

APPROVED Meeting Minutes
Transportation Commission
Monday, January 29, 2017
Community Room – Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School

Present: Jack Chalabian, Kyle Eichenberger, James Thompson, Michael Stewart,
James Taylor, Akiwumi Attawia

Excused: Roya Basirirad

Staff: John Youkhana, Allison Von Ebers, Tammie Grossman, Mike Koperniak, Mary
Avinger

Parking Consultants: Julie Dixon and Jennifer Rentz of Dixon Resources Unlimited

There was no non-agenda public testimony.

Approval of Tonight's Meeting Agenda

Commissioner Taylor motioned to approve the agenda as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Stewart. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

2nd PARKING PILOT PUBLIC FORUM

Transportation Commission Chair, Jack Chalabian opened the meeting at 7:00pm by asking people to sign in if they wish to speak and provide their email address if they wished to receive future updates. He spoke briefly about the purpose of the meeting and what the Commission would like to do.

Julie Dixon, of Dixon Resources Unlimited, gave a presentation on the proposed Parking Pilot Program. Ms. Dixon's presentation went over the proposed updates to the Village of Oak Park's parking rules. Ms. Dixon reviewed the map of the proposed area, the proposed on-street parking restrictions and daytime restrictions, as well as overnight permit/pass parking between 11pm and 6am, and spoke about existing restrictions.

The floor was opened to public testimony.

Jim Gates read from a statement that was handed out to the Commissioners requesting email or written response for data about the parking pilot program. He would like more significant data showing if a majority of villagers support the pilot program, confirmation that property values will not be negatively affected, that it will not affect villager safety, and that adding parking improves the quality of life. He wants data that the pilot will not damage the character of the Village, about the technology needed for the program and the initial and on-going costs to villagers, and if there will be adequate police and

enforcement officers to monitor and cite violators. Mr. Gates also wanted to know why the mayor and trustees have been absent from the forums and Commission meetings. A copy of the statement is attached to these minutes.

Paul Hamer stated he believes the parking pilot program is an overturning of the overnight parking ban. Julie explained how it is not, but rather a formalization. Mr. Hamer thinks that overnight parking is being moved into the area south of Madison where it currently doesn't exist. He thinks that this is an issue of safety for multi-family and single family residences and thinks maintaining the overnight parking ban is the only way to ensure public safety. Mr. Hamer feels other communities in the area understand the importance of an overnight parking ban and also thinks there should be more open meetings.

Mary Prudden stated she was speaking for the residents on the 100-300 blocks of South Maple regarding the pilot program. Ms. Prudden began by stating these residents already feel the negative impacts of parking. She spoke about permit parking preventing street cleaning and snow removal, about unused parking spaces on South Boulevard, and spoke about a local business and parking issues during their sales. Ms. Prudden believes the pilot program covers 1/3 of the historic district and spoke about getting permission to change anything and how she thinks the program will change the character of the neighborhood.

Kristi Sloniger thinks this program will change her block into a parking lot for commuters when there are already a lot of people parking on the block. She wants to know how much this program is going to cost and if there will be any more enforcement officers monitoring the area. Ms. Sloniger stated there is already a two hour time restriction on her block that isn't enforced and thinks this program will allow people to park all day. She is concerned about snow and leaf removal and wants to know what the fines will be and how much the density has increased in the area.

Dawn Wolfe stated she is not a homeowner and lives in a multifamily residence. She spoke to the audience asking everyone to consider what she has to go through paying \$700 per year for parking on the street, has to move her car to the other side of the street frequently, and deals with parking costs rising consistently. Ms. Wolfe doesn't think this affects safety and questions if guest passes will be available to residents in the program area. She also wants to know if there are any studies that show overnight parking increases safety at night.

Jaggen Farwell spoke about being concerned with putting more parking spaces on the street but is in support of it. Mr. Farwell also spoke about parking issues at Home and Madison and at Marion and Randolph.

Bruce DeViller stated he understands that there is a lot of pressure to provide more parking in the area but would like information on the program. Mobility Services Manager, John Youkhana, stated he will send information to him.

Joyce Porter spoke of being frustrated about not being able to park somewhere with restrictions and with empty streets and thinks only one side should be restricted. Ms. Porter spoke about the change that she saw in the presentation about restrictions starting at 8:00pm instead of the current 6:00pm restrictions.

