

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN - BOARD OF SELECTMEN

**SPECIAL MEETING – MONDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 2013 5 PM
REPORT OF THE PARKING TASK FORCE**

TOWN HALL – JUDGE WELSH ROOM

Chairman Austin Knight convened the meeting at 5:00 PM.

Board of Selectmen attending: Austin Knight, Elaine Anderson, David McChesney, Erik Yingling and Thomas Donegan.

Other attendees: Town Manager Sharon Lynn, Assistant Town Manager David Gardner, Police Chief Jeff Jaran, Deputy DPW Director Richard Waldo, Parking Administrator Domenic Rosati.

Recorder: David Gardner

The following are meeting minutes, in brief:

The Parking Task Force members present: Selectmen David McChesney, Town Manager Sharon Lynn, Assistant Town Manager David Gardner, Police Chief Jeff Jaran, DPW Deputy Director Rich Waldo, Parking Administrator Domenic Rosati, Chamber Board Member Custodio Silva.

1. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: REPORT OF THE PARKING TASK FORCE:

On March 12, 2013, the Board of Selectmen held its annual Traffic Hearing and voted to defer decisions on the several items following the creation of an Ad Hoc Parking Task Force to review and report back with recommendations.

The Parking Task Force has met 9 times over the course of the summer. The group not only discussed the seven items referred to them, but had conversations about the comprehensive parking situation in town. The following recommendations represent the predominance of opinion of the members, since not all members were present at all meetings, some members may disagree on some items.

The Parking Task Force respectfully makes the following recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION 1. ELIMINATE PARKING ON COMMERCIAL STREET

For purposes of this report, the Parking Task Force considered Items 7, 8 and 16 together.

Item 7. Proposal by the Provincetown Board of Fire Engineers to make Commercial Street “No Parking Zone” year round from Pearl Street to Central Street.

Item 8. Proposal by the Provincetown Board of Fire Engineers to make Commercial Street “No

Parking Zone” year round from Cottage Street to West Vine Street.

Item 16. Proposal by the Provincetown Parking Department to make Commercial Street a “No Parking Zone” from the West End Parking Lot to the Land’s End Inn at 22 Commercial Street.

The Task Force agreed to make the following recommendation to the Selectmen in regards to all three requests:

The Task Force makes this recommendation in support of the Fire Department and recognizing that this is a tradeoff of parking spaces in the name of public safety. Recommend the Selectmen consider establishing a policy whereas there shall be no on-street parking where the roadway width of Commercial Street, or the width between any curb and any obstacle (i.e. power pole, sign post, etc...) on Commercial Street, is less than 18 feet, At such obstacle, there shall be no parking with 25 feet on each side of the obstacle to allow clearance of vehicles to maneuver.

This recommendation is consistent with the Selectmen’s motion made at the Spring Traffic Hearing:

MOTION: Move that the Board of Selectmen vote to have increased enforcement where parking is restricted on corners; and further identify where the road narrows adjacent to telephone poles.

The 18 foot standard is based on a 8 foot wide parking space and a 10 foot travel lane, which is an ideal minimum for public safety and access.

As an alternative, staff could consider a 17 foot standard in lieu of the 18 foot minimum, recognizing Provincetown’s traditional narrow road development patterns, custom smaller fire trucks.

RECOMMENDATION 2. EXPAND PERMIT PARKING DISTRICTS

Item #10 and 11. For purposes of this report, the Parking Task Force considered Items 10 and 11 together.

The Task Force does not recommend this change. There is currently a process in place to designate a street a permit parking district. Any resident or property owner can already request consideration of a parking permit district at the Spring Traffic Hearing

RECOMMENDATION 3. ESTABLISH WEEKLY PARKING PERMIT

Item #13. Proposal by the Provincetown Parking Department to create a Weekly Parking Permit.

The Task Force does not recommend this change. At first glance, this appears to be a friendly proposal. However, this could have a significant impact on revenue at meters and the small lots that are intended to have high turn-over. Currently there are two weekly permits available for the Grace Hall and Jerome Smith lots. These are the two lots that are

last to fill during the busy parking season and therefore it makes sense to incentivize a discount for these lots

RECOMMENDATION 4. PARKING METERS ON THE EAST END

Item #12. Proposal by the Provincetown Parking Department to install parking meters along Commercial Street on the East End of Town from Kendall Street to Pearl Street.

The Task Force does not recommend this change. Again, more meters and increased revenue seems appealing, but the reality is far more complicated. Both the road and the sidewalks in the East End are very narrow, there is really no good place to place the meter poles except in the street, which we know from the West End is problematic. The upcoming Phase 3 of Commercial Street reconstruction will change this area anyway, as we will likely need to widen the sidewalks throughout this area, which might make parking difficult. Additionally, this area tends to be more residential and less commercial.

