



CITY OF WAWATOSA

7725 WEST NORTH AVENUE
WAWATOSA, WI 53213
Telephone: (414) 479-8917
Fax: (414) 479-8989

TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday, September 12, 2006

PRESENT: Alds. Donegan, Grimm, Herzog, Sullivan, Treis -5

ALSO W. Wehrley, City Engineer; Chief B. Weber, Police Dept.;
PRESENT: A. Kesner, Interim City Admin./City Atty.; Ald. Didier

Ald. Sullivan as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

U-Turn Restriction for Eastbound W. Capitol Drive west of Mayfair Road

Mr. Wehrley reported that there has been a history of eastbound Capitol Drive vehicles cutting through the residential neighborhood to avoid congestion at the intersection of Mayfair Road and Capitol Drive. A few years ago, left turns were prohibited at 110th Street during rush hours to mitigate that problem. Some drivers now have been making U-turns at the next opening east and then proceeding through the neighborhood. To eliminate that maneuver and reduce cut-through traffic, a U-turn restriction is proposed. Such a restriction would not prevent traffic from getting to any businesses along Capitol Drive.

Ald. Herzog suggested that drivers might just turn left at the opening and go through the Walgreens lot to the alley and then to 110th Street. Mr. Wehrley said that is a possibility but he would not want to restrict left turns there because that would prevent traffic from getting to Walgreens. This will be monitored during the 90-day trial, and adjustments can be made if needed. Ald. Herzog noted that it would also be a matter of enforcement since drivers are not allowed to use private property in that manner.

Moved by Ald. Treis, seconded by Ald. Donegan to approve a 90-day trial of No U-Turns for eastbound W. Capitol Drive traffic at the median opening immediately east of N. 110th Street. Ayes: 5

Parking Issues in the Area of W. North and W. Meinecke Avenues between N. 86th and N. 88th Streets

Mr. Wehrley reported that residents on W. Meinecke Avenue have objected to all-day parking on both sides of their street by employees of the Sendik's store at 8616 W. North Avenue. Mr. Kappel, the Director of Public Works, has been studying solutions to parking problems in this area for some time and has come up with a recommendation for all-day parking on the north side of each block of W. North Avenue between N. 86th Street and Pasadena Boulevard and for a portion of the south side of the street between 86th and 87th Streets. Businesses in the area, including Wisconsin Garden and Pet and Sendik's, have offered alternatives but support having all-day parking on portions of those blocks. If implemented, this would yield nine additional all-day parking spaces.

Bob Miller, 2376 Pasadena Boulevard, said that nine more spaces would not solve the problem and it is not fair to have them carry the parking burden. A long-term plan to accommodate more cars is still needed. In lieu of that, all the streets should have similar parking, either all day or limited hours.

Laura Mierow, 8608 W. Meinecke Avenue, reported finding that there are between 24 and 32 cars parking in that area. Meinecke is very narrow, and there are safety issues when cars are parked on both sides, especially near the school. There have also been problems with leaf collection because of parked cars. Ms. Mierow said she definitely favors two-hour parking on Meinecke between 86th and 88th Streets.

Geri Seidenstricker, 2405 Pasadena Boulevard, said that there was unlimited parking in front of Sendik's when it first opened but it was changed to temporary two-hour parking when Pasadena road construction began. Why can't there be unlimited parking from corner to corner, which would accommodate more cars? Customers would still be able to park in the store's parking lot. Also, why does the 2300 block of Pasadena Boulevard have restricted parking from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.? If that restriction ended at 6 p.m., the Sendik's manager believes it could accommodate some second-shift workers who start around 4 p.m.

Kevin Oberdorf, manager of Sendiks, said that they didn't want all-day parking in front of the store because customers like to park there, although they would be giving up some of that to attain more all-day spaces. A lot of employee cars will be removed from Meinecke if employees do a better job of utilizing those additional all-day spaces. A two-hour zone closer to Wisconsin Garden and Pet would also help that business.

Greg Fritsch, 2544 N. 89th Street, said the overriding theme of the traffic control manual provided by Mr. Kappel seems to be consistency. There is two-hour parking on Pasadena and 88th, and there is one block in between where there is all-day limited parking, which isn't consistent. If two-hour parking is good for 88th and for Pasadena, it should be good for Meinecke also. Allowing parking on the west side of Pasadena next to North Shore Bank would accommodate at least two more cars.

Kathleen Wojcik, 2402 Pasadena Boulevard, said that there should be a way to prevent cars on narrow streets from parking end to end on each side. When big trucks come through, there is no room in the traffic lane and no visibility. Perhaps it should be limited to three cars in front of each house but not right across from each other.

