



Parking Management

Patchogue Parking Management Workshop

December 6, 2006

On December 6, 2006, the Village of Patchogue held a Parking Management Workshop in hopes of establishing an efficient, equitable, and sufficient parking strategy. The event was hosted by NYMTC, along with consultant Michael Kodama of MK Planning Consultants from California. There were a variety of participants voicing numerous issues and concerns. Amongst them were Paul Pontieri (Mayor of Patchogue), many members who were trustees of the village, officials from the Patchogue zoning board, Chamber of Commerce, B.I.D representatives, local planners, merchants, and many more. The diversity of individuals really highlighted the need for such a workshop, not just for the present, but also to build capacity as the village is developing rapidly.

The village of Patchogue had two major parking issues to resolve, one was the on and off street parking, and the riverfront parking. In terms of the on and off street parking, the following concerns were raised:

- Introduce future parking capacity around N. Ocean and Waverly streets
- Parking lot behind the synagogue (also theatre) is vital to the downtown environment because of its close proximity to retail, restaurants, and library
- Better plan for underutilized lots south of Terry St.
- The on street parking spaces along Main St. (roughly 100 spots) in the central business district need to be more efficient and equitable

The main focus for the downtown and on and off street parking for Patchogue is to instill economic vitality. As a growing community, the residents and village officials need to think about how to spur economic activity and increase revenues for future development. The goals should be to spread the demand over the available parking instead of clustering around a central parking lot such as the parcel behind the theatre and synagogue, while greatly underutilizing other lots and spaces.

With the CBD, the priority should be customers, residents, and then employees. Other suggestions were to create a do-nothing summary of the types of uses (events, daily activities), note the stakeholders (village officials, residents, merchants, schools, retail owners, etc.), and look for opportunities of change. The proposed solutions were to introduce new management tools, increase prices, enforce time limits, allow permits, design existing lots to be pedestrian and bicycle friendly, plan employee parking spaces further, incorporate aesthetic environments, provide shuttle services from lots to points of interest.

Terry and Oak streets are prime location for off-street parking with good access to downtown, allowing better traffic coordination and removing congestion on main streets. Waverly and Main St. parking lot is also a vital space. There should be two hour parking closest to the stores and CBD, and four hour parking further away from the center. This allows a coordinated system between short term and long term parking. Building structures should only be an option in the case of having to build capacity, so it is important that the village of Patchogue find more efficient ways to use current parking spaces before constructing new ones. The four main goals of the on and off street parking are to: identify parking uses, identify areas for all uses, plans for parking during seasons and events, and parking/walking linkages.

When it comes to the riverfront in Patchogue, there is a sense of pride and ownership, and that is why residents are the first priority, followed by customers and then employees. Suggestions for the riverfront were to: provide shuttles to the riverfront with parking lots further away; enforce parking permits around riverfront; avoid parking at lots near that ferry to Fire Island because cars just sit in the lot for days, which is very inefficient use of the land; look for larger lots on weekends with a shuttle service to avoid overcrowding, which deters many tourists and visitors, including residents from coming to the riverfront; prevent overuse of cars to the riverfront with carpooling, alternative modes of transport, and walkable and bikeable routes; enforce a cap on parking near and around the riverfront; and last but not least, employee bonus program for parking further away, giving priority to the residents and customers.

One of the advantages of the village owning the lots is that it can play with various options and strategies to fit the needs it might have. The final recommendations from Mr. Kodama and the participants was to prioritize on street parking for short term users, create flexibility and incentives for new developments, maximize alternative modes of travel. The next steps should be to tackle the easy tasks first and lead the individuals involved through the process, develop a concrete plan of action, highlight potential changes in order of most pressing needs to least, and then look for funding sources (bonds, state programs, county programs, local initiatives). Mr. Kodama stated lastly that conducting this workshop is only the first step and that it is up to the village now to implement an action plan and see it through, which requires local leadership.