

Time will tell for city parking problem

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Only time will tell, but something might happen to help the parking problem downtown in Rapid City.

After hearing a report from Roger Schneider, chairman of the Public Parking Board, the city council Monday authorized getting appraisals on a piece of downtown property which could be turned into a public parking lot.

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Schneider told the council there still is a parking problem in the downtown area. "But it would be useless to come to you with the same recommendation we made six months ago." The parking board had recommended the purchase of the old Harney Hotel site at Seventh and Main and the parking lot and former service station at Sixth and St. Joe for use as parking lots, but the council would not authorize appraisals and the idea was "forgotten."

Schneider said the Harney site is out of the question now and the price is the same on the Sixth and St. Joe property. But, he added, it still is for sale. The asking price for the service station, including the structure, and the adjacent parking lot is still \$138,359.

Mayor Art LaCroix commented the

downtown parking problem "didn't go away simply by forgetting it." He asked the council members if they wanted him to proceed to get appraisals and make an offer.

Harold Schmidt said he felt it is time that something was done and moved to authorize "in house" appraisals. The council approved although Mike Madden said he thought the asking price is "quite a lot of money."

Asked what happened to the parking district proposal, Schneider said the board felt it was best to let the idea die because of the threat of legal implications.

The authority of the parking board also was recognized in another matter. The ordinance creating the board also gave it authority to make recommen-

dations on any expenditures from the Parking Lot and Area Fund.

The public works committee had considered using portion of the PL&A fund to pay for the curbs, gutters and approaches for the new fire station parking lot. When this recommendation came up later in the meeting, it was referred back to the public works committee and to the parking board for its consideration.

Bob Flittie reminded his colleagues that it is only proper to have the advice of the parking board. He said that he also is concerned that using any of the PL&A fund for the fire station might deplete it to the point where there is not enough left to buy any land for public parking.