

PARKING & TRAFFIC COMMISSION

Minutes of Public Hearing
October 8, 2003

Downers Grove Public Works Facility
5101 Walnut Avenue, Downers Grove

Chairman Johnson called the October 8, 2003 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: Messrs. Carlquist, Kren, Thurston, Wendt, and Chairman Johnson.

Absent: Commissioners: Messrs. Stapleton and Yeksigian

Present: Staff: Mr. Dorin Fera, Sgt. Jim Nehls, Mr. Tim Sembach, Ms. Chris Chalberg, Recording Secretary.

Visitors: Ms. Pam Gucwa, 1107 Gilbert Avenue; Mr. Dave Gucwa, 1107 Gilbert Avenue, Ms. Pam Brauweiler, 4818 Bryan Place; Ms. Danielle Brauweiler, 4818 Bryan Place; Mr. Tom Lackowitz, 1112 62nd Place; Mr. Andy Clark, 1226 62nd Street; Ms. Sue Smith, 1133 62nd Place; Ms. Marjorie Keenan, 1132 62nd Place; Ms. Kathy Pabis, 1120 62nd Place; Mr. Eric Linder, 1137 62nd Place; Mr. Steve Dickman, 1128 62nd Place, Mr. Kevin Kurnik, 1136 62nd Place; and Ms. Mary Kurnik, 1136 62nd Place.

Chairman Johnson informed the audience that the meeting was being recorded on Village owned equipment to aid in the preparation of the meeting minutes. Commissioners were asked if they had changes regarding the minutes of the September 10, 2003 meeting.

COMMISSIONER WENDT MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2003 PARKING AND TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING BE ACCEPTED AS PRESENTED.

COMMISSIONER KREN SECONDED THE MOTION.

Motion carried by voice vote. 5-0.

File #15-03: Parking Restrictions on 62nd Place East of Brookbank Road.

Chairman Johnson read the following Staff report:

BACKGROUND

A neighborhood petition was received from the area residents on 62nd Place, east of Brookbank Road. The primary issue consists of South High School students parking on 62nd Place at this intersection. The larger issue is the blockage of the residential driveways preventing access for refuse vehicles and snow plowing operations. Also, there is reported blockage of the fire hydrant on the south side of 62nd Place.

The parking restrictions along both 62nd Street and Brookbank Road are “No Parking 7 AM to 4 PM, Except Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays”. The restrictions for the 15 designated parking stalls adjacent to the Park District’s practice soccer field are “No Parking 7 AM to 9 AM”. There are no parking restrictions along 62nd Place east of Brookbank Road.

STUDY

Staff has observed this location on numerous dates, within the month of September, 2003. With the start of school in early September, the parking activity on this street has picked up. Parked vehicles have been observed on each field visit. The approximate number of parked cars ranges between 6 and 10. However, it should be stated that at no time during staff field reviews were the residential driveways blocked by a parked vehicle.

Based on field observation, staff finds it appropriate for some type of parking restriction, to address the neighborhood concerns, and to provide parking consistency in the area. The roadway width in this section of 62nd Place is approximately 28 feet wide. With parking on both sides, the net 2-way roadway width is reduced to under 12 feet. During emergency and regular service intervals, a narrower roadway reduces the safety and efficiency of larger vehicles using this street. Clearly, parking demand is increasing due to more South High School students driving to school. While the Village street system should serve all the residents, in this case, neighborhood safety should take a higher priority.

RECOMMENDATION

It is Staff’s judgment, based upon the current parking issues on 62nd Place that some restriction would be appropriate. It is also important to maintain consistent restrictions within the area.

Staff advises that the Parking and Traffic Commission forward a positive recommendation to the Village Council such that the following be implemented:

NO PARKING ALONG BOTH SIDES OF 62ND PLACE, BETWEEN BROOKBANK ROAD AND CARPENTER STREET, AT ANY TIME BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 7:00 A.M. AND 4:00 P.M., EXCEPT SATURDAY, SUNDAY, AND HOLIDAYS

Chairman Johnson addressed the residents and explained to them that the commissioners and the Village Council will recognize that any restrictions put in place will affect the residents as well as any students involved. Chairman Johnson recognized that parking has been an ongoing issue for the north and south high schools for many years.

