



CITY OF WAUWATOSA

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TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday, September 29, 2009

PRESENT: Alds. Jay, McBride, Meaux, Stepaniak, Wilke - 5

ALSO

PRESENT: W. Kappel, Dir. of Public Works; Ald. Krol

Ald. Meaux in the Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Loading Zone – Lutheran Home, 7500 W. North Avenue

Mr. Kappel reported that the Lutheran Home has requested a 20-foot loading zone in front of their North Avenue entrance to assist elderly residents and visitors. If approved, he may actually extend the zone to 25 feet in order to take advantage of existing infrastructure for the signage, which would reduce the cost to be paid by the applicant. He recommended installation upon payment without requiring a 90-day trial.

Ald. Stepaniak endorsed the request, noting that he has often observed people who would benefit from a loading zone walking a long distance to a vehicle parked elsewhere.

Moved by Ald. Stepaniak, seconded by Ald. McBride to recommend approval of the requested loading zone with installation upon payment of any necessary fees. Ayes: 5

Removal of No Parking Zone at 6636 W. Lloyd Street

Mr. Kappel reported that a no parking zone was installed at 6636 W. Lloyd Street 15 years ago to facilitate daily busing of a handicapped child. The homeowner has request removal inasmuch as the zone is no longer needed.

Moved by Ald. McBride, seconded by Ald. Jay to recommend introduction of an ordinance to remove the parking restrictions on W. Lloyd Street from 10 feet east to 20 feet west of the drive approach at 6636 W. Lloyd Street. Ayes: 5

Extension of No Parking – East Side of N. 70th Street north of Blanchard Street

Mr. Kappel reported there has been a no parking zone on a portion of the east side of N. 70th Street from Blanchard Street to about halfway up the block for the past few years. The police department, several residents, and the local alderperson have requested an extension of the zone farther north from where it

ends at the crest of the hill. The police department is recommending another 200 feet to to the north side of the property at 1524 N. 70th Street.

Father Charles Walders, 409 N. Lexington Parkway, DeForest, WI, the chaplain to the archbishop of the Old Catholic Church of America, said that he lived directly across from Holy Angels Cathedral, 1510 N. 70th Street, in his youth and is affiliated with it as associate pastor. He said that parking has been an issue there for many years and the issue seems to be more than just the church's utilization on Saturdays and Sundays. There is no church activity from Monday through Friday. There are catechism classes and some small events on Saturdays and three masses on Sundays that generate parking from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The current parking restrictions have not been inconvenient to the church, but the proposed change would not allow parking in front of the church, affecting weddings, funerals, and access for handicapped and elderly people. The church has considered selling the building to another group, but this change could affect the property's value. The building has existed as a church for at least 125 years, and neighbors have always known there would be activity on Saturdays and Sundays. The church has tried to address the neighbors' concerns about parking too close to their driveways and has even instructed residents to have the cars ticketed. The church would be willing to allow police to use their driveway to monitor parking and speeding, which is also a problem on this street. Father Walders feared that the proposed 90-day trial would easily turn into a permanent restriction. He said that he has some ideas about how to address the situation and suggested backing up and discussing appropriate steps. He understands, for example, that neighbors were encouraged to paint curbs for a distance from the driveways to indicate the no parking area, which some neighbors have done.

Manuel Flores, 2143 S. 26th Street, Milwaukee, expressed concern about adequate parking on Saturdays and Sundays and asked if the proposal would apply then. Mr. Kappel indicated that the proposal is for no parking at any time.

Ald. McBride said that he had asked the police and Mr. Kappel to look at the situation because of the many complaints he has received since he took office. He uses the street daily and feels it is extremely dangerous to come over the hill in either direction because cars parked on either side cannot be seen. This is probably the steepest hill in Wauwatosa. With cars on both sides, there is effectively a lane and a half for traffic. Police observed the area on several Sundays and arrived at the recommendation to extend the no parking zone. Regarding further police observation using the church's driveway, Ald. McBride noted the department's time constraints and the need to balance the overall needs of the city in terms of crime and traffic. This proposal would extend no parking on just one side of the street, pushing available parking on that side down the hill a little and off the crest.

Mr. Kappel said that he would recommend a no-fee loading zone in front of the church to help mitigate some of the issues that were raised. Loading zones are usually enforced by the entity that makes the request.

Ald. McBride noted that changes are often made during the course of a 90-day trial. If the change is not working, it can be adjusted or ended.

