

**City of Folsom  
Historic District Parking Solutions Ad Hoc Committee**

**MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, September 5, 2019

6:30 P.M.

Public Works Conference Room, First Floor

Folsom City Hall

50 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Steve Heard.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Members Present:

Kenton Ashworth

Shannon Brenkwitz

Steve Heard

Paul Keast

Charles Knuth

Kyle Middleton

Cindy Pharis

Phil Rotheram

Jim Snook

Murray Weaver

Members Absent:

Karen Holmes

Staff Present:

Mark Rackovan, Folsom Engineering Manager

Pam Johns, Folsom Community Development Director

Steve Banks, City of Folsom Principal Planner

Stephanie Campbell, Kearns & West

**III. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

- a. Mike Brenkwitz, Folsom resident, introduced himself and noted that he is the husband of Committee Member Shannon Brenkwitz's. Mike read from submitted comments concerning the lack of parking for the Historic District. He highlighted several solutions given, including a parking structure and reserving some streets for residents only. [See detail in written comment submitted in record.]
- b. Loretta Hettinger, Folsom resident, remarked that she is grateful this Committee has been called together. She believes the root cause of this issue must be directly addressed if it is to be solved. She is a former city planner who has worked on similar issue and has insight having lived and worked in Folsom for the last 40 years. She believes the parking issue in Historic District is the underlying issue which must be addressed. Hettinger hopes the Committee will make a recommendation to ease this issue. She cares very much about this issue being resolved and as such will provide a recommendation by the next meeting.
- c. Jerry Bernau, Folsom resident, stated that the old railyard was studied to provide parking for Historic District. This study analyzed all the issues which need to be considered. He noted that the parking analysis was part of a larger development plan for the entire Historic District, and thus developers have built to these initial guidelines. Bernau stated that the parking structure was built to the City's guidelines and was meant to provide parking for commercial, not residential, and to replace surface parking.
- d. At the request of Committee members, Nora De Cuir reviewed whether questions can be asked regarding business from the floor. She stated that follow-up questions can be asked but there is more time for questions after Item 4 which would allow for adequate time for City Staff's presentation. She noted that questions cannot address items not included on the agenda.

**IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- a. Chair Steve Heard introduced next item: Staff presentation and Committee discussion of background information regarding Historic District parking. Mark Rackovan presented the staff's slide presentation on Folsom's Historic District Parking Solutions Background Information. Rackovan mentioned that this presentation was originally created for a workshop on this issue and is useful to reuse in this setting to give the Committee background on the Folsom Historic District parking issue. Nora De Cuir implored Committee members to think about further questions as they received the presentation.
- b. Mark Rackovan discussed five parking studies occurring all the way back to 1999. First, Rackovan discussed a December 1999 parking study which assessed two planned parking structures at the Railroad Block and Traders Lane. Next, he discussed an April 2000 parking study which looked at the implementation of the first parking structure at the railroad block and second structure on the Brann property. Then, he moved on to discuss a December 2008 parking study which updated the current parking supply and demand and forecasted future needs. Rackovan stated that this is when issues began to be understood, analyzed, and forecasted. Next, Rackovan mentioned a January 2014

parking study which looked at a potential funding strategy and updated current parking supply and demand. Rackovan noted that another parking structure was planned but the recession disallowed for normal financial streams which would have funded the parking structure planned at this point in time.

