

Sounding Board Meeting # 4

MINUTES

AUGUST 4, 2011

Seattle Municipal Tower

Rm. 4080

<p>ATTENDEES</p> <p>(Underlined Indicates "In Attendance")</p>	<u>Katherine MacKinnon</u>	Downtown Seattle Association (DSA)
	Rod Kauffman	Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA)
	<u>Francine Fielding</u>	Wright-Runstad
	<u>Laura Larson</u>	Republic Parking
	Ed Danyluk	Imperial Parking Corporation (IMPARK)
	Mike Fuda	Diamond Parking Service
	<u>Josh McDonald</u>	WA Restaurant Association
	Pamela Hinckley	Tom Douglas Restaurants
	<u>Leslie Smith</u>	Alliance for Pioneer Square
	Tim Gaydos	Belltown Business Association, Mars Hill Church
	Chip Wall	Pike/Pine Urban Neighborhood Council
	Michael Wells	Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce
	<u>Doug Campbell</u>	U District Business Owner, Bulldog News
	<u>Beth Miller</u>	Ballard Chamber of Commerce
	<u>Don Blakeney</u>	Chinatown/International District BIA
	<u>Jessica Vets</u>	Fremont Chamber of Commerce
	<u>Susan Ranf</u>	Seattle Mariners
	Eric de Place	Sightline Institute
	Rob Johnson	Transportation Choices Coalition
	Tom Norwalk	Seattle Convention and Visitors Bureau
<u>Erica Sekins</u>	Seattle Commission for People with disAbilities	
Dick Burkhart	City Neighborhood Council	
<u>Jerry Everard</u>	Seattle Nightlife and Music Association	
Tom Klainer	Harborview Hospital, First Hill Improvement Association	

CITY STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

- SDOT: Peter Hahn, Charles Bookman, Tracy Krawczyk, Mike Estey, Cristina VanValkenburgh, Margo Polley, Mary Catherine Snyder, Allison Schwartz, Ruth Harper
- Office of Economic Development: Kris Effertz

CONSULTANT TEAM IN ATTENDANCE:

- Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.: Dennis Burns, CAPP, Brett Wood, P.E.
Rick Williams Consulting: Rick Williams

Members of the Public

- Eugene Wasserman
- Josh Kavanaugh

Meeting Notes:

The meeting began with introductions led by Mary Catherine Snyder. Following the introduction of those in attendance, Allison Schwartz led a discussion on the business and customer surveys (discussed in greater detail in the next section of this chapter). The survey is trying to obtain information on four key areas:

- 1) Business and customer behavior
- 2) On-street decision process
- 3) On-street experience
- 4) How to improve the experience

The survey is expected to go live on Monday, August 8, 2011 and will be available until September 15, 2011. Links to the survey will be distributed through email and business cards (described later in this chapter). The following are comments from the Sounding Board on the survey:

- Some structural problems – Allison is working with Sounding Board to address
- Events questions should be included
- Survey doesn't reach out to tourists or folks who don't necessarily come into Seattle.
- Counter display to get people who are from out of town or just visiting

Following the discussion on the survey, Dennis Burns and Rick Williams presented an overview of the Draft Final Report, focusing on the nine recommended strategies:

- 1) Neighborhood engagement Strategy
- 2) Investment in data collection and analysis
- 3) Open access to city parking data
- 4) Pay by cell
- 5) Demand and Geographic-based pricing
- 6) Time-of-day Pilot
- 7) Seasonal rate adjustments
- 8) Progressive pricing pilot

Along with the nine recommendations, two other overarching points that were made; 1) Seattle does not have the same funds as SFPark and LAExpress, which are receiving Federal funds for their program improvements, and 2) the City needs to be cognizant of goals (i.e. congestion/environmental benefits).

The following is a summary of discussion and questions during the presentation.

Pay by Cell

- What is the typical market penetration for pay-by-cell? Typical communities see rates in the range of 20-25%. Most communities begin with about 10% and increase as time goes on.
- Introduction of on-street pay-by-cell has the potential to make the usage of off-street pay-by-cell (already in place in many off-street facilities) penetration rate more consistent.

Demand and Geographically-Based Rates

- If I didn't know that rates were different from street to street, I would think that the whole area was expensive. This makes it confusing.

