



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of Public Works
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3800
www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

To: Dave Ramsay, City Manager

From: Tami White, Parking Coordinator

Date: February 20, 2007

Subject: LETTER FROM TAMMY SULLY REGARDING AMPCO PARKING

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter of response to Ms. Sully, who wrote the City concerning Ampco Parking and other parking options.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

Ms. Sully expresses her displeasure about a high parking fine she received while parked at the Bank of America location managed by Ampco Parking. She could not find parking available at the city facilities and parked at a lot operated by Ampco. Ms. Sully admits that she did not pay the required parking fees when she parked, and is upset at the cost of the ticket she received from Ampco. Ms. Sully urges the City to consider "other options that may include pay parking". The Parking Advisory Board is currently considering expanding pay parking. Pay stations allow patrons to pay for only the time they need and pay stations accept credit cards as well as coins. The city operated pay parking costs \$1.00 per hour as opposed to the Ampco flat rate of \$9.00 for the evening. It is hoped that pay parking will not only make more stalls available to customers, but will also create revenue that can be used to fund more parking supply.

The lower level of the parking garage has been opened to all users after 6:00 PM, this opens up the 183 stalls that were previously permit only. In addition, 32 stalls have been added on Central Way as a result of the narrowing project.

Tammy Sully
18336 129th PINE
Bothell, WA 98011

January 25, 2007

David Ramsay
City Manager
City of Kirkland
123 Fifth Ave.
Kirkland, WA 98033

Dear Mr. Ramsay & City of Kirkland City Council,

I am writing this letter to express my sincere frustration with the parking situation in downtown Kirkland.

I am not currently a resident of Kirkland, (although I have been in the past and I currently have family that lives there now), so I like to on occasion frequent downtown businesses or restaurants.

Recently I was in Kirkland to meet a friend at a downtown restaurant, and to my dismay, could not find ANY free street parking, and even the city pay lot was full. Out of frustration and lack of time, I pulled into a private lot, only to have not enough cash for the absurd cost of \$9.00, and decided to put into the slot what cash I had, (\$1.50) and then I received a parking ticket for \$30.00 plus the \$9.00 parking fee.

I am not arguing receiving the parking ticket, as I did not have enough cash money to cover the cost on me at the time. I could have continued to drive around further and further away from my destination until I could find parking, but I could have paid the fee on site if the private company (AMPCO) had installed a device or machine that could take debit or credit cards. I am simply frustrated at the lack of options for payment and what appears to me to be a rather high fee to park, even for a private lot. Most private lots like in downtown Seattle, for example, have a sliding scale of fees based on how long a person is parked. This particular lot (located at the Bank of America in downtown) has only one fee listed no matter how much time a person may be parked. To me the \$9.00 cost is inflated and unfair. I had to park for only two hours.

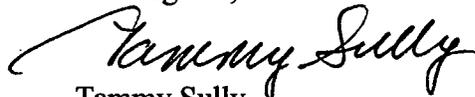
Yes, this particular location does have an ATM machine for cash, but I sure didn't want to give AMPCO an extra dollar, since you can only take out \$10.00 of cash out a time from most ATM's (and in some cases \$20.00 minimum), then I would have to run around and try and get change for the \$10.00 or \$20.00 I would have taken out to pay for parking. Hence, adding to my frustration for lack of payment options other than cash.

I am encouraging the city of Kirkland to consider the impact the parking in downtown has on people like me who like to visit Kirkland. Quite frankly, at this point, unless I know my destination in downtown actually has a lot I can park in, I will be inclined NOT to go there anymore. It's not worth the hassle or the cost.

It seems to me for the average consumer, that downtown Kirkland is just too hard to get to and deal with for sake of a better parking system. I hope the city considers some other options that may include paid parking, but at least have parking fees that are reasonable and fair, and come with other ways to pay besides cash. Otherwise I will encourage everyone I know to avoid Kirkland so they don't have the same problems I have encountered. That is the last time I will meet a friend in downtown Kirkland for now.

Thank you for your time and consideration to this matter.

Best regards,


Tammy Sully

CC: AMPCO Parking Systems

Tammy Sully
18336 129th PINE
Bothell, WA 98011
(425) 424-9032

January 25, 2007

AMPCO System Parking
P.O. Box 80446
Seattle, WA 98108-0446

Dear Sir or Madam,

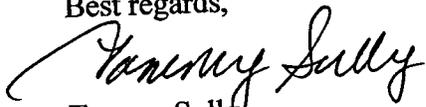
Enclosed is a check for the amount of \$37.50. I have deducted \$1.50 from the total amount requested of \$39.00 because I placed \$1.50 in the payment box for the space #7 at the time the car was parked. Apparently the employee (#3472) failed to take into account the \$1.50 already paid toward the parking fee of \$9.00.

I would have paid the full \$9.00 fee if I had the option to do so. When I say option, I mean as in some kind of automatic machine that can accept debit or credit cards (like what is available at Sea-Tac Airport, or the Convention Center in downtown Seattle, or AROUND THE CORNER at the local city lot), but that was not available.

Yes, there was an ATM nearby, but you can only take out increments of \$10 or \$20 at a time, and then I would get the pleasing task of trying to find change for my \$10 or \$20 and run back to pay the \$9.00 fee. But then again, your company probably makes more money by keeping the parking system the way it is at that particular lot in downtown Kirkland for the very same reasons I am expressing concern about here. If the fee is \$9.00, then most people will not bother to try and save a buck, and shove \$10 in the slot. It would seem to me that AMPCO has potential to make an extra \$1 every time a poor sap like me has to park, either that or I would think \$39.00 (or greater) parking fees are a rather profitable business.

I have enclosed a letter I have written to the city of Kirkland explaining my frustration with this situation. It would be nice to see some effort on the city or AMPCO's behalf to improve payment options, so huge fees can be avoided.

Best regards,


Tammy Sully

CC: City of Kirkland

Encl.

March 6, 2007

DRAFT

Ms. Tammy Sully
18336 129th Place NE
Bothell, WA 98011

Dear Ms. Sully:

Thank you for your letter regarding the parking ticket you received while parked at the Bank of America Ampco lot. We're sorry you had an unpleasant parking experience in downtown Kirkland.

As you know, Ampco is a private parking operator with whom landowners contracts to manage parking at their building. During peak times public parking in downtown Kirkland is often occupied, but we have added more parking options recently. We've added 32 new stalls on the south side of Central Way. In addition, the 183 parking stalls in the lower level of the Peter Kirk Library garage are now available for public parking after 6:00 PM. These stalls were previously for permit use only. There are no evening time-limits after 6:00 p.m. in the parking garage. The garage is located under the Kirkland Library on Kirkland Avenue and 3rd Street.

Our Parking Advisory Board is also exploring expansion of pay parking downtown to help create turnover of parking supply which will make more stalls available to customers. These stalls can be paid for in 3 minute increments so you can pay for just what you need. Our pay stations accept credit cards and coins. The rate is \$1.00 per hour.

We hope that these new opportunities downtown will improve your parking experience and that you will visit downtown Kirkland again. Downtown parking is a challenge for many communities, and we do rely on feedback like yours to help us continue to improve parking where we can. If you have any other parking questions or comments, you may contact Tami White, Parking Coordinator, by e-mail twhite@ci.kirkland.wa.us or call 425-587-3871. If you would like to get in contact with Ampco directly, please call Rafael Cruz at 206-267-0710.

Sincerely,
KIRKLAND CITY COUNCIL

James L. Lauinger
Mayor