- c. Finally, Rackovan discussed the most recent October 2018 parking study, which, again, updated current parking supply and demand. Rackovan referred to the 2018 parking study, stating that future demand was forecasted just last year. City Staff committed to uploading these studies online in the next couple weeks. Additionally, Nora noted printed copies could be made available.
- d. Paul Keast asked about the Sutter Street Steakhouse property. City Staff noted that public parking exists underneath this building (20 public spaces and another floor for building itself).
- e. Phil Rotheram asked to dive deeper into specifics on Trader's Lane. Rackovan noted this but stated he would continue with the high-level overview to catch all members up to speed.
- f. Rackovan moved on to more specifically discuss the 2008 and 2014 parking studies. In these studies, the parking supply was shown to be adequate beyond the full development of the railroad block. Additionally, it was found that the existing parking under-utilized, particularly the parking structure and light rail transit lots during weekends. These studies confirmed the eventual need for a second parking structure. Rackovan then discussed the near-term strategies proposed from these studies to address parking issues, including monitoring neighborhoods, implementing time-limit parking, and increasing parking enforcement. Long-term strategies proposed include in-lieu fees, instituting permit parking, and constructing a second parking structure. Rackovan noted these studies determined more parking would be needed, with consideration for both short- and long-term strategies.
- g. He then moved on to discussing current parking supply, noting the information here focused on the commercial portion of the district.
  - i. Rackovan began by discussing off-street weekday demand, noting that Zones 1 & 2 are heavily utilized, while the light rail lot constricts parking availability as seen in Zone 3.
  - ii. Moving on to off-street weekend peak demand, Rackovan showed that Zones 1 & 2 are at capacity most of the time, and that since light rail users are using parking structure, this is unintentionally skewing the numbers seen for Zone 3.
- h. Rackovan shared the problem statement created by the last parking solutions workshop group: "Employees and visitors from the commercial portion of the Historic District are taking up the available on-street parking spaces in the residential areas at all times of the day and night, along with the associated nuisance factors."
  - i. Rackovan noted that this statement can evolve as decided by the Committee.
- i. In regard to "potential strategies" portion of presentation, Rackovan notes that the workshop the presentation was originally designed for created these strategies. The strategies listed in this section should be seen as a starting point for the Committee to consider, not bound their considerations.

1. First, Rackovan discussed time limit parking in residential areas as a potential parking issue abatement strategy. There would need to be geographic boundaries created to draw a line around the area being regulated. Rackovan mentioned the Committee needed to think about how to institute such boundaries without pushing the problem down a block. Rackovan noted that the aesthetic impact for a large amount of signage should be considered. Rackovan stated that any time limits would apply to all vehicles, thus implications for this must be considered. Rackovan mentioned that there are significant feasibility considerations for parking enforcement implementation in regard to police patrols.
2. Next, in regard to “permit parking in residential areas,” Rackovan suggested that some form of permit could exist for residents. Folsom currently has no legal authority to do this. The Municipal Code would have to be amended to create this authority. There are substantial feasibility issues in regard to staff time and other resource demands. Boundaries similar to time limit parking would have to be created. Rackovan noted majority approval of affected property owners is critical because all individuals will have to adhere to regulations. Rackovan noted the number of residential and guest permits available would have to be defined. Signs would need to be posted every 150-200 feet (6 per block). Rackovan stated that the cost of permits and the overall program is typically borne by the permit holders. Rackovan noted that this is called a preferential parking program because those who bear the preference, bear the cost. Further research can be done into other communities and what the costs could be. Nora De Cuir mentioned that Staff would look at case studies which could include research into these types of permit costs.
3. In regard to the “outreach/wayfinding” section of the presentation, Rackovan stated that the City can provide additional information to motorists to divert people at different points to better utilize what additional parking options currently exist. Signs would need to be posted at strategic entry points across the area. Additional signage could be erected to direct motorists to the parking structure as well as to convey information on parking availability.
4. Finally, in regard to the “parking management strategies” section of the presentation, Rackovan stated that these are short-term solutions to a larger issue, but these can be stopgap measures until bigger, better solutions are found. These options are meant to address different types of parking needs which exist. Recommendations were listed from the 2008 Parking Study including: updating parking requirements; establishing in-lieu parking fees; improving parking structure management; periodically monitoring residential parking; beginning construction of second parking structure; creating on-site loading zones

for large projects; changing existing time limits from 3-hour to 2-hour with some shorter time timed zones (i.e. 30-minute, 15-minute); re-striping off-street lots and charge per hour parking fee; implementing valet parking for restaurants; adding angled parking; and installing parking meters. Rackovan stated that improvements to bicycle and pedestrian access and instituting a pedicab service are solutions currently being worked on. In reviewing a graph from a study from October 2008 looking at a potential parking structure at Trader's Lane, Rackovan stated we can come back to further inspect these studies.

