

STUDY SESSION
Municipal Parking Lot No. 4 and Pension Board Criteria
CITY HALL, Fifth Floor
6801 Delmar Blvd.
University City, Missouri 63130
Monday, May 23, 2022
5:30 p.m.

AGENDA

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

At the Study Session of the City Council of University City held on Monday, May 23, 2022, Mayor Terry Crow called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

In addition to the Mayor, the following members of Council were present:

Councilmember Stacy Clay
Councilmember Aleta Klein
Councilmember Steven McMahon
Councilmember Jeffrey Hales
Councilmember Tim Cusick
Councilmember Bwayne Smotherson

Also in attendance were City Manager, Gregory Rose; Attorney, John F. Mulligan, Jr.; Director of Finance, Keith Cole, and Director of Public Works, Sinan Alpaslan and Linda Schaffer, as Acting City Clerk.

2. CHANGES TO THE REGULAR AGENDA

No changes were requested.

3. MUNICIPAL PARKING LOT NO. 4

Mr. Rose stated this presentation will be made by the Director of Public Works, Sinan Alpaslan. This same information was provided to the EDRST Board, who recommended approval. If accepted by the Mayor and Council there will be a need to amend the FY2023 Operating Budget.

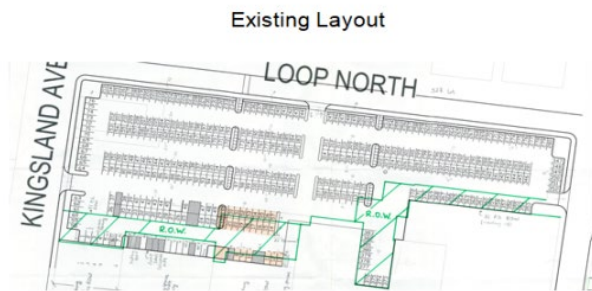
Mr. Alpaslan stated this parking lot is located in the Delmar Business District and is bordered by Kingsland, Loop North, and Leland Avenues. If approved this project has been slated to commence in FY2023.

Municipal Parking Lot No. 4

Total 388 existing parking spaces:

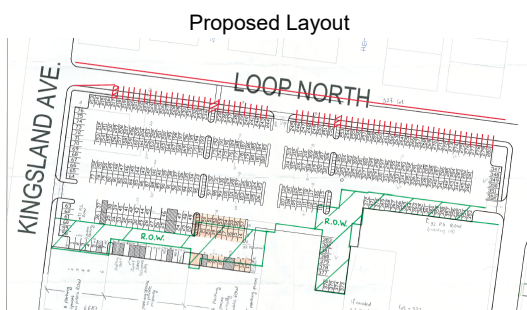
- a. 20 spaces were previously assigned for use under a lease agreement.
- b. 18 spaces are on private property and for private use
- c. Resulting in 370 existing public parking spaces

- ❖ *In 2014, the City spent \$800,000 for a public improvement project to resurface and restripe this lot, which created 5 additional parking spots and several walkways.*



This diagram represents the current layout.

- ❖ *Areas indicated as right-of-ways are platted streets that were never consolidated. They still exist for public use but are now depicted as parking aisles.*



This diagram represents the proposed layout.

This incorporates straight-end spaces on Loop North Avenue and some parallel spaces. These spaces will be shifted to the north side of Loop North in order to create the maximum number of spaces.

Parallel spaces located on the south side of Loop North reduced the number of net spaces. And while the proposed plan shifts these spaces to the north to provide for the maximum number of spaces, it will require the elimination of one-way directional traffic, the assignment of an in or out access, and traffic signal modifications. *(The assumption is that St. Louis County; (the jurisdictional agency for this location), will require that the traffic signal be modified).*

Mr. Alpaslan stated although angled spaces are not mandatory, he would recommend their utilization since there is already existing parking on the other side of Loop North and these angled spaces will provide more room for drivers to maneuver in an out of this area.

