

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PARKING  
(IN VICINITY OF HIGH SCHOOLS)**

**July 19, 2010**

**5:30 PM**

Chairman Roy called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Roy, DeVries, Ouellette

Messer: B. Stanley

Chairman Roy addressed item 3 of the agenda:

3. Communication from Brandy Stanley, Parking Manager, regarding a parking plan surrounding Central High School.  
*(Note: Traffic Regulations and an Ordinance Amendment are attached.)*

On motion of Alderman DeVries, duly seconded by Alderman Ouellette, it was voted to discuss this item.

Alderman DeVries asked Mr. Chairman, are there any handouts for us this evening? I noted the costing was to be available.

Ms. Brandy Stanley, Parking Manager, replied I actually don't have a handout, but I did speak with Kevin Sheppard later this afternoon and he said it would cost about \$2,500 to do the whole thing.

Alderman DeVries asked which budget might that come out of?

Ms. Stanley replied well, that's a good question. Neither one of us has that in our budgets so we're not really sure.

Alderman DeVries asked should I leave that to the Alderman of the Ward to figure out?

Chairman Roy replied I think so.

Ms. Stanley stated basically, as you all know, we have held public meetings at all three high schools. We have taken a look at all three high schools. They are all different in character and have different issues with regards to parking. We looked at the MTA and the school bus capacity and we found that the school buses are at capacity. Anything that we did to encourage students to take the bus would create additional problems in terms of capacity on the buses. Central High School tends to be the one with the most acute parking problems because it has absolutely zero student parking. The other two high schools do have some, one more than another, but Central has none. In fact, they don't even have enough to adequately accommodate all of their faculty and staff members. Central High School is also the most densely populated area. What we decided to concentrate on was looking at what we could do around the area of Central High School to at least make things better. One of the things that we found going through our research was that Central has the highest population of students coming in from other towns. It has obviously the least amount of parking spaces. It also has the highest carpool rate for students. Its athletic fields are remote and in order to get to the athletic fields students must drive or find a ride because there is no school transportation available. All of these things add up to a big parking problem around Central High School. At the current cost of building parking spaces and the lack of available land in the area, building a parking garage is probably a long term idea that isn't going to happen any time soon. In the course of our public meetings, what we found in our audit of the streets was that there was a lot of parking inventory that was not available to be used by either students or residents. In other words, there was a lot of available parking inventory that was signed for no parking any time that was limited to two hour parking during school hours and in some cases, the two hour parking was very close to the residents because they had issues with finding parking in front of their houses. Unfortunately, that creates another issue because they can only park for two hours. There were other instances where streets were signed no parking any time as a reaction to misconduct on the part of the students. The current SRO for Central High School has for the last three years done a much better job at getting students off the streets and into the schools. One might submit that restricting parking because of student misconduct is not the correct way to deal with student misconduct. That is probably a police matter as opposed to a parking issue. What we did was an audit of all the streets and we looked at where we could open up parking inventory and also create parking spaces that are reserved just for residents in areas around the high school. What you see on the map behind you is a listing of all the proposed changes to the streets in the areas of the high school. The area marked in blue is the study area, the area where we looked at all of the changes. In the middle is Central High School. All of the streets that you see in green will be reserved for residents only during school hours. Outside of school hours, during the summer and overnight it is unrestricted parking and the signage will indicate that. The purple will go from either time limited parking or no parking to unlimited parking.

For instance, take Ash Street; right now I believe it is two hour parking. What we are proposing to do is lift the two hour limit on an entire stretch of Ash Street right here, reserve about six spaces, three on either end of the street for residents, and open up the rest of the street for student parking or first come first served parking. That street in itself is going to open up about 40 parking spaces that now go completely unused. The red...this is a church that doesn't really have any on street parking. It is currently signed no parking anytime from 8:00 AM to noon and typically enforcement has avoided this area, but not all the time so that creates problems when churchgoers go to church and park in a no parking zone and risk a ticket. What we wanted to do was change it to a three hour limit Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to noon and what this will do is probably keep students out of that area, but make it legal for the churchgoers to park there without risking a ticket. There are two other areas in red. These are also in front of churches. Right now they are three hour limits, 24 hours a day. The churches don't typically have services at three o'clock in the afternoon so we felt that keeping it consistent within this area to a three hour limit, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to noon, would probably be a good idea. I think for the most part that is probably it. The only other thing of note that I would point out is the addition of all of these spaces on Maple Street between the park and Bridge Street. Right now, both sides of that street are signed for no parking. Maple Street south of Bridge Street has parking on one side of it. The street does not narrow once it goes past Bridge Street so there really isn't any reason to have no parking on both sides of the street. Once you get up to Harrison Street there is unlimited parking on Maple Street on the east side of the street so we just extended that down as far as we could down to Arlington Street. I think that is pretty much about it. The residential parking program will fit nicely with the existing downtown residential parking programs. It will be a zone eight under the same ordinance. The only thing that we did was add a caveat that they do have reserved parking and that their permits allow them to park in the reserved spaces. Other than that, it is pretty much exactly the same as the way the residential parking works downtown.

Alderman DeVries stated Brandy, it appeared to me that the annual renewal could be somewhat cumbersome. When they go to renew a vehicle they could perhaps renew a residential parking permit at the same time. I'm wondering if there is some way, looking to the future, if this program is successful, to possibly allow some online renewal if they have renewed the vehicle at the same address and maybe use the vehicle registration as certainty or proof of residential residency.

Ms. Stanley stated what I can tell you about that is that this neighborhood is fairly similar in demographic to the downtown area. The City requires people to appear in person once a year and they must provide proof that they actually live within the zone. This is done in the form of a lease or a property deed. A lot of the people who live in this area are not property owners. They are tenants who tend to

move in and out. By renewing them once a year, basically it keeps it a little bit cleaner. The residential parking zones downtown have about a 50% renewal rate. In other words, in one year to the next, half of the people who have residential permits no longer qualify for them the next year. In order to make sure that it doesn't get abused, that is why people are required to appear with proof once a year. Frankly, it is cumbersome; however, given the turn in tenants and the number of the people who live in this area, it is probably necessary to keep the abuse down to at least some manageable level. In section 70.55, where we put in section five, letter c, what we submitted on the agenda said a vehicle which has been issued a residential parking permit can legally park anywhere. It is not required to park exclusively in designated residential spaces. However, it must adhere to item a of this section. After we submitted the agenda, the Ordinance Violation Bureau gave us a little bit clearer language that we would like to amend what is on the agenda with. Basically, the amendment says that a vehicle which has been issued a residential parking permit can park in any legal space as opposed to can legally park anywhere. It is just a little bit clearer so people can understand a little better.

Chairman Roy asked so it is just that wording?

Ms. Stanley replied just the wording change.

On motion of Alderman DeVries, duly seconded by Alderman Ouellette, it was voted to amend the Ordinance.

On motion of Alderman DeVries, duly seconded by Alderman Ouellette, it was voted to approve the parking plan as amended.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Ouellette, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee