstated.

Paul Kaplan, Better Parking Alliance member, commented that the Alliance wants to make improvements in people's lives, it is challenging to get a good read on the parking situation last year due to the pandemic, parking in the northwest corner of Ocean Grove will get worse, the North End Redevelopment will make the parking worse, there are more condominiums in Asbury Park, the overall parking situation is getting worse, and Ocean Grove pays 40% of the total taxes in Neptune Township.

Ann MacMorris, Better Parking Alliance, 15 New York Avenue, stated that the study overstates the costs. In Year 1 of the Residential Permit Parking Program, the study shows a deficit of \$40,000; however, after the correction is made, the costs are under \$17,000 and the profit from the parking meter program would be \$70,000. Therefore, the projected loss of \$68,000 in Year 1 would be corrected to a profit of \$70,000.

Joyce Klein, 105 Mt. Hermon Way, stated this is not a new problem but it is getting worse. Kimley Horn has offered some good recommendations. She hopes the Township will direct their professionals to further review. AirBNB's are causing 6 to 7 cars per home every night over a weekend. She asked the Committee to consider a minimum number of permitted rental nights. She concluded that the Ocean Grove Homeowners Association is eager to work with the Township on this issue.

Richard Williams, 1 Abbott Avenue, would like to ask that a coalition of people get together

and take the first step by addressing the concept of three hour parking in the business district.

J. Hargrave, Ocean Pathway, asked for someone to articulate how Residential Parking Permits would negatively impact the historical charm of Ocean Grove. Given the amount of taxes paid already, how can anyone be asked to pay for a parking permit.

Annabel Bisset, 77 Heck Avenue, asked the Committee to move forward with at least a pilot study of the Residential Permit Parking Program. She doesn't believe people will use a shuttle. She asked that the professionals provide a reasonable cost for a parking permit.

Theresa Checki, 74 Mt. Tabor Way, stated her area has been plagued with parking challenges for many years which are more acute in the summer. She asked for action now using a multi-pronged approach, not based on the need for it to be initially self-supporting.

David Minno, 6 Heck Avenue, asked if the report was available on-line. Mr. Gadaleta stated that it is available on the Township web site.

Nick Hodges, 24 Atlantic Avenue, would like to see a map with the proposed residential permit parking zones. He asked why the Camp Meeting Association would fund a study that they reject.

Paul Zapka, 85 Pilgrim Pathway, stated that last summer was not a normal summer and asked how a valid parking study could be done during a pandemic. The unpaved parking area on Broadway along Fletcher Lake should be used to park as many cars as possible.

Timothy Ippolito, 71 Delaware Avenue, asked if a smartphone app could be used as an alternative to parking meters.

Luisa Paster, 82 Broadway, stated there must be a loading/unloading zone for a shuttle so that people can unload their beach items, drive to the parking area, and take the shuttle back. No one will want to carry their beach supplies on a shuttle.

Harriet Bernstein, 82 Broadway, stated it is unrealistic for the Camp Meeting Association to state that parking is a problem for a few weekends in the summer and residents do not want to walk a few blocks to park. Walking a few blocks is a burden for many seniors. The summer rentals are already filled at this time because people are looking for vacations that do not require travel by plane. Chalking the tires in the business district is unrealistic, it will only work with meters.

Frank Gaciofano, 4 Spray Avenue, stated that his street is full 52 weeks a year due to the LaPierre, Marlborough and Spray View condos. The North End project will make it worse. The Township allowed bed and breakfast establishments to convert to condos and now you are looking for a solution.

Jeff Downing, 6 Bethany Block, stated the Residential Permit Parking Program should be self-sustaining from tickets and fines. Parking meters along the beach fronts are not needed and should not be used to offset costs. Meters would deter visitors.

James McNamara, 86 Asbury Avenue, asked that a Township Committee member or Administrator be designated as the contact person for parking. He stated that Kimley Horn did a study in a southern city in five months, why did the Ocean Grove study take 15 months.

Kris Jensen, 90 Mt. Tabor Way, asked the Township to show some initiative and try closing the Wesley Lake footbridges at 4:00 p.m. to limit the flow of people using Ocean Grove for nothing more than free parking.

Joan Venezia, 107 Mt. Hermon Way, thanked the Camp Meeting Association for paying for the study. She asked the Committee to try some of the suggestions in a phased approach. She is in favor of short term parking in the business district and a Residential Permit Parking pilot program. She does not agree with astronomical pricing for permits that was proposed. She lives near Fireman's Park and is impacted by people parking and then walking to Asbury Park. She wants to try the approach suggested by the Homeowners Association which is resident only parking on one side of the street in the north side of Ocean Grove. The idea of a shuttle or meters should be looked into further before trying a pilot program.

There were no further comments.

Mr. Williams offered a motion, seconded by Mr. Lane to adjourn. All were in favor.

Richard J. Cuttrel,
Municipal Clerk