

**MINUTES OF THE
TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Monday, March 18, 2013
City Hall, Room 207
5:30 pm**

MEMBERS: Vice Chairperson Bryan Lipke, Alderman Thomas Sladek, Lieutenant Karl Ackermann, Charles Karow, Victoria Jones, and Daniel Theno

ABSENT: Chairperson Matt Kuepers (excused)

OTHERS PRESENT: Alderman David Boyce, Alderman Mark Steuer, Bill Kloiber, Jeff Mirkes, Captain Jim Runge, Officer Mike Francois, Officer Eric Allen, Officer Craig Carlson, Officer Mark Strojny, Officer Scott Leaman, and Recording Secretary and Traffic Engineer David Hansen

GENERAL BUSINESS

In the absence of Chairperson M. Kuepers and Vice Chairperson B. Lipke, Ald. Sladek assumed the position of Chair for Items 1 through 3. Upon the arrival of B. Lipke at the meeting, Ald. Sladek surrendered his position as meeting Chair and gave it to the Vicechair for Items 4 through 8.

1. Approval of the minutes from the February 18, 2013 Traffic Commission meeting.

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by D. Theno, and carried to approve the minutes from the February 18, 2013 Traffic Commission meeting.

2. Report by the Traffic Engineer of the appointments of Victoria Jones and Daniel Theno.

David Hansen, City Traffic Engineer, introduced both new commissioners and provided their brief bios.

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by D. Theno, and carried to receive and place on file the report by the Traffic Engineer of the appointments of Victoria Jones and Daniel Theno.

INITIAL REQUESTS

3. Request by the Traffic Engineer to replace the NO PARKING HERE TO CORNER zone on the north side of Crest Lane at Pinehurst Avenue with a NO STOPPING OR STANDING 7 AM TO 4 PM SCHOOL DAYS zone.

D. Hansen stated that back in late 2007 that he and school staff reviewed the traffic and pick-up situation at Martin Elementary school and made various changes to the on-street parking zones including the addition of a NO PARKING HERE TO CORNER zone on the north side of Crest Ln at Pinehurst Ave. During a recent site visit with school and police officials, parents occupied the N side of Crest Ln at Pinehurst Ave, which is not necessarily a violation of the posted NO PARKING zone as they were inside their vehicles. Their presence though did hinder the safe flow of traffic on Crest Ln while obstructing the view of crossing pedestrians at the intersection. He recommended establishing a time-limited NO STOPPING OR STANDING zone in place of the existing NO PARKING HERE TO CORNER zone in order to clear the intersection during school release.

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by Lt. Ackermann, and carried that, on a 90-day trial, to:

- A. Remove the NO PARKING zone on the north side of Crest Lane from Pinehurst Ave to a point 75 feet west of Pinehurst Avenue.

- B. Establish a NO STOPPING OR STANDING 7 AM TO 4 PM SCHOOL DAYS zone on the north side of Crest Lane from Pinehurst Ave to a point 75 feet west of Pinehurst Avenue.
4. Request by the Green Bay Police Department to establish a NO STOPPING OR STANDING 12 AM TO 3 AM SATURDAY AND SUNDAY zone on the east side of Washington Street from Doty Street to East Walnut Street, and on the west side of Washington Street from Cherry Street to Pine Street.

D. Hansen summarized the main discussion points from the last meeting minutes on this item.

A motion was made by Ald. Sladek, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to suspend the rules.

Ald. Boyce stated he leans towards the Police Department's position on this item, but also understands that not all businesses in the affected area are in support of it. He backs the businesses, but ultimately Council must make the decision.

Captain Jim Runge stated that some of the officers most involved in the creation of this proposal are here tonight, and would like to speak on behalf of the request.

