

Parking Committee



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July 21, 2021

Online Zoom Meeting at Noon

MEETING OPEN: 12:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Jed Hatfield, Chris Hankins, Norman Ortiz, Todd Stonesifer, Codi Canasa, Dave Hugg, Councilman Neil, Officer Al Aviles, Steve Ottinger, Chris Raubaucher, and Kaitlin Creasy and Helen Willes (Dover Kent MPO); Roman Battaglia (DE Public Media)

STAFF: Tina Bradbury, Diane Laird

Chair Todd Stonesifer opened the meeting at 12 p.m.

Meeting agenda (July 2021): Councilman Neil motioned, **Dave Hugg** seconded; unanimous approval.

Meeting Minutes (May 2021): **Dave Hugg** motioned, Councilman Neil seconded; unanimous approval.

Helen introduced the Parklet Pilot Program to be funded through the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)'s grant.

Slide 2, 3 - Parklet Information

Helen defined a parklet as "a sidewalk extension that provides more space and amenities for people using the street." They may have seating, art, entertainment (i.e.; putt putt) to attract more people.

Parklets can be permanent or temporary. "Permanent" parklets must be easily taken down to be able to provide street maintenance.

Slide 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 - Parklet Program/Deliverables

Helen announced the goals of the MPO's program is to establish behavior changes, calm traffic, and connect people to multi-modal facilities. Municipalities will receive a "mini-grant" to test out the program with guided assistance from the program administrators.

Helen announced the deliverables of the program.

Deliverable 1 - MPO will acquire a "mobile parklet" to be loaned to Kent County municipalities/other partners to pilot the program or use for special events. The mobile parklet is

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expected to have a bench, cafe table, information about the parklet, a table with a QR code that will link to a survey about the quality of the parklet.

Deliverable 2 - Solicit feedback from the public via onsite kiosks with a QR Code scan survey. Results will be used to modify programming directed at public behavior change.

Deliverable 3 - Create and administer a Parklet Mini Grant program (~\$3000) for Kent County municipalities to apply for and receive partial reimbursement for parklet implementation (purchase of equipment, site preparation, signage, etc.)

Deliverable 4 - Develop a Parklet How-to Guide specific to Kent County. Particular attention will be paid to sample local ordinances, liability issues, equipment options and specifications, accessibility, etc. Where it should be set up, how it should be, and other considerations as well as a sample policy from other cities that can be adopted to the individual municipalities' needs.

Deliverable 5 - Provide technical assistance to municipalities seeking to adopt a parklet program.

Slide 10 - Questions

Helen mentioned the Mayor had said he would like to see the parklets during First Friday, but they also discussed the parklets on Farmer's Market day. Todd asked when the parklet is available, and Helen replied that the money is available now and they can set up for multiple events once it is created. The availability is expected to be first come first serve until a municipality receives a mini-grant to create their own. There is no insurance policy, the insurance would come from the event itself/ a request from the city to share liability. Helen said she plans to shop the items this afternoon and have all of the materials by the end of the next week.

Question was asked if the parklets are ADA compliant if they are at grade with the sidewalk and is there a different price if it's a raised parklet. Helen replied that the raised ones cost more and are semi-permanent with a deck built, but the MPO parklet is going to have a turf and be at street level. ADA compliance will require a cutout on or near the parklet so that the street is still accessible. Managing ADA compliance will be featured in the how-to-guide. The parklet would need to be 40 ft away from the bus stop, and the bus stop can be moved temporarily if necessary.

Todd moved forward with the next presentation after asking for any additional questions. Todd mentioned that Dover has started to enforce parking again. Tina mentioned changes to Downtown Parking - Loockerman Way Plaza is metered, the parking lot off Bradford St is metered but turned off at the moment, and the first row of Governor's Ave is going to be metered. This is a pilot program with a strategic marketing plan and does not change any on-street parking. The areas will use Park Mobile and use a good marketing campaign (social media, grace period of enforcement,

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newspaper) before enforcing. The expected launch date is Tuesday after Labor Day (Sept 7). Park Mobile offers an app and a mobile number for those without smartphones. The app will enforce parking so that law enforcement will not have to enforce the mentioned parking areas.

Todd announced that at the last meeting there were discussions of proposals from Colonial Parking Inc. to address the current parking situation and asked for additional options.

Colonial Parking Inc. Downtown Dover Parking Presentation

Slide 1

Chris introduced the presentations by mentioning how discussions for off-street parking spots were reconsidered and they are now offering several alternatives.

Slide 2 - Parking Management Plan

Slide 3 - Refer to presentation for proposed dates for planning the parking management. There are both public and private committee meetings to allow for outside input, followed by private meetings to discuss the input offered from the public. September 28 they plan to present the plan to the Dover City Council. They said they would provide flyers to attract people to the public meetings.

Slide 4 - a map of off-street parking. Chris mentioned the City Hall-Library parking lot could be considered to be included in the Off-Street parking inventory, but it was discussed that it is usually considered on-street.

Slide 5 - Off Street Parking Management Options

Previous meetings discussed marking spaces for permanent holders and visitors to control and maximize parking, but the discussion revealed people would prefer to park where they wanted in the lot. The new options are 1. No equipment (ex. Tina's Park Mobile pilot program), 2. Multi-Space Meter (MSM) and 3. Full parking access and revenue control system (PARCS) including gates.