- ii. Rackovan completed his section of the presentation. The discussion moved to Committee questions on the presentation.
  1. Phil Rotheram asked if a study had been done regarding how many spots are available for residents to be able to park on their own property. Mark Rackovan noted that the studies would be somewhat subjective because of how residential parking occurs because it is utilized differently (e.g., angle vs back-in). Rotheram clarified he was inquiring as to what off-street parking is available rather than what is being done for parking on residential owner's property. Rackovan noted that an informal estimation could be done by staff walking by and noting numbers for residential off-street parking.
  2. Paul Keast asked about parking around the Railroad block. Mark Rackovan noted that the trendline on the October 2008 study's graph is likely going to trend upward beyond capacity in the district in the future. Keast stated that the Committee and City Staff do not know what full demand is in the district. Rackovan noted this is just due to the purview of the 2008 study but more work can be done to address additional questions. Pam Johns added that the 2018 study includes the area outside the railroad block.
  3. Mark Rackovan pulled up graphs noting parking utilization over the week. Rackovan noted Scott's will need 80-100 spaces over time, meaning light rail users will likely have to be squeezed out.
  4. Kyle Middleton asked about how the weekend peak demand was shown as being in the evening and wondered if the daytime had been looked at. Mark Rackovan noted that events are special, but the focus is on normal days and daytime parking on normal days are not an issue.
  5. Shannon Brenkwitz asked if the weekday demand slide in the presentation considers parking on Figueroa Street. Mark Rackovan stated that it does not, only time limits were considered. Brenkwitz inquired as to what areas are considered commercial on Figueroa and Sutter. Rackovan did not think Figueroa Street was counted for this slide.
  6. Murray Weaver expressed an interest in residents having an option for parking permits but does not think residents should have to bear the

entire cost. Weaver stated he would like this to be discussed in next agenda.

7. Steve Heard wondered if Riley Street will be narrower with future development changes. Mark Rackovan stated that this was not the plan currently, but the design was not yet finalized.
  8. Phil Rotheram asked if there was a cost in changing the Municipal Code in addition to the cost of permit. Rackovan stated that there is no cost in the City Code change besides staff time.
  9. Paul Keast asked if the Sutter Street alleys were considered in the parking supply. Mark Rackovan stated that there were no private lots included in inventory
  10. Jim Snook asked what residential streets were most affected. Several members responded that Figueroa was most affected. Mark Rackovan responded that looking more into Snook's question was an exercise that would be valuable. Snook suggested that signs saying "residential parking only" could help to deter tourists. Mark Rackovan responded that a phased rollout of restrictions could potentially start with these signs.
  11. Kyle Middleton asked in regard to the permit parking issue, if other parts of Folsom could also have these permits and restrictions. Mark Rackovan stated that there was a likelihood this type of legal restriction could be instituted in other areas, such as the high school area.
  12. Cindy Pharis stated that the 2008 parking study does address spillover streets, including Figueroa.
  13. Shannon Brenkwitz asked why so little has been done when so many suggestions have already been put forth. Mark Rackovan stated that there has previously been a lack of political support to take next step (e.g., meters) but the closer the City gets to capacity, the harder it is to avoid addressing the issue. More than one strategy is needed to adequately address the issue.
- iii. Once Committee member questions were addressed, Steve Banks moved on to presenting the background information on parking in the Folsom Historic District as it related to special event. [Handout passed out.]
1. In regard to the "Special Events in Historic District" section of the presentation, Steve Banks stated that certain questions are asked by city staff regarding events in this district, such as number of attendees per day expected, road closures required, signage required, and how the City will need to provide resources to adequately support the event. Conditions of approval are granted after all departments considered.
    - a. Banks noted there were 50 special events within the Historic District in 2018: 43 one-day events, 5 multi-day events, and 2 weekly events (i.e., farmer's market & concert series) with sizes ranging from 75 – 6,500 estimated attendees per day. Banks stated that all areas are included in these quantitative metrics.