Adding to staff's report, **Mr. Fera** indicated no sidewalks existed on either side of 62nd Place currently.

Chairman Johnson opened up the discussion to the residents.

Ms. Marjorie Keenan, 1132 62nd Place, said cars are being parked very close to the ends of her driveway and she was having difficulty pulling out of her driveway. Students were littering. She believed it would cost more to put in sidewalks rather than a few No Parking signs.

Ms. Sue Smith, 1133 62nd Place, was of the understanding that there would be a positive recommendation. Since there were no sidewalks currently, she expressed concern about the safety of her children since they walk on the street to get to school. Because more students would be receiving their parking permits in the spring, Ms. Smith said the parking would increase. She suggested a restriction of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. instead of 4:00 p.m.

Chairman Johnson, however, explained the suggestion was staff's recommendation currently and that the Parking and Traffic Commission was a recommending body to the Village Council. The commission may discuss other recommendations.

Ms. Keenan inquired as to the utilization of the soccer field during the day, noting it was only utilized in the evening, wherein **Chairman Johnson** explained he recalled it was designed as a practice field.

Mr. Andrew Clark, 1226 62nd Street, explained that the Park District did pay for the street improvement and did own the soccer field, but some years ago the county approached the park district about making a water detention area there and they paid to have that field made. But it was still park district property.

Mr. Eric Linder, 1137 62nd Place, has noticed increased foot traffic across his lawn as well as more litter from the kids. Per his wife, the parking is not orderly in the morning. He supported revising the parking restriction to 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Tom Lackowitz, 1112 62nd Place, supported the above comments and agreed that in the spring more activity will increase. He supported 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. restriction.

Chairman Johnson briefly explained that the restriction hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. were used when the high school was an open campus. However, with the closed campus, he believed the 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. restriction was effective.

Ms. Kathy Pabis, 1120 62nd Place, lives in the middle of block and agreed with her neighbors. She noted her residence has the fire hydrant on her property and on occasion the hydrant has been blocked. In general, she believed the students were noisy when arriving and leaving the area with loud music and foul language. She said a safety hazard existed since many of the residents have elementary school children who ride their bikes to school.

Chairman Johnson read into the record an e-mail staff received on October 7, 2003, from Mr. Dave Fusaro, 1124 62nd Place, noting that if the restriction on the 6200 block of Brookbank was removed, as suggested by Mr. Fusaro, the parking would fill up immediately and become an issue there as well. Discussion followed on permit parking spots and resolving a noise issue.

Mr. Steve Dickman, 1128 62nd Place, suggested that the students use the Eagle parking lot or the church lot on Middaugh Street, since the church was more convenient to the students. He inquired as to the cost of the parking spaces. Mr. Dickman supported the 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. restriction.

Discussion followed that the Eagle parking lot was private property and the fact that the Village did not have a responsibility to provide parking for the students and the church may not want to assume liability.

Mr. Fera explained that the Village recently reduced its annual parking fee from \$275.00 to \$250.00 for the school year and no one from staff or the Village had approached the church about the parking issue.

Mr. Kevin Kurnik, 1136 62nd Place, explained the 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. restriction worked prior to this year. However, the school instituted late arrivals (10:00 a.m.) and the students parked on Brookbank, near the park, because it was a 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. restriction. He suggested revising the restriction to 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Fera indicated he would contact the high school regarding future late arrival dates.

Chairman Johnson asked the residents for their preference of the restriction wherein a number of residents agreed a No Parking restriction from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. would be amenable.

Ms. Kurnik, discussed how the high school has made recent changes to early dismissals and is now having students arrive at school later rather than leave earlier

due to extracurricular activities. Approximately eight late arrival dates existed throughout the school year, mostly on Wednesdays.

Chairman Johnson agreed the school would not change their schedule for the year and asked residents if they felt the parking that was going on by the soccer field was a result of the 10:00 a.m. restriction. Residents agreed it was due to the ten o'clock school start time.

Mr. Kurnik, explained the reason the restriction near the park was changed to 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. from the 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. restriction was due to making the park available to the public. The longer restriction prohibited the park's use. He believed extending the time to 10:00 a.m. would restrict the students completely.

Chairman Johnson believed since only eight late arrival dates existed, it may be better to remain with the 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. restriction first.

Commissioner Wendt inquired as to the logic of restricting both sides of the street and suggested restricting one side first to see what happens and still allow for parking.

Ms. Kathy Pabis, did not support that suggestion only because no sidewalks existed in the area and safety was an issue.

Ms. Sue Smith, 1133 62nd Place, asked as to why Middaugh Street and other streets had No Parking signs on both sides of the street and why would 62nd Place be the experiment? She and other residents agreed a safety issue existed with the younger, elementary students.

Discussing sidewalks, **Chairman Johnson** indicated that 62nd Place was low on the sidewalk matrix to receive sidewalks, which he agreed was an issue.

Ms. Keenan believed restricting one street would not solve the issue with snow plows and street cleaners.

Commissioner Carlquist, personally, did not like to restrict parking but he did see a consensus among the residents for the change. He supported the No Parking restriction from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and considered the eight late arrival dates not an issue.

Discussion followed by **Chairman Johnson** on the importance of safety and providing services to the residents, which were the reasons why the issues had to be weighed and a decision made for the majority.

As a last comment **Ms. Pabis**, personally, believed the students should be in a parking spot that they must pay for it or at least respect the areas where they were parking. She reiterated the safety issue with the children.

While there is sidewalk along both sides of Bryan Place for pedestrian use, the dense stands of trees in both parkways can limit visibility when crossing the street. Also, with parking on the west side combined with the presence of trees, and a downhill roadway grade, the southbound motorist has little time to react to a pedestrian crossing mid-block between cars.

Based on the traffic data and field observations, Staff has considered several options for addressing the pedestrian safety in this section. One potential solution would be to remove the on-street parking. Another could be to install a painted centerline. A third option is to maintain the on-street parking but shift the parking to the east side, to allow better southbound visibility.

Given that the roadway volume is so low, the roadway width is narrow with on-street parking, and with a short distance between STOP-controlled intersections, there are not any pure traffic engineering solutions offered in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), which could be applied here.

RECOMMENDATION

While Staff understands the neighborhood concerns for safety in this section of Bryan Place, any physical or operational designs need to be consistent with the MUTCD. Staff believes that the best options at this time for addressing the pedestrian safety and sporadic speeders are to request additional Police enforcement during peak travel periods and also:

Staff also advises that the Parking and Traffic Commission forward a positive recommendation to the Village Council such that the following be implemented:

MOVE THE “4-HOUR PARKING, 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM EXCEPT SATURDAYS, SUNDAYS, and HOLIDAYS” FROM THE WEST SIDE TO THE EAST SIDE OF BRYAN PLACE, AND MOVE THE “NO PARKING THIS SIDE OF STREET” FROM THE EAST SIDE TO THE WEST SIDE OF BRYAN PLACE, BETWEEN PRAIRIE AVENUE AND FRANKLIN STREET.

Because staff had no comments, **Chairman Johnson** opened the meeting up for resident comments:

Ms. Danielle Brauweiler, 4818 Bryan Place, asked for more information on how to proceed with this matter.

Chairman Johnson explained the steps in the recommendation process and how an ordinance must be revised. However, he indicated his concern was that in changing the No Parking from the west side to the east side, many resident habits would not only have to change, but it may require changing other blocks of Bryan Place. That so, **Chairman Johnson** believed it was important to receive input from those residents.

Ms. Brauweiler, who resides at the top of the hill explained her concerns were with the safety of the children in the area since they play in the front yards. She indicated she did petition other neighbors on this matter.

Chairman Johnson did open the matter up for discussion but mentioned the street was low volume and he did not necessarily agree if changing the sides of the street would help. He believed the Children At Play signs, as suggested by Ms. Brauweiler, were not effective because they were advisory signs and motorists generally ignored them within a few months. Additionally, it was usually 80% of the residents who lived in the area, traveling the street. Another concern of Chairman Johnson was the stop sign at the bottom of the hill and whether it was being ignored later at night when no pedestrians were expected to be out.

