

URBANA TRAFFIC COMMISSION  
Tuesday, August 12, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Madigan, City Council Member, Ward 6, Chair  
Craig Shonkwiler, Assistant City Engineer  
Pat Connolly, Chief of Police

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Irene Halcrombe, 917 North Harvey Street  
Willene Howard, 916 North Harvey Street  
Rich Surles, Police Lieutenant  
Tim Bartlett, Urbana Park District, 1101 East Kerr Avenue  
John Collins, Operations Manager  
Wade Franklin, 201 Lincoln Square  
Bill Gray, Public Works Director

The meeting began at 4:00 p.m.

**Additions to the agenda:**

There were no additions to the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Pat Connolly moved to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2014 meeting. Craig Shonkwiler 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**

### **Item #1- Discussion of parking in the 900 block of North Harvey Street.**

Rich Surles reported that he had been working with residents at the north end of the 900 block of North Harvey Street. He said that in 2011 he wrote a memo to Traffic Commission asking to change parking to no parking tow away zone or mark hammerhead for no parking to keep King Park users from blocking driveways on Harvey Street, south of the park. He said that the current restrictions had not been effective in reducing the number of parking violations. He added that the 10-minute loading zone became burdensome since officers had to wait ten minutes before towing vehicles. Lt. Surles stated that the officers and the residents were frustrated with the current system. He also noted that officers had received 14 service calls last year to enforce the restrictions within the last year. He asked the Traffic Commission to look at his recommendations again to help with enforcement. He explained the problem with park users blocking the driveway at 917 North Harvey Street and asked that the hammerhead be designated as no parking.

Michael Madigan asked if a vehicle could be towed for blocking a driveway.

Lt. Surles said that it could be towed but that it was difficult to get out to the location before the vehicle moved.

John Collins said that it was currently marked as a loading zone.

Irene Halcrombe added that the park users violated the loading zone time limit and would not move until the Police Department came. She said that there had been times when she was unable to get out of her driveway and the owners of the vehicles refused to move. She mentioned that she felt like the bad person for reporting those who were blocking her driveway, but she had been unable to resolve the problem. She said that many times when the police officers were able to convince the motorists to move, the motorists waited until the officers left and moved the vehicles back so they blocked the driveway again.

Michael Madigan asked why it was designated as a loading zone.

Tim Bartlett said that the Urbana Park District had made many improvements to King Park. He mentioned that the residents had asked for a shelter with restrooms. He said that the park district was opposed to the location but followed the wishes of the group representing the neighborhood. He continued by saying that he had worked with the City prior to this to develop the current plan. He sympathized with those living next to the park, but he said the decision made by the Traffic Commission the last time, which allowed a 10-minute loading zone, tow-away zone, was the best option. He added that the shelter was used often and that Harvey Street was the best access to the shelter. He voiced concern about the parking being restricted as it might reduce access to the park and make it unusable. He explained that originally the shelter was proposed near Wascher Drive, but it was not approved by neighborhood group. He said that he wished people would respect the signage, but there were no other access points besides Harvey Street.

Ms. Halcrombe asked if residents on Harvey Street had been included in the discussion about the plans for the park.

Mr. Bartlett stated that Urbana Community Alternative Policing Advisory Committee (UCAP) represented the neighborhood during the park planning discussions. He said that the goal was to provide park facilities for the neighborhood. He did not believe that there was a survey taken of the neighbors. He felt that the park added to the value of properties adjacent to the park.

Ms. Halcrombe asked why plans were not made for parking.

Tim Bartlett said that their plans for providing for parking within King Park but that the park district prefers promoting green space over parking spaces. He said that the park district made an arrangement with the school district to use the parking lot at King School when school was not in session.

Michael Madigan felt that the park district should provide parking within the park. He added that there was a problem and that the park district needed to provide a solution.

Mr. Bartlett said that he would be willing to work with UCAP to enforce and add more signage.