- i. Steve Heard asked if attendees are not parking in the garage and if this is affecting Figueroa Street. The Committee members responded in the affirmative.
- b. In regarding to the “Parking Regulations” section of the presentation, Banks stated that the Historic District relies on parking at the Sutter Street subarea properties and this is substantially less than what is available in areas outside of the Historic District. For retail, offices, restaurants, museums, and similar uses, 1 parking space is allowed per 350 square feet of building space. For hotels, motels, guesthouses, 1 parking space is allowed per guest room plus one parking space per 350 square feet of other building space. For dwelling units, 1 parking space is allowed per dwelling unit, although two parking spaces for dwelling unit is allowed if the building’s square footage is greater than 600 square feet.
- c. In regard to the “Parking and Variances” section of the presentation, Steve Banks stated that each property has the opportunity to provide parking. The City has assumed some responsibility in helping to maintain Historic District character which pertains mainly to parking.
  - i. Going into greater detail regarding parking variances, Steve Banks stated that in order to grant a variance, such as height, fence, or any other standard the City has, the Historic District Commission must find three items. 1) There must exist special circumstances applicable to the property, including size, shape, topography, location, or surroundings whereby the strict application of the zoning code deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other properties in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification. 2) The granting of a variance is necessary for the applicant’s preservation and enjoyment of the property. 3) That the granting of the variance will not, under the circumstances of the particular case, materially affect the health or safety or persons, residing or working in the neighborhood of the property.
- d. In reviewing the “Parking Variance Table” slide, Steve Banks stated that with the development of new buildings or building additions since 2000, 203 parking space variances have been granted. Banks added that what is not shown in the table is that had the parking standard been applied retroactively, the Sutter street buildings almost all, around 70 percent, would have needed a variance. Banks noted that variances have already been approved for buildings that were proposed but not built

on the railroad block. Banks stated that the approval on a variance cannot be removed but a variance can expire if it was never developed and enough time has passed.

- e. In regard to the "Parking Agreements" slide, Steve Banks mentioned the 2010-2011 Historic Folsom Station/Railroad Block Disposition and Development Agreement, which reserved 23 parking spaces in Historic District parking structure for exclusive use by office uses within the Historic Folsom Station development on weekdays. Additionally, there exists a 2006 Sutter Street Development Partners/Folsom Power and Light Operations Agreement, which provided for 51 public garage parking spaces within the Folsom Power and Light Building at 602/604 Sutter Street.
- iv. Following the presentation, questions from the Committee were addressed by City Staff.
    1. Shannon Brenkwitz asked if Committee members can get copies of this presentation. Mark Rackovan responded that it can be made this available on the website. Pam Johns stated that it can be made into a PDF so it can be enlarged and read.
    2. Kyle Middleton confirmed that the railroad block is the parking garage. He also asked how the 23 spots for new development will be allocated. Mark Rackovan responded that when the three new buildings are built around Historic Folsom Station, the city will need to identify locations within garage nearest to the Sutter Row building for the 23 spots. Time limits will be adjusted over time and expanded to accommodate the Historic District. The light rail users will need to find other parking outside the garage. Additionally, more parking will have to be set aside for employees in the Historic District.
    3. Jim Snook, in regard to special events, stated that the Historic District Association puts on some events – most of which have a decade's long history, but the Association did not want to put on events that affected residents too heavily. Snook stated that the plaza gives the Association the flexibility to put on smaller events. He mentioned that the Association's board is sensitive to residents being affected but looking to energize district with farmer's market.
      - a. Charlie Knuth asked what is considered a small sized event. Jim Snook responded that events such as the red hat society, zoo, and reading kickoff events are considered small – anything under 750 or whatever garage can handle.
    4. Paul Keast asked, in terms of variances, what is the forecasted for variance demand. Steve Banks responded that very few sites are left to develop, perhaps 4-5 undeveloped sites, but the city has no idea which might request variances – not all variances will be granted. Pam Johns added that unless something is big enough, it is challenging for infill



sites to be developed. Steve Banks responded that undeveloped sites will require variances for parking, if developed. Pam Johns stated that the City has gotten cost estimates for parking structures to see where would be most cost effective.