Dan Gerlach, Wisconsin Garden and Pet, said he would not oppose changing half of an area on the south side of North Avenue across from their store from all day to two-hour parking. There is a group home and an apartment building there. The group home might want to retain some two-hour spaces for their van pickups. Also, the bus stop across from the store was moved west to help left-turn situations there, which left a space that could accommodate four or five cars. The Chair suggested that the county supervisor could be consulted about the rationale for moving the bus stop.

Joanne Keller, 8707 W. Meinecke Avenue, said that employees who park on the street are not considerate of residents. They park very close together and right up to driveways, obstructing access and visibility.

Ald. Herzog said that he has been discussing this with neighbors for over two years. He spoke of a similar situation in the past with Briggs & Stratton employee parking. Restrictions placed then have since been eliminated due to workforce changes and the desire of residents to park for more than two hours. Two-hour restrictions could have been installed in this area, but not everyone agreed on that solution because it limits residents also. Now, two-hour parking is probably the only solution to clear up Meinecke Avenue, but a solution is then needed for where those employees could park. In discussions with the Mayor, Director of

Public Works, and others, it was determined that there are about 22 employees working at any one time at Sendik's and North Shore Bank, plus there may be a few more cars from other businesses. More all-day parking spaces are definitely needed. The area of no parking on the east side of Pasadena adjacent to North Shore Bank is needed to accommodate turning radii of trucks coming out of the Sendik's lot. Eliminating one of the drive approaches out of North Shore to create additional parking wouldn't generate enough spaces to be worthy of restructuring. Ald. Herzog said he would favor two-hour parking on Meinecke between 86th and 88th under a 90-day trial. In addition, restrictions on the north side of North Avenue would need to be eliminated, and a closer look at the south side would be warranted. Also, removing two-hour restrictions on 88th Street from North Avenue to the alley would accommodate four vehicles. He felt that employees should be encouraged to use a rotating system using different streets rather than using the space spot every day.

Moved by Ald. Herzog, seconded by Ald. Treis to approve a 90-day trial of removal of two-hour parking on the north side of W. North Avenue between the street lights along Sendik's –

Mr. Oberdorf felt that there should be a two-hour zone in front of the store with all-day parking to the west. The two-hour zone could also accommodate some Wisconsin Garden and Pet customers.

With consent of the second, Ald. Herzog amended the motion to approve a 90-day trial of two-hour parking on the north side of W. North Avenue in front of the Sendik's store and to allow all-day parking from the light pole in front of the store west to Pasadena Boulevard. Ayes: 5

Moved by Ald. Herzog, seconded by Ald. Treis to approve a 90-day trial of removal of two-hour restrictions on the south side of W. North Avenue between 8603 and 8611 W. North Avenue. Ayes: 5

Moved by Ald. Herzog, seconded by Ald. Treis, to approve a 90-day trial of removal of two-hour restrictions on the east side of N. 88th Street from W. North Avenue north to the alley –

Mr. Wehrley indicated that he has not reviewed the subject location relative to truck deliveries to the gas station on the northeast corner.

With consent of the second, Ald. Herzog amended the motion by making it contingent upon finding no conflicts with truck turning radii. Ayes: 5

Moved by Ald. Herzog, seconded by Ald. Treis to approve a 90-day trial of two-hour restrictions on both sides of W. Meinecke Avenue between N. 86th and N. 88th Streets –

Mr. Wehrley said that the proposal for two-hour parking on both sides of Meinecke would push parking to the residential streets north of Meinecke and to 86th, Pasadena, and 88th. Mr. Kappel recommended two-hour restrictions on just one side; both sides was a secondary option. Ald. Herzog said that the hope is that employees would park closer to the store rather than going farther north, although this may have to be tweaked at a later date. He would like to try both sides for 90 days and see what happens.

Asked about trucking, Mr. Wehrley said that there are not any trucking restrictions on Meinecke but there are on Pasadena. Even with restrictions, trucks are allowed to go around one block in order to turn. If making local deliveries, they could still legally go up to Meinecke. Not allowing trucks to turn from parking lots toward Meinecke could hinder businesses that rely on deliveries off of North Avenue. The Chair noted that trucking could be discussed as a separate issue in the future.

In response to a question, Mr. Oberdorf agreed that two-hour parking on Meinecke will push cars onto Pasadena, 86th, and possibly 88th Street. He plans to inform employees of parking options in front of the store, between 84th and 85th Streets, and on the south side of the street and encourage them to use those spots first. Removing two-hour restrictions on Pasadena would also help with the second shift. He will also explain the legal parking distance from driveways and crosswalks. He said he has tried to add some employee spaces in the lot, now having about three set aside, and he also has some other ideas for getting more employee cars in the lot. He confirmed that there are about 16 people with cars working at one time.

