Subcommittee to the Accessible Parking Policy Advisory Committee

Notes from meeting on November 13, 2012

The first meeting of the Accessible Parking Policy Advisory subcommittee took place from 10 to 11:30 am on Tuesday, November 13, 2012 at SFMTA. Present were subcommittee members Carla Johnson, Jessie Lorenz, Ed Reiskin, Stu Smith, and Ann Flemer; facilitator Richard Weiner; committee staff Lisa Foster and Mariam Morley (City Attorney); and members of the public Roland Wong and Corey Marshall.

1. Opening

The meeting began with introductions and an agenda review by the facilitator, Richard Weiner of Nelson/Nygaard. The goal of the meeting was to work towards a problem definition. With such a diverse group of opinions represented in the committee, it might not be possible to reach 100% agreement on everything discussed, but that shouldn't prevent the subcommittee or the larger committee from moving forward on those issues where there is a critical mass of support.

Participants discussed what motivated them to be on the subcommittee and the following reasons were mentioned:

The placard program is abused, with consequences for everyone.

- This is an important opportunity for the disability community to address the frustration of the unavailability of parking.
- This is an opportunity to develop a rationale for a system that makes sense.
- There are many dimensions to this issue and it's important to try to understand it before proposing solutions.
- This subcommittee is a chance to dive deeper into the issues than would be possible in the larger committee.

2. Mechanics of agreement/decision-making

Richard proposed a way to help overcome the possibility of stalemate due to disagreements by having people place their responses on a range or "Gradation of Agreement" rather than simply saying "yes" or "no." Responses could range from 1 to 5 as defined below.

1) Strongly endorse

2) Support with reservations

3) On the fence

4) Have significant concerns (but don't want to get in the way)

5) I would block it if I could

It was agreed that within the larger committee:

- The Gradation of Agreement will be used

- At least half of the people must fall between 1 and 3 in order to move forward with a proposal

- Everyone must vote

3. Problem Definition

Most of the meeting was taken up with a discussion of what the problem with the current accessible parking policy was and what the roots or causes of the problems are. Following is the final list that was verbally agreed upon:

PROBLEMS

1) People with disabilities can't find parking

2) Not enough parking turnover to ensure available parking spots in general

3) Loss of revenue

4) Public perception that people with hidden disabilities don't deserve placards

RESULTS OF PROBLEMS

1) Environmental impacts from cars circling to find parking

2) Transit/pedestrian impacts- circling and double-parking creates congestion which diminishes pedestrian safety and slows buses

3) People with disabilities are not able to reach needed services because they can't find parking nearby

ROOTS OF PROBLEMS

Some of these are speculative; more data is needed or the cause simply can't be documented

1) There are too many placards

2) Placards create a lifelong parking benefit even for people whose mobility impairment may only last a few years.

3) There is not enough accessible parking, .e.g., blue zones (there's disagreement on whether there's not enough parking overall)

4) Can't manage parking demand via pricing (some disagreement)

5) All day parking is an incentive to abuse placards

6) Weak placard enforcement

7) Permanent placards are too easy to get

8) Limited oversight of doctors who issue placards; unknown accountability

9) DMV has limited discretion

10) Inadequate distinction between granting of temporary and permanent placards

11) Inadequate monitoring of placard holders who die

3a. Additional Data Needs

Subcommittee members requested additional data about:

1) Placards issuance: who's authorized to award placards and on what basis? What makes people eligible? How do they determine temporary vs. permanent?

2) SF*park* project goals and methods – how does parking pricing work?

3) Presentation on DMV policies. Is it possible to find out how many placards are issued by particular doctors?

4) Is it possible to hear from a group of doctors who can speak candidly about how they see the issue?

4. Agenda Development

The subcommittee reviewed a draft agenda for the next full committee meeting and raised no objections.

5. Closing

The meeting closed with feedback about the meeting. Roland Wong, who had asked to be part of the subcommittee, was endorsed by several members as a positive addition to the subcommittee.