



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fwd: Opposed to parking proposal for 29/35 High St

1 message

Kathy Corson <kcorson@exeternh.gov>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Mon, Oct 7, 2019 at 8:19 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jeffery Brubaker** <jsbrubaker@gmail.com>
Date: Sat, Oct 5, 2019 at 8:55 AM
Subject: Opposed to parking proposal for 29/35 High St
To: <kcorson@exeternh.gov>

Good morning Chair Corson,

I am hoping to make it to the Oct. 16 public meeting but in case I can't, I wanted to offer my perspective to the Select Board on the potential idea of the Town purchasing and converting the subject properties to a parking lot. I am opposed to this idea and generally do not think the Town should be adding any more free parking spaces for cars downtown.

Downtown Exeter seems to already have sufficient parking via its on-street spaces and off-street municipal lots. I appreciate downtown's walkability and historic character, and I think a new surface lot on the perimeter would degrade its charm.

In downtown Exeter as in many other vibrant town centers, it is unreasonable to expect to always have free parking available close to the door of the destinations one is visiting. Parking seems to be sufficient if one is willing to walk a short distance. Towns can encourage this with good wayfinding and clear information online and through other channels about off-street parking locations.

That doesn't diminish the importance of access for those with mobility limitations. Maintaining and enhancing ADA-accessible spaces on Water St. is one way to accomplish that, but in the bigger picture, people with mobility limitations should have better non-driving choices for getting downtown.

For this and for many other reasons, the Town should be coordinating closely with COAST, neighboring municipalities, RPC, and others on restoring regular, fixed-route bus service. The bare-bones, on-demand-only Route 7, which requires one-day-advance reservations and even then only operates on select days, while somewhat helpful, is insufficient. (I understand the Town has been supportive of transit in the past and that lack of support from some neighboring municipalities has hindered transit service provision.) Yes, that may cost money, but if the Town is potentially ready to spend \$1.7M, subject to a warrant article, to subsidize free car storage, then a robust funding contribution for COAST service should be part of the discussion.

Also part of the discussion should be enhancing access to downtown for people using active transportation. It seems less-than-prudent to entertain spending \$1.7M to supply more of something that seems already in abundance, when there are pressing needs for other, less-polluting modes of transportation, such as improving/extending sidewalks on Portsmouth Ave. and Epping Rd., and exploring high-comfort, low-stress bikeways on arterials leading into downtown, such as protected bike lanes on Portsmouth Ave. Also, adding more bike racks would make it more convenient for people who choose to access downtown on bike, at a fraction of the cost and impact of car parking. That includes covered bike parking for rainy and snowy days; I am attaching a photo of a downtown covered bike rack in Ashland, OR, for reference.

This potential surface parking lot would be within 100-200 ft. of the river, introducing a large amount of new impervious surface that would contribute to stormwater runoff pollution.

In addition to all of the above, it would also not be wise to rush to a decision without first better understanding parking demand and utilization downtown. If there's been a more recent update to the 2002 Parking Study, it's apparently not on the Town's web page. If there hasn't been, it would seem prudent to conduct another such study before blindly deciding that downtown needs more free car parking. That would hopefully include interviewing business customers to ask what mode they used to get there.

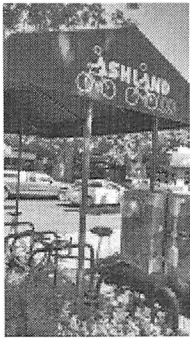
My wife and I really enjoy living in Exeter. We patronize downtown businesses often (just yesterday, both D-squared and Capital Thai), and almost always get downtown by walking or bicycling. While some car parking is certainly important for downtown businesses, we already have that in abundance, and so rushing into a proposal/warrant article for such a large expenditure to add more on the perimeter just seems like a short-sighted idea given the impacts and opportunity costs.

Above all, thanks to you and the Select Board for opening this idea up to a public forum, and thanks for taking the time to read my long email.

Sincerely,

Jeff Brubaker
Exeter

--
Kathy Corson
Selectwoman



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1556K



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fwd: Downtown parking/paying for parking

1 message

Kathy Corson <kcorson@exeternh.gov>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Mon, Oct 7, 2019 at 8:19 AM

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From: **Kathy Corson** <kcorson@exeternh.gov>
Date: Sat, Oct 5, 2019 at 9:50 AM
Subject: Re: Downtown parking/paying for parking
To: annephilbrick@yahoo.com <annephilbrick@yahoo.com>

This metered parking would more than likely be in the business area of Lincoln Street and would not effect where the school is. Also this would be daytime only. The issue we have right now is that we can't monitor 2 hour parking anymore with the chalk method because of a lawsuit that happened in the midwest. So train riders conceivably could park all up and down Lincoln Street all day and we couldn't enforce it with our current method. That would leave parents with no way to pick up their children.

