



LEWES PARKING WORKING GROUP
Friday, April 10, 2026, 9:00 AM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
AGENDA

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B. PRESENTATION & POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE APPROVAL OF MINUTES	
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C.1. Presentation and discussion of in-town parking pilot, including possible recommendation to the Mayor and City Council. Considerations include cost of residential permit under the pilot and determination of employee designated parking locations.	
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E. ADJOURNMENT	

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Posted: 04/02/2026 Posted By: ASA

City of Lewes
LEWES PARKING WORKING GROUP
Friday, March 20, 2026
MINUTES

The Lewes Parking Working Group met on Friday, March 20, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall, in accordance with proper notification, with the following members present: Chair/Councilmember Joe Elder, Working Group Members Lisa McDonald, Betsy Reamer, Patty Gibler, Pete Sanger, Larry Franz, and Craig Harbeck. City Staff members present included City Manager Ellen Lorraine McCabe, Police Chief Thomas Spell, and Parking Enforcement Officer Dennis Crawford.

- A. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL & ANNOUNCEMENTS** *Councilmember Joe Elder called the meeting to order and conducted roll call.*

He introduced audience member Duke Hansen from Ramp Up Advisors, a parking consultant with experience since 1979 who currently works with Ocean City and has extensive background in municipal parking management. Hansen expressed interest in potentially supporting Lewes' parking improvement efforts.

Chair Elder highlighted a local news report that aired that morning highlighting the parking challenges in Lewes.

- B. PRESENTATION & POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Councilmember Elder requested a motion to accept the minutes as submitted.

Motion: *Larry Franz moved to accept the minutes as submitted. Pete Sanger seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

- C. MEETING ITEMS**

1. Reports/Updates from sub-working groups.

Parking Committee Recommendations - March 20 2026

Larry Franz presented a comprehensive report analyzing the parking situation in Lewes, emphasizing that he had prepared the briefing based on previous meeting discussions and wanted feedback from the committee. He structured his presentation around data from the 2022-23 parking study, which he considered excellent and sufficient for decision-making.

Mr. Franz identified employee parking as the root cause of Lewes' parking problems, citing approximately 500 employee parking spaces needed during peak times. He analyzed the city by quartiles and examined walking distances, noting business community concerns about elderly employees, safety for young workers, and cash-carrying employees needing closer parking.

The presentation included detailed calculations showing that after accounting for residential needs (approximately 353 spaces based on two permits per house without adequate off-street parking), there would be roughly 707 spots available for competition between businesses, residents, and visitors. Mr. Franz emphasized this creates a significant shortfall, particularly for the estimated 500 employee spaces needed.

He proposed several potential employee parking locations:

- The 1812 lot (approximately 32 spots, including one handicapped space)
- Schleigh Avenue area (approximately 125 spots, including adjacent city-owned land)
- Across the canal near EV chargers (L-shaped area with potential for expansion)

Mr. Franz stressed that without addressing the employee parking shortage, a parking garage would ultimately be necessary, estimating costs of \$25,000-30,000 per space excluding land acquisition.

His key recommendation was forming a small working team comprising 1-2 business representatives, 1-2 residents, and 1-2 city staff members to develop detailed street-by-street solutions rather than continuing the back-and-forth process with City Council. He advocated for a pilot program on the streets closest to the business district (Market, Chestnut, Second, Third, Mulberry) to test residential permit parking combined with three-hour limits.

Audience member Duke Hansen provided professional perspective, noting that Lewes faces the classic problem of demand far exceeding supply. He mentioned Ocean City's transition to plate-based enforcement using ParkMobile rather than traditional meters and suggested that handheld enforcement devices costing around \$2,800 might be more practical for pilot programs than the \$70,000 vehicle-mounted systems.

Parking Enforcement Supervisor Dennis Crawford raised concerns about enforcement complexity, particularly regarding three-hour limits in residential areas and the challenge of tracking employees who move vehicles between different areas. He emphasized the importance of maintaining downtown vibrancy and warned against converting optimistic parkers (who will search for spots) into pessimistic parkers (who avoid downtown altogether).

Police Chief Tom Spell supported pilot programs but advocated for permit-only parking rather than mixed permit/time-limit systems, citing enforcement simplicity.

2. Discussion regarding next steps and possible recommendations to Mayor and City Council.

The committee engaged in extensive discussion about implementing a pilot program. Chair Elder strongly advocated for action, stating "If we always do what we've always done, we'll always get what we've always gotten," and emphasizing that four previous attempts to address parking had failed.

Lisa McDonald suggested a simple initial approach of designating one side of streets for residential permits and the other for open parking, though others noted this "one size fits all" approach wouldn't work given the unique characteristics of each street.

Patty Gibler emphasized the importance of considering designated employee parking lots in addition to street-level solutions and stressed the need for a comprehensive plan so residents know what to expect citywide.

The committee discussed potential funding sources, with Chair Elder mentioning discussions regarding combining parking structures with emergency shelters to qualify for resilience grants. He referenced a Project Guidance Group through RASCL (Resilient and Sustainable Communities League) that could provide technical assistance and funding coordination.

