

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING COMMISSION
Minutes

September 9, 2015, 7:00 p.m.

Council Chambers - Village Hall
801 Burlington Avenue, Downers Grove

Chairman Pro tem Saricks called to order the September 9, 2015 meeting of the Transportation and Parking Commission at 7:00 p.m. and explained the protocol of the meeting.

The commissioners recited of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call followed and a quorum was established.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Pro tem Saricks; Commissioners Aguzino, Carter, Wilkinson, Wrobel

Absent: Chairman Stuebner; Commissioners Golomb, Schiller

Staff Present: Transportation Division Manager Matt Mayer

Public: Ms. Christina Kollintzas, 4225 Seeley Ave., Downers Grove; Ms. Jerri Reimann, 4231 Belle Aire, Downers Grove; Mr. John Siragusa, 4225 Belle Aire, Downers Grove; Ms. Melissa O'Driscoll, 4205 Belle Aire Lane; Karen Dietschweiler, 6323 Washington, Downers Grove.

Chairman Pro tem reviewed the protocol for the meeting.

MINUTES

Since Mr. Wrobel was not at the last meeting, he asked that a follow-up to the items discussed at the last meeting take place since he found the follow-up minimal or not done at all. Chairman Pro tem Saricks concurred and believed some of the items/questions not addressed will be addressed under Old Business.

MINUTES OF THE JULY 8, 2015 MEETING WERE APPROVED ON MOTION BY MR. WILKINSON, SECONDED BY MR. CARTER. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE OF 4-0-1 (WROBEL ABSTAINS).

PUBLIC COMMENT (on non-Agenda items) – None.

New Commissioner Aguzino was introduced and welcomed.

File #09-15 Washington Street – Parking Restrictions – Traffic Division Mgr. Matthew Mayer said this matter was initiated by manager's memorandum dated June 12, 2015, and was a temporary authorization initially. Mr. Mayer stated he was seeking a recommendation for permanent signage to be forwarded to the Village Council for approval. The area being considered included 200 feet on the east side of Washington Street to improve the general operations for emergency vehicles and residents.

Mr. Wrobel was supportive of the permanent signage. He explained the challenging roadway conditions at 63rd Street and Washington Streets and believed it would be beneficial to allow an extra turning area for larger vehicles. Asked how the residents felt about the recommendation, Mr. Mayer said he received one phone call from a resident inquiring about the restriction and where he could park once the restriction was in place. He also received one email in support of

Transportation and Parking Commission

September 9, 2015

the permanent restriction; otherwise, no objections. Asked if there was going to be a problem from the southern end of the proposed restriction to Meadowlawn on the east side, Mr. Mayer indicated it was not staff's impression to date and it appeared that the proposal solved the issues of Washington Street at 63rd Street and allowed a better radius at "that pinch point" and needed to be cleaned up to allow better flow of two-way traffic.

Chairman Pro tem Saricks opened up the meeting to public comment.

Ms. Karen Dietschweiler, 6323 Washington, believed the restriction should be placed on the west side because when vehicles turned off of 63rd, they were turning into the west side where the vehicles were parked and lighting was poor at night. She even supported both sides of the street being restricted.

Asked if restrictions for both sides of the street were considered, Mr. Mayer stated it was, as well as the driveway access in terms of moving from one side to the other. He did not know if restricting the entire west side of Washington would be the solution, but surmised possibly the first 50 feet or so, as a compromise, would make some sense.

Conversation followed that it was a good suggestion, but that the width of the road also had to be considered -- being only 18 feet wide. Vehicle scenarios followed. Asked if staff considered making modifications to 63rd and south, such as a de-acceleration lane that could be widened to the sidewalk, Mr. Mayer stated only restriping of lanes on 63rd Street was considered -- just low impact, low cost, and high results options. One commissioner suggested staff to consider widening the "throat" of the roadway, wherein staff explained that the same results could be found when installing the 50 feet of restriction on the west side. Per the chairman pro tem's question, Mr. Mayer explained that for the west side of Washington there were no restrictions other than the general state requirements, i.e., from the Rules of the Road guide. However, the chairman pointed out that staff may want to consider a No Parking from Here to Corner sign at least from the point south of the sidewalk to ensure vehicles were not parking in the sight lines.

