

COUNCIL WORKSHOP ITEM

ITEM: File #05-02
DATE: August 7, 2003
PREPARED BY: John J. Bajor, Jr., Public Works Director
Dorin Fera, Traffic Manager
PURPOSE: Parking Restrictions on Florence Avenue South of Ogden Avenue

BACKGROUND:

This item was last presented and discussed at the May 13, 2003 Parking and Traffic Commission meeting. Staff had not prepared a formal recommendation since the issue was previously discussed in 2002 and it was not certain from just several complaints received the extent of the problem was. Therefore, the purpose of the May 13 meeting was to obtain more data and input from the residents.

Based on the input received, there were several complaints received that painted a picture of more serious parking violations and driveway blockages regularly occurring along the east side of Florence Avenue, in the residential section south of Ogden Avenue. Some of the potential recommendations along the east side of Florence Avenue, arising from this meeting included:

- Permanent parking restriction for a distance to be determined by staff;
- Permanent parking restriction between signs in front of the two or three affected residence driveways;
- Temporary 3- or 4-hour restrictions for a distance to be determined by staff

ATTACHMENTS:

Recommendation of Parking and Traffic Commission – July 9, 2003.

July 9, 2003 Minutes of the Parking and Traffic Commission, File #05-02 discussed on pages 2 through 8.

RECOMMENDATION:

Place this item on the Workshop Agenda for August 26, 2003 for Council review and consideration.

OLD BUSINESS

File #05-02: Parking Restrictions on Florence Avenue South of Ogden Avenue

Per **Chairman Johnson**, this matter was a continuation from the May 13, 2003 meeting, at which time staff was directed to investigate the matter further. The lapse in time was to allow commissioners to travel through the area and invite surrounding neighbors of that street to attend tonight's meeting. Staff's report followed:

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Based on the input received, there were several complaints received that painted a picture of more serious parking violations and driveway blockages regularly occurring along the east side of Florence Avenue, in the residential section south of Ogden Avenue. Some of the potential recommendations along the east side of Florence Avenue, arising from this meeting included:

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It became obvious that any imposition of parking restrictions placed on this section of Florence Avenue would affect essentially the entire block, plus the several adjacent businesses on Ogden Avenue that use this area for parking. To address this situation comprehensively, the Parking and Traffic Commission requested that staff re-visit this issue at a future meeting, and invite as many of the adjacent residences and businesses as practicable.

Tonight's meeting will focus on receiving comments from the rest of the neighbors, before a formal recommendation can be made.

RECOMMENDATION

It is staff's position that the Parking and Traffic Commission support one of the above parking restriction choices and forward a positive recommendation to the Village Council. Staff believes that the current parking situation along Florence Avenue south of Ogden Avenue can be resolved. Based on the discussion at tonight's meeting, it is possible that another parking restriction might arise that could also be suitable.

Mr. Fera explained he traveled the area and found no decrease in cars but rather an increase, and in reviewing the area closely he found no consistency in parking restriction patterns. He surmised the Saab dealership would probably generate more similar issues in the months to come especially on Cumnor Road.

As to whether the Saab dealership submitted plans for the development and had enough parking, **Mr. Millette** indicated preliminary plans were submitted but it did not look like sufficient parking was provided.

Chairman Johnson opened up the discussion to the audience:

Ms. Ruth Bumblauskas, 4319 Florence, inquired as to how the Village decided that cars could not park on Cumnor but could park on Florence wherein Chairman Johnson explained the Village deals with parking issues as they arise and but he could not recall how the change occurred without researching it further. He noted, however, the Village's goal was to be as least restrictive as possible without causing safety issues and disrupting residents. Further discussion followed regarding the on-going parking issues at the high school.

Ms. Georgia Homko, 4327 Florence, said high school children were different than a business. She believed businesses were suppose to provide parking for their employees and the current business was outgrowing its space wherein Chairman Johnson stated businesses were suppose to provide sufficient parking and explained how certain ordinances required a certain amount of parking per square foot of building. He noted that the uses of buildings could change and currently the Village offered no effective way in handling the matter. Because he was not sure of the laws, as he understood the situation, nothing in the law could prevent a business from parking in the public right-of-way. A good business would provide the space, but it was not always possible.

Mr. Al Rouffa, 4426 Florence, has lived at his residence for over 50 years and has noted that over the years, especially in the winter months, that parking has gradually become worse. During the winter it becomes more dangerous because the street becomes narrower. He asked as to why businesses were not providing enough parking for their employees and believed it was not only the business' problem but the Village's. He asked how the Village was handling the parking in the downtown district and emphasized the Village will have to consider the parking issue and not expect the business people to do it on their own. More planning was essential. Additionally, he said the Saab dealer would create more parking issues on Cumnor.

Chairman Johnson explained the parking in the downtown district was being utilized by business patrons and commuters, which was why the Village was constructing a parking deck. He agreed the issue was difficult especially after a development is constructed and several years later the use changes. He suggested the Village may have to effectively enforce businesses to meet certain criteria.