Officer Mike Francois spoke in favor of the request. He is part of the neighborhood response team and has been involved in this area and downtown for the past 10 years. He recalled an issue that just happened over the weekend where 3 trucks parked on the E side of the 100 block of S Washington St blocked his view of a fight that started on the sidewalk. If parked vehicles were not there, he would have been able to resolve many details of the incident. Chase and Johnson Bank parking lots are still available to the public during this time, but the gated lot across the street does not allow anymore due to past issues with bar crowd. This request likely would eliminate 14 on-street stalls, but there is plenty of available parking elsewhere nearby. Typically 6 squad cars respond to incidents in this area. In the 200 block of N Washington St, the issue is more pedestrians crossing midblock between parked vehicles. He's concerned that after the new road near the Schreiber Foods development is built, bar goers will circle Washington-Cherry-Adams-new road. It's better for them to be able to park squad cars to respond to incidents rather than block a lane or two of traffic.

Ald. Sladek questioned Ofc. Francois why entire blocks need to be restricted rather than just the areas in front of the bars. Ofc. Francois responded that the fights and disturbances move along each block and even into the nearby parking lots. Many people leave their vehicles in the Chase Bank lot into Monday morning, as the bank only enforces customer only parking during their business hours.

A discussion took place that plenty of free parking is available nearby downtown, especially in the Cherry St Ramp, which is ½ block away from the 100 block South, and rarely is parked past the second floor on weekends. Capacity is roughly 600-700 vehicles.

Ald. Sladek questioned how GBPD would handle taxi access to this area. Ofc. Francois responded that taxis are currently stopping in the travel lanes while they pick up passengers that are crossing between parked vehicles. This is dangerous. If the request is approved, they would cite taxis if they stopped and waited for passengers, but would not ticket them if they pick up and leave right away.

Lt. Ackermann requested clarification of the COBAN In-Car Video for Law Enforcement system. Ofc. Francois responded that as soon as the squad lights are turned on that dash-cam video footage starts to be recorded. This is why they need parked vehicles removed, so that they no longer have a blocked view of the activity on the sidewalk. He stated they could review footage for evidence on who, what, when, and where incidents take place.

B. Lipke questioned how the Downtown Hospitality Alliance (DHA) has been involved in the discussions on the parking proposal. Ofc. Francois responded that there wasn't much negative feedback from DHA. GBPD adjusted their proposal from 9PM-3AM to 12AM-3AM primarily to accommodate the Meyer Theater passenger loading after shows. There are those at the Meyer

shows that want to park in front of the Meyer Theater after show release to get prime spots nearby downtown bars. He stated that there is ample parking nearby.

Officer Eric Allen spoke in favor of the request. He encourages taxis to come downtown as they keep drunks off the road. He does not like it when they double-park, but it happens because vehicles are parked on the street. If there were no parked vehicles, squad cars will be seen well by the people on the sidewalk. Incidents will then be reduced. Likely 500-600 vehicles come downtown on a weekend, and their request would only displace around 20 vehicles. If people want to come downtown on the weekends, they are willing to walk a block from their parked vehicle to their destination. The City pays \$80,000/year to staff security at the Cherry Street Ramp, and the ramp is under used. Those 20 displaced vehicles can park there. The Cities of Appleton and Milwaukee charge for downtown parking. Green Bay could recoup some of the \$80,000 if we charged for parking. The nearby surface lots do not want the bar crowd because people are leaving messes and vehicles which interferes with Monday mornings in those rented spots. A couple of taverns are concerned with proposal. D. Theno questioned if the 100 block and 200 blocks could have different hours for the parking restriction. Ofc. Allen prefers the same hours for consistency.

J. Runge stated that the midnight begin hour was part of the discussions and negotiations and is agreed upon by all parties that met (business owners, Mayor, police). C. Karow and B. Lipke questioned the position of the DHA. J. Runge stated that DHA asked about a few meters to be bagged in each block. GBPD responded that partial areas wouldn't allow them to see all the activity going on.

Ald. Steuer questioned what time metered parking turns free. D. Hansen replied there is no charge to park at a meter on weekends. Ald. Steuer would like to hear from impacted business owners. He would like the Cherry Street Ramp to be more utilized on the weekends. He likes that the proposal would help GBPD do their job in this concentrated bar area. When vacancies occur in this area, like Liquid 8 in the near future, he would like alternative and more family-friendly uses for those buildings. He has witnessed the bad activity in this area firsthand while doing a drive along with officers.

