



Civil Engineers  
Structural Engineers  
Traffic Engineers  
Land Surveyors  
Landscape Architects  
Scientists

**Project:** Downtown Parking Facility and Management Study  
Dover, New Hampshire

**Date:** 27 March 2007

**Re:** Stakeholder Public Information Meeting  
City Hall Auditorium

**Notes By:** Kristine Silva  
TFMoran Inc.

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A brief project overview and an introduction to the team were given by City Planner, Christopher Parker. He also emphasized how important public involvement is to this project.

Chris Luz of Lansing Melbourne Group LLC initiated the PowerPoint presentation attached to this memo. In the presentation Chris introduced the team, went over the agenda for the meeting and provided a general project overview. He reviewed the Scope of Services and pointed out some key dates in the schedule (e.g. next TAC Meeting 21 May, next Stakeholder Meeting 22 May and the draft report 23 July).

Next, Bob Duval reviewed the project status and gave a brief summary of the four draft technical memos that have been prepared, including: Public Information Program, Previous Studies, Existing Conditions Update and Transit Operations.

Chris Luz then moved on to Perceptions & Issues and Informed Decisions; which included management of supply and demand, parking policy and a discussion of "best practices". He also briefly mentioned the typical financial costs of building and maintaining components of a parking garage, including first and on-going costs.

At the conclusion of the PowerPoint presentation, public comments and questions were encouraged.

#### **Comments & Questions:**

Edward Bleiler residing at 28 Isaac Lucas Circle, a resident of Dover for the past 12 years stated that in all the years he has lived in Dover he has never had a problem parking. He did note that the only problem he has ever seen is at night when the bars are open. He strongly feels that the City does not need a parking garage. He voiced some concern on who would pay for it; he feels that by building a parking garage we would be bankrupting the City and the residents. He said that we could not afford it and therefore should not go through with it.

Chris Boldt residing at 4 Evans Drive, City of Dover, expressed some positive comments. He feels that building a parking garage is important for employers. He stated that there is no space for employees or customers and that we need to look at this in a long-term perspective; in order for the City to grow we have to have the capacity for growth. He supports Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and feels that having multiple entrances to any parking garage is important.

Vivian Bingham residing on First Street, City of Dover, stated that a parking garage would benefit the City but not her personally. Ms. Bingham was concerned that a new garage not be located in a residential area; she feels that this would be unfair to the property owners and that a garage would decrease the value of the resident's property.

Linda Hagan, Jewelry Creations, 388 Central Avenue, City of Dover stated that she had a problem with parking for her customers. She remarked that her customers were not willing to drive around the block more than twice and since that seems to be the current situation, she feels she is either losing customers, having people arrive late or not at all for appointments, etc. She is currently paying \$5,000/yr for her employees to park. She supports the idea of putting a parking garage downtown but feels that a garage in one location only is not the solution. She supports PPP and believes that we need to work together to help the community grow. Linda made a suggestion of putting in a large events center on the top floor of a new garage; she thought that it would bring people into the City and provide rental income (for the top floor) for the garage. She expressed that if the parking problem in Dover is not solved she will most likely need to move her business out of the City.

Jeremy LaRose, Wildcat Transit Operations Manager and Dover resident, speaking on behalf of Wildcat, informed the study team and public that Wildcat was committed to helping but expressed some concern on potential locations for a new garage. He indicated that bus schedules could be compromised due to traffic congestion in the downtown area and felt that if garages were located too far outside the current bus routes that their effectiveness would be reduced. He thought that having a garage with multiple access points was important. As a resident of Dover he expressed that there was definitely a lack of parking especially during lunch hour because people are parking on-street all day. His experience in Nashua shows that parking rates in a parking structure must be priced properly in order for the structure to be utilized. To bring more business and residents into the City, the City needs to provide appropriate parking at a reasonable price.

Rich Schreuer, resident of Second Street, City of Dover suggested that it is within the interest of the City to have residents living closer to downtown. His concern was with regard to providing adequate opportunities for residents who live downtown and have, or need, on-street parking. He also suggested that the winter parking ban be changed to a snow emergency ban.

Janet Perry, Nicole's Hallmark, 386 Central Avenue stated that she receives regular comments from her customers and employees regarding their difficulty in finding adequate parking. Noon and evening hours are the most difficult periods to find proximal parking and signage is poor. She feels that the Orchard Street Lot is overpriced, constantly full and the ability for permit parkers to park in metered spaces makes finding an available metered space more problematic. She mentioned that the First Street Lot, which is permitted, is always empty and that the City should think about opening the lot up. She is looking for a good solution from this project such as recommending multiple garages so that the business community could expand their client base. She also mentioned that she would like the study team to consider topography when picking a location. Another concern she had was she noticed that handicapped employees working at the mill were parking in unrestricted spaces all day and then walking to the mill. Officer Marn Speidel commented on this concern and responded that there is a State statute that allows disabled permit parking in any space with no time restrictions and takes precedence over local law.

Another comment was made regarding the Dover Mills: that if parking is such an acute problem for their business, why haven't the owners built their own garage?

In an effort to encourage final questions, Chris Luz asked the audience, "How far is too far to walk to a parking garage?" Several answers included ¼ mile, 440 yards, more than 2-3 blocks. Chris noted that many communities believe that the ideal distance to walk to a garage is approximately 1 – 1 ½ blocks.

Chris also suggested that Public Private Partnership could be an effective way to incentivize or partner with an owner/developer on redevelopment of sites by accommodating parking spaces in "excess" of what the development needs to meet other public needs, noting that the most effective solutions typically attack a problem from multiple angles.

In regard to how to make a parking garage both aesthetically pleasing and cost-effective, Chris noted that just providing commercial space at the grade level of a garage was not the answer. This approach needs to be evaluated as to what the market needs are, because a parking structure with vacant lease space at the grade level is neither aesthetically pleasing nor economically viable.

Bob Duval closed the meeting by thanking City officials and emphasizing the project's email address as a way for the public to communicate ideas to us. Gathering and evaluating public input, ideas, and suggestions is a very important component in this study. The study team needs to understand what the community, landowners', and business-owners' perspectives are so that we can develop effective recommendations.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.