

MINUTES
PARKING AND TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – Thursday, March 8, 2012
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Ken Smith called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Councilor Ken Smith, Chair
John Bohenko, City Manager
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director
Frank Warchol, Police Dept. Representative
Steve Achilles, Assistant Fire Chief
Ron Cypher, Member
Ted Gray, Member
Harold Whitehouse, Member

Staff Advisors Present:

Jon Frederick, Parking & Transportation Director
Michael Angstadt, Legal Department

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Mr. Cypher moved to accept the minutes of the February 16, 2012 meeting as presented. Seconded by Mr. Whitehouse and voted.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Parking and Transportation Director Frederick stated that everything is on target at this time.

Chairman Smith asked if there has been a jump in credit card usage on the new meters. Mr. Frederick stated not yet as there has only been a 25% usage of credit cards on the new meters versus 60% with the Pay and Display. He stated that people are just getting used to being able to use cards instead of change.

Mr. Whitehouse asked about the figures that state "Transfer to Parking Fund" and the \$1,507,494.00 in "Funds Remaining in General Fund".

Mr. Frederick explained that the amount of money above and beyond the operating costs in the Parking Fund will go to the General Fund.

Assistant Fire Chief Achilles moved to accept the Financial Report and place on file. Seconded by Mr. Gray and voted.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Lincoln Avenue to City Hall – Citizen request for crosswalk

Mr. Whitehouse stated a sitewalk was held at the site and it was clear that there had previously been a crosswalk there at one time.

Mr. Whitehouse moved to install a crosswalk at the North end of Lincoln Avenue across Junkins Avenue to the Municipal Complex. Seconded by Mr. Cypher and voted.

B. Dennett Street and Kane Street – City Council Referral – Neighborhood request to reconsider parking area

Assistant Fire Chief Achilles moved to reconsider the request of the Dennett Street and Kane Street Neighborhood to reconfigure the parking area at the April 12, 2012 Parking and Traffic Safety Committee meeting, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse.

Joe Caldarola, 170 Dennett Street – thanked the Committee for reconsidering the request.

Philippe Favet, 152 Dennett Street, stated he likes the new plan, but is unsure where the cars will now park instead.

Tylene Jousse, 197 Dennett Street- thanked the committee for coming out for another site walk to review the new proposal.

Chairman Smith clarified that this will not have to go back to the City Council, but will need to be added to the Public Works work schedule so may not be done until sometime in the Spring.

Motion voted.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Downtown Speed Limits – DPW Report Back – Speed Study

Parking and Traffic Director Frederick stated the Public Works Department is still gathering information.

Mr. Gray moved to refer to the next meeting. Seconded by Mr. Cypher and voted.

B. 86 Haven Road – Report back from Fire, DPW and Legal – Citizen request for “No Parking” in vicinity of Brackett Road

Mr. Frederick stated that he sent letters out to the neighborhood informing them of this meeting and some of the potential solution. He stated he received some correspondence from Tom Mosier as well as a petition that was referred by the City Council regarding weekend activities at Little Harbour School and the impact on the neighborhood which will be on the next PTS agenda. He stated regarding signage, there are no signs except for one about the “pooper scooper” law at the end of Haven Road. Regarding the Fire Hydrant, it is on the corner of Haven and Brackett Roads.

Assistant Fire Chief Achilles reported that they took fire apparatus to the area several times at different times of the day and found that the truck and ambulances can get down the streets, although “No Parking” on one side of the road would help.

Michael Angstadt, Legal Department – stated he addressed the questions from the last meeting in memos that he distributed to the members. In regards to the authority of the PTS Committee to implement pilot measures, his conclusion is that the PTS is authorized to recommend temporary parking and safety regulations, such as “no parking” pilot measures, to the City Council. However, by accepting the PTS minutes, City Council bears ultimate discretion regarding whether, and for how long, such measures should take effect. He continued that in regards to Submission requirements for PTS meeting minutes, there is no general requirement mandate that the PTS submit its minutes to the City Council for approval or acceptance. However, given specific ordinance provisions and past practice, the PTS may find it beneficial to submit its minutes to City Council for acceptance.

Mr. Whitehouse moved to request the City Council to introduce a 60 day pilot program for “NO Parking” on the East side of Haven Road, seconded by Assistant Fire Chief Achilles.

Assistant Fire Chief Achilles stated he doesn’t think that the City Council should make the recommendation and it should come from the PTS Committee.

Jim Lamonde, 84 Haven Road – thanked the committee for the work they have done on this issue. He reviewed the various issues and concerns in the neighborhood and the effect that 40% growth at Little Harbour School has had on the neighborhood. He continued stating that there are several potential solutions that would not impact negatively on the neighbors who have come to expect that they can park on their streets. First, make it a “No School Parking” Zone so that people who live there can still park. Secondly, “Resident Only” parking during school hours and specific “NO school parking/dropping off” designated area. Thirdly, there is a congestion issue on Haven Road with parking on both sides and having to wait for the other lane to go past before being able to go on the other side, so “NO parking” on one side of the street would help, but would interfere with the parking of the people who live on the street. He stated this

affects the quality of life of the neighborhood and it is also a safety issue. He stated that there should be 20 mph speed limit signs placed more prominently as well.

Michael Coffey, 86 Haven Road - passed out photos of the parking problems in front of his house and reiterated some of the points made by the previous speaker.

City Manager Bohenko asked if the 60 day trial were implemented, what would the reaction of the neighborhood be to not be able to park on one side of the road. Mr. Coffey replied that he wouldn't want to have that restriction imposed on the neighbors as it would restrict parking for people on one side and then move it to the other side of the street. He stated he knows that people got letters, but doesn't think they know that this would be the proposal. He feels that the issue could still be resolved by speaking with the parents.

Mr. Lamonde state he doesn't like the "No Parking" on one side solution and would rather see a "No School drop off" area designated because there is a drop off system in place by the school.

Assistant Fire Chief Achilles feels this would be an enforcement problem determining who is a resident and who isn't. City Manager Bohenko stated that there is currently "No parking" during certain hours designated at the Middle School and feels that this is a courtesy issue and maybe putting up signs to "respect the neighborhood" may help. He stated he is concerned with implementing a trial period at this time of the year because the weather will be better and the school year is almost over, so he would rather see something done in the fall with the new school year.

Mr. Whitehouse stated he brought forward the motion for discussion purposes and doesn't support it either.

City Manager Bohenko stated that he would like to have Jon Frederick work with Principal Grossman and communicate with the parents and perhaps put an ombudsman in place, similar to the Middle School/Library Parking lot, where they can instruct the parents on the proper school policy of dropping off and picking up children.

Mr. Whitehouse withdrew his original motion, Assistant Fire Chief Achilles agreed.

Mr. Gray stated he would like to see 2 signs at the end of Haven Road at South Street stating "Not a Drop-off Zone" and redirecting them to Clough Drive.

City Manager Bohenko moved to have Parking and Transportation Director Frederick work with Little Harbour School Principal Grossman and establish an education program with an ombudsman advising and directing parents to follow the school policy for dropping and picking up students for a 30 day period with a report back regarding feedback received from the parents as to why they currently do not follow the policy. Seconded by Mr. Whitehouse and voted.

Mr. Whitehouse volunteered his services as this is in his neighborhood.

Chairman Smith stated he likes this approach rather than placing "No Parking" signs that would penalize the residents of the neighborhood.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Whitehouse moved to adjourn at 8:50 a.m. Seconded and voted unanimously.