Ms. Sherry Labate, 4421 Florence, expressed concern over the large trucks unloading cars for the existing dealership on one side of the street while the employee's park on the other side and the hazards it creates for passing cars. Winter months were also an issue. She believed that businesses opening up on Ogden Avenue should take all issues into consideration or a mandate should exist which states cars cannot be unloaded on residential streets.

Chairman Johnson stated there was a restriction in existence on that matter.

Mr. Sembach agreed and stated the office has received complaints for trucks unloading, which many have been ticketed. The trucks were supposed to be unloading on the dealership property but most do not have the space to do so.

Mr. Rouffa emphasized again that it was a planning effort and the Village and businesses will have to work cooperatively.

Mr. Rob Labate, 4421 Florence, expressed concern about the safety of children since no sidewalks existed and a school was at the end of the block. Children were constantly playing and the matter was a year-around problem. He voiced concerns of not only the loading/unloading of cars but also of those individuals who test drive cars in the area. He worried someone would get seriously hurt or killed and the liabilities to the Village.

Ms. Labate agreed, stating Florence was being used as a cut-through during the rush hour. She corresponded to the Village regarding sidewalks and received a response that Florence was slotted at some future point.

Chairman Johnson agreed with Mr. Rouffa's statement regarding better planning and offered to discuss what could be done about the situation. A 2 to 3 hour parking restriction in place would be the least restrictive but burdensome on the police department in trying to enforce the restriction. Therefore, he suggested that a no parking restriction on both sides of the street be installed, or, at least on the east side, with no parking between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. or 4:00 p.m. or something similar. He asked the residents how they would be affected regarding the change.

Ms. Homko said the change would not affect her at all since she has been unable to park in front of her house for two years. LaMantia has dump trucks on the street and the employees' park on the street and discard their garbage on the residents' lawns. Due to the parking, the streets do not get cleaned.

Chairman Johnson asked about those residents who lived further south.

Mr. Labate said the change would not bother him or his wife. His concern was about shifting the burden and requiring the police department and the Village going after the source, i.e., the owners of the business. Writing tickets would not be effective.

Chairman Johnson believed writing tickets was proven effective in other areas, but could be handled in other ways such as a change in fines.

Mr. Sembach said he spoke to the owner of the dealership who has agreed to have the semi-trucks unload at another location, or at 1400 Ogden Avenue. He has noticed that the trucks are unloading there since less homes were in the area.

Mr. Labate was in favor of allowing parking on that side only because if cars were parked at that end of the street, a car had to go around them, and cars that turn into Florence could not see ahead.

Mr. Fera said that at the last meeting a question was raised if it would be a burden for workers or vendors to not be able to park on the street wherein Ruth Bumblauskas asked whether it would be beneficial to contact the police department to explain work was being done at her residence and to grant permission to the vendor. Mr. Nehls said the course of action made sense.

Chairman Johnson read into the record an e-mail dated July 7, 2003 from Kurt Nusbaum, 4343 Florence Avenue, to the Village indicating his concern in trying to pull onto Florence Avenue from eastbound Ogden Avenue. He believes 4 to 5 car lengths of no parking at the north end of Florence where it meets Ogden Avenue is necessary.

An e-mail dated July 8, 2003 from Steve Laya, 4504 Florence Avenue, to the Village was also received. Mr. Laya discussed his concerns with the high concentration of cars parked along Florence between Ogden and Grant. His other concerns included Florence being used as a cut-through, safety of the children, and of residents. He supported restricting parking in the area.

Mr. Fera confirmed he will be focusing on traffic operations but also safety since the stream of cars begin at the stop sign and park south. The road was a concern due to its narrowness and suggested that whatever recommendation was made to include it all the way to the south side of Ogden because cars need to have a clear line of site at the intersection.

Mr. Rouffa asked for clarification whether there would be restricted parking at the intersection of Florence and Ogden. If so, he believed the cars would just move further down the street and it would not solve the problem.

Chairman Johnson, pointed out that Cumnor, north of Ogden Avenue, with its width and the possible parking on the west side did not appear to cause any problems for residents due to its proximity to the shopping center, and enough of the commission's recommendation was a setback to provide ample turning movement at that intersection, the commission felt it could allow for some parking on the west side of the street. However, he noted the Village had some obligation to provide as much parking as possible for businesses because their tax revenue was significant for the Village. Yet, at the same time, he believed businesses also had a responsibility as well. The Economic Development Commission is also trying to deal with the traffic, parking, and beautification issues along Ogden Avenue and the matter could be a long process.

Ms. Labate asked whether the commission was talking about prohibiting parking along the entire length of Florence Avenue. Chairman Johnson indicated the commission was trying to determine that and sometimes restrictions occurred in sections.

