



MINUTES

Capital Projects Committee of the Legislative Council

July 19, 2006

Third Meeting of the 2005–2006 Biennium

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Tom Courtney,
Chairperson Representative Libby Jacobs,

Senator John P. Kibbie

Vice Chairperson
Representative Chuck Gipp
Representative Pat Murphy
Representative Janet Petersen

MEETING IN BRIEF

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- I. **Procedural Business.**
- II. **Capitol Complex Parking.**
- III. **West Capitol Terrace Project/Land Acquisition.**
- IV. **Additional Property Acquisition Options — Mercy
Capitol Hospital Campus and Capitol Hill Lutheran
Church.**
- V. **Other Business.**
- VI. **Materials Filed With the Legislative Services
Agency.**



Capital Projects Committee of the Legislative Council

I. Procedural Business.

Overview. The third meeting of the Capital Projects Committee for the 2005-2006 biennium was convened at 1:05 p.m. in Committee Room 22 at the Statehouse. The Committee adjourned at 2:40 p.m. After adjournment, the Committee members and staff participated in a driving tour of the Capitol Complex grounds including parking areas. The tour was conducted by staff from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS).

Minutes Approval. Upon motion of Senator Kibbie, the minutes of the February 14, 2006, meeting were approved on a voice vote.

Next Meeting: The Committee agreed to meet on Thursday, August 17, 2006, in Committee Room 22 at 9:00 a.m.

II. Capitol Complex Parking.

Overview. Ms. Mollie Anderson, Director of DAS, presented information to the Committee requested by the Legislative Council during the Council's June 16, 2006, meeting concerning the parking situation at the Capitol Complex. The information presented included a review of current parking facilities including the state parking facility at East Grand and Pennsylvania Avenues that opened in February 2003, information concerning the permanent relocation of the DAS vehicle fleet, and information pertaining to parking at the Capitol Complex.

Capitol Complex Parking Slots. Director Anderson indicated there are primarily three types of parking slot designations used: persons with disabilities, visitors, and employees. In addition, a few slots are designated for motorcycles and deliveries. There are 4,184 parking slots at the complex of which 784 are designated for visitors. The department strives to provide an average of three parking slots per 1,000 gross square feet of office space. With 4,634 full-time employees officed at the complex, currently the average is 2.75 slots for that footage or 1.1 employees per slot. In response to a question from Vice Chairperson Jacobs, Director Anderson clarified that these averages do not take into account the temporary employees present only during the legislative session.

Due to expense, there are no long-term plans to provide tunnel access to any of the parking locations on the Capitol Complex grounds.

Parking Structure. The parking structure has 874 stalls, of which 300 are used to store the state vehicle fleet and motor pool. Prior to moving these vehicles to the structure, studies indicated that less than half of available space was being utilized. The structure was opened in February 2003 at a cost of \$12.72 million. It is primarily used by employees and visitors in connection with business involving the Wallace State Office Building and Historical Building.

Summer Events at the Capitol Complex. Director Anderson provided information concerning usage of the parking structure during the Yankee Doodle Pops Concert held on the west side of the Statehouse on June 30, 2006. The fleet and motor pool were moved in order to provide



additional space for the public. Approximately 50 percent of capacity was used during peak usage. Vice Chairperson Jacobs and others complimented Director Anderson on the event and suggested that signage improvements could better inform the public concerning the availability of the structure to park without charge.

Parking Structure—Other Considerations. Director Anderson agreed to review the signage and noted clear direction has been provided regarding the desire for the fleet and motor pool to be moved to another location. She clarified that there is no budget for that other location. Consequently, DAS is currently working with Grubb & Ellis, a real estate consultant, to locate property close to the Capitol Complex to find a permanent location for the state vehicle fleet which includes both public and private land acquisition considerations.

Discussion.

