

## Accessible Parking Policy Advisory Committee

### Notes from full committee meeting on November 27, 2012

The second meeting of the Accessible Parking Policy Advisory Committee was held on November 27, 2012 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency's (SFMTA) office building.

#### Attendees

##### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ed Reiskin, SFMTA; Carla Johnson, Mayor's Office on Disability; Stu Smith, PCC; Jeff Spicker, Building Owners and Managers Association ; Ann Flemer, MTC; Cristina Rubke, SFMTA; Bob Planthold; Jessie Lorenz, Independent Living Resource Center; Roland Wong, MAAC; Andrew Conway, DMV; Henry Karnilowicz, SF Council of District Merchants Associations; Edna James, SF Commission on Aging; Deedee Workman, SF Chamber of Commerce; Pete Curran, SF Medical Society; Bonnie Lewkowicz, Access Northern California.

##### FACILITATORS

Richard Weiner and Bonnie Nelson, Nelson\Nygaard

##### STAFF

Bryant Woo, Jay Primus, James Lee, Lisa Foster, Kate Breen, Annette Williams (SFMTA); Andres Power (Board of Supervisors), Mariam Morley (Office of the City Attorney).

#### Intended Meeting Outcomes

- Critical mass of support on problem definition
- Exploration of roots of the problem(s)

#### 1. Opening

##### MEETING NOTES APPROVAL

- October 23 meeting notes approved with following changes: change heading from "DMV Perspective" to "Perspectives on DMV", and a similar change to "Medical Perspective"

##### NEW DATA AND INFORMATION

The SFMTA reviewed new information sheets provided to the committee

- [Blue zone overview.](#)
- Question: how are blue zones removed? Answer: The majority are removed because they were improperly located in tow away zones. Others that rely on a noncompliant ramp using a driveway that's not ADA compliant have also been removed.

- [Disabled placard overview](#). Includes updated chart—added 2012 DMV issuance numbers and population 65+. The latter made it necessary to start chart in 2001 rather than 1996. Since 2001, there's been a 100% increase in disabled placard issuance and an 18% increase in 65+ population.
- [Disability, low income status, and car availability statistics overview](#). Revised from the Oct. 23 presentation to use 200% rather than 100% of federal poverty level to define low income, and to include statistics for the nine-county Bay Area.
- [Parking census overview](#). Includes any public parking available in the city; provided to give a sense of parking as a whole in the city.
- Question: is it possible to correlate zip codes of placard users to find out where there is a plethora or dearth of placards versus where people with disabilities live? Census data by zip code or by census block?
- [SFpark](#) brochure. A staff member gave a quick overview of SFpark: goal is to make sure there's always a parking space available on every block.
- Bus stops without parking restrictions. Preliminary data shows 2080 stops without parking restrictions (bus zones, bulbs, islands, or other facilities blocking cars from parking in front of the stop) among 3670 total bus stops. This data is very rough and subject to field verification, because some of these stops have extended driveways that in effect prohibit curb parking.

## 2. Mechanics of agreement/decision-making

The facilitator introduced the concept of Gradations of Agreement, which follow:

1. Strongly endorse
2. Support with reservations
3. On the fence
4. Have significant concerns
5. I would block it if I could

These had been presented to the subcommittee, which agreed that:

1. The Advisory Committee will use these to come to agreement
2. Every member must vote
3. The committee will move forward if at least half of people fall on 1 to 3 on Gradations of Agreement

## 3. Defining the problem

### SUBCOMMITTEE PRESENTATION ON PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Two subcommittee members reported back from the of November 13 subcommittee meeting. It's human nature to try to solve problems, to jump to solutions. But first we need to come to a common definition of problem. The subcommittee came up with the following for discussion (see below and the [November 13 meeting notes](#)).

**IDENTIFICATION OF AREAS OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT**

Item identified by subcommittee	Full committee response
<b>Problems</b>	
People with disabilities can't find parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensus (everyone strongly supported)</li> </ul>
There isn't enough parking turnover to ensure there's enough parking for everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 members said they were #1 on this issue (Strongly support)</li> <li>• 3 were at #2</li> <li>• 1 was at #4. This member asked whether turnover was a root of a problem, not a problem in and of itself. SFMTA staff suggested that thinking in terms of parking availability rather than turnover would be more helpful.</li> </ul>
There is a loss of revenue to the city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 members were at #1</li> <li>• 8 were at #2</li> <li>• 1 was at #3</li> <li>• 1 was at #5. This member said that the also City loses revenue from people without disabled placards failing to pay at meters.</li> </ul>
Public perception that people with hidden disabilities don't deserve placards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 members were at #1</li> <li>• 4 were at #2</li> </ul>
<b>Results of Problems</b>	
Environmental effects from circling to find parking: fuel consumption, pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 members were at #1</li> <li>• 1 was at #2</li> </ul>
Congestion from current policies, causing circling and double parking, slows transit and makes it unsafe for pedestrians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 members were at #1</li> </ul>
Lack of parking makes it hard for people with disabilities to reach necessary services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wording change: lack of parking makes it hard for people with disabilities to reach their desired destinations.</li> <li>• All members were at #1, with changed wording</li> </ul>

## ROOTS OF PROBLEMS

The facilitator led a discussion of the roots of the problem. She pointed out that some of the issues are researchable and have data available, but some of them are not and in the absence of data are purely speculative. For this reason we are not attempting to reach consensus on the roots/causes of the problem. After this discussion the committee will begin to develop strategies that focus on these causes.

