

URBANA TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Tuesday, April 8, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Madigan, City Council Member, Ward 6, Chair
Joe Smith, Senior Civil Engineer
Sylvia Morgan, Assistant Chief of Police for Pat Connolly

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Craig Shonkwiler, Assistant City Engineer
John Collins, Operations Manager
Norman Baxley, 510 West Main Street
Susan Summers, 403 West Washington Street
Jerry Davila, 405 West Washington Street
Kyle Kroha, 406 West Washington Street

The meeting began at 4:00 p.m.

Additions to the agenda:

There were no additions to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes:

Joe Smith moved to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2014 meeting. Michael Madigan seconded the motion. The Commission voted 3-0 to approve the minutes of the meeting.

Public Input

Those present wished to speak to the Commission at the time the item was discussed.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

Item #1- Discussion of parking on Main Street, Griggs Street and Coler Avenue.

Norman Baxley discussed concerns about Carle employees using on-street parking on residential streets instead of using parking facilities provided for employees. He added that guests of those living on those streets have difficulty finding parking during the day. He noted that there were not many vehicles parked on those streets before 7:00 a.m., but that parking was full by 9:00 a.m. He said that many of the cars are the same from one day to the next and those leaving the parked cars were wearing hospital scrubs. He stated that he had observed this congestion on Griggs Street, Coler Avenue, and Main Street. He asked if the Traffic Commission could place some type of signage that would restrict parking to two hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday to alleviate the problem. He would prefer that permit parking not be considered as a solution.

Joe Smith asked what problem was created by the use of on-street parking. He added that the parking had been occurring for a long time.

Mr. Baxley said that all of the spaces are taken so home health care providers, visitors, and service persons and contractors were not able to park in front of homes on those streets.

Michael Madigan asked if the parking situation had worsened as a result of the construction of the south tower. He did mention that Carle provided employee parking on the Champaign County fairgrounds.

Norman Baxley noticed that contractors parked there and then caught rides to the job site with other workers. He asked about the criteria for West Urbana parking restrictions and two hour parking on Birch Street. He said that some of the parked vehicles might be University students as one approaches the west end of the streets.

Joe Smith stated that the two hour parking restrictions on Birch Street were there to provide turn over for a business located on Birch Street.

Norman Baxley asked if a business used residential on-street parking to accommodate its employees would there be any zoning requirement that the employer provide parking for its employees.

Mr. Madigan said that businesses do have some parking requirements.

Joe Smith asked if any of the apartment residents used on-street parking.

Mr. Baxley did not observe many parking on-street since the apartment complexes provide on-site parking.

Mr. Smith asked if Mr. Baxley had observed patients using on-street parking.

Mr. Baxley said that he had not noticed that type of use since most of the spaces were filled after 7:00 a.m.

Mr. Smith was concerned that restrictions might move motorists to another location. He advised Mr. Baxley to ask residents on those streets to sign a petition indicating a preference for parking restrictions during the week. He said that this item would come back to the Traffic Commission in May. He recommended that staff make observations of the parking situation.

Item #2- Discussion of parking in the 400 block of West Washington Street.

Kyle Kroha discussed her concern about cars parking across from 408 West Washington Street creating a situation where those at 406 and 408 West Washington Street had difficulty backing out of their driveways. Ms. Kroha asked if the parking restriction beginning at the intersection of Carle Avenue on the south side of Washington Street could be moved farther west to eliminate the parking space directly across from 408 West Washington Street.

Joe Smith noted that there were not many times that he had observed cars parked in that space.

Susan Summers explained that she and her neighbor share a driveway, which made it difficult to park in the driveway.

Ms. Kroha said that cars had been hit while parked in the space across from 408 West Washington Street. She asked if the sign could be moved to the east to gain a parking space.

Joe Smith stated that the restriction was there to provide visibility for those travelling northbound on Carle Avenue. He said that there was no configuration that would gain a space.

Susan Summers said that there was nothing to impair drivers coming out of the driveways at 406 and 408 West Washington Street.

Ms. Kroha said that there was no impediment, but she had to make a very sharp turn to exit her driveway.

Joe Smith said that many of the older streets in Urbana were constructed with narrow driveway approaches. He suggested widening the driveway if the owners were having difficulty maneuvering from their driveway onto the street. He said that the City is reluctant to remove parking in areas where on-street parking is in demand.

John Collins suggested that the motorists come out of the driveway toward the east instead of the west if hitting a car was a concern.

Ms. Kroha asked if bike lanes were to be installed in the 400 block of West Washington Street.

Craig Shonkwiler said that bicycle lanes were not scheduled to be installed in the 400 block of West Washington Street. He said that there would be a bike route, but the lanes would not be added to this area of Washington Street.

Joe Smith moved to take no action on this item.

Michael Madigan stated that the suggestion of widening the driveway was a solution.

Michael Madigan seconded the motion.

The motion was approved 3 to 0.

Ms. Kroha expressed concern about speeding on Washington Street.

Mr. Madigan asked if there was a time when the problem was worse.

Ms. Kroha said that the evening rush hour was the worse.

Sylvia Morgan said that the Police Department would set the speed trailer for westbound traffic to monitor the situation.

The meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting will be held on May 13, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. at the Urbana Public Works Department, 706 South Glover Avenue, second floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stiehl
Recording Secretary