Betsy Reamer expressed strong reservations about volunteers attempting to design a complex pilot program, arguing that this type of work requires professional city planners and consultants. However, Larry Franz countered that consultants still need community support and involvement to be effective.

- D. PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS** *David Shook* presented a proposal for motorcycle and scooter parking, noting this was his third time making this presentation to different city administrations. He demonstrated how existing parking spaces could accommodate eight scooters where one car parks, and identified eight locations downtown where scooter parking could be implemented immediately. He suggested implementing free scooter parking initially to encourage alternative transportation, with paid permits possible in future years. Chair Elder committed to presenting this proposal to City Council with City Manager Lorraine.

Joe Stewart (207 Second Street) shared experience from Washington D.C.'s "segregated parking" system where one side of streets requires residential permits while the other remains open. He noted this system worked well despite his initial opposition. He also highlighted problems with short-term rentals bringing multiple vehicles, suggesting daily fees for excess vehicles.

Chip Davis (115 E. Third Street) provided information about potential additional parking resources, including the Presbyterian Church lot and a small city-owned parcel. He noted that while the church lot was previously available for employee parking, recent communication suggested this arrangement was discontinued. He also mentioned discussions about easements for parking on private property.

Councilmember Trina Brown-Hicks (speaking online) (504 Dupont Avenue) suggested residents with large driveways might be willing to share parking spaces with downtown employees for compensation, proposing a private arrangement solution.

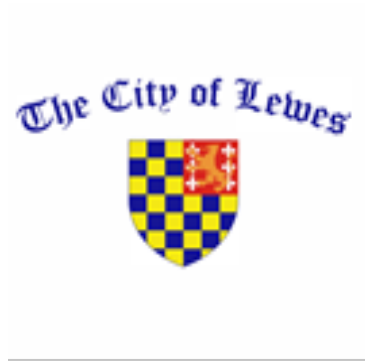
The committee agreed to proceed with forming a subcommittee including business representatives (potentially Matt DiSabatino), residential representatives (Pete Sanger to coordinate with affected streets), and city staff (Ellen Lorraine or designee, Chief Spell or Dennis Crawford). Mr. Franz agreed to participate in initial meetings to provide strategic input but declined to lead the effort.

- E. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING** *The working group* scheduled the next meeting for Friday, April 17, 2026, at 9:00 AM, with the possibility of an afternoon time if needed to accommodate all members. The meeting will focus on the subcommittee's pilot program recommendations.
- F. ADJOURNMENT** *Councilmember Elder* adjourned the meeting, emphasizing that while the work is challenging, the committee is making incremental progress toward addressing Lewes' parking challenges. He stressed that even small improvements in one or two neighborhoods would represent meaningful progress after previous failed attempts.

Minutes submitted by: Jeffery Coover, Administration Support Specialist

Minutes generated by HeyGov.ai

Transcripts available upon request.



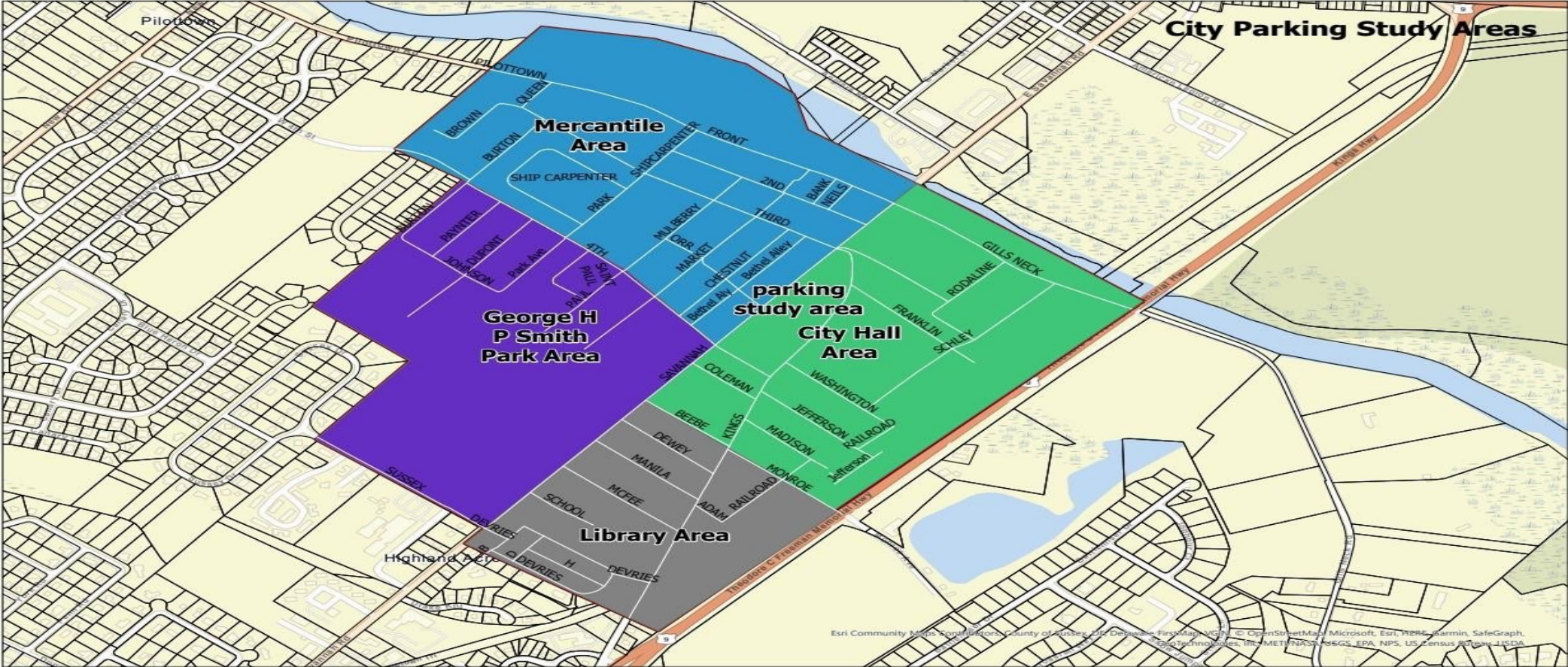
Lewes Parking Committee's Parking Solution Recommendations

BOTTOM LINE UPFRONT

- Significant parking demand with non-accommodating parking supply
- Zones include Residents /guests, Business Community employees and customers all compete for limited supply
- Absent a parking garage, ANY solution is premised on a “ZERO SUM” scenario
- Demands for employee parking / (500).... is the root cause of parking issue

Team Participants: Council (1) / Business Community (3) / Residents (5)

CENTER CITY QUARTILE AREA OF ANALYSIS



DATA SOURCE: PARKING STUDY 2022-23 / Councilperson Candace C. Vessella

Summary of Property Parking Data – City Center

	No Off Street Parking	One Off Street Space	Two Off Street Spaces	Total Properties on Street	Public Street Parking Spaces Available
City Hall	30	38	149	217	307
Library	12	18	94	124	259
George H. P. Smith Park	7	26	127	130	100
Mercantile	64	45	244	353	484
Totals	113	127	614	824	1150
	14%	15%	71%		

DATA SOURCE: PARKING STUDY 2022-23 / Councilperson Candace C. Vessella

PARKING DEMAND VS PARKING SUPPLY

- Current cumulative on street parking supply available in **quartile areas** is 1150 parking
- Current demand for parking from residential zones is 353
- Current demand from business related employee zones is approximately ***500** parking spaces
- Currently 707 on street parking spaces available post resident zones.
 - Business customers must complete with business employees for preference.
 - Business community to weigh-in on decision.
- **NOTE: Data / 500 provided by Chamber / Business community**

Competitors?	Parking Demand	Parking Supply	Parking Delta + / -
Cumulative/Residents	353 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No driveway / 226 • 1 driveway / 127 	1150 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • $1150 - 353 = 797$ 	+ 797 – 90 Meters = 707 unmetered spaces available *
Business Employees	500 (shift change)	≈ 200 City lots Schley / 140 , Savannah / 60	- 300 spaces short during “transition” period only
Customer (s)	Variable	90 Metered	Variable

* Employees, business customers (3hr limits), residential guests to compete for **707** parking non-metered spots

Zero-Sum Based RECOMMENDATIONS

- City to fund identified employee parking renovations at Schley / Canal parking lots
 - Recommend charging a seasonal fee for employee applicants who seek to participate.
- Phased approach premised on strategic analysis premised on segmented lessons learned
 - Pilot program to consider Chestnut, Market, Mulberry / 67 on-street spaces open
- Implement residential ***designated*** parking zones per the space calculations
 - Parking zones for residents to be complimentary.
- Enforce a phased 3-hour limit on “Mercantile” quartile for non-residential spaces
 - 3-hour limit provides businesses with consistent customer turnover
 - Hire “Parking Committee member (s) to enforce Pilot sections and **collect data**
- All components of this recommendation have a mutual dependency therefore implementing some of the recommendations alone will not have a “optimal” result.
- QUESTION: What else can “Parking Committee” do to move forward?

Tiered parking garage ultimate solutions to satisfy all competing entities.

Zero-Sum Path Forward

- City to fund identified employee parking renovations
 - Approximately 175 -200 spaces identified at Schley / Canal parking lots
 - Recommend charging a seasonal fee for employee applicants who seek to participate.
 - Phased approach premised on strategic analysis / Trial-n-Error & Lessons Learned
- Pilot program to consider Chestnut, Market, Mulberry / *67 on-street spots after resident zone assigned*
 - *Business Community to prioritize employee vs customer needs. Business Community decides.*
- All components of this recommendation have a mutual dependency. Change one component affects others
- NOTE: Parking Committee to act as temporary parking enforcement officer to service Pilot Program streets.



Strategic Phased Implementation Steps