Revised Cost Estimate (Loop North aisle one-way)

- \$250,000 Construction
- \$30,000 Design
- \$15,000 Surveying and Lot Consolidation of all parcels
- \$30,000 Miscellaneous Work (Lighting) + Construction Contingency
- \$35,000 Traffic Signal Modification and Access Rebuild on Kingsland
- Total Project Cost: \$360,000

- ❖ *Miscellaneous construction costs include the removal of a sidewalk on the south side of Loop North*
- ❖ *The number of angled spaces created: 55 with no offsets. (Equates to additional revenue of \$6,500 per space.)*

- ❖ *While agreements with the TruHotel for 17 spaces, and/or any other potential developments, may generate revenue, they will not impact publicly available spaces as the use of all spaces will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.*

Councilmember Clay stated while he recognizes that Loop North is not a major thoroughfare, he was curious to know whether staff anticipated any negative impacts from making it a one-way street? Mr. Alpaslan stated while it is correct that there are no high traffic volumes on Loop North, this modification will result in the need for traffic to circulate the parking lot, adding additional travel time for patrons. He stated while traffic will still be able to utilize aisles to go in and out, the use of a parking lot as a through access is typically not a good practice. So, the alternative, Leland to Delmar, and back west, while not problematic, will add some additional travel time. Although, his assumption is that the engineers will recommend the inclusion of some safeguards during the design phase that will keep drivers from using the aisles for that purpose and directing them to the alternative route.

Mr. Alpaslan stated a question posed by the EDRST Board was this design's impact on pedestrian access. And at this point, the only solution; other than the use of sidewalks on Delmar, is to create pedestrian access on the north side of Leland Avenue.

Councilmember Cusick posed the following questions to Mr. Alpaslan:

Q. The proposed spaces along Loop North will eliminate the existing sidewalk, correct?

A. Correct.

Q. So, there would no longer be a median dividing the parking lot from Loop North?

A. There will still be a small tree lawn and the intent is to reserve that area.

Q. When people leave the parking lot will they have to exit off of Loop North?

A. If Loop North is designated as westbound only, the exiting traffic can use Loop North, but they will have to turn west onto Kingsland.

Q. If it's designated as eastbound only, will they have to turn east onto Leland?

A. That is correct.

Q. Regardless of Loop North's designation, what kind of impact, if any, will this proposal have on the northern streets?

A. The proposal closes off any access to Heman, Syracuse, and Leland, so there will not be any traffic from the parking lot onto the neighborhood streets.

Q. If the southern ends of these streets are closed would residents have to use Clemmons as their access point?

A. That is correct. And while there is some leeway in the design, if those streets are not closed it would mean the loss of 5 parallel spaces.

Councilmember Klein asked if any consideration had been given to the impact this proposal would have on residential neighborhoods located to the north? Mr. Alpaslan stated these neighborhoods have had a longstanding issue with the fact that their streets were not given priority when it came to the plowing of snow, so many of them parked on the lot. And while this issue can easily be remedied by revising the City's snow operations, this proposal will not hinder their ability to continue parking on the lot if those parallel spaces are not available.

Councilmember Hales questioned whether a traffic signal would be needed in this area if the ingress for Loop North was eastbound? Mr. Alpaslan stated the real need for this signal is the TruHotel on Kingsland, whose plans depict a full signaled intersection for its development. However, the ultimate decisions regarding a signal and left-only access into Loop North will be made by St. Louis County.

Councilmember Smotherson stated in his opinion, the design should not bring traffic back into The Loop, but he was curious as to whether staff had a preference for the direction Loop North should go? Mr. Alpaslan stated there are several existing parking spaces on Loop North which represent half of what is being created by this proposal. So, in his opinion, this would not be an ideal layout for westbound movement because there is no available interior circulation. Therefore, if a driver is unable to find a space in this area they will have to exit onto a busy street to reenter the lot.

He stated although the goal is to maintain the number of parking spaces being proposed, a determination can be made during the design phase on whether to open this area up by removing spaces on the west and allowing drivers to access the parking lot rather than Kingsland.

Mayor Crow posed the following questions to Mr. Alpaslan:

Q. Is the average cost per spot roughly \$7,000?

A. Correct.

Q. In construction terms is that a good deal?

A. In Chicago's downtown area they sell parking spaces that start at \$50,000. Of course, how that translates to St. Louis is different, but it is a reasonable cost for a space.

Q. Has there been any discussions about what will be done with the bus stop?

A. There have not been.

Q. Will Leland remain a two-way street?

A. Yes, it will.

Q. Will there be parallel parking on both sides of Loop North with this proposal?

A. Yes.

Mayor Crow stated this is probably a topic that should be discussed; especially with his colleagues from the 2nd Ward, but he would tend to think that the neighbors to the north would prefer not to have this traffic flowing into their neighborhood. Whatever the outcome, he hopes Council will be able to move forward with this proposal in some fashion because the parking lot is probably one of those underutilized assets that could help the City recover from the pandemic.