Sgt. Nehls offered to send some officers to the area during the morning and afternoon to document traffic patterns and to monitor the stop sign activity.

Ms. Brauweiler mentioned a neighbor expressed concern about construction vehicles coming off of Prairie and not being able to see those vehicles, wherein **Mr. Fera** agreed, stating field observations have proven visibility issues existed when vehicles were parked close to Prairie and that no physical intervention existed to slow the vehicles down.

Mr. Fera further explained the idea behind that specific recommendation was to open up the visibility and for the motorist to have a clear line of sight. Similar situations existed in other parts of town. As to moving the No Parking restriction to the opposite side of Bryan Place and how it would affect the next block south, **Mr. Fera** could not confirm, mentioning it would be difficult to follow-up on each block.

Commissioner Wendt suggested inviting the residents of the second block, wherein staff was supportive. **Mr. Kren** also supported inviting the other residents.

Mr. Sembach believed any restrictions would have to apply to both blocks.

Mr. Paul Brauweiler suggested making the street one-way northbound or install speed bumps.

Chairman Johnson conveyed turning the street into a one-way would be difficult and would move the problem to the other streets. Speed bumps were illegal on public streets; however, the Village was looking to speed "humps" which incur a gradual rise or decline on a street, but would not apply to Bryan Place because of the low traffic volume. Discussion followed on how the cars were counted during the 24-hour period.

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APPROVED AS SUBMITTED
November 12, 2003

Ms. Brauweiler asked how she could assist in this matter, wherein **Chairman Johnson** suggested that her neighbors attend if they felt strongly about the matter. He reiterated, however, the traffic volume was low. A short discussion followed regarding rush hour traffic peak times, traffic backing up on Washington Street due to the train, and motorists using other streets to avoid the backup.

Chairman Johnson closed by suggesting that the commission and staff have a follow-up to the discussion and invite the other block of Bryan Place residents. Commissioners concurred.

File #17-03: Parking Restrictions for Immanuel Residences at 1122 Gilbert Avenue.

Chairman Johnson read the following Staff report:

BACKGROUND

The parking restrictions in front of the Immanuel Residences at 1122-34 Gilbert Avenue for the six (6) indented parking spaces were last studied a couple of years ago. At that time, the Commission had placed the present restriction, which consists of a 3-hour parking limit between signs. East of this address on the north side of Gilbert Avenue, there is a "No Parking Anytime" restriction, while to the west, there is a "No Parking 6-9 AM" restriction. The entire south side along Gilbert Avenue has a "No Parking This Side of Street" restriction.

The Immanuel Residences are an Assisted Living type of land use, and as such do not generate an overwhelming amount of parking demand. So, this parking restriction has been working reasonably well until just recently. However, with the completion of the Georgetown Condominiums fronting Gilbert Street, there is now more intense daily competition for those six parking spaces. The demand is coming from both sides of the street. Complaints have been received from the Immanuel Residences, due to the lack of parking spaces in front of their building.

STUDY

Based on discussions with Village Attorney's office, the parking spaces in question are Village owned and located on Village right-of-way. Staff has looked at several options for the parking controls at this location. Clearly, one of the options is to do nothing, that is, leave the present situation in place. In this way, it works as a first-come first-serve operation. Another option is to remove the spaces entirely, and require visitors or residents to park west of the building on the north side. But, this action would cost considerably more to complete. A third option could be to install 3-hour parking meters for these six spaces. This option may be more equitable to all the users on both sides of Gilbert Avenue. It is evident that these parking spaces are providing a direct benefit to the patrons at Immanuel Residences. Staff is anticipating other options and suggestions from tonight's meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

It is Staff's judgment, based upon the information reviewed that there is a need to revise the current parking restriction on Gilbert Avenue at the Immanuel Residences. However, the location and operation of these parking spaces are rather complex. At this time, staff would hold off on making a recommendation until the residents on both sides of the issue can be heard.

Mr. Fera noted this location was difficult to address due to its lengthy Village history which he was not aware of and that parking spot situation was unique. He was looking for resident and commissioner input.

