Downtown Boone Development Association
Budget Retreat – February 6, 2024
8:30 am – The Jones House

Board Members Present: Wayne Miller, Kendra Sink, Renee Boughman and Megan Kevorkian at 9:00 am.

Ex-Officio's Present: Eric Plagg, and Edie Tugman at 9:00 am.

MSD Members/Guests present:

Town Staff Present: Amy Davis, Reta Jackson, Lane Moody, Mark Freed, Guy Miller, and Brad Farthing.

Call to Order
There was no call to order because the Board did not have a quorum. However, Council Member Plaag had prepared a parking presentation that was discussed. The presentation is listed below.



Reimagining Downtown Boone Parking

February 2024

Recover Town Parking Spaces



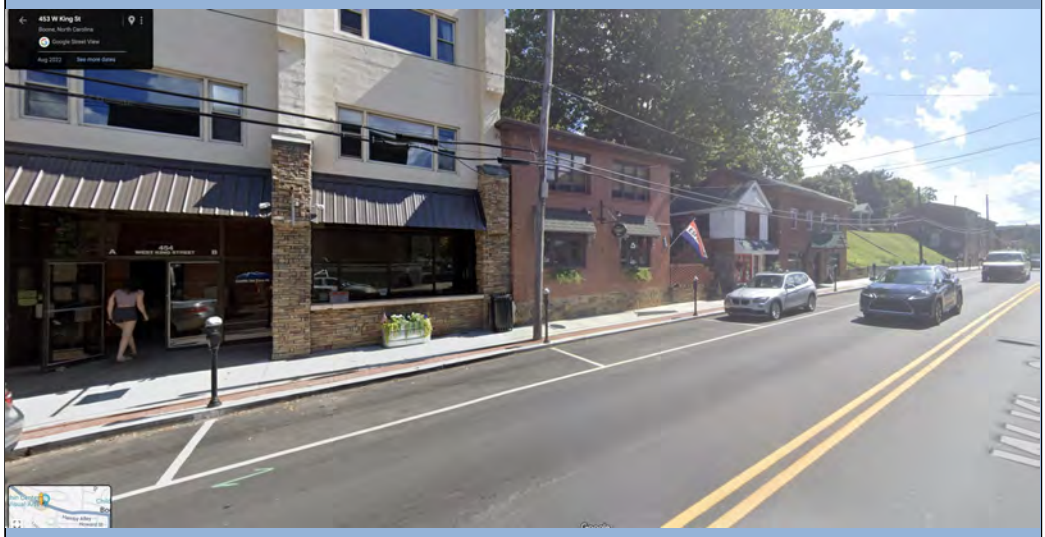
--Agre
--Agreement would formally end effective July 1/opening of county parking deck
--Recovering Queen Street spaces would return 30 spaces to paid meter use (via kiosk)—revenue must be spent on parking infrastructure
--Recovery of Queen Street spaces means relinquishing Watauga County Library permitted spaces, which are currently underused

Eliminate Jury Parking at Meters



--Jury
revenue and space availability
--Juror parking can be covered by the county's new parking deck when it is complete

Rethink Meter Time in Select Locations



Google Streetview, August 2022

--Note how much parking is available when ASU is not in session, with Carolina Pizza Company clearly open circa 11:00am in early August 2022
--March 2024: Run pilot program reducing meter times in this strip and at Hamby Alley to one hour to determine turnover rates
--Consider other meter strips where reduced meter time may be appropriate

Reconsider Use of Queen Street Lot



--Perm

--Add pay kiosk to this parking lot so that visitors can infill spots not used by permit holders (revenue is unrestricted)

Reconsider Use of Jones House Lot



--Retain reserved spots exclusively for Jones House
--Install kiosk to allow general use parking

Rethink Permit Program



--Use hang tag system for all downtown permits
--Permit holder must provide proof of downtown employment, lease, or property ownership at each renewal
--Tags must be renewed every six months but can be purchased for up to one year
--Permit holders are automatically billed for any hang tag number not canceled with Town
--Permit entitles holder to park for free at any meter or in any Town-owned kiosk lot, but a parking spot is not guaranteed
--Currently $175 6 mo/$300 yr ($288 Jones House/yr). Permits to increase to $350 per six months, $600 per year ($720 student pass, $504 faculty pass)
--Number of available permits to be expanded by 30% to reflect underuse of current permitted lots

Change Meter/Kiosk Rates



--Meters have been $1 per hour since 2015. By comparison, metered parking in Durham and Wilmington is $2.50/hr; Hendersonville and Chapel Hill are $2.00/hr
--Proposed increase for meters is from $1/hr to $2/hr
--Being able to park and leave one's car warrants paying a premium for that convenience. The proposed increase for off-street parking is $1/hr to $3/hr

Change Overtime Parking Fines



--Current fine at Appalachian State is $60 for parking overtime
--Current fine in Boone is $12 for parking overtime
--Overtime parking in Wilmington is $20 at meter, $25 in lot; Hendersonville is $25; Beaufort is $50
--Proposed increase to $25 for parking overtime
--Proposed mail campaign to collect unpaid fines for out-of-area people; possibility of partial “forgiveness” if balance paid by a certain date following mailing
--Proportionate increase in other parking fines

Consider Extending Meter/Kiosk Time to 7:00pm, M-F



Improve Signage at Town Lots Re: Hours and "Free" Times



Historic images courtesy of the Palmer Blair Collection and the Downtown Boone Development Association Collection, Digital Watauga Project

Questions?

