



CITY OF WAUWATOSA

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TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday, July 29, 2003

PRESENT: Alds. Becker, Herzog, Krol (7:40 p.m.) Matthews, McCarthy -5

ALSO

PRESENT: W. Kappel, Dir. of Public Works

Ald. Herzog in the Chair called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m. -4

Parking Changes in the Area of N. 77th Street and Mary Ellen Place

Mr. Kappel outlined the various measures taken under 90-day trials since late October 2002 to address residents' concerns about all-day parking in front of their homes. One-hour restrictions were placed on the west side of N. 77th Street from the south property line of 521 to the north property line of 529 N. 77th Street and on the south side of Mary Ellen Place from the east property line of 7705 to the west property line of 7729 Mary Ellen Place. In addition, under the current 90-day trial, parking restrictions were removed from the west side of N. 77th Street adjacent to the building at 7700 W. Blue Mound Road.

Mr. Kappel reported that his observation over the past 60-90 days indicates that employees are parking along the west side of 7700 W. Blue Mound Road rather than in the neighborhood and any cars that do park in the neighborhood abide by the one-hour restrictions. He has not seen any cars parked on Mary Ellen Place this summer where it was formerly common to see five parked cars. He recommended permanently removing the parking restrictions along the west side of 7700 W. Blue Mound Road and making the one-hour restrictions in front of residences permanent, if that is what the residents want.

Harvey Pollack, owner of the building at 7700 W. Blue Mound Road, indicated that the current situation is working out well and he would like to see it continue. The five or six additional on-street spaces next to the building apparently help keep employee parking out of the residential area. A cul-de-sac would not be worthwhile for just a few more spaces, he felt.

Judy Nicholson, 7705 Mary Ellen Place, said that every so often an employee still parks all day on Mary Ellen Place. She expressed some concern about winter conditions and agreed that the current situation should be made permanent, including the one-hour restrictions.

Jill Wickham, 7733 W. Wisconsin Avenue, president of the neighborhood organization, said she spoke to a few neighbors today and all thought that the 90-day trial was working very well and the one-hour signs should remain. Some were concerned that employee parking would return in the winter, and some have noticed some all-day parking where there are one-hour restrictions.

Ald. Becker asked Bridget Brennan, 521 N. 77th Street, about parking in front of her home, and she indicated that there has been no problem since cars have moved to the east side of 77th Street. It was noted that someone with handicapped parking privileges is exempt from the restrictions.

Moved by Ald. McCarthy, seconded by Ald. Becker to recommend to Council introduction of an ordinance permanently implementing the current one-hour restrictions on N. 77th Street and Mary Ellen Place and removing restrictions on N. 77th Street adjacent to 7700 W. Blue Mound Road. Ayes: 4

Request for Stop Signs on N. 99th Street at W. Marion Street

Mr. Kappel reported that this item and the next both relate to the area bounded by 100th Street, Grantosa Drive, and Congress Street where both area alderpersons have received complaints about speeding and parked cars hampering mail delivery. The fire department also has some concerns about emergency vehicle access. A stop sign has been requested for north and southbound traffic on N. 99th Street at W. Marion Street. Mr. Kappel reported that the accident history of the intersection indicates there were three accidents in a little more than three years, two personal injury and one property damage. There were also anecdotal observations by Ald. Matthews, who requested review by this committee. Mr. Kappel referred to the warrants for stop signs as outlined in his July 21, 2003, memo and said it is his opinion that this intersection does not meet those warrants.

Frederick Krause, 4265 N. 99th Street, described traffic conditions when students are being dropped off at Milwaukee Lutheran and Divine Savior-Holy Angels High Schools (DSHA) as a "madhouse." This is a dangerous corner, he said, with high speeds and many near-accidents. He felt that stop signs are needed here.

