

**Downtown Port Colborne BIA
Minutes of Monthly Meeting – February 8th 2012**

Venue : Port Colborne City Hall – 3rd floor
Date: Feb 8th, 2012

Board Members Present: Bob Porter, Dave Elliot, Mike Hopper, Rosemari Poisson, Kamesh Sundaram, Marty Crowder, Gary Talosi

Absent: Ed Cleveland

BIA Members present: John Mayne (Mayne), Mickey Mayne (Mayne), Gail Todd (Something Else), Larry Boggio (Boggio Pharmacy), Cathy Boggio (Boggio Pharmacy) Wendy Batm (Water's Edge Hairstyling), Lisa Gram (Crew's Quarters) Angie D'Uva (Trip Central), Alfie D'Uva (TripCentral), Mike Allinson (Allinson Family Discount), Midge Butson (Meridian Bank), Claudia Spiteri (Eataty), Tony Spiteri (Eataty), Norbert Gieger (Gieger Denture Clinic)

Minutes of Meeting for January 2012 – Motion raised to adopt the minutes by Kamesh Sundaram. Mike Hopper seconded. All in favor.

Business arising from Minutes: None

Correspondence – Invoice from GSP Group. Email received from Shoppers Drug mart regarding parking issues.

Treasurer's report – Rosemari Poisson reported that she has received bills amounting to approximately \$515. Dave Elliot moved to accept report and was seconded by Mike Hopper

City Councillors report: Downtown BIA expansion is being discussed by the city council on Monday 13th February 2012.

Old Business: Harbourmaster Building: Bob Porter reported that the city is willing to let BIA take over the premises for promotional activities. They have asked for \$800/year which the previous tenant was paying. Some members felt that this money could be raised easily by renting the place during canal days time alone. Bob wanted to ask the city to waive the rent, so we could promote Port Colborne and its downtown even during Canal Days. Also the issue of maintaining it and providing a tourist guide during summer has to be discussed.

New Business: Parking Meter Issue. - Bob Porter handed over the meeting to Gary Talosi to moderate.

Background: The city council introduced a motion to raise downtown parking

rates to 50 cents and hour from 25 cents an hour and to introduce pay and display meters at various spots around the city. BIA intervened and got city council to postpone any decision regarding this until BIA has discussed it with its members.

BIA asked for a city representative to be present in today's meeting. City has sent Mr. Dan Aquilina to the meeting.

Dan Aquilina: Existing parking meters need upgrading. Many meters are broken and replacement parts are expensive. Pay and Display metering has been proposed as the solution to the problem. Also, no change in parking rates have been made since 1981. A total of \$120,000 is being requested for 12 meters. Each meter will cater to up to 10 parking stalls. A layout of the machines was presented. It would take 7 to 8 years to recover the cost of installing the machines.

Mickey Mayne: The parking meters are supposed to be customer service oriented. However the pay and display meters are a pain to use. Pay and display machines are too far from where vehicles are parked. There are too many signs that are needed to be put up. The signs which are up around the market square are bent and pointing in the wrong direction.

Dan Aquilina was asked if the meters generate revenue. He said it was revenue neutral.

Mike Hopper (Candy Safari) Customers to West street businesses are being harassed by parking enforcement personnel. Customers have complained that the enforcers open driver side doors to talk to the drivers. Mike Hopper had made a petition which had been signed by 50 of the 51 businesses in downtown, calling for elimination of parking charges and enforcing a 2 hour limit with increased fine.

Mike Allinson (Family Discount) Why is replacing with digital meters not an option. It looks like it is less expensive?

John Mayne: As per the city's report of machines needing replacement (page 3 of 5) even if all the machines are replaced with digital the expense would only be less than \$50,000. What is the justification to go for pay and display.

Kamesh Sundaram (Dollar Planet) To expect a person to park the vehicle, go to the machine, buy the ticket, return to vehicle and display it, come into the store and buy a greeting card for a dollar is unreasonable. This idea will kill businesses downtown and drive the customers to malls where parking is free.

Unknown : What about a customer who wants to just make a photocopy costing 10 cents.

John Mayne: (Gave a list of neighbouring municipalities and what they charge for parking.) We have to attract people to shop local. Not chase them away.

Mickey Mayne: City recognizes the need for free parking. They have allowed 15 minutes of free parking in front of the city hall for their customers. What about the merchants?

Wnedy Batm : Many merchants and their employees park in front of their businesses all day.

Rosemari Poisson: BIA has been requesting people to tell their employees in the newsletters, periodically.

Mike Hopper: Most of the parking spaces in market square are occupied by city staff who park for free all day.

Dan Aquilina: That is not true. City staff have parking behind the city hall.

Lisa Gram : Does not seem to be true. May be some of them have parking behind the city hall. In the first week of January when city hall was closed there was very less occupancy in the market square. The day city hall reopened, it was back to being full at 8.30 in the morning.

Kamesh Sundaram: It is surprising to see how this idea got through to the city budget without a single business or a single user being asked.

Gary Talosi: That is why we intervened and brought this here.

Kamesh Sundaram: What if you did not get the news? It would have gone through the budget. What does Dan say about it?

Dan Aquilina: I can't say anything about it. We have been in touch with the BIA's CIP coordination committee.

Gary Talosi: That is not true. CIP report made by the city says that a parking supply and management study has to be carried out as part of CIP implementation. Nothing like that was done.

Midge (Meridian) : The city should not slide by, issues which involve public and businesses like this.

Gary Talosi: Dan should be given a clear message to pass on to City Staff and Council.

Kamesh Sundaram: I place a motion to ask the city to remove Pay and display machine from the options for solution to the parking problem.

Gary Talosi: I second it. How many in favour?

All members in favour. Motion carried.

John Mayne: I move that BIA should form a parking sub committee to discuss the issue with the city.

Mike Hopper: I second it.

All in favour. Motion carried.

Gary Talosi: I would like to thank Dan Aquilina for attending our meeting, answering questions, and facing the music. This discussion on parking downtown is ended. May the chair please take over.

Committee reports:

Marketing and events: Rosemari Poisson reminded members that February 15th is flag day and to display Canada flag.

Beautification committee and CIP coordination committee had nothing to discuss.

Motion to adjourn (Gary Talosi made the motion and Dave Elliott seconded it)

Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting : March 14th 2012 – 6.30pm at the 3rd floor of the city hall.

Minuted by Kamesh Sundaram
Secretary – BIA – Downtown Port Colborne