Joshua Reed stated he is concerned about zoning and worried that he may have to park three to four blocks away from his residence and doesn't want to have to do that again.

Erik Wise stated he doesn't believe the overnight ban is being removed and welcomes the change proposed in the pilot program. Mr. Wise said he has heard the argument before that allowing more people to use the area would make the streets unsafe and thinks that the more people around would make it safer.

Robert Becker spoke about enforcement and how the existing no parking 8am-10pm restrictions aren't being enforced and stated he spoke to a police officer and was told that the area wouldn't be enforced regularly and that was by policy. Mr. Becker spoke about streets not getting cleaned and leaves not picked up, and how he thinks services would become worse under the program.

Anna Harlan wants to clarify what is meant by a permit and Julie explained long term and short term permits. Ms. Harlan also asked about the cost of the permit and Julie explained a cost had not been figured out yet and spoke about the differences for service workers and care givers. Julie also spoke about license plate recognition and registering vehicle information. John Youkhana spoke about permits for residents and passes for guests, service workers, and caregivers.

Barbara Westermann spoke about the lack of data including the cost to people in the pilot area and the differences in being in an apartment and owning a home. Ms. Westermann spoke about the effects this will have on people in the area and thinks the program will take at least a year. She also talked about the importance of knowing how much this will cost and thinks maybe just opening parking on east/west streets would be enough.

Brian Lantz asked about the 72 hour rule and Julie responded that is no longer an option. Mr. Lantz spoke about living on Home Avenue for over 20 years and how when the traffic light went in at Washington traffic increased. He spoke about people not moving their cars and snow and leaves not being picked up and streets flooding from melting snow. Mr. Lantz also spoke about parking at Wisconsin and Randolph near the YMCA and how congested traffic has gotten since the parking changes took effect. He wanted to know the methodology behind determining where parking should be and stated while he understands there are people in multifamily buildings there are single family property owners that should be heard. He doesn't want to create a Chicago style parking situation.

Kelly W. spoke about living in a multifamily building on Oak Park Avenue, restrictions, and getting a ticket, and monitoring who parks on blocks from businesses. She thinks there needs to be a lot more research and consideration that should be up for a vote.

Joan Strand thinks the set of restrictions are complex and asked about escalating rates in three hour parking areas and Julie explained it is intended for short term parking and long term parking should be in the garages. She also spoke about restrictions changing from 6:00pm to 8:00pm and thinks it is unfair to also increase the time to 11:00pm.

Anna McDermott spoke about living in the 300 block of Clinton and asked about the rules from the previous meeting; Julie explained the information presented at the meeting is the plans for the program. Ms. McDermott stated she likes the new proposed changes and spoke about living on another block in the area and the congestion there.

Jerry Sjostrom spoke about living in Oak Park for over 40 years and his experience when parking in the area. Mr. Sjostrom spoke about traveling to many different areas and that encouragement to people to ride bikes instead of driving would be great.

Ralph Whetstine stated he's lived in Oak Park for 18 years and spoke about seeing enforcement frequently and how he's paid many tickets just for parking 10 to 15 minutes past restriction times. Mr. Whetstine spoke about coming home from work and having a difficult time finding parking and having to park 3 to 4 blocks away from his home sometimes but that he's committed to finding an effective use and balance that would work for everyone. He spoke about the cost of having to park on the street and paying over \$1200 a year for parking for him and his wife and how the Village already increases rates every year, and to have to pay even more for having a second car will make living in the Village very difficult.

Hannah Jennings spoke about living in the Village for 35 years and that she first lived in an apartment and had to park over a block away and walk with a baby and it wasn't safe. Ms. Jennings stated she currently lives in a condo and the cost to park keeps going up but she will soon be on a fixed income. She thought meter parking would end at 6:00pm but it is proposed to end at 8:00pm and she is against that change.

Joe Keffer spoke about living in north Oak Park and is a commuter. Mr. Keffer thinks zones should be simplified near South and North Boulevards.

Cathy Yen stated she is concerned about the delineation of the quadrant in the pilot program. Three business districts are involved in the program and thinks that the pilot program should be extended through the Hemmingway District and how there would be different parking rules on opposite sides of the street. Julie stated that nothing has been decided on and before anything will happen there will be outreach to everyone involved.