- **New Building Parking.** Representative Petersen inquired whether the new building that will be built to replace the Wallace Building will be designed to address parking needs. Director Anderson clarified that DAS is making a determination as to the square footage and level of finish needed for the building and that parking needs are included in the planning considerations.
- **Shuttle Service.** Representative Gipp observed that other than special events, parking at the complex is rarely a problem except during the legislative session. However, the quality of the surface and lighting of the gravel lots available to temporary legislative employees is low. Director Anderson noted that DAS has had discussions with the City of Des Moines concerning parking issues and that one possibility is that the city could assist with a shuttle service during times of peak demand.
- **Des Moines Transit System.** Vice Chairperson Jacobs suggested that the Des Moines Metropolitan Transit Authority could also make a presentation to employees regarding ride sharing, van pooling, and other resources. Director Anderson noted that a subsidy for transit has been discussed as a possibility during collective bargaining, but has not advanced.

Committee Motion. After further discussion and a request from Director Anderson, the Committee agreed to provide a letter urging DAS to request the City of Des Moines to research opportunities for providing shuttle service for the general public to the Capitol Complex. There was a strong interest in having an arrangement in place prior to the convening of the General Assembly in January 2007.

III. West Capitol Terrace Project/Land Acquisition.

Overview . Director Anderson reported that removal of the parking lots west of the Capitol and construction of the Central Plaza in that same space (phase one of the West Capitol Terrace Project) began on July 17, 2006. This first phase is expected to be completed by June 2007 in



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time for the Hy-Vee Triathlon, which is scheduled to end at the west steps of the Capitol. In response to a question from Representative Petersen, Director Anderson reported that the parking lot removal has eliminated 410 parking slots.

Property Acquisition. Director Anderson presented information concerning three properties located at the west end of the West Capitol Terrace Project area at the intersection of East 7th and East Locust Streets that are being considered for acquisition by DAS to complete the West Capitol Terrace Project. She stated that the owners of all three properties at 707, 709, and 711 E. Locust are private owners.

Visitor Center. The property located at 709 E. Locust is an 1880s row house and has historical significance as possibly the only surviving row house in the Capitol Complex area. In addition, it was a center of activity for immigrants of Scandinavian heritage. The current owner of the row house would like to see the building preserved and DAS has suggested this building could be used as the State Capitol's Visitors Center as an alternative to using the Carriage House on Des Moines Street. She indicated that a matching grant for development of the visitor center at the Carriage House has been approved by the Department of Transportation, but the department is receptive to using the row house instead. One concept is to glass in the building to expand the amount of climate-controlled space and another is to provide nearby parking for buses transporting visitors. After further discussion, upon motion of Senator Kibbie, the Committee expressed support for DAS working to secure the row house building and proceed in further developing the concept.

Land Swap. Director Anderson stated that the General Assembly appropriated \$500,000 to acquire these properties, but that additional resources will be needed to secure all three properties. She suggested that a certain parcel of land south of the Capitol Building (land at the foot of the popular sledding hill) be appraised to try to negotiate a land swap deal for one or more of the properties located at the foot of the West Capitol Terrace Project. Several members were wary about a land swap using that property. Director Anderson noted that the Capitol Planning Commission discussed the question and thought it is reasonable to consider.

There was an inquiry from a member as to whether the city has land that could be involved. Director Anderson said that Grubb & Ellis is also being consulted about this project and will be researching that question. Senator Kibbie suggested that property north of Grand be considered. Chairperson Courtney requested that Director Anderson consult with the Committee before proceeding with a land swap arrangement. The Committee approved by voice vote Representative Gipp's motion to support DAS in securing an appraisal of the property, investigating further the possibility of a land swap, and returning to the Committee before taking action.

IV. Additional Property Acquisition Options — Mercy Capitol Hospital Campus and Capitol Hill Lutheran Church.

Overview. Director Anderson stated that Mercy Hospital is interested in selling the Mercy Capitol hospital building located at E. 12th and Des Moines Streets. Ms. Anderson indicated that DAS wants to continue having discussions with Mercy Capitol representatives and is interested in



exploring what this building and other buildings located on the Mercy Hospital Campus may be used for by the state if purchased by DAS, as well as the value of the assets, potential revenue streams for the state, and the value of the frontage property. Director Anderson also discussed a DAS proposal to purchase the Capitol Hill Lutheran Church property located at 511 Des Moines Street.