RECOMMENDATION 5. PARKING PERMIT FEE STRUCTURE

Request from the public to reconsider the permit parking fee structure. We have recently received complaints that the resident/non-resident property owner/non-resident permit fee structure was unfair. There is at least one individual who wishes to bring the issue forward to eliminate the fee structure for these permits. The complainant felt that a separate fee structure for parking permits based on residency was unfair and should be eliminated. The task force reviewed the request and decided to support the existing fee structure.

Consistent with recent BOS and FINCOM discussions, the Task Force recommends not changing the Residency Parking Permit fee structure.

RECOMMENDATION 6. TICKETING VERSES TOWING IN SWEEPING ZONE

The Task Force discussed a recent complaint from a visitor whose vehicle was towed from Commercial Street during street sweeping. The Parking Department asked for a recommendation from the task force whether to continue towing or just do ticketing in street sweeping zones.

The Task Force recommends that we change the policy on towing vehicles within the street sweeping zones and ticket them instead. Towing of vehicles is inherently costly and unfriendly to residents and visitors alike. The cost to tow a vehicle is approximately \$190 - that money goes to the tow company not the community. It also creates a lot of bad will that can't be measured monetarily. The Task Force does, however, realize that street sweeping is also important and that sweeping Commercial Street cannot occur unless cars move out of the way. We therefore recommend that we increase the cost of the ticket to \$100 (\$25 currently) in order to provide the incentive to ensure that cars do move. The cost to park for a week in the Grace Hall lot is \$75. If the cost of the ticket is less than the cost to park for the week, then there is no incentive to get people to move their cars on street sweeping day.

RECOMMENDATION 7. OVERFLOW PARKING AT MOTTA FIELD

Request from the Provincetown Chamber of Commerce. Chamber of Commerce submitted a proposal for a pilot project for 2014 to allow parking on the Motta Field property from July 15 – Sept 15 from 10am – midnight daily. There have been several days this summer where the lots fill up by 1100 am, especially on cloudy days. There are severe traffic jams on Bradford Street as visitors are looking to available parking. Eventually, many of them just give up with frustration and leave town. The original proposal was to have the lot managed by the Parking Department and utilized and marketed to the day trippers as an “Economy Parking Lot”. There would be a minimal/discounted daily rate. The lot will be opened up to access from Winslow St. There will be additional attendants required on duty taking the fare and directing vehicles similar to what you would experience during fairground parking. Besides staffing, there will be minimal cost and improvements necessary as we will be parking directly on the grass where we can chalk drive lanes.

Some Task Force members went to the Recreation Commission on August 13, 2013 to request the use of the field for a onetime pilot project to see how it would go. The field is already used by the Lion’s Club on July 4, and Carnival each year. The Recreation Commission did not support this request.

The Parking Task Force still feels that the issue of insufficient parking is critical for the long term success of the downtown businesses and the community as a whole and feels that something needs to be done to address this need on cloudy and crowded days in July and August.

The Parking Task Force would like to re-approach the Recreation Commission at a future date with a revised proposal that would be acceptable to them. The Parking Task Force has suggested that the field could be split as not all the field is occupied by participants in the Recreation program during this period. The proceeds of the parking in excess of the parking attendants could go to the Recreation Department to be reinvested in Motta Field help maintain the field, expand the facilities and repair any temporary damage to the field from the vehicles.

The Task Force recommends that we reconsider the proposal for overflow parking at Motta Field for at least some days during the peak parking season when the available lots fill by noon. Consistent with what the Recreation Commission already allows on certain days for the Lion’s Club, we request that the Recreation Commission be asked to work with the Task Force, DPW, Police and Parking Departments to portion off a part of the field for parking that will not damage the field, prohibit recreation opportunities or compromise public safety of those using the field. We recommend that all proceeds in excess of the staffing costs go directly to the Recreation Department and be reinvested in the field and the facilities.

RECOMMENDATION 8. OVERFLOW PARKING AT JERMONE SMITH ROAD

In addition to Recommendation 7, the Parking Task Force feels that the need to meet the parking demand in the height of summer is critical to the town as a whole. We must find a solution that adds to our existing inventory of available parking. We should look into satellite parking areas, including but not limited to the Catholic Church property on Winslow Street or expansion into the

leaching fields property and soccer field along Jerome Smith Road. To be clear this is not about revenue, although there is revenue to be had, this is about having available parking for visitors in the height of season to prevent people from driving around looking for a space or outright leaving town in frustration.

The Task Force recommends that we consider alternative locations for the overflow parking for at least some days during the peak parking season when the available lots fill by noon. We request that we investigate the potential to park on the leaching fields along Jerome Smith Road. We request that we reach out to the Catholic Church with a proposal to utilize their land for parking on certain days, with the proceeds going to them.

MOTION: MOVE that the Board of Selectmen vote to refer recommendations 1 and 6 to a special public hearing on October 28, 2013, substituting the width of recommendation 1 to 17 feet in lieu of 18 feet; and further to refer recommendations 7 and 8 to the Spring Traffic Hearing after further analysis.

Motion by: Tom Donegan Seconded By: Elaine Anderson Yea 5 Nay 0

Motion to adjourn by Elaine Anderson at 5:55 pm.

Minutes transcribed by: