



CITY OF WAUWATOSA
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**TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, September 27, 2005**

PRESENT: Aids. Becker, Herzog, Maher, Purins -4

EXCUSED: Ald. Krol

ALSO PRESENT: W. Kappel, Public Works Dir.; Chief B. Weber, Police; Ald. Treis

Ald. Becker as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Reconsideration of 90-Day Trial of No parking on W. Glendale Avenue

Held from the previous meeting was a request by Ald. Maher to cancel the 90-day trial of no parking on both sides of W. Glendale Avenue from N. 100th to N. 101st Streets that was approved in June and began with the start of school. Mr. Kappel noted that the original request was based on safe passage for school children in an area that drivers were using for drop-offs. He did not have a recommendation on the request for cancellation.

Troy Seabrook, 4556 N. 107th Street, said that conditions have been great since the no parking signs were erected. Parents can still park along the east side of 100th Street just north of Glendale Avenue where there is a sidewalk and a crossing guard at the corner. There is a lot of pedestrian traffic in the street in this area, and many use Glendale Avenue because of the crossing guard. There is little room for pedestrians or cars when parking is allowed on both sides of Glendale. There are also problems with backups in this area. Mr. Seabrook disagreed with a statement made at the previous meeting that residents don't mind people walking on their grass, reporting that he encountered a resident with strong objections last year. He suggested that prohibiting parking on both sides plus a combined pedestrian and bike lane on the south side of Glendale Avenue would provide more room for cars and more visibility of pedestrians.

Ald. Treis reported that since the previous meeting he talked with Ald. Maher and met with a police representative and the Madison Elementary School principal. Prohibiting left turns from northbound 100th Street to westbound Glendale Avenue was discussed but was not supported by the principal and police captain. The consensus was to retain the no parking area so that people do not crowd the corner and complicate the work of the crossing guard. Police would monitor the area to discourage drivers from leaving their cars for extended periods to run into the school. Ald. Treis said that his main concern is the safety of the children with convenience for adults running second.

Chief Weber said that with parking on Glendale the concern is that students will walk between the cars and along the street. In winter when more people drive to school the street would be much narrower. Prohibiting left turns would only force drivers farther north and would dump more traffic onto other side streets. He noted that problems similar to this occur for about 20 minutes in the morning and afternoon at every one of the city's schools. Police try to encourage people to drop off their passengers and then move on. They may be ticketed if they leave their car to go into the school. If parking is again allowed on Glendale, Chief Weber felt it should at least be kept to one side of the street.

Mr. Seabrook said the principal plans to send a letter to parents about parking in front of the school, encouraging them to drop off their children and then leave. He noted that Divine Savior/Holy Angels and Milwaukee Lutheran High Schools also contribute to traffic on 100th Street.

Ald. Maher explained that this began with an e-mail from the mother of a disabled child who was concerned with the removal of this parking option close to the school. He said he is not convinced that prohibiting parking on both sides of the street is the answer to safety concerns. Forcing people to park a greater distance from the school means that more people will be walking in the street. A viable option would be no parking only on the south side of Glendale.

Ald. Treis concurred with prohibiting parking only on the south side of the street. He commented that the whole idea of a 90-day trial is to see what works and what doesn't work.

Moved by Ald. Herzog, seconded by Ald. Maher to amend the 90-day trial by continuing to prohibit parking on the south side of Glendale Avenue between N. 100th and N. 101st Streets and removing the no parking restrictions from the north side of the street –

Ald. Purins said this would create a situation where children would walk with traffic at their backs rather than facing oncoming traffic as recommended for safety. He felt that a bicycle lane might help if it keeps traffic out of that lane, but the striping might disappear with the first sign of rain or snow. Having lived on the west side of 100th Street just north of the school, he observed that even families living a block or two away often drive their children to school. He felt it might be appropriate to analyze how many are actually walking.

Ald. Herzog noted that there are marked pedestrian lanes on 112th Street south of Potter Road, but people often park in that lane. Mr. Kappel said that there are actually two walk-to-school routes in that area. He said he would never profess that a painted line would keep a car from veering into a pedestrian.

Ald. Maher said that erection of the no parking signs on Glendale Avenue has not prevented people from parking there. There are still cars parked on both sides every day because parents have no other place to go.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 3; Noes: 1 (Purins)

Mr. Kappel indicated that signs would be removed from the south side of the street this week.

Proposed Ordinance Prohibiting Engine Compression Braking

Mr. Kappel reported that he contacted someone from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) on the question of engine compression braking. He distributed information from their Traffic Guidelines Manual, which answers some of the question raised at the previous meeting. He said that if the city passes an ordinance prohibiting engine compression braking, the city would then need to petition the state for permission to install signs at specific locations. Since some surrounding communities have similar ordinances, it seems WiDOT would look favorably upon such a request. Mr. Kappel said that he is more concerned about the problem of enforcement. He said that trucks cannot be prevented from using this type of braking in an emergency, but truck drivers do often use them when unnecessary because it saves wear and tear on regular brakes.

Bobby Marek, 10804 W. Fiebrantz Avenue, said it does not seem logical that the city doesn't have an ordinance covering this problem if other communities do. Trucks are being forced off the freeway and down Hwy. 100,

which adds to all the other traffic already on that road. The posted speed limit is 40 mph, although the sheriff's department recommends 30-35 mph for roads in urban areas with heavy, oversized traffic. Mr. Marek said that when trucks traveling south use engine compression braking to slow down as they approach Capitol Drive, it is impossible to converse with someone standing 3-4 feet away in his backyard. This impacts many residents along this street. Brenda Marek, 10804 W. Fiebrantz Avenue, conceded that many drivers would not obey this law, but she felt it would make a tremendous difference if posted signs would reduce the noise even by half. She noted that there is a curve in this area of Hwy. 100 that often causes trucks to use this type of braking to slow down.

Mr. Kappel said that any sign would probably have to be placed close to the city limits at Hampton Avenue, since the DOT says the signs cannot be site specific. The signs are usually seen outside of small towns where there is a highway off ramp. The city would have no jurisdiction on Hwy. 45 or its off ramps.

Ald. Purins asked if these signs are used in other Milwaukee County communities, noting that no local suburbs were included in the sample ordinances previously provided. Mr. Kappel was not familiar with their use locally. Ald. Purins then asked about a need to post signs at every freeway off ramp and truck route throughout the city. Mr. Kappel said that the only authorization the city could request would be for entrance points along Hwy. 100 or perhaps Hwy. 181, and we would have to be specific about where signs would be placed. The city would be responsible for erecting and maintaining the signs. Mr. Kappel indicated that there have not been any other complaints about this problem.

Ald. Herzog reported that he received a complaint last night from someone who lives near Hwy. 45. He questioned the wording of the DOT guidelines regarding jurisdiction on freeways and expressways and the section prohibiting signage on certain downgrades. Mr. Kappel said that the city cannot put a sign on Hwy. 45. Only the state has jurisdiction on Hwy. 45 or on I-94. He explained that engine compression braking is allowed for safety purposes on certain steep downgrades.

There was further discussion of the effectiveness of any signs that might be approved and the problem of enforcement. Ald. Maher pointed out that there are residents along Hwy. 100 only from Hampton Avenue to Burleigh Street. With more and more trucks being pushed onto Hwy. 100, he felt that the city has to at least try to address this problem.

Moved by Ald. Maher, seconded by Ald. Purins to recommend to Council introduction of the proposed ordinance and to direct the Public Works Director to request permission to install at least one sign on Hwy. 100/ Mayfair Road near Hampton Avenue. Ayes: 4

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

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