

Parking and Traffic Committee Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Thursday, April 17, 2014, 5:30 pm., in the Birch Room at City Hall
Members Present: Abitz{C}, Kellbach, Winters, Mielke, Nutting
Others Present: Lt. Pekarske, Alfonso, Wagner, Lang, Candace & Craig Johnson, Pat Jozwiak

In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and sent to the Daily Herald in the proper manner. It was noted that there was a quorum present and the meeting was called to order by Chairperson Abitz at 5:33 pm.

(1) Minutes of the Prior Meeting – 03/20/2014

Motion by Nutting, second by Mielke, to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2014. Motion approved 4-0.

(2) Discussion and possible action: To adjust the traffic signal timing or install “No Right Turn on Red” signage for northbound 17th Avenue traffic at the W. Bridge Street intersection.

Discussion: This topic was discussed at previous meetings and the City staff was asked to bring back recommendations.

Lt. Pekarske stated that he and Allen researched and observed this area at the end of March and beginning of April between 0700-0800, 1200-1300, and 1500-1600. There was a 10 to 20 second traffic gap approximately every 2 minutes during light cycles. North/South green and then East/West turn arrow provides ample traffic gaps with little to no traffic eastbound traffic on Bridge Street. The DOT guidelines are based upon research and best practice for traffic safety and flow of traffic and does not support a “No right on red” at this location. Bridge Street has been and will continue to be a major thoroughfare through the city. Any changes will have significant impact on the flow of traffic at this intersection effecting thousands of motorists daily and potentially back up traffic on 17th Avenue. Based upon the observational data of the intersection, combined with the DOT guidelines for “No right turn on red” signs, it is recommended that no change be made as during the day there is adequate traffic gaps to safely enter EB Bridge Street and the roadway and intersections are designed to handle high volumes of traffic in a safe and efficient manner with their current markings.

Nutting asked if during the observation, did anyone pull into the driveway and back out? Pekarske stated no.

Committee members discussed various time frame limits, more police presence in the area, or bringing the speed trailer to the area. Pekarske indicated that this particular area would be difficult to enforce due to the area layout and volume of traffic. Wagner stated that he has talked numerous times with the resident that is having difficulty getting out of her driveway and feels that this is a safety issued for the four residents on W. Bridge Street, along with those who are trying to enter Bridge St. from 12th Avenue as well.

Wagner stated that he is an advocate of the study, however, the study is for the majority and common sense says that it is not safe for the few residents. He would like to try the signage and see it fail than not do anything at all. He understands this is not an easy solution.

Pekarske stated that the DOT safety engineers do not recommend a trial and error use of street signs because thousands of motorists pass through every day and motorists should not be looking for constant changing of signs.

Abitz asked ACA Alfonso if there are any liability issues with putting up the sign. Alfonso stated that the city is bound by MUTCD guidelines and Allen stated this was not in the MUTCD.

However, Alfonso reminded the committee members that anyone can sue the city at any time. Pekarske reminded the Committee of a situation in the Town of Rib Mountain which resulted in a law suit.

Motion made by Nutting, to install the “No Right Turn on Red” sign for the northbound 17th Avenue traffic at the W. Bridge Street intersection, second by Mielke. After further discussion, the motion was amended to install the “No Right Turn on Red” sign for the northbound 17th Avenue traffic at the W. Bridge Street intersection between 6AM and 6PM. No objections to the amendment, the Motion approved 5-0.

(3) Discussion item only: Parking concerns near 105 N 2nd Avenue and the surrounding N 2nd Ave and Elm Street area.

Discussion: Resident Candace Johnson stated that she operates an in-home daycare and her clients are not able to park near her home. She stated that Eastbay employees are parking along the streets starting at 7AM and lasting all day. Patrons of the Chatterbox and Sam’s Pizza also park on the street in this area, but those cars are not there all day.

Committee members discuss various solutions such as; limited 15 minute parking, limited 2 hour parking, alternate side of the street parking, and resident permit parking.

It was the City’s recommendation not to assign 15 minute parking to individual residential areas as this area is not an established business district and the house could be sold or the business terminated at any time.

Winter recommended putting this on the next agenda, recommending 2 hour parking in this area between 8AM to 6PM and contacting the Chatterbox, Sam’s Pizza, and other area businesses for their input.

(4) Discussion and possible action: Create and sign a 15-minute parking space in the 300 block of Garfield Avenue on the south side of the roadway in front of 311 Garfield Ave.

Discussion: Catholic Charities and the Warming Center are located near 311 Garfield Avenue. When Catholic Charities has meetings, they park in front of the residential homes and then there is no parking for the in-home daycare.

Discussion among Committee members to install a 15 minute parking sign in front of 311 Garfield Avenue’s walkway.

Pekarske stated that Allen said to use with caution, as with the previous item, the City does not recommend making an ordinance given the fact it is a private residence for a daycare, as the home could be sold and the business terminated at any time.

Motion by Winters to install 15 minute parking sign for one spot in front of 311 Garfield Avenue’s walkway Monday – Friday from 6AM to 6PM, second by Kellbach. Motion approved 5-0.

(5) Discussion and possible action: to amend W.M.C. 10.20.070 relating to handicapped stall designation at the corner of Jefferson Street and N 3rd Street to coincide with the two currently marked spaces.

Discussion: This is a housekeeping issue. This item was discovered when updating the location of handicap stalls in the downtown area. The three parking stalls located in this area were converted into two stalls; one stall became a van accessible area. However ordinance was never updated to reflect the change.

Motion by Winters to amend W.M.C. 10.20.070 relating to handicapped stall designation at the corner of Jefferson Street and N 3rd Street to coincide with the two currently marked spaces, second by Mielke. Motion approved 5-0.

(6) Discussion and possible action: to move the start time for the monthly meeting of the Parking and Traffic committee to 5:00 PM or 5:15 PM

Discussion: Kellbach requested the meeting start at 5:00 PM or 5:15 PM due to the county board meeting starting at 7:00 on the same night.

Motion by Winters to start the Parking & Traffic Committee meetings at 5:15PM, second by Kellbach. Motion approved 5-0.

(7) Future Agenda items.

Action on 2nd Avenue parking.

To be added to the agenda in Fall if 2014; observation of effects of the right turn prohibition on 17th Ave and W. Bridge Street.

Wagner stated that the Committee will be electing a new Chair and Vice Chair in the near future.

(8) Communication

Pekarske stated that the DOT will be starting construction on Grand Avenue from Kent St. to Townline Rd. Pekarske indicated that Grand Avenue will be down to one lane in each direction during the construction with some re-routing and detours of side streets. Pekarske asked for the Committee member's permission that he and Allen have the authority to handle all the parking issues during the construction, including but not limited to temporary parking, deliveries, and pickups. Committee members expressed support for this and also requested that city staff monitor the traffic on Prospect Avenue during the construction as well. Alfonso indicated that this should still be put on the next agenda for committee approval.

(9) Adjournment

Adjourn.

Motion by Winters, second by Kellbach to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 5-0.
Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Parking and Traffic Committee
Sherry Abitz, Chair