

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

February 2, 1998

The minutes of the proceedings of a public hearing before the City Council of the City of Coos Bay, Coos County, Oregon, held in the Council Chambers, 500 Central Avenue, Coos Bay, Oregon at 7 p.m.

Those Present

Those present were Mayor Joanne Verger, Councilors Joe Benetti, Jeff McKeown, Don Spangler, Kevin Stufflebean, and Judy Weeks. Councilor Cindi Miller was absent due to illness. City staff present were City Manager Bill Grile, Deputy Recorder Joyce Jansen, Community Services Director Bruce Meithof, and Police Chief Chuck Knight.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Mayor opened the public hearing and explained the purpose of the hearing was to take public input on the circulation and parking study performed by Kittelson and Associates. City Manager Bill Grile briefly reviewed the purpose and parameters of the study. Comments from the public were then taken.

Kathi Joy, speaking as a downtown employee, concurred with rerouting traffic from Anderson to 4th Street and Elrod, and agreed with making Market Avenue a one-way street. Ms. Joy commented the parking lots in her opinion were not underutilized during the peak hours, as determined in the study. She expressed concern about providing parking for employees in the downtown area, especially for employees whose business requires they leave and return throughout the day. Ms. Joy requested parking in the Chamber lot be provided for the Chamber volunteers. Ms. Joy suggested short term 30 minute parking near the Chamber building be established for customer parking.

Mike Crow, Crow/Clay and Associates, recommended the City Council consider the proposals made by the Parking Advisory Committee regarding downtown employee parking. Mr. Crow disagreed with the escalation of the parking space fees, and suggested the parking along Hwy 101 northbound be designated for employee parking because the area is unimproved and has no sidewalks.

Rondi Potter, co-owner of the Art Connection, thanked the Mayor and Councilors for participating in the study. She commented the zone system for parking sounded like a good idea and suggested the portion of 6th Street between Commercial and Anderson Avenues be designated for employee parking. Ms. Potter reported this area is away from businesses and is currently used for employee parking. She noted the additional parking on 5th Street has worked very well.

Bret Miller, Bracelin and Yeager, expressed concern about truck traffic on Anderson to 4th and Elrod. He explained the current plan for the right turn from Anderson onto 4th would be too tight for trucks. Mr. Miller suggested having two lanes on Anderson with one lane for turning right. He explained Ocean Boulevard to Anderson to 4th Street was the main route for truck to access the Empire and Charleston area. He suggested at the intersection at 4th and Elrod the right lane be designated for through traffic and the left lane for a left turns. Mr. Miller suggested the turn at Hwy 101 and Elrod have the left lane for through traffic and the right lane for right turns only so the area would provide room enough for trucks to make the right turn. Councilor McKeown inquired about on-street parking for Tower Ford and Mr. Miller said there would be parking, possibly eliminating the one space at the corner. Mr. Miller suggested the diagonal parking on Anderson be placed on the south side of the street to keep the traffic pattern matched. He also suggested the two lanes of north bound traffic have through traffic designated to stay in the right lane. Mr. Grile commended Mr. Miller for his proposals and said staff would take them into consideration.

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Dave Harold, owner of Kaffe 101, expressed concern about adequate customer parking in their section of downtown, and reported the lots are full all year round. Mr. Harold commented on the importance of customer parking otherwise travelers will continue through town without stopping. Mayor Verger commented the parking needs to be customer friendly. Councilor Spangler asked Mr. Harold if he opposed employee parking in this area and Mr. Harold said no. Councilor Spangler explained the parking advisory committee's recommendation is that a portion of the lots would be designated for employee parking. Mr. Harold said currently the lots are two and three hour limits and it is working well. He reported that most people are not aware of the parking behind Coast to Coast.

Dave Fauss, Coos Bay, commented Kittelson and Associates did a good job on the study. He reported talking with Matthews Computers about parking and their view is that customer parking is very important. He noted that many of the employees from Security Bank use these lots rather than the designated employee lots and when questioned, the employees do not wish to walk over a block from parking to their workplace. Mr. Fauss expressed the need to focus on customer parking and suggested making Curtis Avenue one-way. He commented on the condition of the parking lots and suggested removing the concrete curbs to enable both regular and RV vehicles parking.

Tom Muscus, 1655 Thompson Road, commented traffic and parking has been a problem for a long time and recommended Council not spend taxpayers' money needlessly. He expressed concern about providing enough room for trucks and RVs to maneuver. Mr. Muscus suggested making Curtis Avenue one-way and remove the light except for pedestrian crossing.

Gary Rifkin, Coos Bay, thanked the Mayor, Councilors, and staff for working to make good changes in the city. He expressed concern that a 90 minute limit in the lot next to his business was not long enough and explained customers generally visit more than one establishment when they stop downtown. Mr. Rifkin asked if the new parking on 5th Street was being used as employee parking. Councilor Spangler said it was designated three hour parking and is being used by some employees. Mr. Rifkin suggested if a lot is partially empty, the cars not be ticketed.

Geno Landrum, 2800 Libby Drive, and downtown business owner, commented the number of retail shops in the downtown area is growing and there is a need for adequate customer parking. He suggested the city have a parking validation system for downtown businesses.

Flora Lee Lockhart, Coos Bay, asked if the Council had any questions regarding the report from the parking advisory committee; there were none. Mrs. Lockhart suggested the four parking spaces next to Kaffe 101 be designated for employee parking, and the lot next to Kaffe 101 and beside Fiddlesticks be designated for customer parking.

There being no further comments to come before the City Council, Mayor Verger closed the public hearing. City Manager Grile reported Community Services Director Meithof had redesigned the 4th and Anderson intersection to allow traffic to keep moving without taking property from Bank of America or US Bank. The city manager and community services director met with representatives of both banks and they support the redesign proposal. Mr. Grile commented staff has been unable to pin the department of transportation down on funding the changes; which would include reprogramming stop lights, painting lines, etc. He noted the city could possibly use urban renewal funds. Mayor Verger commented the parking zone system will require signage and upgrading the parking lots. Mr. Grile reported the lot upgrades may also use urban renewal funds and staff if looking into this possibility.

Mayor Verger reported Council would be prioritizing the improvements at Tuesday evening's meeting and suggested using the headings from the staff report for the process. Consensus of the Council to follow this format with the Council voting on each section.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Verger adjourned the meeting

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to February 3, 1998 at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Joanne Verger
Mayor of the City of Coos Bay
Coos County, Oregon

ATTEST:

Joyce Jansen
Deputy Recorder of the City of Coos Bay
Coos County, Oregon