



March 7, 2016

Memo

To: Town Council

From: Cornell Knight, Town Manager 

Re: Special Council meeting March 10th at 6 pm.

At Thursday's special meeting there will be two items discussed. The parking recommendations and an update on the ferry terminal study. Enclosed are the Frequently Asked Questions prepared by the consultants and also their parking recommendations. Tere Garcia from Bermello & Ajamil will review the parking recommendations at the meeting.

Luis Ajamil will review the ferry terminal study. His presentation will consist of the following:

1. Review of work to date
2. Input received
3. Update of forecasts
4. Changes and trends in shipping since 2012
5. Update of financials
6. Potential uses of the property
7. Location options for the pier
8. Execution and management options
 - a. MPA
 - b. PPP
 - c. Others
9. Next steps

No motions are needed following these presentations. Parking recommendations will be on a future council agenda. The ferry terminal report will be submitted later this spring.

BAR HARBOR BACKYARD PARKING STUDY



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. WHAT ALTERNATIVE PARKING STRATEGIES WERE LOOKED AT?

The study considered multiple options to address the parking demand in the village center and along the waterfront including: a garage on the Backyard site and other locations in the village center; developing a remote parking facility at the Ferry Terminal with shuttle service via the Island Explorer; and utilizing the existing satellite parking facility at the new Gateway Center on Highway 3 with supporting shuttle service from the Island Explorer. The garage was recommended to help satisfy the demand for additional spaces in the center of Town. While satellite parking does not have a user fee financing mechanism they will need an initial and recurring investment. The existing Gateway Center capacity does not equal its capture or addresses the parking demand impacting downtown Bar Harbor.

Subsequent to the Open House meeting of November 9, 2015 and after listening to the input from the community in attendance, the recommendation was modified for the town to also consider the most fiscally feasible remote satellite option as a subsequent phase to the parking program provided that improvements associated with these options are implemented to make them effective options in the future. This way the Town can take a more holistic approach to addressing parking demand during peak periods of the summer.

2. WHICH REMOTE OR SATELLITE OPTION WOULD YOU IDENTIFY AS THE MOST FEASIBLE TO COMPLEMENT THE SPACES GENERATED BY THE GARAGE?

The study evaluated two satellite facilities, the current vacant Ferry Terminal facility, located on Eden Street approximately 1.5 miles from the center of Town, and the Gateway Center facility located outside the park's boundary along Route 3. It would be premature to identify which is the most feasible at this time as these lots are not within the Town's jurisdiction and there are outstanding issues that would need to be addressed with FDOT, the Maine Port Authority and the Park. When the Town is ready to proceed with considering satellite options a more current evaluation should be performed.

3. WILL SATELLITE PARKING LOTS ADDRESS THE PARKING PROBLEM?

Satellite parking in Bar Harbor will work best in an environment where 1) the community is charging a stiff rate for parking in the downtown to create an incentive for users to park off-site, 2) the intended users of the satellite facilities have to come downtown each day [like employees or residents] and will build the practice into their schedule, and 3) the shuttle service moving users between parking and destination is equivalent to or faster than driving oneself downtown. The estimated capital cost for either the Ferry Terminal or the Gateway Center even after any outstanding ownership issues are addressed would need a capital investment of up to \$500,000 and an investment of up to \$150,000 in operation or marketing expenses. These would need to come out of the parking fund, which would include revenues from the proposed garage.

4. HOW WAS THE PARKING SHORTFALL DETERMINED?

The methodology used to determine the parking shortfall was described in the last presentation made at the Open House on November 9, 2015 and is included in the Feasibility Study (Final Report) of the Backyard Lot Parking Garage submitted on October 20, 2015 accessible from the Town's website. In the simplest terms, it was determined that up to 412 parking spaces might be needed as follows:

- Through direct observations on multiple days in August 2013 and 2014, it was determined that another 79 parking spaces were needed based on comparisons of observed peak hour parking demand to existing parking supply.
- Comparison of field observations performed in 2013 to those done in 2014 showed that parking demand was growing by roughly 2% each year, so by 2020, another 10 spaces beyond the 79 spaces would be needed due to natural growth in visitors to Bar Harbor each year.
- It was calculated that up to 48 new parking spaces might be needed to support all of the development planned around the village center.
- Based on field observations, up to 60 spaces would be needed to accommodate visitors parking on residential streets around the village, if that practice was banned.
- In order to make West Street safer for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, 49 spaces would have to be eliminated from the street's shoulder and relocated into a new facility.
- If the garage was built on the site identified on the Backyard Lot, 66 existing public and private spaces would be destroyed and would need to be accommodated in a new facility.
- If the Backyard Lot option went forward, Ocean Properties requested and would pay for up to 100 spaces on the lowest level of the facility to accommodate the West Street Hotel's patrons and employees.

