

## **Harbor Place Transportation Study Work Group**

Minutes of the Meeting of April 4, 2018. The meeting took place in the conference room of the PLUS building at 2 Fairgrounds Road, Nantucket MA 02554. Workgroup Members Present: Libby Gibson, Dawn Hill-Holdgate, James R. Kelley, Linda Williams, Barry Rector, Paula Leary, Andrew Vorce, Andy Hill (DESMAN), Norm Goldman (DESMAN), John Twohig (New England Development), Dave Fredericks (Owners Group).

Staff present: Mike Burns (Planning), Leslie Snell (Planning), Greg O'Brien (Owners Group), Janet Schulte (Town's Project Representative).

Also attending: Matt Fee, David Worth

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Kelly called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m.

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA:** Mr. Fredericks asked to add a report about his conversation with the Historic District Commission (HDC) Chair and discussions with the Owners.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 15th MEETING:** The minutes of the meeting of February 15<sup>th</sup> were unanimously approved.

**INDEPENDENT DEMAND ANALYSIS:** Mr. Hill presented two methodologies for determining the number of parking spaces needed in the downtown area: Occupancy method and Shared Parking Method. He reported on the work that had been done with these two methods in 2009-10 by Tetra Tech. The Occupancy Method indicates a deficit of 77 spaces based on counts done in July and August 2009. The Shared Parking Method – with additional information on ferry ridership provided by Mr. Hill – projects a shortfall of 671 spaces.

There was a brief discussion about the impact of pricing on parking demand, but since it wasn't directly addressing the analysis, the group elected to return to the discussion of demand analysis. Mr. Hill did indicate his opinion that the impact would be minimal.

Mr. Hill noted that the high number of 671 – determined by the Shared Parking Method – was critically flawed and overstated since it doesn't reflect actual conditions in the field. The average of the two numbers is 374. He noted some other variables to consider when analyzing the parking demand on Nantucket including displacement in the surface lot (Stop & Shop) when development moves forward (150), the number of vehicles that queue up when the ferry arrives (135), the use of the Valet Park service on the National Grid site (110), and reducing the size of the area studied in the Occupancy Method to just the downtown core (101). Based on this analysis, he recommended that DESMAN should proceed to design against a 200-space target. That number of spaces is achievable on the site, accommodates the valet impact, projected growth in the use of ferries, and allows for an additional 75 spaces applied to other needs. He

noted that 200 spaces would not accommodate all the needs identified, but does mitigate against the deficiency and allows focus on alternative methods of transportation.

The discussion opened to comments from the work group members and other attendees.

In response to a question about “who would be served how much over the course of a year,” Mr. Hill replied that the garage would be at 100% capacity 35/40 days of the year in the June, July, August time frame. Off-season, he projected, would be about 40% capacity. Other members responded with additional information about the growing demand for parking in the downtown core throughout the year as evidence by their personal experience or observations. Mr. Hill noted that a higher off-season use was good news for revenue generation and to support the downtown economy and vibrancy. Mr. Kelly noted that the town was taking other efforts to improve the efficiency of surface parking such as year-round bus service and bike lanes into the downtown. Mr. Vorce affirmed that Mr. Hill’s methodology was sound and comprehensive.

Mr. Fredericks reported on his conversations with the HDC Chair and National Grid regarding the “historic” brick building located on the site. He met with the HDC chair and HDC staff. A formal application to the HDC is required for a definitive answer, but the conversations indicated that the HDC would be reluctant to approve a relocation of the structure. He reported that National Grid staff is not concerned about the building and it would be up to the community to decide about relocation and to pay for it. He also indicated National Grid was not interested in making more land available to accommodate the relocation of the brick building.

Using a map of the site, he explained some of National Grid’s operational needs for space to meet its requirement to provide electricity in an emergency. He noted the initial discussions about the Intermodal Transportation Center provided about 1 acre of land for the Center, other projected programs (green space, road ways, grocery store) left the developers with about 1.7 acres of land to develop on the 5-acre site. He added that the Owners have already put a lot of land on the table, and a lot of it is for the public and not the developers’ project.

A discussion about ways to incorporate the historic brick building’s architectural features ensued. Ms. Williams suggested that a design reminiscent of the brick façade that had been there several decades ago had been favorably approved when the brick substation was built.

Mr. Twohig reported that the developers could not proceed with project ideas until decisions about the garage were settled. He also noted that there are 16 years remaining on a lease for the Stop & Shop. He indicated that the overall project would not be a large-scale development – some retail and housing on the site (with some parking provided). The redevelopment also would not occur along the same timeline as the building of an Intermodal Transportation Center. The plan for the rest of the property is based on the size and location of the Intermodal Transportation Center.

**DESIGN CONCEPT:** Mr. Hill reminded the group that they had seen three options at the last meeting: 1) design with historic building remaining; 2) a moderately sized structure and 3) extension of the garage to the north and west to create a larger footprint. DESMAN had moved forward in the design planning with Option 2: 122' x 234' footprint, with 235 spaces in light of constraints required by floor area and other proposed uses.

Mr. Goldman presented a packet of drawings and noted that the drawings took into consideration the work group's issues discussed at the February meeting. He noted the following points:

1. Every time one eliminates spaces and adds another use, cost of each space increases.
2. Need decisions on critical elements for what is wanted in the facility.
3. Need to know the impact of the old brick building on the garage and its footprints. He noted that DESMAN has created garages that replicates a previous building's architecture at different sites in New England.

He then asked the work group to focus on functionality in the facility now. Mr. Kelly noted that the work group reached a consensus at the last meeting that the facility would be a "parking garage with some Intermodal Transportation Center elements." Mr. Vorce emphasized the need for some ground level activity to enliven the sidewalks to avoid long stretches of dead space. Mr. Kelly agreed that there had been work group agreement on small retail or institutional spaces.

Mr. Worth asked about ways to change behavior of queuing up to drop off or pick up ferry passengers. Mr. Hill noted that a realignment and widening of streets in the area to have drop off and cab lanes would address the issue.

The following decisions regarding functions to be included in the facility were made:

- Eliminate buses inside the building; exterior queuing location to be determined
- Allow for retail/institutional space on the Washington Street Side
- Include two passenger elevators
- Do not design for adaptive re-use (Note: load for an office building is greater than load for a garage)

Mr. Hill stated that a traffic engineer will need to study all the intersections to address traffic flow.

The design currently under consideration would have 261 spaces, be 38' in height to the top floor and 41.8' to the parapet. Decisions about operations and programming will be made later.

**NEXT MEETING:** April 24, 2018, 2 – 4 pm. Desman will continue to work on the design incorporating decisions made today.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m.