4. PENSION BOARD CRITERIA

Mr. Rose stated a longtime employee who recently retired was also a member of the Pension Board. And as staff started reviewing the criteria for filling this position, the consensus was that it would be a good idea to make sure Council was aware of these requirements and garner any input on whether they believed any changes should be made. He stated the one issue that raised a red flag was the employee representative's ability to remain in this position indefinitely. Prior to 2012, this was a four-year term that had to be voted on once that term expired.

Mr. Cole provided the following summary:

Board of Trustees – Uniformed & Non-Uniformed Pension Boards

On October 8, 2012, Ord. No. 6899 was adopted increasing the total number of members from 9 to 11. The Uniformed Board consists of the following 11 members:

- (7) – Citizens
- (1) – Salaried member of the Police Department
- (1) – Salaried member of the Fire Department
- (1) – City Manager – non-voting member
- (1) – A member of the City Council – non-voting member

The Non-Uniformed Board consists of the following 11 members:

- (7) – Citizens
- (2) – Salaried members of the Non-Uniformed employees
- (1) – City Manager – non-voting member
- (1) – A member of the City Council – non-voting member

Electing Criteria of Members (Trustees)

- Citizen members shall serve for a term of four (4) years. Citizen appointments are made at the first (1st) meeting of Council in July, and the terms shall be staggered so that two (2) shall expire at one time; three (3) shall expire one (1) year later, and two (2) shall expire one (1) year thereafter. Citizen vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the term as original appointments
- The City Manager serves during their tenure in the office

- A member of the City Council will be selected to serve from their colleagues
- Employee members are selected and determined by their peers and currently serve indefinitely.

Current Pension Board Members (Trustees)

- (5) - Citizen Members
- (2) - Vacant Citizen Members
- (1) - City Manager
- (1) - Councilmember
- (2) – 1 Police & 1 Fire Employee Representative
- (1) – Non-Uniformed Employee Representative
- (1) – Vacant Non-Uniformed Employee Representative

Mayor Crow stated he does not remember this Ordinance, so he is not sure what the logic was for making this change, or frankly, how or when these elections have ever occurred.

Mr. Cole stated his understanding is that a group email is sent out seeking candidates to serve on the Non-Uniformed Board. Thereafter, another email is sent with the list of candidates, requesting each employee to submit a vote for the individual they would like to see serve on their behalf.

Mayor Crow asked if these were robust elections with a number of candidates or one where you always have the same one or two people applying? Mr. Cole stated he did not recall. Mayor Crow stated unless Mr. Rose or Mr. Mulligan believe this should be an indefinite position, he would tend to think that the more democratic way would be to serve one term and then seek reelection. Councilmember Clay stated if this is a matter Council is being asked to vote on, then he does not know of any reason why it should not be rescinded back to a four-year term.

Mr. Rose stated if there is a consensus among Council, he intends to ask Mr. Mulligan to prepare an Ordinance that would be added to Council's Regular Meeting agenda.

Councilmember Clay asked if there was a compelling reason why this term should remain indefinite? Mr. Cole stated in his opinion, an indefinite term prohibits anyone else from applying.

Mr. Rose stated it also eliminates the ability to make this a competitive process.

Mayor Crow stated the only thing he can think of that might be a detriment to the four-year term is the benefit of gaining institutional knowledge about how these boards work and past practices. However, he does not think that should outweigh the need to provide others with the opportunity to serve.

Mr. Mulligan stated when the 2012 Ordinance was passed; two sections of the Code, 120.130 and 120.140 should have been amended in harmony but were not. As a result, they still state that the board should consist of 9 members, and the employee representative shall serve a four-year term. Even though under the law, the latest version is presumed to be the legislative intent, he would recommend that these two sections be amended, along with Ordinance No. 6899.

Mayor Crow asked what members encompassed the two additional slots added in 2012? Mr. Cole stated the two slots were added to the citizen members, taking them from 5 to 7.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Crow thanked Mr. Rose for the presentations and adjourned the Study Session at 6:11 p.m.

LaRette Reese,
City Clerk, MRCC