Real Estate Consultants. She indicated that Mr. Randy York of York Companies has been retained to investigate the possibility of the acquisition and identify options for using the buildings on the property and revenue possibilities to reduce costs. In addition to Grubb & Ellis, a third consultant, Mr. Elliot Farber of Equis, Greenwood Village, Colorado, is also assisting DAS with real estate matters.

Parking Considerations. One of the other areas of interest in discussions concerning the Mercy Capitol property is land currently used by the state and the hospital for parking. The state currently has parking lots on Grand between E. 12th and E. 14th Streets and the hospital has a lot on E. 12th between Des Moines and Lyon Streets. The area between East Grand and I-235 is under consideration for potential sites for construction of the new building to replace the Wallace Building. The new building would also add additional space so that state staff in the Des Moines area can relocate from leased space in the Des Moines area to the Capitol Complex.

Hospital Property. Members recalled previous discussion of purchasing the hospital several years ago. Director Anderson said that the previous consideration involved converting the hospital to house the state laboratories. Other members asked questions concerning the ownership and uses of buildings currently located on the hospital property. Members were receptive to the continued consideration of the possibilities concerning the hospital property as described by Director Anderson.

Church Property. Mr. Mark Johnson, DAS, provided historical information concerning the Capitol Lutheran Church property located at 511 Des Moines Street. It was originally state property provided to the church at a nominal sum. There was a land patent issued that provided for the land to revert to the state if the church discontinued the use. At some point, a corrected patent was issued that eliminated the reversion provision. Director Anderson stated that at this point, DAS plans to send a letter to the church apprising the church of the state's interest in the property and to continue discussions.

Temporary Space Contingency. Director Anderson noted that the Capitol Complex campus is more than 95 percent occupied. The department is investigating the willingness of landlords to rent to the state on short notice if a flood or other unanticipated need arises to move employees from current space.

V. Other Business.

Van Tour. Upon adjournment, DAS provided members of the Committee and legislative staff a driving tour of the Capitol Complex grounds including parking areas.



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Next Meeting. The next meeting of the Capital Projects Committee is scheduled for Thursday, August 17, 2006, in Committee Room 22 of the State Capitol at 9:00 a.m. Agenda items may include the grade of finish needed in the new state office building. Director Anderson noted there is discussion of the possibility for state officials relocating from current space and if these officials relocate to the new building, a "ceremonial grade" of finish will be needed. Vice Chairperson Jacobs suggested that there be further discussion of space planning at the Capitol Complex and the future needs anticipated.

VI. Materials Filed With the Legislative Services Agency.

The materials listed were distributed at or in connection with the July 19 meeting and are on file with the Legislative Services Agency. The materials may be accessed from the "Additional Information" link on the Committee's Internet Page:

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/asp/Committees/Committee.aspx?id=45>

- A. Nonbinding draft letter of intent to purchase Capitol Hills Lutheran Church property.
- B. The packet of materials distributed by DAS includes the following information:
 - 1. Frequently Asked Questions concerning Capitol Complex Parking Issues, dated July 19, 2006.
 - 2. Listing of special events scheduled at the Capitol Complex, July—October 2006.
 - 3. Correspondence and supporting information from DAS describing the department's plans and activities in response to the Legislative Council's request regarding the Yankee Doodle Pops Concert.
 - 4. A Capitol Complex parking map and related information concerning parking plans, requirements, and capacities of parking facilities.
 - 5. Frequently Asked Questions concerning the Capitol Complex Parking Structure, dated February 2006.
 - 6. Frequently Asked Questions concerning the West Capitol Terrace Project, dated July 18, 2006, plus related news releases and planning documents.
 - 7. A map of the Iowa Capitol Complex accompanied by photographs of various properties and a memorandum and supporting materials regarding an alternative site for a visitors center that were distributed to the Capitol Planning Commission, dated July 14, 2006.
 - 8. An overview with maps and diagrams of the Mercy Capitol Campus and facilities.

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