From this a total capacity target of 412 spaces was determined. For specific details please access the presentation from November 9, 2015 on the Town's website at www.barharbormaine.gov/402/Parking-Garage-Presentations

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



5. DOES THE GARAGE PAY FOR ITSELF INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION, OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE? HOW WILL THE GARAGE BE FUNDED?

Many municipalities have paid for the cost of a parking structure by creating a parking fund. This fund collects the revenues generated by the facility itself, plus other parking related revenues such as revenues from other municipal parking facilities, on-street meter fees, on-street parking permit sales, and parking citation fines. This strategy has been recommended to fund the proposed parking garage without having to use property taxes or any other kind of tax. This type of fund would cover the capital costs of construction as well as the on-going operations and maintenance expenses. This fund could also be used in the future for other improvements such as sidewalk or streetscape improvements, funding other remote parking facilities, or supporting alternative transportation options like mass transit and bicycling. These are future options that the Town can consider as the fund's balance allows.

6. DOES THE GARAGE SOLVE BAR HARBOR'S PARKING PROBLEM? CAN OTHER ALTERNATIVES BE IMPLEMENTED IN ADDITION TO THE PARKING GARAGE IN SUBSEQUENT PHASES?

The garage addresses most of the unmet demand for parking in the center of Town. The solution of the whole parking issue and satisfying the identified demand can be addressed by the garage with support from one remote satellite parking facility or as an option by providing an extra floor to the garage. As a result of the information obtained from the Open House it has been recommended that the Town also consider in a subsequent phase, development or improving an existing satellite option that would be effective and fiscally reasonable and can offer additional spaces and address future demand in a more complete and holistic approach. The remote parking facility can be used by individuals seeking to avoid paying for parking at a meter, Town lot or the proposed garage. It is believed that this option would be best suited for and most appealing to longer term parkers like village employees, students and park visitors. This phased option should appeal to all users as it allows for personal choice in deciding where to park.

7. WHY CONSIDER A GARAGE IF IT OFFERS ONLY A LIMITED AMOUNT OF SPACES AT A VERY HIGH COST?

A garage needs to be considered, because there is a demand for extra spaces in the center of Town that has been quantified by the data in the study, and confirmed by the surveys from the Open House. This demand has also been discussed over the years in previous efforts as well as by anyone trying to park during the peak season. A garage is the only way to add spaces in this location. This demand cannot be satisfied by a remote/satellite parking facility.

8. WILL THE FUNDING OF THE GARAGE INCLUDE PROPERTY TAXES NOW OR IN THE FUTURE?

NO. No property taxes will be considered now or in the future to fund this project.

9. WOULD CURBSIDE METERS BE USED?

As a general rule, traditional curbside meters are easier to understand to the average user and more convenient than centralized pay kiosks. DESMAN's recommendation includes the installation of curbside meters which accept both credit/debit cards and coin payments and are solar powered with secure wireless (cellular) connections for processing transactions. However, multi-space meters (also known as kiosks) could also serve this program if the Town believes them to be more aesthetically pleasing. The **On-Street Meter Program** would be implemented along the following areas:

- West Street between Main and Bridge Streets;
- Main Street between West Street and Atlantic Avenue/Newton Way;
- Mt. Desert Street between Main and High and School Streets; and Cottage Street between Main and Bridge Streets.

On-street parking outside these areas would remain free of charge to Town residents.

10. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE PUBLIC PARKING LOTS?

It is recommended that a **Town Parking Lot Program** be established so that all public parking lots be turned into fee for use parking and that the Town purchase and install solar power multi-space parking kiosks with secure wireless connections for processing credit, debit or cash transactions for the Town Pier lot, the West Street lot, the Newport Drive and Roddick Place lots. Also it is recommended that the town consider Albert Meadow Street and Bridge Street (Casino) lots continue to operate as free parking facilities.

BAR HARBOR BACKYARD PARKING STUDY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



11. WILL THERE BE ANY FREE PARKING ANYWHERE?

A recommendation has been made to maintain or extend the two-hour time limited “free parking” in the following areas with an option to purchase an all-day parking permit. This would be part of an **On- Street Parking Permit Program**:

- West Street between Bridge Street and Route 3;
- Main Street between Atlantic Avenue/Newton Way and Cromwell Harbor Road
- Mt. Desert Street between High and School Streets to Route 3; and
- Cottage Street between Bridge/School Streets and Eden/Kebo Streets

Parking may continue to be free at the Albert Meadow and Bridge Street lots. For residents, parking would be free of charge and time restrictions on any street designated within the Residential Parking Permit zones.