Michael Madigan said that the current parking situation was not working. He asked if the bicycle path could be moved further up to allow parking within the park.

Craig Shonkwiler asked if people using the shelter had to rent it or if it could be used by anyone.

Mr. Bartlett said that either option was available, but if someone wanted to guarantee use of the shelter, the person should rent it.

Mr. Shonkwiler asked if the restrooms were unlocked all of the time or were there times when use of the shelter was not available.

Mr. Bartlett said that the restrooms were open at all times during the seasons when the parks were open from April to October.

Mr. Shonkwiler said that if only authorized users were allowed to use the shelter, the park district would be able to notify the users about the parking restrictions. He acknowledged that the current situation made it difficult to let users know about the parking restrictions other than reading the signs that were in place. He stated that the current parking restrictions were not working and asked if the park district was willing to look at a solution where parking was provided within King Park as part of a 5- to 10-year plan to look at all solutions. He said that the City would like to make it a no parking zone and work with the park district to find a solution.

Tim Bartlett stated that it was not fair to restrict parking as the problem was not an issue when park users dropped off items and then moved their vehicles to a legal parking space.

Pat Connolly mentioned that moving the loading zone to the south would not work since it would inconvenience homeowners in that area.

Rich Surles said that the drop-off was not a problem until the vehicle owner left the vehicle. He said that when the property owners call about their driveways being blocked, those calls were usually deemed as a low priority. He added that by the time an officer arrived, the problem vehicle was already gone or the vehicle owner would then move the vehicle.

Ms. Halcombe thanked the officers for their responsiveness and acknowledged that it was inconvenient for the officers to come because someone blocked her driveway.

Rich Surles reiterated that it was difficult for officers to enforce parking violations as currently posted.

Craig Shonkwiler asked if vehicles could park legally south of the hammerhead at the end of Harvey Street.

Willene Howard was concerned that park users would park in front of her driveway.

Craig Shonkwiler said that there were spaces on the street where park users could park without blocking driveways. He added by ordinance, vehicles could not park within five feet of the driveway entrance.

Pat Connolly asked if the park district could provide instructions for park users to include information about dropping off items and warn them about the consequences of violating parking restrictions.

Tim Bartlett said that the park district would just tell people that they could not park there and not include information about being able to drop off items. He said that no one would rent the facility if there was no parking.

Michael Madigan said that there needed to be a compromise between the residents and the Urbana Park District so residents on Harvey Street did not have to call the Police Department every time the residents wanted to access their driveways and so users had places to load and unload.

Tim Bartlett said there were no perfect solutions.

Pat Connolly asked if parking could be allowed on the north side of the park.

Craig Shonkwiler stated that there was parking allowed on both sides of the street, north of the park, so vehicles would not be able to park at the end of the street.

John Collins asked if there was a design presented by the City that went into the park and allowed for a couple of spaces within the park.

Tim Bartlett said that the right-of-way was not wide enough in that proposal.

John Collins said that right-of-way was not of a concern since some of the design was on the park district property and the hammerhead was not designed to allow parking.

Craig Shonkwiler stated that property owners adjacent to the park were invited to this meeting since they had been impacted by the current parking restrictions. He noted that there was additional parking along Harvey Street to the south.

Tim Bartlett said that the parking on Harvey Street was acceptable as long as property owners did not complain about park users parking on the street.

Michael Madigan asked if the hammerhead could be removed.

Bill Gray said that the hammerhead design was used so emergency vehicles could turn around without using the driveways. He said that the City would prefer to keep the hammerhead.

Mr. Madigan asked if half of the hammerhead could be removed.

John Collins said that both sides of the hammerhead were needed for the turning maneuver at the end of North Harvey Street.

Craig Shonkwiler recommended reviewing Rich Surles' suggestion for a no parking, tow-away zone.

Tim Bartlett did not think that the proposed plan was very user friendly. He said that living next to the park shelter was an attractive nuisance. He added that allowing a loading zone was needed to keep the park viable.