Ms. Pam Gucwa, 1107 Gilbert, who lives across from the Immanuel Residences, explained she and approximately five families live in the new Georgetown complex which has not been completed yet and more families were expected.

Mr. Dave Gucwa, 1107 Gilbert, said an informal meeting took place among his neighbors and he and his wife were present to represent the neighbors and to get a better understanding of the parking restrictions. His understanding was that spaces in the permit lot to the north, could be used on the weekdays until 2:00 a.m. He also understood that the six spaces under discussion were for the general public.

Chairman Johnson, agreed the six spaces were for the public but explained when they were first installed they were installed to make it easier for the residents of the Immanuel Residences complex and for safety issues. However, he questioned whether part of the problem was the Georgetown complex being under construction and the fact that the rear parking was not completed. He did not know how many spaces were planned for the rear area.

Ms. Gucwa, however, saw the issue of service people parking in the six parking spaces and the Immanuel owners believing they own the parking spaces, as she has been yelled at. She expressed concern that when her complex gets built out, more cars will exist. She suggested making Gilbert one-way and allowing the residents to adjust.

Mr. Gucwa explained he and his wife initially used the Immanuel Residences parking spaces when they were moving into their home, possibly twice a week, but not for the entire day. He also saw future problems when the complex gets built out. As a solution, he suggested making Curtis and Gilbert alternating one-way streets.

In response to Mr. Gucwa's suggestion, **Chairman Johnson** said the flow of traffic for those two streets was restricted due to the railroad crossings at Forest Avenue and traffic could be heavy on both streets. If traffic was restricted on one street, it will affect nearby streets. He was reluctant to make any decision until the complex was completed.

As to whether complaints were received from Immanuel Residences, **Mr. Sembach** stated there were complaints received during construction and because there was minimal parking. The Immanuel residents were calling to park in the permit lots. He agreed that commissioners should hold off on any decision until the Georgetown complex was completed.

Ms. Gucwa commented on the large number of spaces in the permit lot and that residences of Immanuel could use the spaces entering through the rear of their complex and park there. She agreed there was more activity on the weekends at the senior complex, but did not see the spaces being used up, unless during festivals.

Chairman Johnson reiterated that the permit lot could be used after 3:00 p.m. on weekdays as well as Saturdays, Sundays and Sundays. But he believed all the parking spaces in the permit lot were over sold because of the commuters. **Mr. Fera** agreed there were always vacant spots.

Ms. Gucwa believed many residents did not see the vacant spots and, therefore, they did not know they were available.

Discussion followed on whether the parking issues would be minimized once the parking garage was built, wherein **Chairman Johnson** indicated the parking spots north of the tracks would be affected because retail parking would be provided instead.

Sgt. Nehls also believed the parking patterns would change once the garage was in.

Chairman Johnson recalled there was some prior discussion to mark the six parking spots for short-term, i.e., 15 minutes or 30 minutes. However, the restriction was not installed because visitors wanted to stay longer. He agreed that once the new occupants of the townhomes become familiar with the area and the parking deck was constructed, they would not be utilizing the six spaces.

Ms. Gucwa, suggested taking the land near the library and turning it into a parking area, wherein **Chairman Johnson** indicated it was not an option.

Clarifying a question of **Mr. Gucwa's**, **Chairman Johnson** explained that visitors of the Georgetown homes could park west of the building on the north side of Gilbert, since it was allowed to the public.

Chairman Johnson closed by suggesting that the commissioners' wait until the construction of the townhomes was completed. Commissioners concurred.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion followed whether a study could be done at Grant and Douglass Streets since a group of residents would be approaching the commission on installing four-way stops at that intersection. **Commissioner Kren** said he has seen a new trend in the western part of the country where pedestrians are using red flags to cross a street and suggested the Village try same. A concern was raised about the location of painted center lines and crossing over double center lines. **Mr. Fera** stated he would check the latest edition of the Illinois Vehicle Code Manual and report back to the group.

COMMISSIONER KREN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

COMMISSIONER CARLQUIST SECONDED THE MOTION. Motion carried. 5:0

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
(as transcribed by tape)

/s/ Celeste K. Weilandt

Celeste K. Weilandt
Recording Secretary