

PARKING & TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Minutes of Public Hearing
April 10, 2002

Downers Grove Public Works Facility
5101 Walnut Avenue, Downers Grove

Chairman Johnson called the April 10, 2002 meeting of the Parking and Traffic Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. He then asked for a roll call.

ROLL CALL:

Present: *Commissioners:* Mr. Kren, Ms. McNamara, Mr. Thurston,
Mr. Stapleton, Mr. Wendt, Mr. Yeksigian (7:35 p.m.)
and Chairman Johnson.

Absent: None.

Present: *Staff:* Mr. Jack Bajor, Mr. Bob Schiller, Sgt. Jim Nehls, Mr.
Tim Sembach, Mrs. Chris Chalberg, Recording
Secretary.

Visitors: Mr. Vincent Barrett, 4521 Highland Avenue; Mr. Bill
Barrett, 4911 Highland Avenue; Sister Dorothy
Randall, St. Joseph's School; Len & Mary Lynn
Fisher, 4914 Highland Avenue; Mr. Phil Bartnicki, 825
Oxford Street; Mr. Stephen Jagielo, 4908 Highland
Avenue; Ms. Sandy Liedtke, 755 Claremont Drive;
Ms. Gina Gasborne, St. Joseph's School; Mr. Roman
Gesior, 4504 Linscott Avenue; Mr. John Scigouski,
921 Franklin Street; Mr. Steve Rhodes, 4931
Highland Avenue; Mr. Thomas Corbett, 4614 Elm
Street; Ms. Martha Harnik, 4927 Bryan Place; Ms.
Mary Alice Flavin, 6342 Prideham; Ms Caroline
Mangen, 4900 Northcott Avenue; Mr. William Wrobel,
7800 Queens Court.

Chairman Johnson informed the public that the meeting was being recorded on Village owned equipment to aid in the preparation of the minutes of the meeting. He then asked the Commission if they had any comments or changes regarding the minutes of the March 13, 2002 meeting.

COMMISSIONER MCNAMARA MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 13, 2002 PARKING AND TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING BE ACCEPTED AS SUBMITTED.

COMMISSIONER WENDT SECONDED THE MOTION. *Motion carried 6:0.*

NEW BUSINESS

File #08-02 Parking Fee Structure

Chairman Johnson introduced the first agenda item that being the discussion of the Parking Fee Structure and recommended changes. Before discussing the agenda item, he explained that the Commission's responsibility is to act as a recommending body to the Village Council to look into issues and concerns brought forth by the residents related to parking and traffic. When an issue comes before the Parking and Traffic Commission, Village Staff gathers information on the particular subject of concern and presents a report to the Commission.

Chairman Johnson read the staff report for File #08-02.

BACKGROUND AND RECOMMENDATION

During the Village Council's review of the 2002/03 Budget, staff presented various revenue alternatives for funding of future activities. One of these revenue alternatives was the increase in parking meter fees. Attached is an ordinance amending Section 14.1110 of the Village Code. This amendment changes all 9 hour and 12 hour meters to a fee of 25 cents per hour. The increased revenue that will result from this fee increase will be used directly in Village parking lots for resurfacing, restriping, or reconstruction of said lots. Based on our five-year projections, our current revenue streams were not sufficient to keep pace with the ever-increasing cost of construction, labor and materials necessary to complete these activities in a timely fashion.

Chairman Johnson stated that the parking meter fee increase would not affect downtown shopping.

Mr. Schiller stated that the last meter fee increase was in 1992. At that time all meter fees were not raised. The 9 hour and 12 hour meters have not been raised in several years.

Commissioner Kren was surprised to see penny meters listed in the Ordinance.

Mr. Schiller said that penny meters are no longer utilized within the Village.

Commissioner Kren feels that penny meters should be removed from the Ordinance.

Mr. Schiller said that he would speak to the Legal Department regarding the removal of penny meters from the Ordinance.

COMMISSIONER MCNAMARA MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TO INCREASE 9 HOUR AND 12 HOUR PARKING METER RATES TO 25 CENTS PER HOUR. ADDITIONALLY, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDED REMOVAL OF THE PENNY METER AND 2 HOUR RATES FROM THE ORDINANCE.

COMMISSIONER STAPLETON SECONDED THE MOTION.

Roll Call: AYE: Ms. McNamara, Mr. Stapleton, Mr. Thurston, Mr. Wendt, Mr. Kren and Chairman Johnson.

NAY: None.