Commissioner Carlquist mentioned there was one neighbor at the last meeting who was opposed to the restriction, commenting the resident was juggling cars around the street. While Carlquist generally supported street parking, safety was an issue since no sidewalks existed. If no parking were added to the north end, it would have to be extended to the south end. The only exception would be to include wording on the sign which specifically states "No parking during the Week between the Hours of", thereby leaving the residents access to the east side of the street in the evening and weekends since business parking would probably not be used during those hours. However, while Chairman Johnson believed that type of sign may work well in many areas, it may not work on Saturdays because the dealerships were open. Residents stated there were trucks and cars on the street on Saturdays.

Mr. Nehls mentioned there were thousands of parking signs throughout the Village and enforcement would probably occur on a resident complaint basis.

Ms. Homko noted the daycare parents park on the west side anyway where there is currently no parking and therefore it does not affect the east side.

Mr. Fera discussed that any signage would be a positive measure and would help the police to enforce.

Chairman Johnson inquired whether it would be reasonable to compare this location to the Cumnor situation, north of Ogden Avenue, possibly instituting a 75 feet setback, wherein staff believed three to four car lengths, or 60 to 75 feet, may work well but a field review by the engineering staff would get a better analysis. Staff offered to measure the distance prior to making a full recommendation to the council.

Commissioner Carlquist discussed his understanding of the situation commenting an individual will have to stay 20 feet north of the commercial drive and then south of Ogden for another 60 to 80 feet, with no parking on both sides of the street except for the length of the two or three cars, in that section.

Chairman Johnson stated the Village had an obligation to provide as much parking as possible and cause the least amount of hardship to all entities. While most of the problem belonged to the businesses, unfortunately it becomes a Village problem. He further discussed that the parking matters needed to be part of the master plan for Ogden Avenue. After speaking on different ideas of signage, Chairman Johnson personally believed having the no parking from the alley, south, and a no parking sign from an appropriate distance from Ogden Avenue south 65 or 70 feet, would be logical.

Residents and commissioners discussed various hours, noting that dealer employees arrived early. Chairman Johnson felt the no parking signage had to indicate six days a week from 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. since many car dealers were open during the evening.

Mr. Labate confirmed with the commission that under the current ordinance there was to be no trucks parking, standing or unloading on the street, wherein Mr. Nehls clarified trucks and car carrier trucks could park and travel on Florence but they could not unload. Adding to that, Mr. Sembach conveyed there was no truck weight restriction for the street as well.

Mr. Labate asked whether the Village had considered a ban on truck parking on Florence wherein Mr. Nehls explained he was discussing an entirely different issue. The issue had arisen in other parts of the Village but currently the commission and council were not going to make restrictions on each individual street at this time. Mr. Nehls also explained that should the no parking signs be installed, the problem would likely be gone within three weeks following enforcement.

Chairman Johnson asked staff for its opinion on a no parking restrictions from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., except Sundays, believing the restriction would be helpful, wherein Mr. Fera believed it was fair, however, he would have to confirm whether the restriction would become a new ordinance or configure the change into an existing ordinance.

COMMISSIONER THURSTON MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TO RESTRICT PARKING ON THE EAST SIDE OF FLORENCE AVENUE FROM OGDEN AVENUE TO A POINT 70 FEET SOUTH OF OGDEN AVENUE. ALSO, TO RESTRICT PARKING ON THE EAST SIDE OF FLORENCE AVENUE FROM 6:00 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M. EXCEPT SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS, FROM A POINT 220 FEET SOUTH OF OGDEN AVENUE TO THE NORTH LINE OF GRANT STREET.

COMMISSIONER STAPLETON SECONDED THE MOTION.

**Roll call: AYE: Thurston, Stapleton, Carlquist, Chairman Johnson
 NAY: None**

Motion carried: 4:0

Chairman Johnson estimated the restriction would take four to five weeks to become effective. He invited the audience to attend the Village Council meeting on this matter.

Mr. Rouffa explained it appeared the resolution was for the short-term but the Village needed to address the issue with the Ogden Avenue Economic Development Commission for the long-term.

NEW BUSINESS

File #10-03 School Walking Route Review

Chairman Johnson announced it was time again for the annual review of the school walking routes for the Village to determine if changes were necessary. Staff immediately indicated a correction on the map where the map depicted three crossings on Lincoln Avenue, east of Prairieview Avenue. The map should reflect two crossings on Lincoln Avenue. The correction would be noted.

Chairman Johnson read into the record an e-mail dated July 9, 2003 from Lorie Pilster (School District 58) to the Village stating the changes made to the walking route map would not negatively impact the students.

Commissioner Carlquist pointed out that the map was showing no sidewalk on Lee Avenue wherein the chairman believed that some of the sidewalks approved last year should be included in the map update.

Some discussion followed. A question was raised about some missing sidewalks on Washington Street, north of 59th Street (to 55th Street) since the map key indicated sidewalks were missing. Mr. Fera would make the necessary revisions to the map.