The meeting for paid parking is not on the agenda yet. The meeting for the parking on High Street is in the Town Hall on October 16th at 7pm.

On Sat, Oct 5, 2019 at 9:44 AM Anne Griffin <annephilbrick@yahoo.com> wrote:

Thank you for your response. Honestly metered or kiosk paid parking along the streets would greatly effect parents. A lot for just amtrak/all day parking makes sense but having to pay along the street doesn't to me. Right now I have 2 in main street school. Next year I will have one in each school. What happens with school events. When cars are arriving more than a 1/2 hour early and the events can go longer than 1.5 hours, or school meetings. That would mean as parents or care takers of school age kids, we have to pay to attend school events. How about parents get a parking pass that exempts them from any parking fees. I totally get that amtrak riders who park all day are effecting businesses but I don't think parents picking up and dropping off should penalized by having to pay.

When is the meeting schedule for?

Anne

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

On Sat, Oct 5, 2019 at 9:30 AM, Kathy Corson <kcorson@exeternh.gov> wrote:

Hi Anne,

Thanks for your input. We are working on some kind of paid parking on Lincoln Street but we all feel that some portion of parking should be free but like Durham where you get the first hour free it would just require you to go to a kiosk and get a ticket for your free parking. This could be up to 2 hours. I see that the parking by the school for parents would be free up to 2 hours as well. We have a real issue with train riders parking all day in front of stores and it hurts businesses. Also Amtrak does not give the town any money to maintain that parking lot which is a burden to the town. If we do have paid parking for train riders I see it as a scenario where they get a monthly or weekly pass or even buy 3 days get 2 days free through a kiosk. Also this makes sure that they park in the right place and the parents of Lincoln Street School and the patrons of Lincoln Street will have plenty of places to park.

I hope you will participate in this conversation as we formulate a plan in the coming months.

Sincerely,

Kathy Corson

On Fri, Oct 4, 2019 at 9:14 PM Anne Griffin <annephilbrick@yahoo.com> wrote:

Paying for parking would be horrible for more than just patrons of the businesses and train riders. With 2 schools between downtown and the train this would also effect parents who park to drop off and pick up their kids. Neither school has sufficient parking so parents are parking anywhere and everywhere. For pick up many are getting the more than 30 mins before there dismissal bell in ordered to find a spot.

And Exeter is loved by many because it doesn't cost to park like in Portsmouth and Newburport. I like the ideal of parking over off High street and even the possibility of the lot on Lincoln that goes with the fabric place. If those places need to be paid parking so be it but not everywhere

Anne Griffin

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

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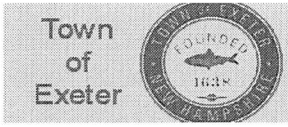
Kathy Corson
Selectwoman

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Kathy Corson
Selectwoman

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Kathy Corson
Selectwoman



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fwd: High Street parking lot

1 message

Kathy Corson <kcorson@exeternh.gov>
 To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Mon, Oct 7, 2019 at 8:19 AM

----- Forwarded message -----
 From: **David Stewart** <dpsaia@comcast.net>
 Date: Fri, Oct 4, 2019 at 9:05 AM
 Subject: High Street parking lot
 To: <kcorson@exeternh.gov>

Kathy,

You asked for an email regarding this from the Exeter FB forum. Here are my thoughts and posts

David Stewart This is a poor location for a parking area trying to be associated with solving a downtown parking issue. People will not know it's there and it won't be utilized. I would rather spend \$1.7 million on a second deck over the existing lot in town. If I were town planners I'd do that, and build shallow retail at the front of the site to fill in the streetscape and hide the second parking deck.

Rachel DeCicco David Stewart ...and you could put a permanent Farmers Market on the roof of a parking garage there.