David Hazen, 4309 N. 99th Street, spoke of excess speeds and dangerous behavior by young drivers, emphasizing that inexperienced drivers are not that aware of the danger of uncontrolled intersections. There have been several close calls, and area residents have learned to be very cautious. There are also some visual obstructions at the intersection due to some pine trees and the siting of one corner house. Speeds of 40-50 mph are common.

Donna Somers, 9804 W. Grantosa Drive, agreed that this is a very dangerous intersection. Students do not observe the speed limits, and there are many squealing tires and dangerous behaviors, she indicated. Wayne Krueger, 9915 W. Congress Street, concurred that there is much speeding, especially after athletic events. The situation has gotten worse since Milwaukee Lutheran put in their back parking lot, he said.

Ald. Matthews said that a number of people raised this issue and she personally observed the situation during the time she spent surveying residents about the parking concerns to be discussed next. Although she usually concurs with staff recommendations, she said, she believes this is an unusual situation because of the two high schools and the large number of inexperienced drivers approaching an uncontrolled intersection.

Moved by Ald. Matthews, seconded by Ald. Becker to approve a 90-day trial of stop signs for north and southbound traffic on N. 99th Street at W. Marion Street [trial to begin and stop signs to be erected prior to the start of school in August] –

Ald. Becker commented that this seems to be a unique situation, although there probably is no problem 90% of the time. Ald. Matthews responded that this problem exists far more than 10% of the time due to the number of activities at both schools in the evening and on weekends.

(Ald. Krol present. -5)

Asked by Ald. McCarthy for accident details, Mr. Kappel said that drivers were ticketed in each case for failing to yield the right of way. In two of them, medical transport was needed. Ald. McCarthy then asked about other measures such as speed reader boards or unmarked squad cars. He said that drivers that don't respect the rights

and safety of others don't necessarily respect stop signs either, and he was concerned that stop signs would give a false sense of security. He also asked whether input from the schools has been sought and said that those measures he has mentioned should be taken before resorting to stop signs.

Noting that the majority of the problem is during the school year, Ald. Matthews said she planned to request the speed trailer for this fall. This issue came up toward the end of the school year, so she has not yet spoken with either school about it. She emphasized the uniqueness of this area with two high schools and many youthful drivers in a residential area, which is much different than in other school areas. Madison Elementary School to the north contributes additional traffic. She would ask for extra police patrols here to be sure the stop sign is being enforced. Upon a suggestion to hold this matter until September, Ald. Matthews said that she wanted the signs to be in place prior to the August start of school for Milwaukee Lutheran and Divine Savior Holy Angels. The 90-day trial would begin at that time.

The Chair expressed some reservations about 90-day trials for stop signs, since it is difficult to remove the signs after training drivers to stop. He also observed that if stop signs are placed at every intersection at which they are requested, we'd have four-way stops at every intersection. He also commented that stop signs do not control speed but often result in drivers rolling through and then racing on. He indicated that he would support the motion based on Ald. Matthews' recommendation and the fact that there are some sight problems at this uncontrolled intersection.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 4; Noes: 1 (McCarthy)

(Ald. Krol assumed the Chair.)

Request for Two-Hour Parking in Area of N. 99th Street, W. Marion Street, and W. Byron Place

Noting that this item relates to the same area as the previous agenda item, Mr. Kappel reported that there have been several complaints from residents on W. Marion Street regarding lack of mail delivery due to cars parked too close to mail boxes. He has observed the situation there himself, and Deputy Chief Carberry of the fire department has also raised concerns about getting fire equipment down Marion Street. A Marion Street resident near Divine Savior-Holy Angels (DSHA) also complained of not being able to park in front of his own home. Mr. Kappel said that the problem is periodic and seems to happen more toward the end of the school year. No one seems to park on N. 99th Street, he noted, which abuts the Milwaukee Lutheran athletic field. That area is in Milwaukee, and Milwaukee officials have been notified of the concerns. Mr. Kappel recommended two hour school-day parking restrictions as follows: 1) on the west side of N. 99th Street from the north city limits to Grantosa Drive; 2) on the north side of W. Marion Street from N. 100th Street to N. 99th Street; 3) on the south side of W. Marion Street from N. 99th Street to Byron Place; and 4) on the west side of Byron Place from W. Marion Street to Grantosa Drive. He indicated that streets other than Marion Street were included to address any shift in parking to adjacent streets.