- The upcoming central waterfront parking loss will likely push parkers into Pioneer Square. How does this plan affect the loss of parking, and other unintended consequences?
- User information is primary challenge and also an opportunity.
- Varying time limits is better than varying rates. Different rates label a neighborhood as expensive. High demand areas need more parking capacity.
- We don't have enough areas with shorter time limits. Loading zones are used now for short term parking. Need half hour and one hour zones

Time of Day

- Why not just start meters at 11 am? Revenue approach versus business approach.
- You could set the rate lower in the morning shoulder, which is the same incentive as no rates.
- Highest rate is going to define neighborhood. People don't understand variable rates.
- Starting meters late is variable. Legibility – need to define new communication tools to help neighborhoods and customers understand
- Neighborhoods doesn't equal downtown. Downtown users are savvy.
- Complex system means complex communications.

Seasonal Rates

- Like this idea to help promote off-season interest in low-demand areas.
- Areas where it might be applicable
- Ballard Locks, Green Lake, Seattle Center, Waterfront
 - People would understand this better than variable, geographic, or time of day

Event Overlay

- Need to change the discussion to supply and demand and communicate that these changes are not intended to make parking harder, but rather to improve the experience.
- How is this working in Portland?
 - 20 day event overlay
 - 90 minute limits on game days
 - Communicate next game information at current game
 - Impetus is to provide parking for businesses and neighborhoods
- Seattle has significant impediments (density, transportation capacity, lack of off-street parking, combinations of events)
- University of Washington football will be downtown for a year – need to be aware of those impacts

Progressive Parking Strategy

- Can this be combined with pay-by-cell? Can a structure be defined to allow progressive in times of day with less demand?
 - Probably available, but communication would be hard
 - Not with our current equipment
- Making parking complicated – we're not LA, New York, or San Francisco. What is the gain here?

- If we had more paid parking areas, we could have more opportunity to educate
- Could be very interesting in downtown. You can still promote turnover, but allows flexibility
 - Could set prices lower to promote short-term or raise them to limit all-day parking
- Oppose variable pricing, but could get on board with this because you are getting what you pay for
- Takes away the punitive aspect
- Is there a more appropriate use by time-of-day – maybe better served in the evening?
- Being able to add more time may be bad for employee parking in neighborhoods in First Hill
- May be hard to define a complex system that will appeal to non-Seattle residents

Pilot Studies

- How would people feel about multiple pilots?
 - Mixed approaches will confuse even locals.
 - Look to other cities to see how they piloted
 - Perhaps do one pilot at a time to determine effects
 - People depend on their cars. Need more capacity. We could open avenues to pedestrians and bicyclists with private/public partnerships
 - On-street and off-street need to work in concert. Multiple pilots would allow us to implement faster and use resources for education and communication
- These recommendations are going to be detrimental to the economy of downtown and neighborhoods. Need to take meters out in some locations

Other Strategies and Thoughts

- Competing interests (e.g. longer time limits in U-District may promote more long term student parking on-street)
- Neighborhoods need to be involved in the development of recommendations so they fit the context of the area
- How is the handicap parking problem being managed?
 - Extend time limits, define abuse problem
 - It is a problem throughout the state, not just in Seattle
- 1-hour limit on Avenue and 4-hour parking outside (U-District). Simpler is better
- Can Business Improvement Areas set the rates in their areas and share revenue?
 - Needs are so different, maybe define a pilot where BIA drives decision
- Optimistic that Seattle-ites will understand. Are the strategies feasible with our technology?
 - Our report evaluates technology
 - The Strada can do some, but Citypal can do much more
 - 1500 = older model (not able)
 - 2200 total

Closing and Next Steps

Mary Catherine Snyder closed the meeting with some other topics for consideration.

- Disabled
- Parking tax
- Revenue sharing/benefit districts (helps promote payment because it improves the area)

Other Thoughts from the SB

- Fremont should provide off-street surface parking
- What percentage of profits would go to the neighborhoods?
- Difficulty is taking money from the general fund
- Is there a way to help educate our employees not to abuse primary parking?

Next Steps

- Final report and Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) response due to City Council – September 1
- September Sounding Board Meeting – September 15
 - Preliminary survey results
 - SLI report summary
- Mayor submits proposed City budget to City Council – September 26
- October Sounding Board Meeting – October 27

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

NEXT SOUNDING BOARDING MEETING:

Date: Thursday, September 15, 2011

Location: _____

Preliminary Agenda: Present preliminary survey results and the SLI report summary.