Ms. Dietschweiler appreciated the consideration and stated she lived on the east side of Washington and the restrictions would not affect her. This was just something she observed.

General dialog followed regarding the parking area under discussion and what the Illinois code stated. Consensus was reached that the proposed modification by Ms. Dietschweiler were acceptable to the commissioners. A motion was entertained:

MR. AGUZINO MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REQUEST TO INSTALL "NO PARKING ANYTIME" RESTRICTIONS ON THE EAST SIDE OF WASHINGTON STREET FROM THE SOUTH LINE OF 63RD STREET TO A POINT 200 FEET SOUTH OF THE SOUTH LINE OF 63RD STREET AND TO INSTALL "NO PARKING HERE TO CORNER" RESTRICTIONS ON THE WEST SIDE OF WASHINGTON STREET, 50 FEET SOUTH OF THE INTERSECTION.

SECONDED BY MR. WROBEL.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE OF 5-0.

File #10-15 Belle Aire Lane – Parking Restrictions – Mr. Mayer reported staff initiated this request due to resident concerns about on-street parking/pedestrian parking on Belle Aire Lane, north of Ogden Avenue. Because parking was allowed on both sides of Belle Aire Lane, it was causing traffic congestion, safety concerns and, therefore, staff was requesting placement of

“No Parking Anytime” restrictions along the east side of Belle Air Lane and on the north and south sides of the adjacent block of Janet Street. Mr. Mayer stated the issues at the site had been ongoing due to the proximity to Ogden Avenue and the area being commercial. Various parking issues were voiced by staff, noting some the issues were derived from Enterprise Rental. While some of the mitigation was initiated by the village about a year and a half ago, Mr. Mayer believed this new change would improve the parking. Additionally, he and staff from the Community Development department worked on this issue to develop a plan to free up some parking, since the development department staff had identified some of the commercial tenants being overparked.

Mr. Wrobel voiced that the issue appeared to be employees from the nearby dealerships parking their cars on Belle Aire all day, wherein staff clarified that the issue was really from an insurance assessment company located at 4248 Belle Aire, who had a number of transient contractors and field crew that came to the site to pick up files and then leave. Some of the vehicles parking were larger vehicles but in general it was a variety of different sizes. Mr. Mayer reminded the commissioners that the goal was to have all of the parking located on the west side because many residential driveways existed on the east side of Belle Aire Lane. North of Janet Street there were no frontages and more access was available. Staff felt that moving the vehicles north versus west was the easiest because most people were willing to walk within the first 150 feet of Belle Aire, north of Janet versus down the next street and up the next block.

Chairman Pro tem Saricks opened up the meeting to public comment.

Christina Kollintzas, 4225 Seeley Avenue, stated this issue has been ongoing for a very long time and vehicles park in front and on the side of her house and access to her home is difficult. Two cars cannot pass on the roadway simultaneously to get to Ogden Avenue and pedestrians are sometime walking in the middle of the street not aware of vehicles traveling. Safety for her children was a concern because no sidewalks existed in front of her home. She inquired as to how residential parking would be differentiated from business parking and suggested the restriction state “Residential Parking Only” versus “No Parking Anytime.” Ms. Kollintzas stated that vehicles continually make quick three-point turns at Janet and Belle Aire Lane. She is worried that emergency vehicles will not be able to access the street.

Commissioner questions followed if there was “residential” parking restrictions in other parts of the village and could restricted parking be placed on a certain side of the street for a certain period of time.