Moved by Ald. McBride, seconded by Ald. Stepaniak to approve a 90-day trial of an extended no parking zone, as recommended, with a trial of a no-fee loading zone as the Director of Public Works deems appropriate –

Ald. Stepaniak asked if the safety problem could be alleviated with less than 200 feet of additional no parking. Mr. Kappel said that might be possible; 200 feet was the recommendation of the police captain.

With a loading zone at the crest, though, additional space may be needed to avoid potential problems. Another possibility is moving the restriction to the west side, but he would hesitate to do that because it is cars going up this steep hill that need unrestricted momentum. If approved tonight, he would encourage some discussion with the church hierarchy during the course of the 90-day trial.

Ald. Jay said that she would not be in favor at this time since she has seen no pictures or drawings of the topography nor has she visited the street. Committee members briefly commented on timing, possible extensions, and the need for additional information.

With the consent of the second, Ald. McBride withdrew the motion.

Moved by Ald. McBride, seconded by Ald. Stepaniak to hold this matter for further discussion at the October 13th meeting. Ayes: 5

Mr. Kappel said that staff would prepare further documentation and told Father Walders that any suggestions he has could be integrated into the report. The City Engineer will likely be present in Mr. Kappel's place at the next meeting. Ald. McBride said that he would like to ensure that everyone's concerns are addressed to the greatest extent possible.

Removal of Two-Hour Parking – Blanchard Street between N. 72nd and N. 74th Streets

Mr. Kappel reported that two-hour parking restrictions were removed on a trial basis from the south side of Blanchard Street between N. 72nd and N. 74th Streets. Residents had requested the removal so that they could park their own vehicles on the street. The trial was extended to address some concerns that the street that the change would prompt continuous parking by patrons of a bar on State Street that had recently expanded. Mr. Kappel said that the lack of complaints as well as his own observations seems to indicate that no problems have arisen. He recommended making a permanent ordinance change.

Ald. McBride noted that when he originated this request he also wanted to address the concerns of a resident with a home business whose customers were getting ticketed when exceeding the two-hour limit. His own observations during the trial period confirmed that few cars are parking in this area.

Moved by Ald. McBride, seconded by Ald. Wilke to recommend to Council introduction of an ordinance to remove the two-hour restrictions on the south side of Blanchard Street between N. 72nd and N. 74th Streets. Ayes: 5

Parking Changes on W. State, N. 72nd and N. 74th Streets

Mr. Kappel reported that trial parking changes were put in place on State Street, 72nd and 74th Streets when a business on State Street expanded. The east side of N. 72nd was signed for no parking at any time from State Street to Blanchard Street. Signs were added at the driveways for the multi-family units along State Street to reinforce that no parking is allowed in those areas. Adjustments were made during the trial period to retain one-hour parking on the east side of N. 74th Street. Now that construction at the Hart Park athletic field has ended, signage will be added to direct drivers to the public parking across State Street on Hart Park Lane. Mr. Kappel recommended making permanent changes by ordinance.

Moved by Ald. McBride, seconded by Ald. Jay to recommend to Council introduction of an ordinance to amend parking restrictions on W. State Street, N. 72nd Street, and N. 74th Street. Ayes: 5

Proposed Ordinance – Traffic Control Trial Period

The committee reviewed a proposed amendment to the city code that would give the Traffic and Safety Committee authority to extend 90-day trials without having to forward the matter for Council approval. Mr. Kappel said that this is a result of discussions among staff about streamlining and expediting existing processes. Enforcement of any temporary restrictions would continue to have the full weight of any traffic law, just as it does now with Council approval.

Ald. Stepaniak expressed strong support for the amendment but suggested that it should provide more flexibility to amend the original restrictions. Mr. Kappel agreed, noting that there could be a need for more than two 90-day trials if changes are precipitated along the way. Those decisions would be made at the committee level upon recommendations from staff. If the committee chose, extensions could be for less than 90 days.

Ald. Jay commented that there should be a limit on the number of extensions. Ald. McBride agreed with providing as much flexibility as possible but recommended that trials should not exceed one year.

The Chair proposed redrafting the ordinance amendment to add flexibility and a 12-month limit. He felt that the first trial should be for 90 days. Ald. McBride favored an option for extensions of less than 90 days.

Moved by Ald. McBride, seconded by Ald. Jay to hold this matter to the next meeting for discussion of a redrafted amendment. Ayes: 5

The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

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