Craig Shonkwiler asked if the park district was willing to work with the city to develop a plan.

Tim Bartlett said that there was not much room to do anything. He said that the park district worked with the school district to use the parking at King School when school was not in session.

Rich Surles said the current parking restriction was not enforceable and that he would explain to officers that they should use discretion before ticketing vehicles.

Tim Bartlett asked if there was striping or different signage that could be used.

John Collins did not want to add street markings.

Bill Gray said that No Parking Any Time signage would keep driveways open and allow park users a place for drop off. He added that people would still use the area to drop items off, but that users should not permanently park there. He explained that the action was not to be punitive, but the restrictions would encourage users to find somewhere else to park.

Rich Surles stated that the signage would be immediately enforceable if a vehicle was left unattended.

Bill Gray said that the end of the street was not intended as for permanent parking, but as a place to drop off and then park at another location.

Pat Connolly moved to restrict parking any time and to create a tow away zone at the north end of the 900 block of North Harvey Street adjacent to King Park.

John Collins stated that he would look for locations for appropriate signage in the area.

Michael Madigan asked if people would block the driveway and park south of the sign.

Craig Shonkwiler stated that the parking restriction would be monitored and a decision could be made to determine if additional restrictions might be necessary.

Rich Surles mentioned that parking enforcement would be as needed and not part of officers patrolling for violations. He asked that the residents contact the Police Department if there were vehicles blocking the driveway.

Craig Shonkwiler seconded the motion. He hoped that the park district would work with the City to find a solution.

Michael Madigan said that the current restrictions were not working.

Tim Bartlett said the agreement with the school district for the use of the King School parking lot was working well as long as users follow the rules.

Michael Madigan said that the park district might have to create some parking on their own property to accommodate its users.

Tim Bartlett said that initially the park district was opposed to the installation of the shelter at the current location, but the neighborhood group involved in the planning was insistent about the location. He said that the issue had been discussed and that the current parking configuration was the best solution possible.

The motion was approved 3-0.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

Michael Madigan explained the process for the parking restrictions to go into effect. He asked the Recording Secretary to notify the residents present when the item is scheduled on the Committee of the Whole agenda.

Ms. Halcrombe discussed her frustrations with the current parking situation.

Pat Connolly asked her to call if the problem persisted with the current change.

**Item #2- Discussion of the installation of parking meters in Lot 10 A North**

Wade Franklin said the installation of parking meters in Lot 10 A North was allowed per the agreement between the City of Urbana and Lincoln Square. He said that the meters were removed at the request of a former tenant. He added that the business owners were still opposed to the addition of the meters.

Michael Madigan said that many of the users of the lot were not Lincoln Square patrons but were Champaign County employees.

John Collins said that the Finance Department would work on a program for validation. He said that the ticket would be issued and the person would present the receipt and have the ticket voided.

Michael Madigan said that it should not be a problem to put a quarter in a meter to park in the lot for an hour.

Wade Franklin said that he wanted to represent the best interest of his clients and asked if there was a type of validation that could be used.

Mr. Madigan said that the use of metered parking was not an issue in the evening.

Mr. Franklin said that the validation of tickets was acceptable.

John Collins said that there were more spaces available in the parking lot to the south and east than spaces available in Lot 10 A North.

Pat Connolly said that if a patron received a ticket, the patron could place a receipt from the Lincoln Square business the patron visited in the ticket envelope and put the envelope in the fine box located in the Lincoln Square parking lot. He suggested that process as a way to void tickets for Lincoln Square patrons.

Michael Madigan did not think that the parking meters would impact business in Lincoln Square since the meters would not be in effect in the evening and patrons could have their tickets voided by including a receipt from a Lincoln Square business in the ticket envelope.

Pat Connolly moved to install parking meters in Lot 10 A North for \$.25 per hour with a two-hour limit between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Craig Shonkwiler seconded the motion.