Motion Carried: 6:0

Chairman Johnson stated that this recommendation would be sent to Village Council. He said that if anyone is interested in attending the Council meeting for this item they should watch the Village Corner section of the newspaper for the Council agenda dates. He further stated that the Village Clerk could also be contacted and asked when this agenda item would be brought before Council.

OLD BUSINESS

File #04-01 Regulatory Control Evaluation at Main Street and Franklin Street

Chairman Johnson stated that the second item on the agenda was the consideration of the implementation of regulatory control at Main Street and Franklin Street. The Metro Transportation Group, Inc. report was included in the packets. The report included extensive studies, traffic counts and projections of the traffic signal affect on the surrounding area.

Chairman Johnson then read the Staff Report for File # 04-01.

BACKGROUND

The Public Works Department has received the final Main Street and Franklin Street Traffic Impact Evaluations Report from Metro Transportation Group, Inc. Metro Transportation Group, Inc. is recommending the designation of Franklin Street as a two-way roadway between Main Street and Highland Avenue.

Staff has reviewed the report and concurs with the recommendation of Metro Transportation Group, Inc. as explained in detail in the report.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests that the Parking and Council forward a positive recommendation to the Village Council approve Metro Transportation Group, Inc. recommendation to designate Franklin Street a two-way roadway between Main Street and Highland Avenue.

Chairman Johnson asked Bob Schiller if he had anything to add to the staff report.

Mr. Schiller stated that staff's concurrence with Metro Transportation Group's recommendation to designate Franklin Street as two way was based solely on traffic studies of the area. The issue of a high accident rate at Highland Avenue and Prairie Avenue also was a factor in the recommendation. Relief for the Highland Avenue and Prairie Avenue intersection would be provided through the ability of northbound Highland Avenue traffic to access Main Street at a controlled intersection via Franklin Street.

He further stated that staff is looking for resident input prior to making a final determination that would benefit the entire community.

Ms. McNamara feels that due to the large expense of the signal installation, Franklin Street should be a two way street.

Chairman Johnson said that based on the Metro Report there does not appear to be a significant difference on traffic flow between a one way or two way designation.

Mr. Schiller stated that he concurred with the report that the level of service does not change drastically whether Franklin Street is one way or two way. Traffic volume was not the warrant met for the traffic signal. The signal met warrants due to the high pedestrian traffic generated by St. Joseph's School.

Chairman Johnson welcomed audience members to come forward with any questions or comments.

Mr. Vince Barrett, 4921 Highland Avenue, feels that Franklin Street should be one way westbound. Reason being is due to utilization of Franklin Street by the buses and also the front of the school faces Franklin Street. He also expressed concern over the speed of traffic and vehicles traveling the wrong way on Franklin Street. He feels the designation of a two way street would only exasperate the existing problems and create a safety issue.

Mr. Barrett thanked the Commission for the installation of the stop sign at Highland Avenue and Franklin Street. He feels the stop sign has helped the traffic situation in the area.

Mr. Stephen Jagielo, 4908 Highland Avenue, agrees with the traffic signal installation at Franklin Street and Main Street due to the increased pedestrian safety. In terms of the report, under the westbound only option in conjunction with the signal, Metro lists as an advantage a reduction in conflict between buses and vehicles. Currently buses park westbound on Franklin Street, if designated westbound, the conflict would be reduced. He stated that another benefit would be the reduction of traffic on Highland Avenue. Traffic would have access to Main Street via westbound Franklin Street thus reducing traffic at the Highland Avenue and Prairie Avenue intersection. He also compared the advantages and disadvantages of a two way designation.

Chairman Johnson questioned if Mr. Jagielo felt that eastbound Franklin Street worked well.

Mr. Jagielo replied that in his observation vehicles tend to roll through the stop sign at Highland Avenue and Franklin Street creating a safety issue.

Mr. Tom Corbett, 4614 Elm Street, said that he concurs with westbound only Franklin Street. He feels confusion would be created by having set hours of eastbound and westbound traffic. He is concerned for the safety of the children.

Mr. Steven Rhodes, 4931 Highland Avenue, said that he also concurs with the westbound only designation. He feels that vehicles utilize eastbound Franklin Street as a shortcut through the downtown area which creates a safety issue for the children.

Chairman Johnson feels that the Commission needs to consider is the impact of the signal and proposed traffic flow change on the entire area not only Franklin Street.

Caroline Mangen, 4900 Northcott Avenue, stated that she is concerned over the safety of the children. She said that there are two lanes of traffic on Franklin Street dropping children off in the mornings. The majority of the vehicles utilizing Franklin Street are parents so they appear to be conscientious of the children present. She feels if Franklin Street were changed to two way additional vehicles would utilize Franklin Street compromising the safety of the children. She would like to see a westbound only designation.