Jeff Mirkes, Downtown Green Bay Incorporated (DGBI), stated that the DHA has good working relationship with GBPD. The downtown night-time bar-related problems exist with only a few of the establishments. He confirmed that the begin time was negotiated between all involved parties, and that he was strongly in favor of a 12 AM start. Parking should be low or free when supply is greatest. Short length parking zones were considered. There was a lot of give and take in the DHA/GBPD/City negotiations. Few businesses are concerned with the parking proposal. The Meyer Theater accepts a 12 AM start. Businesses will cooperate. He is proud of the good operators in DHA, and that group is growing. He respects the GBPD position on this matter. DHA has no official position on the request.

J. Runge stated that the proposal may take a full year to evaluate its effectiveness.

Ofc. Allen stated that the Cherry St Ramp is very safe to park, with 3 security officers present on weekend nights.

Ofc. Francois stated the proposal should cut down or eliminate sidewalk drug deals and that the problem may go elsewhere.

Ald. Boyce and Ofc. Francois had a brief discussion about on-street and parking lot/ramp motorcycle parking.

A motion was made by Ald. Sladek, seconded by D. Theno, and carried to return to the regular order of business.

A motion was made by Ald. Sladek, seconded by D. Theno, and carried that, on a 90-day trial, to:

A. Establish a NO STOPPING OR STANDING 12 AM TO 3 AM SATURDAY AND SUNDAY zone on the east side of Washington Street from Doty Street to East Walnut Street.

B. Establish a NO STOPPING OR STANDING 12 AM TO 3 AM SATURDAY AND SUNDAY zone on the west side of Washington Street from Cherry Street to Pine Street.

5. Request by Ald. Brunette to discuss, with possible recommendation, the removal of 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 4 PM SCHOOL DAYS zone on Ernst Drive.

D. Hansen stated that years ago prior to the parking lot expansion at Notre Dame Academy, many students used to park within the neighborhoods of the schools. Since that expansion, most of the students have been parking onsite, and spillover into the neighborhoods has been significantly reduced. Other nearby streets have eliminated their parking zones. He spoke with Ald. Brunette, who told him that everyone he spoke to along Ernst Dr was in support of the request.

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by Ald. Sladek, and carried that, on a 90-day trial, to remove the 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 4 PM SCHOOL DAYS zone on both sides of Ernst Drive from Shirley Street to a point 415 feet south of Shirley Street.

6. Request by Ald. Steuer to consider operating flashing yellow arrow traffic signals on Military Avenue as is done on South Oneida Street near Bay Park Square mall.

D. Hansen summarized the benefits of the use of the flashing yellow arrow (FYA) by showing an animation of an intersection using FYA plus a WisDOT brochure on their website (<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/travel/flashing-yellow.htm>). Studies have shown a reduction in left-turn crashes where FYA is used. He supports the use of FYA on new or reconstructed signalized intersections. Also, he supports conversion to FYA at intersections with a high left-turn crash rate.

Prior to the meeting, Ald. Steuer explained to D. Hansen the reasons for the request, which one was to reduce the amount of wait time at intersections with Military Ave such as Shawano Ave, where a motorist can only turn during the green arrow. D. Hansen stated that he and the alder one night drove both the Military Ave and Oneida St corridors to witness firsthand the difference between standard arrows and FYAs. Military Ave does not have FYAs because they were not formally allowed (experimental only) at the time of its design. D. Hansen explained that FYA is used to improve left-turn safety. However, if SB Military Ave at Shawano Ave was converted from its existing protected only left-turn, conversion to a FYA can only increase left-turn crashes by allowing lefts during a circular green. He stated that with the shorter cycle lengths now used that the wait time is reasonable for left-turning motorists. One issue he's seen with left-turning motorists at this location is that they stop too far ahead of the pavement sensor, and can be left undetected. He stated that he will modify the signal controller to lock those calls after motorists pass the detector so they will get a green arrow. The existing signal arm lengths at Shawano Ave are adequate to install FYA signals. However, other Military Ave intersections have arm lengths too short for FYA.

