

LICENSE HEARING MINUTES
Impark, 240 Spring Street
Thursday, January 27, 2011, 2:00 p.m.
330 City Hall, 15 Kellogg Boulevard West
Nhia Vang, Deputy Legislative Hearing Officer

The hearing was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

Staff Present: Jeff Fischbach, Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI); Corinne Tilley, DSI; Gary Grabko, Planning and Economic Development (PED); and Paul Prior, Parks & Recreation (Parks & Rec)

Applicant: Jeremy Nelson, Senior Parking Manager

Others Present: Mary Hilfiker, 284 Spring Street #303; and Dan Patsey, 284 Spring Street #310

Impark: Parking Ramp (*Note: This license is for a parking garage, which is located under an existing residential building. No new construction is proposed. This license is necessary because the owner of the parking spaces is leasing them for contract parking.*)

Ms. Vang stated that this was an informal legislative hearing for a license application. This particular license required a Class N notification which means the neighborhood was notified and people had the chance to voice their concerns. The City received two letters of concern. There were three possible results from this hearing: 1) she may recommend that the City Council issue this license without any conditions; 2) she may recommend that the City Council issue this license with agreed upon conditions; or 3) she may recommend that the City Council not issue this license but refer it to the city attorney to take an adverse action on the application, which could involve review by an administrative law judge. The applicant will be required to sign a Conditions Affidavit demonstrating the understanding of the conditions.

DSI staff will explain their review of the application and state their recommendation. Ms. Vang will then ask the applicant to talk about the business plan. At the end of the hearing, she will make a recommendation for the City Council to consider. Her recommendation will be on the Consent Agenda; the City Council is the final authority on whether the license is approved or denied.

Mr. Fischbach stated that the recommended license condition was as follows:

NOTE: THIS LICENSE IS FOR A PARKING GARAGE LOCATED UNDER THE BUILDING

1. Required parking for any use of the former grain elevator building (a.k.a. Headhouse building at 258 Mill St) shall have priority use of the parking spaces for their customers/tenants. Monthly rental contracts must be written to reflect this.

The neighborhood district council did not submit any recommendation concerning this license.

Mr. Nelson stated that Impark manages the ramp and leases spaces on behalf of the city. The current tenants were mostly residents of Upper Landing and city workers. There were 48 stalls with 43 being occupied which left five stalls available for lease. The charge was \$30 per month from May through October and \$50 for the remaining months during the year. Signed contracts were on a three-month term and then on a month-to-month basis with stalls available on a first come, first

serve basis. The contract provided for parking of over-sized vehicles only on prior approval of management and currently, there were two boats and one trailer being parked in the ramp. The entrance to the ramp was keyed entry with no staff on site; however, the ramp was patrolled two times during the day. If unauthorized vehicles were discovered during patrols, they were warned and if there were repeat violations, the vehicle would be booted.

Ms. Vang stated that she had received two letters of objection; one from Karen Brennan who was opposed to contract parking in the residential building and the other from Ms. Hilfiker who was present to testify. Said letters are attached and made a part of this record. Ms. Vang invited the members of the audience to present testimony.

Mr. Patsey stated that he supported the license application. He said he lived in the building next door and leased a parking space as there wasn't enough parking places in and around the Upper Landing area. He had no complaints concerning the operation and management of the ramp and wished to see it continue to operate under its current management.

Ms. Hilfiker stated she had a letter from her neighbor, Jan McKichen, who was also opposed to the license application for Imperial Parking. She explained that the print on the letter was very faint and offered to read it into the record to the best of her ability. According to Ms. McKichen, she had been given incorrect information on who was able to lease parking spaces in the building and it was her desire that non-residents of the area not be allowed to lease spaces as it would be a threat to security and vandalism would likely increase. Ms. Hilfiker then summarized her letter indicating that she was not opposed to residents of Upper Landing leasing parking spaces in the garage; however, she was opposed to non-residents being able to lease spaces as she had concern about increased traffic, theft, and litter. She was also opposed to the ramp being used by the city for event parking.

Ms. Tilley clarified that the parking ramp was built specifically to accommodate parking for the commercial use of the Head House once a business was developed in that building. Since a business was not currently in operation, the decision was to open the ramp for leasing spaces.

Mr. Prior stated that currently, the Head House was just a shell of a building which was owned by the HRA/City. The intent was for a developer to build the space into a commercial use to be rented for special occasions, such as weddings or receptions, and operated by Harriet Island Parks & Rec staff. A conditional use permit was placed on the license for the parking ramp to accommodate off-street parking and the ramp is to be made available for any special events scheduled in the building. Until such time as the building is developed, the HRA/City had a one-year contract with Impark to manage and lease spaces in the ramp.

Mr. Grabko presented a copy of the Parking Operation and Services Agreement between the HRA and Imperial Parking on the operation of the parking ramp. He said the agreement had a provision which stated: "Impark will make the garage available to City of Saint Paul, Parks and Rec on an as needed basis for the purpose of serving special events at City House. Impark will contact Parks and Rec regarding event scheduling and will need two weeks advance notice of events in order to properly notify contract parkers that the facility will be unavailable on those dates." A copy of said Agreement is attached.

Ms. Vang asked whether there was an increase in litter from the patrons of the ramp and if this was an issue which needed to be addressed. Mr. Nelson responded that there were trash containers in the ramp and management routinely picked up and disposed of any strewn trash.

Ms. Vang stated that she will recommend to the City Council that they approve the license with the condition proposed by DSI.

The hearing adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

The Conditions Affidavit was submitted on December 17, 2010.

Submitted by:
Vicki Sheffer