Chairman Johnson asked if buses utilize Franklin Street during the morning drop off hours.

Ms. Mangen replied that parents utilize Franklin Street only during the morning hours.

Commissioner Kren questioned if the church parking lot could be utilized for drop off.

Ms. Mangen stated that there is a traffic issue on Main Street turning eastbound into the parking lot, traffic backs up to Prairie Avenue waiting to turn into the parking lot.

Commissioner Kren stated that it appears that there is not enough room in the church parking lot to accommodate parents.

Ms. Sandy Liedtke, 755 Claremont Drive, said that she is concerned that the Village has studied vehicles and traffic patterns but has not studied pedestrians. She supports the installation of the signal and one way westbound Franklin Street.

Ms. Jean Gasborne, President, Athletic and Booster Club, St. Joseph's School, said that there are over 250 children involved in the sporting programs, they utilize the gym from 3:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. every day from August through March. Children are also present on the weekends for athletic activities.

Mr. Phil Bartnicki, 825 Oxford Street, St. Joseph's School Board Member, stated that he concurs with one way westbound Franklin Street. He feels one issue that has not been taken into consideration is Saturday evening and Sunday morning masses. Parking would be eliminated with a two way designation.

Sister Dorothy Randall, St. Joseph's School Principal, thanked the Commission for considering all of the resident and school requests. In regard to Commissioner Kren's previous question regarding utilizing the parking lot for morning drop off, she stated that the lot is utilized by teachers and church members attending morning mass.

Commissioner Kren said that he feels a traffic pattern could be set up utilizing the parking lot for morning drop off. He stated staff members could utilize parking on the west side of Main Street to open up the parking lot.

Sister Dorothy said that she feels one way westbound would be the best solution for the safety of the children.

Ms. Mary Alice Flavin, 6342 Prideham, said that she has witnessed morning traffic near St. Joseph's School, at times the crossing guard experiences difficulty with the heavy traffic. She expressed that she is in favor of one way westbound Franklin Street.

Chairman Johnson expressed concern over the narrowness of Franklin Street. If a two way designation was implemented parking would have to be restricted on at least one side of the street possibly both sides.

Commissioner McNamara said that parking should be restricted whether Franklin Street is designated one way or two way.

Chairman Johnson asked Mr. Schiller to give a scenario of the sequencing of the signal and how it would function one way as opposed to two way.

Mr. Schiller replied that a standard type signal timing with Main Street as the primary and the lights would cycle either by delay, max time or by pedestrian generated activation. The signal may be set with an eastbound and westbound only phase.

Commissioner Yeksigian asked if all of the signals would be timed together.

Mr. Schiller stated that all of the signals would be interconnected in one system.

Mr. Schiller further stated that in regard to parking, in any scenario on Franklin Street, given the situation that was just before the Parking and Traffic Commission regarding Florence Avenue and Indianapolis Avenue near Lester school, where an ambulance was caught in grid locked traffic due to parents parking on both sides of the road. He feels that parking should be restricted in some fashion regardless of the scenario approved. He would recommend that the north side of Franklin Street be restricted at all times which allows for clear bus access or any other emergency vehicles.

Commissioner Stapleton asked if at the present time, buses drop off only on Highland Avenue and parents drop off on Franklin Street during morning hours.

Mr. Schiller replied that is correct.

Commissioner Stapleton questioned if the direction were to be reversed would the buses drop off on Franklin Street instead of Highland Avenue.

Mr. Schiller replied that staff would recommend dropping off on Franklin Street.

Commissioner Stapleton said that if Franklin Street were designated one way westbound, parking should be restricted on both sides of the street.

Mr. Bartnicki asked Sgt. Nehls his opinion regarding the matter.

Sgt. Nehls stated that his children attend St. Joseph's School. He expressed concern that if Franklin Street were two way there would be a safety issue with children crossing the street.

Sister Dorothy concurred that parking should be restricted on the south side of Franklin Street to allow enough clearance for the school buses.

Chairman Johnson said that another consideration would be the impact of Franklin Street on the Highland Avenue and Prairie Avenue intersection. The Parking and Traffic Commission should consider which scenario may improve the Highland Avenue and Prairie Avenue intersection. The study does indicate the installation of the signal would decrease traffic on Prairie Avenue by approximately 20% - 30%.