David Stewart Rachel DeCicco and make a green roof up there.....community garden

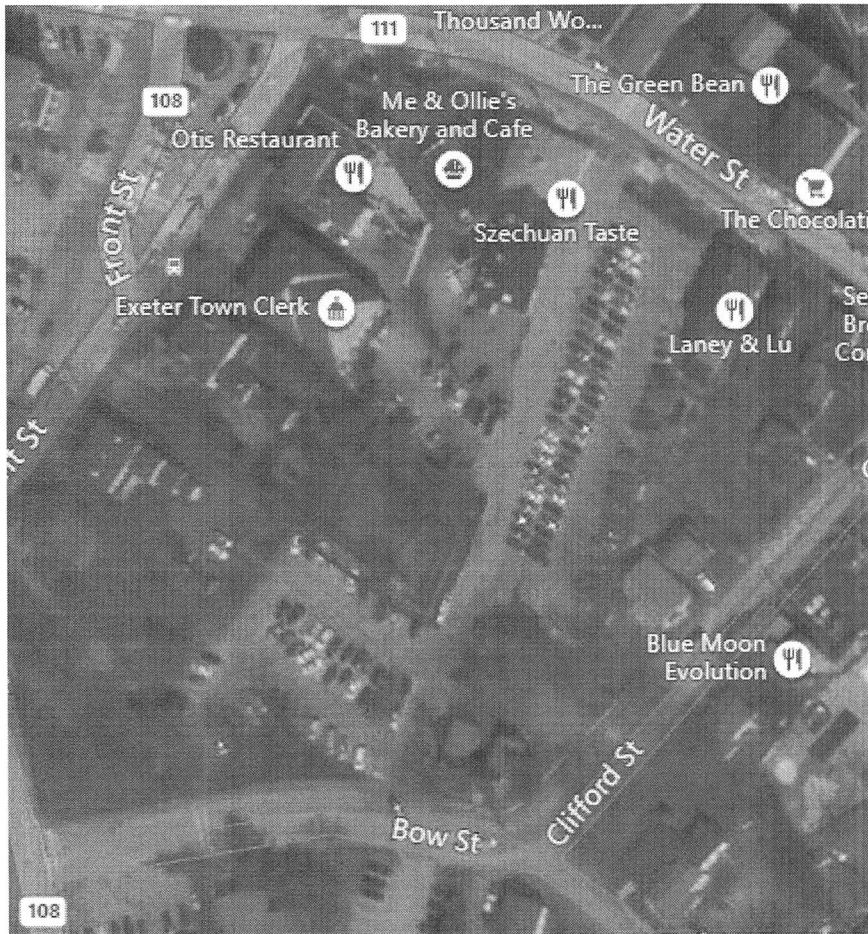
Now, I personally never have a challenge finding parking in town, but I've lived here a long time and know where to look if I can't find something on the street. However, it is a potential detriment, or at least a perceived detriment, to Exeter's growth and livability, so I would support a ballot initiative to deal with this. I would not support this initiative as:

\$1.7MM for a lot that far from town in not a viable solution

Its location is too far from the parking need, people won't know it's there, and as many have said on the forum, most people won't walk that "far"

We take an existing tax paying residence and remove it from the tax roll

As an alternative, see the image below:

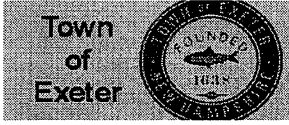


Work to acquire this parcel, and expand and reconfigure the existing lot, including the areas behind Town Hall. Second, consider the content of the post above.

Thanks!

David Stewart

--
Kathy Corson
Selectwoman



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fwd: Parking Issue

1 message

Kathy Corson <kcorson@exeternh.gov>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Mon, Oct 7, 2019 at 8:20 AM

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **Ann Sanok** <annsanok@comcast.net>
Date: Fri, Oct 4, 2019 at 4:21 PM
Subject: Parking Issue
To: <kcorson@exeternh.gov>

Hello,

Just chiming in on the parking issue. I oppose creating another parking site. We have plenty of parking. I park downtown several times a week and Always get a spot within 25 yards of my destination. In fact, I go downtown for lunch at the Greenbean at noon several times a month and often park directly across from the restaurant, on the street!

Occasionally, yes, I have had to drive around the block and look for a spot, but one always opens up. Today I was downtown at 12:45 and counted five open spaces on Water Street near the bookstore and four near the loka!

The parking lot was pretty full, but there were three open spaces in the lot across from the police station. And two cars were leaving the larger lot as I left.

I also go to the book store often - again always get a spot directly in front of the store. Same with Stillwells.

The proposed site is hardly convenient to anything...really only close to Sea Dog and not that close.

I hope that the board will discourage constant "growth". The traffic is getting ridiculous. How can we stop these condo approvals?

I remember a quote - don't know by whom: When a person destroys a piece of art, he is called a vandal. When a piece of nature is destroyed (or open space!) we call him a developer.

So true!

Thank you for your service to the town and for listening.