Paul Seidenstricker, 2405 Pasadena Boulevard, asked about minimum parking requirements that are imposed on businesses. He believes there has been direction from management for employees not to use the lot, which is aggravating the problem and may be an enforcement issue.

The Chair said that minimum parking lot requirements based on square footage might be worth looking at. Also, there are some issues related to enforcement, which has been very helpful around Roosevelt School in his district. He noted that two-hour parking on Meinecke may well lead to residents themselves being ticketed at times. Parking will likely migrate to other streets. Ultimately, some kind of cooperative solution is needed to create off-site parking, which cannot necessarily be dictated by city hall.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 5

Referring to questions that arose earlier, Mr. Kesner said that the legal parking distance from driveways is 4 feet and it is 15 feet from any crosswalk, whether marked or unmarked. Questions about marking crosswalks should be directed to the Director of Public Works. The Chair said that the question of parking changes in the 2300 block of Pasadena Boulevard could be discussed at a future meeting along with other points raised here such as employee use of the Sendik's lot. The county should be consulted about the bus stop.

Update on Jefferson School Area Traffic Issues

Mr. Wehrley reported that the issue of a traffic study in the area of Jefferson School was discussed in May but held until this meeting because construction traffic was disrupting normal traffic patterns. Since there is still a detour in this area, the Director of Public Works recommends placing this matter on file until he is able to report back on experience with a new-style school crossing installation elsewhere in the city.

Moved by Ald. Treis, seconded by Ald. Donegan to place this matter on file pending a report from the Director of Public Works –

Steve Oliver, 1057 N. 70th Street, expressed concern with speeds and pedestrian traffic, especially near the school. After northbound drivers stop at Aetna and 70th Street, they reach speeds up to 45 mph down the hill. Southbound drivers also exceed the speed limit. The school zone sign for southbound traffic is obscured by a tree right now, and speed limits are not well marked in the area. Children have been hit on 70th and 68th Streets in the past. There has been some police presence, but perhaps there are other options to be considered

such as stop signs. Mr. Oliver said he was told by the Director of Public Works that stop signs cause more accidents and higher speeds, but he has researched the issue and has not found any such evidence.

The Chair said that one of the first tools would be an updated report from the Director of Public Works. He also encouraged Mr. Oliver to talk with Mr. Kappel, particularly about the obscured sign.

Chief Weber reported that traffic monitoring was done over a period of time on that stretch of road, but speeds were within the limit and no citations were issued. Mr. Oliver said that the monitoring was done at Auburn but he is concerned about the area between Maple Terrace and Auburn.

With the consent of the mover and the second, Ald. Grimm amended the motion by moving to place the matter in file pending a report –

There were further questions relating to school route maps and safety zone maps that it was claimed should be on file for every school according to the traffic manual.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 5

Speed Limit Reduction on N. 70th Street

Mr. Wehrley reported that the consultant who designed the new 70th Street roadway has recommended a reduction in the speed limit to 20 mph between W. State Street and Auburn Avenue due to limited sight distance and a change in grade.

Steve Oliver, 1057 N. 70th Street, asked if the 20 mph limit could be continued all the way to Aetna Court. Mr. Wehrley said that the recommendation is based upon the limited sight distance in a particular area. Extending it beyond that area would be a policy decision, not an engineering decision.

Greg Fritsch, 2544 N. 89th Street, commented on the need to have consistent speed limits around schools.

Ald. Herzog asked about anything that would differentiate this from a normal 25 mph speed sign or that would call attention to the curve or grade change. Mr. Wehrley said that a standard black and white regulatory sign would be used. Ald. Treis noted that flags are used temporarily to call attention to new signs.

Ald. Didier commented on the need to be creative and proactive when traffic increases in connection with Hart Park expansion. She advocated measures to alert drivers to conditions as they head south from State Street. Ald. Donegan said that the issues of Hart Park, 70th Street, and Jefferson School should be on the agenda in the near future.

Moved by Ald. Treis, seconded by Ald. Grimm to recommend a 20 mph speed limit on N. 70th Street between W. State Street and Auburn Avenue and to request that the issues of 68th Street and 70th Street be brought back to the committee for further consideration along with comments from the public. Ayes: 5

Ald. Donegan suggested that the committee take up as a separate item the issue of speed limits and their enforcement, which seems to be a more broad and challenging issue. There have been numerous complaints about drivers not obeying speed limits and stop signs. The committee could brainstorm to consider solutions.

Mr. Kesner commented that this is not a new issue and is not unique to any particular place; there have been a lot of studies on enforcement. Staff will work on this as a bigger picture item and get some studies on the issues.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

es