Ald. Steuer stated he greatly appreciated the time and efforts of D. Hansen with him on this request. He stated that some people are avoiding Military Ave because of the additional wait times at left-turns including at Shawano Ave. This is a business corridor, and wants more not less traffic on it. He stated that D. Hansen's observation of motorists stopping too far ahead is part of the issue. He agreed with D. Hansen that if Military Ave signals were upgraded to FYA that it should be done correctly including extending the signal arm lengths where needed. FYA is a new technology, and would like to see it used. However, he notices that there are differences between Oneida St and Shawano Ave, moreover that there are more Military Ave intersections where each intersecting street carries high volumes of traffic, which maybe isn't the best for FYA. He deferred to the recommendation of the Traffic Engineer, and supports staff's position of using FYA for new or reconstructed intersections.

A motion was made by D. Theno, seconded by Ald. Sladek, and carried to receive and place on file the request to consider operating flashing yellow arrow traffic signals on Military Avenue as is done on South Oneida Street near Bay Park Square mall.

7. Request by Ald. Steuer to possibly reconfigure the northbound lanes of North Oneida Street at Shawano Avenue to allow for left and right turns, as well as forward egress.

D. Hansen displayed a map of the intersection as well as photos from his site visit with Ald. Steuer. Currently, the NB approach is signed and marked with a left-turn lane and a thru-right lane. He stated that in early 2007, the parking zones on Oneida St changed north of the newly constructed portion from W Mason St to Badger St. Many Oneida St residents didn't like the new parking restrictions, especially on the W side of the street from Badger St to Shawano Ave. The alder at the time pushed to get parking back on the street which required moving traffic exiting south from Shawano/Oneida into the SB curb lane. Doing so created 2 wide NB lanes which required through traffic to use the NB curb lane. The newer lane configuration has contributed to longer NB backups especially after Franklin Middle school release time. He stated that if a lane was added that all existing lanes would be narrowed. This could potentially create turning movement issues for WB to SB lefts encroaching on NB traffic, especially given many City trucks and vehicles make that maneuver.

Ald. Steuer stated that if all lanes could fit within the width of existing S Oneida St that he would support this request. The NB left turn lane seems too wide. He would like item studied. He was unsure if he would support the request if it required intersection reconstruction but is curious of the cost. He agreed that safety needs to be considered.

A discussion took place questioning if Shawano Ave and S Oneida St are transit routes.

Lt. Ackermann stated that NB traffic clearing is the potential issue to be resolved, and questioned D. Hansen if signal timings could be modified or left-turn arrows added to reduce the wait time. D. Hansen replied that timings under the existing configuration could be done, but adding displays such as left-turn arrows would be costly, as the signal equipment is old and would require significant improvements to accommodate turn arrows.

A brief discussion took place about traffic counts and that the Traffic Commission does not authorize improvement projects.

D. Hansen recommended the request to staff for study.

A motion was made by Ald. Sladek, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to refer to staff for study the request to possibly reconfigure the northbound lanes of North Oneida Street at Shawano Avenue to allow for left and right turns, as well as forward egress.

8. Request by Ald. Sladek to change parking restrictions to 2-HOUR parking from 1-HOUR parking for the easternmost portion of Laredo Lane and the part of Delray Drive which extends north of Trojan Drive.

Ald. Sladek stated D. Hansen informed him that the 2-HOUR zone was established in 2005 to reduce/eliminate late lunch students returning from their lunch break to the end of the school day from parking on neighborhood streets. He verified that school hours have not changed since the zone was established. The problem would likely return if parking zones were changed. He would like the request to be received and placed on file.

A motion was made by D. Theno, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to receive and place on file the request to change parking restrictions to 2-HOUR parking from 1-HOUR parking for the easternmost portion of Laredo Lane and the part of Delray Drive which extends north of Trojan Drive.

There being no other items of discussion, a motion was made by Ald. Sladek, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to adjourn from the regular order of business. The meeting ended at 7:23 P.M.

The next Traffic Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 15, 2013 at 5:30 P.M. in Room 207.