Ms. Kollintzas stated there were people sleeping in their cars overnight who worked for Nationwide Insurance and recently her neighbor was startled by someone sleeping overnight in their car at Janet and Belle Aire Lane. She also asked what stopped another business from coming in and doing the same thing to the neighborhood.

Dialog followed that there was a village ordinance restricting no overnight parking from 2:00 A.M. to 6:00 A.M. and the issue appeared to be police enforcement. Per a question, Mr. Mayer indicated when he spoke to Nationwide they did acknowledge that they do have many employees who access the facility at any time and hold weekly and monthly staff meetings. Per staff, Nationwide apparently asked Pull Tool to lease some space but was denied. Other adjacent businesses were also asked by Nationwide but, ultimately, Mr. Mayer said he spoke to the village’s community development department to go over Nationwide’s parking plan but was told that Nationwide was in their appropriate zone and there was nothing the village could do.

Transportation and Parking Commission

September 9, 2015

Mr. Mayer indicated that the topic of off-street residential parking permits has come up in other parts of the village, citing McCollum Park, but he explained that it came down to better and efficient management of the permitting system and better enforcement through time-of-day restrictions, as well as the No Parking restrictions that were being proposed tonight. As for on-street parking for family parties, Mr. Mayer stated that the police department was open to having residents contact the department informing them of such events.

Ms. Kollintzas expressed that the effort was inconvenient 1) every time she had to make such a phone call for unexpected guests, 2) to make sure whomever was visiting did not receive a ticket because she had to call the police department, and 3) because her kids were playing in the driveway and she had vehicles parking in the street for an hour or two because she had no sidewalks. She stated the parking restrictions would help – preferably during business hours. Saturdays/Sundays she had no issues. She, still believed Residential Only parking should be on Janet Street, which was the front of her home.

Because Mr. Aguzino saw two issues at hand, he asked whether staff could contact the police and ask them to enforce the area and ticket the cars staying overnight, to which staff was willing to do. Commissioner dialog followed that Ms. Kollintzas would have to call the police with license plate numbers in order to avoid her friends/family from receiving a ticket. And furthermore, commissioners pointed out it was a requirement that if a resident was going to be parking overnight, they had to notify the police of same.

Ms. Kollintzas stated she and her neighbors did “not like to call [the police] for any reason” as she has lived there 19 years and did not want to inconvenience the neighbors with restrictions.

Discussion by the commissioners and staff centered around creating parking restrictions of 7AM to 4PM Monday through Friday rather than the full No Parking Anytime restriction.

Ms. Jerri Reimann, 4231 Belle Aire, confirmed there were constant activity of vehicles and people coming out of their cars at 2:00 a.m. but not making any noise. She has seen vehicles parked overnight, blocked in by snowplows, and never towed nor given tickets. She will call the police from now on. She also supported the time of day restriction, as modified, but moving all of the parking to the west side of the first block would inconvenience the mail truck. She did not understand why the village allowed the business parking to come into a residential area.

Commissioner dialog was then raised that the situation was unique in that there were employees on-site much of the traffic was visitor traffic and the area could not handle it; it was not considered in the planning.

Mr. John Siragusa, 4225 Belle Aire, said he noticed garage doors at the Nationwide building appeared to be used for storage. He asked staff if the employees were supposed to be parking in them, wherein Mr. Mayer stated he did bring up the same matter to Community Development and Code Enforcement, whom met with the manager and did an inspection and found that everything was in order with the plan. Per Mr. Mayer, the garage areas were being used as warehouse space but he could not confirm whether the garage areas were used in the parking count for the building.

Mr. Siragusa stated he has a single driveway and his son’s friends drove, which created some entry/exit challenges for him. Restricting the parking hours would make the matter worse. He stated when he worked in Oak Park there were two-hour parking restrictions in the residential area and it was very effective keeping the business vehicles out of the residential area.