### **There are too many placards**

- How do we know this? How can we possibly define this? Is the problem closer to: placards are too easy to get?
- I'm not happy with saying there are too many placards; people who need them should get them.
- We're asking the question: is it that there are too many placards that are being used by non-disabled drivers rather than too many placards?
- Perhaps the issue is that there aren't enough parking spaces.

### **The city can't manage demand with pricing when many spaces are being used by people who don't pay**

- 15% of parkers citywide are using disabled placards. This doesn't seem high enough to cause systemic trouble. The problems are specific to some areas, not all neighborhoods.
- Should we edit this to say: in some locations?
- Michigan has two placards –only one is for free parking, and that is limited to certain people with medical qualifications.

### **The attractiveness of all-day parking is incentive to abuse placards**

- Would edit this to say: incentive to USE placards.
- But we're not pointing to people with disabilities who use placards, we're pointing to abuse.

### **There is limited oversight and unknown accountability over doctors who issue placards**

- Doctors may not be getting adequate feedback or information about restrictions
- Stories about chiropractors who have pre-filled cards; you pay and go with your placard. Note that doctors giving them out this way are doing something illegal.
- We do a lot of work to ascertain a person's eligibility for paratransit, such as in-person evaluations, and we keep lists of medical certifiers. Why for transit but not for placards? There is a model for doing this.

### **DMV is administrative, no discretion**

- DMV perspective: people who can give out placards include nurse practitioners, midwives, and chiropractors. It's not practical to require that only doctors can do this paperwork as it would make it too expensive for the applicants. Any change in how this is done would be a legislative change.

**Inadequate oversight over placards when people die**

- The DMV renews placards every June in odd-numbered years. They use Dept. of Health and Statistics Bureau information to update records of people who have been reported as deceased. Now we also get a monthly update, and send that information to those who enforce placards (the DMV does not have the resources to confiscate all those placards).
- They do not have databases of which doctors are giving out placards.
- What happens when people move? It's up to individuals to renew their address with us. Mailings from DMV are returned by post office if not sent to correct addressee. We have over two million address files.

**Other items to add to list**

- Accessibility of meters is the issue rather than affordability – this was the origin of placard law in the first place, to address the needs of people who could not use the old style parking meters.
- The word “free” is not showing up on this list--#5 refers to all-day parking but it's also free parking that is creating incentives.
- Interesting to note that only two of these issues don't have to do with placards. Placards seem to be overwhelmingly the root of the problem.

**REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL DATA**

- Information about other jurisdictions re: placards issuance and costs. Also interesting is process: What caused them to decide the way they did, how hard was it to experiment, did they need state support or authorization? (example: DC tried and then changed mind)
- It may be appropriate to share this info before next meeting.
- We have a basic overview which shows which states have which benefits, and several case studies but they need to be updated
- Process question: how do members bring info to committee as a whole? Give it to Lisa

**4. Initiate discussion regarding criteria for selecting policy recommendations (if agenda item #3 does not require the allotted time)**

- There was insufficient time for this agenda item.

## 5. Closing

The facilitator pointed out that in this meeting the committee achieved significant consensus on a definition of the problems. There were some dissenting voices, but strong agreement overall on defining the problems. The committee also began to grapple with what are some of the roots of problem. There was more diversity of opinion there, but we weren't trying to get a consensus. Instead we were able to hear different ways of framing the issues.

Question: In future, can you send out meeting notes out in advance of the next meeting? This hadn't been done because of a desire to make sure everyone had a chance to approve them before they were sent "into the ether" but this can be changed. From now on the meeting notes will be sent ahead of the meeting

The next subcommittee meeting will be held on December 11 and will develop a draft list of criteria that the committee will use to evaluate potential solutions. Ahead of that meeting, send in your ideas to Lisa. The next full meeting will be December 18 at 10 a.m.

## 6. Public Comment

*One member of the public spoke.*

Information about this process in other states would be useful to help ferret out what is working and what isn't and why things work or don't.

I have a placard and I use it when I go places with my family. One of the things that I see often: people who have placards who are running to their cars. I ask: are you supposed to have that placard? Yes, it's my mother's. But your mother's nowhere around. These are people who know they're not supposed to keep the placard in their car when they don't have a need for it. How do we solve that problem?

Parking all day for free does not work. I don't think it's fair that someone with a blue placard who can afford to pay gets to park for free. I believe that we should pay what we can afford, and then we can accommodate those who can't afford to pay anything for parking.

We need a solution for this. I don't know if an honor system will work. I think enforcement is a big thing. We need to beef up resources that it will take to do this and I'm willing to help.

## Action items

- All: send in ideas/thoughts about on criteria for evaluating potential solutions.
- SFMTA: find out whether it is possible to correlate zip codes of placard users to find out where there is a plethora or dearth of placards compared to where people with disabilities live? Census data by zip code or by census block?
- SFMTA: look into data showing meter collection rate