5. Phil Rotheram asked what the cost of the railroad block parking structure was and what the funding mechanism was. Mark Rackovan responded that it was paid for with redevelopment monies. Phil Rotheram asked if there were stipulations for how the developments from those funds could be utilized. Mark Rackovan stated that no transit money was involved for that garage so there is no need to supply light rail parking. Rackovan continued, furthermore, the City can stipulate that light rail users can be required to not use the parking facility but doing so would be difficult to implement.
6. Steve Heard asked why a left turn on North-bound Riley Street cannot be made. Mark Rackovan responded that going North-bound on Riley makes seeing Leidesdorff oncoming traffic very difficult so a left turn would be unsafe.
7. Kenton Ashworth brought up that it is hard to balance bringing in people to events to spend money in the district with bringing in too many people and putting strain on resident parking. Steve Heard responded that a free light rail is provided to help alleviate parking issues. Jim Snook added that taxi services are routed to alleviate congestion and parking issues.
8. Nora De Cuir asked the group to focus on agenda items for future meetings which the group can dig into further.
9. Shannon Brenkwitz asked why the 2008 study, which recommended different amounts of parking for different types of commercial uses, required different amounts of parking in the Historic District compared to other commercial areas. Pam Johns stated that the city-wide code does break down the standards in this way but the City is currently updating this, creating an opportunity to change the parking standards for the future. She also mentioned that comparable regulations in other Historic Districts should be studied to understand what the known best practices are. The City could bring this information to the group so informed recommendations could be made. Brenkwitz asked why parking standards are different from the Historic District compared with other commercial areas outside the Historic District if the same types of commercial establishments are present. Pam Johns explained that the context and allowed uses are different, requiring different regulations which adequately apply to the specific setting.
10. Kyle Middleton asked if it is an issue getting people to use the parking garage. Steve Heard responded that the parking garage is inconvenient for most of Folsom by local standard, as it is extremely difficult to get to.

11. Nora De Cuir asked if the staff had any additional thoughts. Mark Rackovan stated that the staff can discuss at a later date – permit parking will likely be a multi-meeting item
- v. Nora De Cuir confirmed the Committee’s ongoing interest in case studies and noted that they are a potential future meeting topic. Paul Keast noted that case studies are significant – the earlier the better to address.
- vi. Cindy Pharis asked what kind of parking we are looking at and why. She questioned whether time was being wasted finding residential parking numbers instead of looking at how many Historic District employees are parking in the area and exactly where this is happening.
- vii. Steve Heard responded that this issue was generated by the impact on residential parking. He stated that if so, looking at residential parking will allow the Committee to understand more about the issue.
- viii. Nora De Cuir stated that City Staff could come back with thoughts on the matter.
  1. Mark Rackovan mentioned that residential parking numbers would be almost impossible for the City Staff to gather.
- ix. Nora De Cuir stated that the group should consider prioritizing what progress be made on, such as a merchant survey on employee parking.
- x. Paul Keast asked if information could be gathered from Google that is time-based to understand how parking happens. Holidays could be compared with normal days to understand employee parking issue.
  1. Phil Rotheram volunteered to communicate with Google due to his existing working relationship with them.

**V. COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- a. Steve Heard asked if there were any final public comments.
  - i. Murray Weaver asked if we can improve signage.
- b. Jerry Bernau noted that parking management can be done well if hot spots are defined and addressed.
- c. Loretta Hettinger expressed her appreciation for not separating residential from commercial parking issues.
- d. Ernie Sheldon Jr. stated that he would like to get rid of the orange traffic cones that residents put out. Once this happens, he believes it will be an indicator that the problem is being solved.

**VI. NEXT MEETING DATE**

- a. Chair Steve Heard confirmed the next meeting date as October 3, Thursday, at 6:30 p.m.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

- a. The meeting is adjourned at 8:37 p.m. by Chair Steve Heard.