Transportation and Parking Commission

September 9, 2015

Ms. Melissa O'Driscoll, 4205 Belle Aire Lane, stated that when the employee parking overflows it ends up in front of her house which blocks her mailbox. She noted that drivers have used her half circle driveway to turn around. She has received dirty looks from men leaving their cars who continue walking down her street. She expressed concern about her well being and safety as a woman. Should the overflow move to Seeley or Drove, she said those same employees would be walking past her home and being angry with the neighbors for "doing this." She voiced concern about her customers parking on the street for a short period of time during the busy season.

On that point, commissioners noted that home businesses had to be considered now.

A resident from 4202 Seeley Avenue commented that Belle Aire has drainage ditches and that most of the cars are on the street which creates a canyon to drive through. This resident had never seen the parking issues this bad until now due to Nationwide. On another matter he asked staff whether it had addressed the Enterprise vehicles parking on the sidewalks.

Staff confirmed that emergency vehicles will have a traffic flow issue on Belle Aire Lane when both sides have vehicles.

To that point, Ms. Christine Kollintzas, 4225 Seeley Avenue, agreed and confirmed that on the first day of school she and others received police warning tickets because they were blocking possible emergency vehicle access which she also believed was occurring on Belle Aire Lane. She stated that the kennel business across from her never was a nuisance to the neighbors, as a business, since she has lived in her home. She questioned how can the village allow businesses into the village and let them know how many parking spaces are available to them before they become a nuisance to the residents. She voiced her frustrations with cars parking and then 5 or 6 drivers getting into a van and being transported somewhere else. Asked if she was documenting this, Ms. Kollintzas stated she was and she was the one who started the petition. She appreciated staff's assistance.

Commissioners now raised the concern that the business was acting as a transport center, which was not what it was zoned for and it was a clear violation of the code.

In the interim, Chairman Pro tem Saricks recommended temporarily implementing the time-of-day parking restriction to see what effect, if any, occurred in the area. Other comments followed as to the location of the sidewalks used to get the students to school and the various sources of traffic that come past Ms. Kollintzas's home. Mr. Wrobel pointed out that Belle Aire was a collector street which had a higher volume of traffic and it was the only way out to Ogden Avenue.

Contrarily, Ms. Kollintzas pointed out that the issue was with a business and not vehicles from the residential area, citing that Delta Sonic was located in the area and the neighborhood never had issues with it. It was taken care of as a zoning issue.

Bringing the conversation back around, Chairman Pro tem Saricks suggested to table the full time restriction on Janet Street since placing a time restriction there was not conducive and zoning was not under this commission's purview.

Further dialog followed by Ms. Kollintzas as to the difficulties she would have on Janet Street whether there were No Parking restrictions on both sides or whether there was a time restriction on one side of the street. She stated it would bring back employees in front of her home and would not solve the parking problem. She said it was a no-win situation as long as the village continued to let employees park by the residents' homes.

Transportation and Parking Commission

September 9, 2015

Asked what side of Janet Street she preferred the restrictions on – both or one side, she recommended the side that had no sidewalk. Dialog continued between the commissioners, Ms. Kollintzas and staff.

A resident of 4202 Seeley returned and commented that the same parking issues existed when he lived near the high school and he had to continually return to this commission because the parking problem moved over another block whenever restrictions were enacted. He inquired whether the neighbors or Ms. Kollintzas would be required to take photos of the cars parking in the area. He also appreciated Ms. Kollintzas's diligent efforts on this matter. He hoped the parking would be monitored.

CHAIRMAN PRO TEM SARICKS MADE A MOTION THAT THIS MATTER BE TABLED PENDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MORE TIME SPECIFIC ORDINANCE FOR THE LOCATION TO BE PRESENTED BY STAFF AT THE NEXT MEEING. SECONDED BY MR. WROBEL.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE OF 5-0.