12. HOW WOULD THE RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMIT WORK?

By establishing a **Residential Parking Permit Program**, individuals submitting a proof of residency may register the vehicles within their household with the Town and receive one identifier (sticker or hangtag) per vehicle, free of charge. The program could include residents registering visitors’ permits for their guests. This program will provide the mechanism for identifying non-authorized users parking in residential districts and will protect the rights of residents to park freely on the streets around their home. The program does not reserve the parking spaces directly in front of a residents home but it authorizes them to park in a defined area close to their home without competition from non-resident users.

13. DOES METERED PARKING EXACERBATE TRAFFIC AND PARKING PROBLEMS ON SIDE STREETS AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS?

There is no analysis indicating that metered parking exacerbates traffic and parking problems if implemented together with a Residential Parking Permit Program. In fact, most municipalities using this system report an improvement in user satisfaction after meters are introduced into an environment as they promote turnover and make it easier to find an open space. A properly administered residential parking permit will limit the incidence of unauthorized persons parking on residential side streets. Residential parking permit programs have been proven to be very effective in curbing abuses on residential streets.

14. SOME YEARS AGO THERE WAS TALK ABOUT BUSINESSES PAYING INTO A PARKING FUND. DID THIS EVER COME TO FRUITION?

The 2002 and the 2004 Recommendations from the Parking Committee and the Transportation Task Force did include charging a user fee for parking but this did not advance to implementation. The Backyard Parking Committee was the most recent group to study the parking challenges of Bar Harbor.

15. WOULD THE BUSINESSES CREATE A PROGRAM OF VOUCHERS FOR THEIR CUSTOMERS?

A merchant validation program would need to be a private business undertaking developed by an association of downtown business owners. Negotiation or coordination with the Town would be recommended. Depending on the rules of such a program, vouchers or validations could be used for on- or off-street parking.

16. WHY NOT CHARGE FOR USE OF SPACES IN THE PUBLIC PARKING LOTS AND NOT IMPLEMENT ON-STREET METERED PARKING? HOW MUCH WOULD BE COLLECTED?

The on-street parking spots are the most desired in the center of Town and should command the highest rates. If these spots are not metered the Town would be required to drastically expand their enforcement efforts to make sure that users abided by the posted time limits on the on-street spaces. Financially, it would have a negative impact on the parking fund, as the Town would have to charge higher rates for off-street parking (public lots) as well as higher parking tickets to make up for the loss of revenue. This would also have a negative impact on the visitor population as they would be hit with even higher than the proposed parking fees and more aggressive enforcement. This would not be an option recommended.

17. WOULD THE TOWN CONSIDER USING CRUISE SHIP FEES FOR PARKING SOLUTIONS?

The Town’s adopted Cruise Ship Policy states:

“It is the policy of the Town of Bar Harbor to assess fees that fairly represent the cost of services that are provided to visiting vessels. The funds derived from the assessment of these fees will be used to reimburse the Town for services provided or projects that enhance the safety, efficiency of service, or experience of the passengers from visiting vessels. These include, but are not restricted to, pier improvements, safety equipment or personnel, planning for and accommodating visitors, directing and educating visitors,

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

and preserving the natural beauty of Bar Harbor waterfront for visitors into the future. Transfer of Cruise Fund outside the budget recommended by the Cruise Ship Committee should be reviewed for recommendation by the committee whenever possible.”

18. I WORK IN THE DOWNTOWN AND DO NOT HAVE MY OWN PARKING SPACE. WHAT PARKING OPTIONS WILL I HAVE?

There are proposed areas around the perimeter of the Downtown that are designated free for the day and are first come first serve, basically on Town owned lots. Other options include certain zones where permits could be purchased. Modifications can be incorporated once the rules are being drafted.

19. WILL I BE ABLE TO ROLL MY CAR BACK AND FORTH ALL DAY TO KEEP FROM GETTING A TICKET?

No- and you shouldn't be now. One of the benefits of the proposed metering system is that people will not be able to occupy the Downtown spaces all day without paying their fair share. There will be several locations for all day parking that should allow the local workforce convenient options. The spaces in the core of the Downtown should be kept available for customer turnover.

20. WILL THE PROPOSED PARKING METER RATES EVER CHANGE?

The Town will always maintain control over the parking rates and policies. Once these rates are implemented they can be adjusted annually, if needed.