Commissioner Thurston stated the one way westbound Franklin Street would alleviate the issue at Highland Avenue and Prairie Avenue. He feels the best alternative would be westbound Franklin Street with parking restrictions implemented on one side of Franklin Street.

Commissioner Stapleton expressed concern that traffic may be increased on Highland Avenue if Franklin Street were westbound only due to vehicles trying to avoid the signal at Prairie Avenue and Main Street.

Commissioner McNamara stated that the accidents at Highland Avenue and Prairie Avenue appear to be the left turn accidents.

Mr. Schiller said that the majority of the accidents at Highland Avenue and Prairie Avenue were left turn or straight through accidents.

Mr. Corbett addressed Commissioner Stapleton's comment on vehicles avoiding the Prairie Avenue and Main Street signal. He stated that vehicles would have to stop for the signal at Franklin Street and Main Street.

Mr. Roman Gesior, 4504 Linscott Avenue, said that the issue at Highland Avenue and Prairie Avenue appears to be the hill. He feels the only solution would be to implement a four way stop at the intersection.

Chairman Johnson stated that there are issues other than the hill. The Parking and Traffic Commission is awaiting a traffic report of the intersection to determine any action to be taken.

Commissioner Yeksigian feels that if Franklin Street were to be westbound only the number of left turns at Highland Avenue and Prairie Avenue would be reduced.

Commissioner Wendt stated that he does not see a real change in the traffic pattern with westbound Franklin Street as it involves an extra turn.

Chairman Johnson said that parents dropping off children at the school would utilize Franklin Street not necessarily general traffic.

Commissioner Kren expressed concern over Main Street backing up during rush hours and vehicles violating the one way westbound designation.

Chairman Johnson asked Mr. Schiller his opinion from an engineering standpoint.

Mr. Schiller replied that there are several options, one way eastbound, one way westbound, two way and two way with one way designation during set hours. The two way with one way designation during set hours could be accomplished through the signal. He stated that he does not have a strong opinion over one way westbound or two direction on Franklin Street, either scenario would function well. He feels that one way eastbound should be the last choice. Restricted parking should be implemented on the north side of the street no matter which scenario is chosen.

He further stated that due to the bus clearance issue, staff could post No Parking Here to Corner signs on both sides of Franklin Street.

Chairman Johnson questioned if the fiber optic signals are obeyed.

Sgt. Nehls replied that the signal would be similar to the Belmont Road and Warren Avenue signal. He stated that the signal is generally abided by.

COMMISSIONER KREN MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TO IMPLEMENT ONE WAY WESTBOUND TRAFFIC OPERATION DURING THE HOURS OF 6:00 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M., MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY AND TWO WAY TRAFFIC OPERATION DURING ALL OTHER HOURS.

MOTION FAILS DUE TO LACK OF A SECOND.

COMMISSIONER THURSTON MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TO IMPLEMENT OPTION B FROM METRO TRANSPORTATION GROUP WHICH IS: ONE WAY WESTBOUND TRAFFIC OPERATION AND ALSO RESTRICTING PARKING AT ALL TIMES ON THE NORTH SIDE OF FRANKLIN STREET BETWEEN HIGHLAND AVENUE AND MAIN STREET.

COMMISSIONER WENDT SECONDED THE MOTION.

Roll Call: AYE: Mr. Thurston, Mr. Wendt, Mr. Yeksigian, Ms. McNamara, Mr. Stapleton and Chairman Johnson.

NAY: Mr. Kren.

Motion Carried: 6:1

Chairman Johnson stated that this recommendation would be sent to Village Council. He said that if anyone is interested in attending the Council meeting for this item they should watch the Village Corner section of the newspaper for the Council agenda dates. He further stated that the Village Clerk could also be contacted and asked when this agenda item would be brought before Council.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Bill Wrobel, 7800 Queens Court, appeared to update the Commission on the traffic issue in his subdivision. He stated that the Village has provided traffic studies, an unmanned squad car and a speed trailer was present April 1st through 4th.

He further stated that the City of Darien utilizes speed humps throughout the community. He suggested that the Commission Members view the speed humps. He would like to see the speed humps installed throughout his neighborhood.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Commission presented Commissioner McNamara with a cake and flowers celebrating her retirement from the Parking and Traffic Commission. Commissioner McNamara has been a member of the Commission since 1975. The Commission, Mayor, Village Manager, Council Members and Staff Members thanked her for all of her contributions to the Commission and wished her well in the future.

COMMISSIONER KREN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

COMMISSIONER WENDT SECONDED THE MOTION. *Motion carried 7:0.*

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

/cc
staff/p&t/2002/minutes/april 10, 2002