

MEETING MINUTES

PARKING and TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – June 1, 2017

City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Lown called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Chairman, Brad Lown
City Manager, John Bohenko
Public Works Director, Peter Rice
Deputy Fire Chief, James Heinz
Police Captain, Frank Warchol
Member, Ted Gray
Member, Harold Whitehouse
Member, Ronald Cypher
Member, Shari Donnermeyer
Alternate Member, Mary Lou McElwain

Staff Advisors Present:

Parking and Transportation Engineer, Eric Eby
Planning Director, Juliet Walker

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Ron Cypher moved to accept the meeting minutes of May 4, 2017. Seconded by Harold Whitehouse. **Motion passed 9-0.**

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Harold Whitehouse moved to accept the financial report dated June 2017. Seconded by Ron Cypher. **Motion passed 9-0.**

V. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Rick Becksted spoke to action item VI.A. [Clarification of overtime parking definition]. He opposed City staff recommendation to modify the ordinance requiring a vehicle to move at least

500 feet from their original parking space, once they have reached the designated time limit. He expressed concern about residential parking and requested the Committee table the discussion until after the new garage is completed.

Brenna Cavanaugh spoke to an incident regarding construction on Islington Street and an unpleasant encounter with a construction worker while trying to access a property. She commented on the need for police detail during roadway construction projects. She requested measures be taken to increase visibility and awareness of the All-Way STOP sign at Summer Street and State Street because vehicles are not stopping.

City Manager Bohenko stated the work on Islington Street was a Util project and they would be contacted about the matter.

Mary Krempels spoke to resident parking concerns in the South End. She informed the Committee that people attending events at Prescott Park were illegally parking. It is causing problems for residents.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Clarification of overtime parking definition. Eric Eby stated this action item was brought forward based on complaints from residents, input from enforcement staff and the Parking Clerk's office. The City ordinances state that a vehicle shall be considered as unlawfully parked if it remains in a parking space beyond the legal parking limit. However, the ordinances do not state that the vehicle must move or how far. This has made it difficult to enforce overtime parking violations. The goal of enforcing overtime parking is to ensure spaces are available to customers and other short-term parkers.

People have appealed parking citations by claiming they moved their vehicle and found the same spot open a short time later. Eric Eby reviewed parking regulations from other cities and found that they often specify a distance that a vehicle must move to avoid being ticketed. He provided examples of their regulations on overtime parking.

City staff recommended that the City ordinances be modified to require a vehicle to move at least 500 feet from their original parking space, after reaching the designated time limit. This action would make it clear that they have moved out of the original space, provide clear definition for enforcement, and help to achieve the goals of the time limit ordinance.

Public Works Director Rice stated one of the misperceptions was this change would have a negative impact on residents. He stated it would in fact free up parking spaces for residents and businesses. Mr. Rice stated residents have complained about this issue and asked City staff to address it. The proposed ordinance modification would address citizen complaints and optimize parking.

Harold Whitehouse moved to modify the City ordinances to require a vehicle to move at least 500 feet from their original parking space, once they have reached the designated time limit. Seconded by Public Works Director Rice.

The Committee discussed the contractor parking permit, enforcement issues, working with the Downtown Business Association to encourage use of satellite parking alternatives and citizen concerns about parking revenue.

Vote 9-0, to modify the City ordinances to require a vehicle to move at least 500 feet from their original parking space, once they have reached the designated time limit.

B. Appeal of driveway permit at 834 Middle Road. An on-site visit was conducted on May 30, 2017 by the Committee.

The Committee was provided background on the action item. In June 2016, the contractor was granted a variance by the Board of Adjustment. As part of the variance process, the contractor was required to submit a driveway permit to the Department of Public Works (DPW) for approval. The approval was granted with stipulations. The stipulations included removing the three existing driveways and installing a new one in front of the garage on Swett Avenue. After construction began, the contractor discovered the design layout favored two driveways. The contractor appealed the removal of the existing driveway on Swett Avenue nearest to Middle Road. He requested the property be granted two driveways on Swett Avenue. City staff did not propose a recommendation, but requested additional time to study the appeal request.

Harold Whitehouse moved to allow staff time to continue studying the issue and report back. Seconded by Public Works Director Rice.

Public Works Director Rice stated there are sight distance concerns if the driveway on Swett Avenue remains. Staff requested additional time to review the sight distance issues associated with the contractor's request.

Chairman Lown expressed support for the contractor's request. The Committee discussed alternatives to multiple driveways on the parcel.

Harold Whitehouse moved to suspend the rules to allow for public comment. Seconded by City Manager Bohenko. **Vote 9-0, to suspend rules to allow for public comment.**

Matt Silva, Futuro Construction, spoke to the Committee. He stated there was confusion about the process. Construction began in December 2016 and he believed the original design for two driveways was approved because it went through the Board of Adjustment variance process. However, the driveway permit he received was modified with stipulations and conditions. It did not reflect the original design he had requested. He spoke to concerns about having only one driveway.