21. WILL I BE ABLE TO “PURCHASE” SPACE FOR MYSELF IN THE GARAGE?

Annual parking permits could be considered by the Town for the garage or Town lots if the interest is there.

22. WHAT HAPPENED IN THE WINTER

The operating season for the meters is currently proposed from June 1 to Oct 15. After that the meters would be removed for winter storage and there would be free parking everywhere. The garage could be used for covered storage for boats or summer vehicles. It could also be used for residential parking during storms, making snow removal easier from Town's lots and streets.

23. WHY A PARTNERSHIP WITH OCEAN PROPERTIES

The Town does not own adequate land to build a parking garage as some parcels required are privately owned. A public/private partnership would allow for the Town to proceed with a parking garage entering into an agreement for the use of the property and also share the construction and maintenance costs of the facility.

BAR HARBOR BACKYARD PARKING STUDY

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS



PARKING PROGRAM

- On-Street Metered Parking Program
- Town Parking Lot Program (Fee-for-Use)
- Construction of a Garage
- Residential Parking Program
- On-Street Parking Permit Program

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

On-Street Metered Parking Program and Town Parking Lot Program

- Amend the Town's Codes and Ordinances as needed to establish the Town's right to charge for parking on-street and to establish the Town's right to charge parking in Town's owned off-street facilities.
- Initiate the legislative process necessary to institute the recommended rates for parking fees and fines.
- Incorporate recommendations for increased enforcement into the budget process for the next fiscal year.

Parking Fund

- Establish a "parking fund" into which parking-related revenues are deposited and against which parking-related expenses are charged.

Garage

- Amend Zoning Code and Land Use Ordinances to allow for the development of the parking garage on the Backyard site.
- Confirm preliminary structure and terms negotiated and execute an agreement between the Town and Ocean Properties defining roles and responsibilities through the garage design and development process.
- Commission an official survey of the project site to establish lot lines and parcel ownership.
- Identify and commence negotiations with property owners of parcels necessary to facilitate the efficient design of the structure.
- Prepare and execute agreements with property owners regarding property or easements needed, as appropriate and corresponding terms. (Point to be discussed).
- Initiate design process for development of construction documents for the proposed garage.

Residential Parking Permit Program

- Amend the Town's Codes and Ordinances as needed to establish a Residential Parking Permit Program.
 - Provide regulatory framework to establish this program
 - Draft rules, regulations and procedures for establishment of the program;
 - Stakeholder outreach
 - Ratification of the program by Town Council if required.

BAR HARBOR BACKYARD PARKING STUDY

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS



- Assignment of responsibilities for program implementation and administration; ordering of supplies and signage
- Implement Program

On-Street Parking Permit Program

- Amend the Town's Codes and Ordinances as needed to establish an On-Street Parking Permit Program.
 - Provide regulatory framework to establish this program.
 - Draft rules, regulations and procedures for establishment of the program
 - Stakeholder outreach
 - Ratification of the program by Town Council if required
 - Assignment of responsibilities for program implementation and administration; ordering of supplies and signage.
 - Implement Program

Parking Enforcement Program

- Expand and amend Parking Enforcement Program as needed
- Implement Program

FINANCING PLAN

- Initiate process to acquire funding for project's capital initiatives
- Acquire funding for project's capital initiatives.
 - Town Meeting can authorize the borrowing of an initial loan to fund the on and off street meters/kiosks.
 - Establish Financing Structure for all capital program elements and prepare to issue bonds.

CAPITAL PLAN

On-Street Metered Parking Program & Town Parking Lot Program

- Prepare a bid specification for purchase and installation of on-street meters.
- Prepare a bid specification for purchase and installation of off-street meters.
- Solicit bids, evaluate and select vendor(s).
- Purchase and install on-street meters and off-street meters.

Garage

- Prepare a bid specification for construction of the garage.
- Solicit bids, evaluate and select vendor(s).
- Initiate and completed building program
 - Construction of the proposed garage.
 - Complete construction
 - Open garage and start operations

BAR HARBOR BACKYARD PARKING STUDY

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS



FUTURE PHASES

- Revaluation at a subsequent phase how to address future needs and investments once the above Parking Program has been implemented and the parking fund is established and in operation with revenues from all the above programs.
- As a result of the revaluation, proceed to plan and invest any additional revenues from the parking fund that may be generated, in alternative parking infrastructure improvements such as: an effective and feasible remote/satellite facility, additional streetscape and street improvements or additional improvements to the parking garage that would result in additional spaces.