File #11-15 East-West Access Drive (north of parking deck)– Loading Zone – Per staff, this request was initiated by staff in response to the Downtown Downers Grove Management Corporation (“DDGMC”) regarding an existing 24-hour loading zone which sits at the northwest corner of East-West Access Drive and Mochel just north of the parking deck. Staff asked that this location be added to village’s code “Section 14.108.4 - Thirty Minute Loading Zones.” (Mr. Saricks noted an error in staff’s report.) Mr. Mayer described that at issue is a 65 to 70 feet of curb line that many of the nearby restaurants/bar owners have requested to be available for on-street parking for their patrons. Staff circulated information about this modification through the DDGMC and to date, has not received any negative feedback on the proposal except to say that the DDGMC has indicated that adjacent businesses near the loading zone support the request. From his own observation, Mr. Mayer stated that loadings/unloadings typically occurred between the hours of 8 AM and 3 PM and the restaurants were already operating. He noted another location further east had an established 30-minute loading zone (7 AM to 3 PM), which, he believed, set a precedent for the area.

Mr. Mayer estimated that one compact, parallel space will be created and he could not create a two-space diagonal space due to the roadway, at that point, being two-way. In closing, staff and commissioners did not see any concerns with the request. A short dialog was raised regarding consideration for angled parking wherein Mr. Mayer said he would speak with the village’s engineer regarding a striping plan to see if one or two stalls could be created.

MR. WROBEL MADE A MOTION THAT TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING COMMISSION INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING LOCATION TO SECTION 14.108.4. THIRTY MINUTE LOADING ZONES, OF THE MUNCIPAL CODE:

“EAST-WEST PARKING DECK DRIVEWAY ACCESS ON THE NORTH SIDE, FROM THE WEST LINE OF MOCHEL DRIVE TO A POINT SEVENTY (70) FEET WEST OF THE WEST LINE OF MOCHEL DRIVE” WITH THE MODIFICATION THAT LOADING IS FROM 7AM to 3PM ONLY.

SECONDED BY MR. SARICKS.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE OF 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Mayer recalled there were some outstanding questions from the prior meeting which he was unable to answer. He recommended that the commissioners view on-line videos of the September 1st Village Council meeting and a governance meeting that took place, where some of those questions were addressed. Specifically, Mr. Mayer indicated the council discussed having no council liaisons because much information was now available via staff packets, meeting minutes, etc. to pass along an item's status.

Chairman Pro tem Saricks asked staff about the role of this commission and asked whether there was a better way to track this commission's recommendations to the council to see their outcome. Mr. Mayer then responded by explaining what types of cases this commission and the Planning Commission would be reviewing. As far as tracking future recommendations from this commission, Mr. Mayer envisioned providing an update to this commission on what was approved by the council all the way to implementation. Regarding the process previous to his employment, where certain items were taken from an engineering study to village council for approval, he was of the understanding that such clear-cut items or engineering-based projects were seen as being outside the scope and were forwarded directly to council.

In response, Chairman Pro tem Saricks indicated that it was the experience of this commission that such cases, as mentioned above, would be the first commission where the public could voice their concerns, thereby this commission acting as a "conduit" to the village council. Seeing that this commission's questions were answered, Chairman Pro tem Saricks asked if staff could send out a revised version of his answer sheet.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Mayer announced he had a kickoff meeting today for the village's 2015 traffic data collection and would try to address questions from the July 8th meeting with the traffic consultant. A staff update also followed regarding the parking restrictions enacted at McCollum Park. A commissioner pointed out to staff that in the park's fall brochure they were scheduling fall softball through November 15th. (The parking restriction went to November 1st.) Mr. Mayer stated he would monitor the matter. On another topic, Mr. Wrobel asked staff for some follow-up information on traffic calming measures -- bulb-outs and yellow lines, specifically -- and their comparisons (before/after) to slowing down traffic. Mr. Mayer offered to look into the matter.

COMMUNICATIONS - None

ADJOURN

CHAIRMAN PRO TEM SARICKS MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:08 P.M. MR. WROBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED. VOTE 5-0.