A resident from the 100 block of Washington stated she has lived there for 29 years and spoke about the growth in the area between apartment buildings and townhouses and the change in population. She also spoke about commuters parking in the area and how things have changed and the area she lives in is very congested.

Greg Marcy asked about the citations in the proposed area and if there would be warnings to people still trying to learn the rules. Julie explained how the warning period would work during the outreach campaign.

Paola Daly spoke about being a new homeowner in the Village and wondered if the outreach method would be changed and Julie explained all the ways they have made every effort for outreach and transparency and welcomed suggestions on how to reach the public. Ms. Daly asked about shuttle service getting to downtown Oak Park or for commuters and Julie explained how that would cost money and the idea is to create a program that would sustain itself. Ms. Daly also spoke about people not moving their cars or having their cars moved for them and also spoke about not being able to park in front of her house at night. She rents a condo and wants to get a pass to park near where she lives and mentioned having to wait three months for a pass to open up and then having to park in a garage blocks away. Ms. Daly thinks the amount of hassle for parking here is not good.

A resident asked for an explanation of the three hour parking restrictions on residential streets. John explained blocks that currently do not have restrictions would not be changed in the pilot program. However, if a block currently has restrictions they would standardize hourly parking to three hours. The resident also spoke about the reason behind restrictions originally being put in for commuters and John explained that the goal of the permit for a homeowner would be to allow them to park on their block during the restrictions with a one-day restriction for street cleaning.

Paul Hamer asked about residents having to buy a permit to park on the street and John explained about giving homeowners the option to purchase the permit. Mr. Hamer also spoke about enforcement and technology for the program.

A resident asked about how parking restrictions would be monitored and Julie spoke about license plate recognition and speaking to the Police Department about committed enforcement.

A resident asked about the recommended length of the pilot program and Julie responded the target time is six months and another six months of gathering information.

A resident asked about having a police representative at the next commission meeting.

John Youkhana spoke about working with all the Village departments about the pilot program and mentioned that people concerned about safety could attend one of the forums with the police department in the upcoming week.

A resident asked about parking meter spaces at night and guest passes and Julie responded that the meters would become available for valid permits and passes overnight and that she didn't have information on guest passes yet. The resident also spoke about parking at Wisconsin and Randolph and how the street is not wide enough for parking on both sides of the street and two-way traffic.

A resident asked about the pilot program area boundaries and Julie responded the area is Harlem Avenue to Oak Park Avenue and between South Boulevard and Harrison Street and explained that the map and other updated information will be available on the Village's website tomorrow.

Chair Chalabian made a brief statement that this is not the last meeting that will be held on the pilot program and that it is important that the public help craft how the program will go. He spoke about how the Commission will go over the comments and make recommendations to the Village Board of Trustees. He then asked the Commission to give their comments.

Commissioner Taylor thanked residents for coming out and stated he thinks information could be presented better and explained in a better way so people would understand. He said daytime restrictions really aren't new they are just streamlining restrictions for all blocks. Commissioner Taylor spoke about the potential for cars to park in front of homes where cars currently do not park and spoke about living in a condo and having guests.

Commissioner Attawia spoke about this being his first Commission meeting and about living at Washington and Wisconsin and how he understands parking is a complex issue.

Commissioner Eichenberger spoke about also living near Washington and Wisconsin and one of the things that he sees is that everyone is in this situation together and compromises need to be figured out. Commissioner Eichenberger thinks they have received good feedback.

Commissioner Stewart spoke about working in the area and it seems for a lot of people the restrictions are complicated and that hopefully they can come up with a compromise for single family and multifamily residences. Commissioner Stewart also asked people to keep commenting online and spoke of the need for data to be presented.

Commissioner Thompson stated he wants to come up with a reasonable and fair pilot program.

Chair Chalabian spoke about his experience being a homeowner and renter. He also stated the pilot program was proposed by the elected officials and this is not an easy issue to fix. Chair Chalabian spoke about the history of the Commission working on this program over the last year. He encouraged residents to stay engaged in the process

and explained that the Commission has to come up with a recommendation and invited people to attend the next Commission meeting on Monday, February 12th.

Commissioner Thompson motioned to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Eichenberger.

The voice vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectively submitted

Mary Avinger

Mary Avinger,
Administrative Secretary