1. No Equipment (Slides 6, 7) - Parkmobile payment for hourly customers, will sell spaces until the maximum "inventory" of spots are sold. The cost is \$0 upfront and \$0.35 charge per transaction.

Pros: Unrestricted access to the lot, no additional investment.

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Cons: limited control of space for hourly and permit customers (i.e.; controlling room for permanent and hourly customers), no lot full notification (decreased customer service experience)

2. Multi-Space Meter MSM (slide 8,9) - MSM has the ability to limit the number of parking sessions and determine when to stop selling hourly parking, similar to Park Mobile. Accepts app payment, or cash/credit at kiosk. Can stop selling parking after "inventory" is full. The cost is \$7,500 and they are expected to continue to work for several years. The user inputs their license plate to activate their parking.

Pros: unrestricted access to lot, familiar payment system (same as on-street)

Cons: customer experience concerns (limited control of space for hourly/permit customers, and no lot full notification) - the same concerns as ParkMobile

In this method, they would put one meter on each lot. Codi asked what happens if someone leaves their spot early, and **Chris** replied that it is one of the cons of lack of control of space because the meter will not let you park or transfer time to another car and may result in being ticketed. Similarly, if someone does not move their car after their time is up, the meter will appear as if a spot is available.

- a. MSM with a Manual "LOT FULL" Sign (Slide 10, 11) - MSM will determine when to stop selling hourly parking. Enforcement staff would turn on a "LOT FULL" sign on and off based on physical counts. Cost estimate \$17,000 (\$5,000 per sign)

Pros: unrestricted access, familiar payment, LOT FULL Notification

Cons: customer experience concerns (limited control, sign will not prevent access to lot), sign depends on personnel (could be tampered)

- b. MSM with Loop Count System (slide 12, 13) - a loop count system would count the total cars in and out of the lot and trigger the "FULL" sign automatically based on total lot count. Cost estimate \$32,500 (7.5K for MSM, 5K per sign, 15K for the count system)

Pros: unrestricted access, familiar payment, LOT FULL notification, automatic activation of sign

Cons: customer experience concerns, loop count requires regular adjustments

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Sign could also include information about available spaces.

- c. MSM with License Plate Recognition (LPR) Count System (Slides 14, 15) - could count cars and control the "LOT FULL" sign. LPR System can integrate with the MSM to allow counting of permit and hourly customers separately. LPR will be able to recognize how many spots are available, even if people leave early/don't leave after their time. Cost estimate \$57,000 (7.5K MSM, 5K per sign, 40K LPR System)

Pros: provides unrestricted access, familiar payment, LOT FULL notification, automatic activation of LOT FULL sign, LPR integration to improve space utilization

Cons: Customer experience concerns, significant investment

3. Full Parking Access and Revenue Control System (PARCS) (Slide 16, 17) including gates-would provide full control to efficiently manage the Parking Facility. Could have code on their phone or ID tag for permanent space holders. Cost estimate \$95,000

Pros: customer experience, offers an easy and flexible validation option for merchants

Cons: restricts access to lot, significant investment

Offers data on parking habits of users – I.e.; how long they are there, popular times.

Slide 18 - Refer to presentation for matrix comparing the parking systems presented.

Discussion

The feedback from the previous meeting said that an open parking option would be better than a designated parking for permit holders and hourly users. It is asked if the law enforcement equipment cost is worked into the cost of the machines, and the app/MSM would offer that feature. Chris said any additional costs that come up would be reflected in future updates. The Parkmobile pilot is expected to give good feedback towards the potential success of an app program. Steve also suggested that the program could expand over time and extra features could be implemented in the future such as an automatic sign.

Councilman Neil said that they do not see the paid lots full often, but that the program would help provide spaces for customers to have more public options in the merchant area. He said it is important that people understand why we need to improve parking and what areas need to be available for parking and data will be helpful to understand the use of the lots.

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Todd expressed a preference towards starting with a manual sign and MSM and “future-proofing” to expand into the other options over time. The more expensive options, such as LPR would be useful, and may be affordable if grant money is accessed. If we can determine that it is a valuable investment, it may be useful to pursue the funds for a MSM with LPR.

Todd asked for more concrete cost estimates for options 2b and 2c and planning for those options moving forward. Steve says that as we work to automate the system, there will be more information available to make smart investments. Jed says 2a will transition into the other options, but if 2b is chosen the investment in the loops will not be used in 2c, so the investment is lost. Neil asks about the technology becoming obsolete, and Steve says the LPR technology is the most tech-advanced option that people are implementing, and they can be programmed to be even more intelligent.

Tina asked if the meters will be compatible with 3G since 5G coverage is not widely accessed, but Steve did not have that information at the time. Jed said that Colonial Parking does not prefer to implement “cutting-edge” technology, but rather well-tested options that will last many years.

Todd concludes the discussion and asked Colonial Parking to deliver the requested information about options 2b and 2c and prepare information and on-street and off-street plans for the next public meeting, since off-street has been thoroughly discussed.

Councilman Neil motioned to adjourn, seconded by Chris Raubaucher, and vote passed unanimously to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned: 1:23 p.m.

JR/DJL