Public Works Director Rice explained driveway permits are approved through an administrative process. Applicants can appeal a permit decision through the PTS Committee. He reiterated the need to study the sight distance issues and address concerns before making a recommendation to the Committee.

Vote 9-0, to continue study and report back.

Matt Silva expressed concern about the decision because home construction would be completed within one month. Public Works Director Rice stated DPW staff would work with Mr. Silva within the next week to address the issue. He stated a decision would be made before the Certificate of Occupancy was issued.

City Manager Bohenko suggested granting the Director of Public Works the power to make the final decision in order to resolve the matter swiftly.

Shari Donnermeyer moved to amend the motion to give power of decision to the Director of Public Works in order to expedite the action item. Seconded by Ron Cypher. **Vote 9-0, to give power of decision to the Director of Public Works in order to expedite action item.**

Public Works Director Rice moved to suspend the rules to allow for public comment. Seconded by Harold Whitehouse. **Vote 9-0, to suspend rules to allow for public comment.**

Jason Combs, homeowner, expressed concern about installing a parallel parking curb cut-out on Swett Avenue and requested two driveways be granted.

C. Pedestrian safety, crosswalks and crosswalk signs by Mary Lou McElwain. Mary Lou McElwain requested the Committee review crosswalks, pedestrian safety and crosswalk signage. She has heard concerns from citizens and witnessed incidents. She requested a review of all crosswalks in the City, but specifically on South Street, Middle Street and Miller Avenue, Bartlett Street and Islington Street. She suggested installing more crosswalk weebles and a signalized crosswalk on South Street.

City Manager Bohenko concurred with Mary Lou McElwain that an inventory of crosswalks would be beneficial. He stated City staff would create a crosswalk inventory and a map of crosswalk and weeble locations.

Mary Lou McElwain suggested compiling data collected by Juliet Walker, Planning Director, and PS21 on pedestrian safety, bike traffic and accidents. She also mentioned the need to reinstall the NO RIGHT ON RED signs at Middle Street and Miller Avenue. The Committee voted in July 2015 to remove the signs.

Harold Whitehouse discussed his concerns regarding pedestrian behavior in crosswalks in the Central Business District.

VII. OLD BUSINESS:
No old business.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Rick Becksted recommended trimming branches on South Street near the school crossing flashing sign. He requested the rules be suspended to allow comments after informational item IX.B. (Middle Street Bike Lanes Project).

Taylor Andrews spoke to the need for a residential parking program. She lives and works in the downtown and finds the parking situation difficult. She suggested a community service program to pay for parking citations.

Brenna Cavanaugh spoke to pedestrian responsibility and the need for enforcement when pedestrians violate traffic laws.

Doug Roberts suggested including crosswalk widths in the inventory. He recommended investigating the cost and feasibility of including crosswalk flashers in the Islington Street project.

IX. INFORMATIONAL:

A. New Parking Director. Benjamin Fletcher has accepted the Parking Director position and will start on July 3, 2017.

B. Middle Street Bike Lanes Project. Juliet Walker, Planning Director, spoke to the public meeting scheduled for June 8, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. She stated it would be an opportunity for abutters and the public to review the final design and provide comments. The evening parking count results will also be presented. Ms. Walker stated information presented at the meeting will be posted online.

Harold Whitehouse moved to suspend the rules to allow for public comment. Seconded by Ted Gray. **Vote 7-0, to suspend rules to allow for public comment.**
City Manager Bohenko and Police Captain Warchol were absent for vote.

Rick Becksted recounted several suggestions he made concerning the Middle Street Bike Lanes project. He requested the meeting be televised because the project would affect the entire community, not just the abutters.

C. Existing Valet License Agreements. Copies of existing valet license agreements were included in the packet in response to a request by a Committee member at the May 4, 2017 meeting.

D. Requests for Rubber Speed Bumps on Public Roads. Public Works Director Rice received an email from David Witham requesting a temporary speed bump at his mailbox to discourage speeding on his cul-de-sac. Mr. Rice stated temporary speed bumps were designed to be installed in parking lots and not on public roadways. All traffic control devices must meet requirements and design standards outlined in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). He suggested Mr. Witham contact the PTS Committee if he is interested in exploring a permanent speed bump on the cul-de-sac. Ted Gray and Ron Cypher spoke in opposition of speed bumps.

Eric Eby informed the Committee the temporary crosswalk at Islington Street and Albany Street intersection was installed today.

X. ADJOURNMENT – At 9:06 a.m., **voted** to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Chastain
Secretary to the Committee