



DOWNTOWN TASK FORCE MINUTES

An Advisory Group to the City Council

Thursday, February 13, 2014
5:30 PM, Main Street Library

Council Members: Council Member Connie Boardman (Chair) and Council Member Jim Katapodis

Task Force Members: Meg Bernardo, Domenic Iorfino, Ron Newman, Ralph Palomares, Dave Shenkman, Susie Smith, Cathy Werblin, Stephanie Wilson

Absent: Council Member Carchio, Jennifer McGrath, Brett Barnes, Cesar Pena, Michael Wentworth

City Staff: Fred Wilson, Chief Robert Handy, Chief Patrick McIntosh, Ken Domer, Captain Russell Reinhart, Lieutenant Kelly Rodriguez, Scott Hess, Kathy Schooley, Travis Hopkins, Bob Stachelski, Janeen Laudenback, Scott Smith, Dottie Hughes, Kellee Fritzel, Teri Baker, Julie Toledo, Simone Slifman

Council Member Connie Boardman called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM and announced that Downtown Task Force Member Kim Kramer submitted a letter of resignation from the Task Force.

1. Public Comments

Amory Hansen read a letter opposing the dissolution of the Downtown Task Force. Milan Vukoje expressed support for a recent police presence in the Downtown on a weekend, and stated that activity serves as a deterrent and should be repeated in the summer when it is needed most. Mike Hoskinson stated his objection to implementing resident-only permit parking as he believes the City Council is imposing a further burden on residents, many of whom do not want permit parking. Council Member Boardman clarified that resident permit-parking districts are initiated by residents, not by City Council. Steve West encouraged the Task Force to continue urging people who visit the downtown to park closer, to end meter enforcement earlier in the evening, and that he disagrees that beach parking in the evening would be a problem. Richardson Gray stated that downtown is lacking a sufficient buffer between an entertainment district and residents, and indicated his support for Kim Kramer's parking proposal. He also expressed support for a permanent parking committee, would like a downtown resident representative on the Downtown Economic Development Committee. David Maxmuller stated that he searched vrbo.com and found 117 vacation rentals advertised in the City, most near the beach and downtown, all offered for less than a 30 day period and housing from 2-16 people. He stated support for any consideration of occupancy tax or licensing of vacation rentals, as done in other cities. Althea Santucci indicated that residents appreciate the work done thus far by the Task Force, hopes it will continue moving forward, that there is no buffer between residents and the business district, and expressed sadness about Kim Kramer's resignation. Mary Urashima said more enforcement is needed in the downtown alleys pertaining to parking, trash pickup, deliveries, drug use and pedestrian safety. Jim Proctor stated that he is a fan of live music and objects to what he has interpreted as new

regulations banning live music in the downtown, and questioned whether that would apply to the Surf Museum. Council Member Boardman clarified that the Task Force has made no such recommendation to eliminate live music.

2. Approval of January 23, 2014 Minutes

The minutes were approved as submitted. Members Iorfino and Wilson abstained.

3. General Discussion of Parking, not limited to:

- a. Discussion of Valet and Beach Parking**
- b. Business Validation/Employee Parking**
- c. Update on Residential Permit Parking – Kim Kramer (5 minutes)**

A presentation was made by Dottie Hughes, Parking and Camping Supervisor regarding Main Promenade Parking Structure rates, including pass costs for the general public and downtown employees, validations for the public and employees. Task Force members requested data regarding specific use by time of day and night and she indicated that she will provide this information subsequent to the meeting.

Chief Handy and Chief MacIntosh reviewed and answered questions from the Task Force members regarding possible use the beach parking lots for valet during the evening hours. The presentation addressed and reiterated points made at a previous Task Force meeting regarding the complications pertaining to safety due to those crossing PCH during the evening hours, a lack of available enforcement in the lots and on the beach during that time, interference with necessary beach maintenance and an assumption by the public that the beach is open when it is, in fact, closed. Dottie Hughes responded to questions regarding the capacity of the Main Promenade Parking Garage and indicated that it is not full in the evening, although it does fill up during the day in summer, and will research it, but she believes that there are approximately 300 spaces available on Friday and Saturday evenings. Chief Handy indicated that PD can use the electronic signage to help direct traffic into the structure.

A motion was made by Council Member Boardman, seconded by Council Member Katapodis to recommend to the City Council that the top level of the Main Promenade Parking Structure be designated for employee parking after 3:00 or 4:00 PM on Friday and Saturday.

A discussion of parking meter enforcement and signage took place among the Task Force members. Planning and Building Director Scott Hess indicated that if any changes to the meter enforcement or implementation residential permit parking occur within the appealable area of the Coastal Zone, a permit would be required and the Downtown Specific Plan would have to be amended to allow residential permit parking.

A motion was made by Council Member Boardman, seconded by Council Member Katapodis, to recommend to the City Council that t meters be enforced until 2 AM in residential neighborhoods in the downtown, and to add signage to existing meters to promote flat-rate Friday/Saturday night parking in the Main Promenade Parking Garage.

A motion was made by Council Member Boardman, seconded by Council Member Katapodis, to recommend to the City Council that a Zoning Text Amendment and Local Coastal Plan Amendment be processed to amend the DTSP so that residential permit parking can be allowed.

Kim Kramer, President of the Huntington Beach Downtown Residents Association (HBDRA) provided an update on the effort to gain consensus in the neighborhood surrounding Main Street to implement residential permit parking. He reported that the HBDRA, with input from Council Members Boardman, Carchio and Katapodis, and Bob Stachelski of the Public Works Department, created and circulated a resident survey. The survey focused on cost effectiveness; while 88% of the residents approached on 7th, 8th and 9th Streets stated they would approve of residential permit parking, 45% stated they would not approve if they had to pay for it and that the City should pay for it. Kramer expressed the opinion that the opinions expressed by the residents should be respected. He also indicated he would be doing the survey again to encourage participation and that it must be a comprehensive approach on the three streets or it will be ineffective.

4. Ownership of Planters and Fountain Downtown

Deputy Director of Business Development Kellee Fritzal reported that staff from Administration, City Attorney, Police, Planning, and Public Works met and discussed the issue, which was based on a request from the Downtown BID to help control loitering. Fritzal reported that staff cannot recommend this option, as there are complicated issues related to enforcement. The planters were placed there for public use. Captain Russell Reinhart explained this would be problematic from an enforcement perspective because it would become selective if some people were allowed to sit, and others were not and that creates a conflict with First Amendment issues. It is not the same as private property operated by a business – like tables at Coffee Bean or Starbucks. This item will not be recommended to the City Council.

5. Discussion of Task Force Recommendations – forwarding to City Council

This item will be discussed at the February 27 meeting.

6. Task Force Voting Procedures

This item will be discussed at the February 27 meeting.

7. Future of Task Force

This item will be discussed at the February 27 meeting.

8. Review all Items Voted Upon and Not Approved

This item will be discussed at the February 27 meeting.

9. Public Comments

Richard Plummer suggested that the Police Department work closely with neighborhood watch, since PD has to focus more on offenders so this would assist in prevention. Chris Hart suggested that 6th-9th Streets need to also have meters, as there currently are none in place. Steve West encourages free parking instead of paid parking, and said that Triangle Square in Costa Mesa is a good example of this. Member Stephanie Wilson inquired about DUI checkpoints and whether they are done in residential areas. Chief Handy stated that DUI checkpoints are conducted throughout the city but that the funding sources require that the streets used meet specific criteria.

10. Future Agenda Items

Member Palomares asked to receive information on the criteria for installing parking meters.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 PM.