David Hazen, 4309 N. 99th Street, said most of his neighbors are opposed to the two-hour restriction. Noting that both Milwaukee Lutheran and DSHA are in Milwaukee, he suggested that instituting two-hour parking might shift the burden to surrounding Milwaukee streets. Drivers also might park on 99th Street across from his house. Also, there are laws that prohibit parking too close to driveways and littering. From his own experience with high school students, he felt that the problem could be resolved if measures were taken to crack down on those breaking the law. Money spent on erecting and enforcing new signs would be better spent on writing some tickets to send a clear message on the law and its consequences, he felt. Mr. Hazen supported collaboration with Milwaukee Lutheran. He felt that restricting the ability of parents and others to park in the area will take something away from the community.

Donna Somers, 9804 W. Grantosa Drive, said she has found there is barely room for cars to pass through with parking on both sides of the street, to say nothing of garbage trucks, emergency vehicles, and school buses. She has called the school about students blocking driveways and police have written tickets, but it continues to occur. Some students have been cooperative when asked to move. The situation has gotten worse lately because a new addition took away some parking spaces. Rather than two-hour restrictions, she suggested no parking on the residential side of the street to provide safe passage. Parking could be allowed on the school side.

Greg Riederer, 4339 N. 99th Street, opposed two-hour restrictions, stating there has been no problem until just recently. He felt that more questions should be asked and alternatives investigated. He also felt that both schools should be consulted. He noted that DSHA recently added a theater and more sports have been added to Milwaukee Lutheran since their recent addition was built. When police enforcement was done two years ago, he said, 50% of those stopped were not students. He suggested talking to the Milwaukee neighbors in this area and working with the high schools and with the police. He added that more parking spaces may open up when school renovations are completed.

Wayne Krueger, 9915 W. Congress Street, agreed that more investigation is needed, and both schools as well as Milwaukee neighbors should be contacted to achieve a coordinated plan. Frederick Krause, 4265 N. 99th Street, said he has no problem with students parking in front of his house. The main problem occurs on Byron Place and Marion Street between Grantosa Drive and 100th Street. He felt that the proposed restrictions would simply move the problem to other streets.

The Chair noted that both Milwaukee Lutheran and DSHA received copies of Mr. Kappel's memo on this subject and were advised of this meeting.

Paul Bahr, Principal of Milwaukee Lutheran High School, said that the proposed restrictions would be more inconvenient for residents than for the school. The students will merely move across the street. He noted that there are 15-20 parking spaces on the west end of their parking lot, but students find parking on the street is closer. Parking on Marion or 99th Street was not by Milwaukee Lutheran students but was probably due to loss of parking during construction at DSHA, he said. The 80 spaces that were lost during construction will be regained when school starts this year.

Ald. Matthews said she brought this issue to the committee for discussion after getting a 50-50 response from residents. Those who really wanted the restrictions did not choose to come tonight, she noted. She indicated that she is in no hurry to place parking restrictions and would be happy to have more discussions on this issue.

Mr. Kappel recommended proceeding to work with the schools. He indicated some remaining concern about emergency vehicle access and mail delivery.

Moved by Ald. Matthews, seconded by Ald. Becker to place this matter on file. Ayes: 5

Notification of Temporary No Parking During State Fair

Mr. Kappel notified the committee of temporary no parking signage that would be placed on N. 85th Street, N. 86th Street, and W. Hawthorne Avenue during the run of state fair. He reserved the option to expand the restrictions should it become necessary. Aids. Ecks and Jenkins, who represent this area, were present at this time and indicated that there were no negative comments when similar measures were taken last year.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin