

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT

SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 10, 2009

The following is a record of the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Wallingford Town Council held Tuesday, February 10, 2009 Robert Earley Auditorium of the Wallingford Town Hall. The Meeting was Called to Order at 6:01 P.M. Responding present to the Roll Call given by Town Council Secretary Sandra Weekes were Councilors Mike Brodinsky, Vincenzo M. DiNatale, Nick Economopoulos, John LeTourneau, Robert F. Parisi, Rosemary Rascati, Michael Spiteri and Councilors Jerry Farrell, Jr. and Vincent F. Testa, Jr. arrived simultaneously at 6:08 P.M. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. and Corporation Counsel Adam Mantzaris were also present.

Chairman Brodinsky introduced the discussion by reading the items on the agenda and stating the format for the evening.

1. Discussion and possible action on parking enforcement issues pertaining to the downtown.
2. Discussion and possible action on a parking policy. The policy could be:

First Bullet:

The purpose of the parking rules and regulations for the downtown is to promote business activity. To that end, public parking in back of Center Street, Simpson Court, and in the "Wooding-Caplan" area should be unlimited, until the issue is reviewed again as circumstances change.

Second Bullet:

On-street parking rules and regulations (2-hour parking) should be vigorously enforced.

This section was modified by Chairman Brodinsky in view of comments and feedback that he has received. He said that proposed parking along the Center Street cemetery wall would be four hours instead of the current two hours while parking on the other side of Center Street opposite the cemetery wall would remain at the two-hour limit.

Third Bullet:

Signage directing drivers to public parking should be installed/improved.

Fourth Bullet:

Minimum, yet effective, temporary improvements should be made to the "Wooding-Caplan" area to encourage parking there.

Chairman Brodinsky said that he was looking for agreement on the basics in the four bullets.

Mr. LeTourneau clarified that the "downtown" is not just the lower part of Center Street but that it is the entire business district of uptown and downtown.

Chairman Brodinsky said that he limited the geographical area of North Main Street, Simpson Court area and Center Street down to Route 5 in order to narrow the scope, so that common ground could be identified. He said that he held off on the area across Route 5 for another time. He asked for

agreement on: *The purpose of the parking rules and regulations for the downtown is to promote business activity.* There were no comments.

He moved on to: *Public parking in back of Center Street, Simpson Court, and in the "Wooding-Caplan" area should be unlimited, until the issue is reviewed again as circumstances change.* He said that the theory behind unlimited parking in those areas is that long-term customers or people who work in, live on the upper floors or own the businesses in those areas would be encouraged to park in the back area where parking is unlimited. He said that the street parking areas would be used for customers. There were no comments on this, which Chairman Brodinsky construed to be agreement on the first bullet. He commented that how it would be implemented would be subject to further discussion.

Chairman Brodinsky brought up *On-street parking rules and regulations (2-hour parking) with the four-hour modification along the cemetery wall on Center Street should be vigorously enforced.* He said that would create some flexibility. He next talked about parking in the uptown area of North Main Street and Simpson Court where parking would remain at two hours.

3. Public Comment and questions, as time permits.

Bob Hogan, Grieb Road, asked how the two-hour parking limit would be determined. Chairman Brodinsky said they would get to that and asked if people would be happy with the two-hour arrangement.

Patty, Owner of Elite Creations Salon, near the Wooding Caplan area, said that some of her clients are in her salon longer than two hours and that she is concerned when the new restaurant opens that there will not be ample parking. She said that Tuesday night isn't too bad but that Thursday night is unbearable for her clients. She said that she has been in her location for 15 years and asked if the Council could work with the property owner to open up the fenced off area for parking. Chairman Brodinsky said that what he is trying to find out is if the idea of two-hour parking and four-hour parking is agreeable, the idea of it.

Another unidentified speaker said that her customers park wherever spaces are available. She does not want to see her customers penalized for parking beyond the limits posted. Chairman Brodinsky said if there was unlimited parking in the back lots, two-hour parking in front of the shops and four-hour parking on part of Center street, assuming that works, legally and otherwise, would this arrangement be acceptable. He received no comments and announced agreement on this bullet of the agenda.

Steve Lazarus, President of Wallingford Center, Inc., asked about the hours on posted parking. The response was 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. except Sunday and holidays. Mr. Lazarus said that with the concerns about the restaurants and their busy time, which is after 6:00 P.M., the concern goes away, so that it would apply to both Simpson Court and Elite Creations.

Chairman Brodinsky read the final point: *Minimum, yet effective, temporary improvements should be made to the "Wooding-Caplan" area to encourage parking there.* He said that he doesn't want to get specific yet. He asked if the general idea of temporary improvements was objectionable. He received no comments and announced agreement on all four points of the agenda. On implementation, he said that cost matters and money matters. He asked about the Wooding-Caplan area to make it more attractive. Chairman Brodinsky spoke about signage pointing to parking areas in the business district of the town.

Ben Martin, 329 Ward Street, suggested bike racks to encourage bike use instead of cars.

Jason Zandri, 35 Lincoln Drive, suggested parking meters and consistent enforcement.

Mary Lee Pimentel, 582 North Main Street, asked for enforcement on Simpson Court; likes improvements to the Wooding Caplan site; likes bike racks; asked how to enter the Wooding Caplan site; and is concerned with safety in regard to proper lighting in parking lots.

R. Caplan, 88 Long Hill Road, stated that his 37 North Main Street tenants struggle for parking; stated that the least parking available is Wednesday through Saturday and that the DiNatale property is jammed; would like to see clear signage and parking monitored.

Bob Hogan, 251 Grieb Road, was asked to save his Wooding Caplan comments for a future meeting.

Police Chief Dortenzio said that business owners were polled in the past and “canned” a three-hour parking suggestion. Chief Dortenzio suggested that the Council carefully consider whether “unlimited parking” would be desirable, pointing out that cars could then be parked in those lots indefinitely.

In response to a question from Mr. LeTourneau, Chief Dortenzio said in regard to timing on posting Center Street with four-hour parking signs along the cemetery wall would entail purchasing the signs, scheduling the replacement of existing signs, changing all the legal regulations, looking at the documents used for enforcement to determine if there is a provision for overtime parking of four-hours, in other words consistency with the regulations and enforcement.

Chairman Brodinsky made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Economopolous. All Councilors present voted Aye, and the meeting adjourned at 6:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra R. Weekes
Town Council Secretary
Meeting recorded by Sandra Weekes

Mike Brodinsky, Chairman

Date

Barbara Kapi, Town Clerk

Date