Ann Sanok

Exeter, NH

--

Kathy Corson
Selectwoman



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

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Thank you for your service to the town and for listening.

Ann Sanok

Exeter, NH

--

Kathy Corson
Selectwoman



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fwd: 29 and 35 High St

1 message

Kathy Corson <kcorson@exeternh.gov>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Mon, Oct 7, 2019 at 8:20 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Emily Zajano** <emzajano@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Oct 4, 2019 at 10:28 AM
Subject: 29 and 35 High St
To: kcorson@exeternh.gov <kcorson@exeternh.gov>

Kathy,

Thank you for getting the conversation going about these proposed parking lots and for offering to receive emails about the topic.

I am unable to be at the town meeting Wednesday 10/16 due to my work schedule, so I am appreciative of being able to email you my comments.

I am very concerned about this proposal and oppose the parking lots at 29 and 35 High St.

The traffic at the intersection of High St and Portsmouth Ave is very heavy, and having up to 85 cars turning in and out of that location is going to worsen that traffic. It will make getting into or through town worse, and it also inhibits people turning onto Portsmouth Ave from High St. A large portion of the cars at that intersection are not looking for downtown parking. Many are turning onto Portsmouth Ave, and more are driving through town to get onto Court, Front, or Main Streets. I drive through that intersection often between 4-5:15pm, on my way to pick up my daughter at Main Street School, and can wait up to 10 minutes to get through the light at Portsmouth Ave. Then, I usually see parking spots available downtown. I do not feel parking lots at that light will fix any parking complaints.

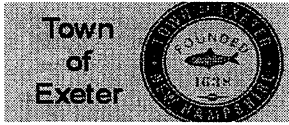
I will not call it a parking problem, because we have not identified if there is a problem. The town should not move forward with any plans to purchase these lots, or any further parking "solutions", until a study has been done to determine if there is a parking problem, exactly what type of problem is there, and what the optimal solution(s) would be. I disagree with the idea of paving areas for parking lots "in advance" of the need for the parking. If Exeter gets to a point where there truly needs to be more downtown parking, that would mean there is a boom in the stores and restaurants and hopefully the loka! Those businesses would bring in more revenue and allow for more money to be available for parking infrastructure. It makes more sense to wait for that point, and then create parking that is truly downtown, if needed. Finally, I would like to see the town take a small portion of the proposed purchase price of the properties, and increase signage downtown to highlight where existing parking is located. The lots behind St Anthony's, near the boat ramp, and even behind the popular lot by Laney and Lu's are so often underutilized.

Thank you again for taking these comments, and please share them with the select board when considering the proposal.

Sincerely,
Emily Zajano

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Kathy Corson
Selectwoman



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fwd: land purchase for downtown parking

1 message

Kathy Corson <kcorson@exeternh.gov>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Mon, Oct 7, 2019 at 8:21 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Renee Nicholls** <r-nicholls@comcast.net>
Date: Fri, Oct 4, 2019 at 9:45 AM
Subject: land purchase for downtown parking
To: <kcorson@exeternh.gov>

Dear Ms. Corson,

I am writing so that you may share my comments with the town selectboard. I am opposed to the purchase of the property on High Street to be used for parking for several reasons.

1. The "parking issue" is debatable. I often travel through town multiple times daily at different hours and usually see a minimum of six parking spaces available within view of the bandstand.
2. People who complain about parking appear to be those who do not want to walk any distance to a shop or restaurant, which is not a reasonable expectation.
3. Those people won't be willing to walk from High Street even if you install a new parking lot, so the lot will not get much use.
4. At this point, I haven't seen any discussion about environmental impact, but presumably being so close to the river there could be concerns about this also.

A larger issue to consider while making any town decision, particularly hefty financial ones, is that it seems to be a trend in town to make one-time, independent decisions on issues such as parking *that are interconnected with other ongoing issues but are treated separately*. For instance, the Exeter Future Housing Meeting just this week indicates that discussions are in progress for housing (and zoning) considerations that will certainly affect parking in the town; parking was a main issue raised at the meeting. Separately, discussions have been raised in the past six months or so about charging for parking at the train station and then possibly other areas of town, yet this new proposed area on High Street is referred to as "free parking." When Issue A affects Issue B, which affects Issue C, it doesn't make sense to jump into a decision on Issue C without looking at the big picture. This purchase should not be made at this time.

Renee Nicholls

10/7/2019

Town of Exeter, NH Mail - Fwd: land purchase for downtown parking

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Kathy Corson
Selectwoman