The motion was approved 3-0.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

Bill Gray recommended that the Council memo reference the Lincoln Square parking agreement and explain that this parking meter zone was allowed as part of that agreement.

The Recording Secretary was directed to notify Wade Franklin when the item was scheduled to go to the Committee of the Whole.

**Item #3- Discussion of the removal of No Turn on Red signage in downtown Urbana.  
(Review 90 days after removal.)**

The Recording Secretary reported that the Traffic Commission had asked that this item be reviewed 90 days after the removal of the signage.

Craig Shonkwiler stated that they had not received any comments about the removal of the signage and that there had been no accidents reported.

Bill Gray said that the one restriction still remained.

Craig Shonkwiler moved to continue with the current signage at the intersections of Main Street and Broadway Avenue and Main Street and Race Street where the No Turn on Red signage was removed for all legs of the intersections except for eastbound traffic on Main Street at Race Street.

Pat Connolly seconded the motion.

The motion was approved 3-0.

No further action is required.

**New Business**

- Item #4- Discussion of the installation of Neighborhood Watch signs at the following locations:**
- a. Kinch Street, south of Washington Street**
  - b. Rainbow View, south of Washington Street**
  - c. Country Squire Driver, south of Washington Street**
  - d. Hunter Drive, west of Rainbow View**
  - e. Rainbow View, east of Smith Road**
  - f. Country Squire Drive, east of Greenridge Drive**

Pat Connolly explained the Lt. Robert Fitzgerald had been working with a neighborhood group to form a neighborhood watch organization. He said that the neighborhood group was excited to have the signage installed.

John Collins added that the neighborhood watch program would be a positive program for the area.



Craig Shonkwiler asked Mr. Collins if the locations were acceptable or if any further clarification was needed.

John Collins said that the sign crew would work out the appropriate locations for placing the signs.

Pat Connolly moved to install neighborhood watch signage at the locations indicated.

Craig Shonkwiler seconded the motion.

The motion was approved 3-0.

No Council action is required. A work order will be written for the installation of the signage.

**Item #5- Discussion of parking meter changes in the 700 block of West Clark Street**

**Item #6- Discussion of parking meter changes in the 300 block of North Coler Avenue.**

The Traffic Commission discussed both issues together.

John Collins explained that there were two metered spaces on Coler Avenue and four metered spaces on Clark Street between Coler Avenue and Busey Avenue that provided two hour parking when an apartment complex was located in that area. He said that since the apartment complex had been demolished, those metered spaces remained empty and Carle employees and visitors parked on Clark Street where no meters were present. He asked that the current meters' time limit be extended from a two hour parking limit to a ten hour parking limit and that eleven meters be added on Clark Street to provide parking for those who may be visiting or working at Carle.

Pat Connolly said that St. Patrick's Church had opened its parking lot for some Carle employees who rent parking spaces.

Michael Madigan asked if there were meters on Clark Street in the block to the west of the 700 block.

John Collins said that there were no meters in that block.

Michael Madigan asked if University of Illinois students used those spaces.

Bill Gray said that traditionally people would be more likely to walk if the distance was one block or less.

John Collins said that those spaces were closer to Carle than to the U of I campus and probably were not used by students.

Pat Connolly asked if St. Patrick's Church had been notified of the changes.

John Collins said that he would let them know before the item went to Council.

Bill Gray asked John Collins to send an e-mail to Carle to let them know of the change for on-street parking.

Pat Connolly moved to add eleven parking meters on Clark Street.

Craig Shonkwiler seconded the motion.

The motion was approved 3-0.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

Pat Connolly moved to increase the meter limits on Clark Street and Coler Avenue from two hours to ten hours.

Craig Shonkwiler seconded the motion.

The motion was approved 3-0.

This item does not require Council action.

Discussion regarding upcoming topics for consideration occurred. The Traffic Commission approved the cancellation of the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

The next meeting, scheduled to be held on September 9, 2014 at 4:00 p.m., has been cancelled.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 14, 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