

URBANA TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Tuesday, July 1, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dennis Roberts, City Council Member
Joe Smith, Senior Civil Engineer
Mike Bily, Chief of Police

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jastin Barber
Taylor Phillips
Jesse Hughes, 2317 Blackthorn Drive, Champaign
Nate Williams, 1428 Holly Hill Drive, Champaign
Nancy Williams, 1428 Holly Hill Drive, Champaign
Lillie Avant, PO Box 3151, Champaign
Darrel Foste, 409 West Main Street
Brigitte Pieke, 311 West Springfield Avenue
Callary Kent, 944 Pomona Drive, Champaign
Rev. Willie Williams, 1407 Collier Avenue, Rantoul

The meeting began at 4:05 p.m.

Additions to the agenda:

There were no additions to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes:

Joe Smith moved to approve the minutes as read. Dennis Roberts seconded the motion. The Commission voted 3-0 to approve the minutes of the June 2008 meeting.

Old Business

Item #1- Discussion of parking in the 300 block of West Springfield Avenue.

Mike Bily discussed the request from Mary Heiles of the Counseling Center to allow parking on Springfield Avenue for their counseling service.

Dennis Roberts mentioned that the parking would be for clients since the staff had parking spaces available under the Opera House.

Brigitte Pieke agreed with the request for the addition of parking spaces with time limits. She expressed concern about the enforcement of the time. She stated that during the summer parking

was not as much of a problem as it was during the time when the University of Illinois was in session. She was concerned about Busey Bank employees parking in the spaces.

Dennis Roberts stated that the area under discussion was not included in the downtown parking study.

Darrel Foste said that he owned the properties located at 402½, 404, and 406 West Springfield. He expressed concern about the underground erosion of the properties. He stated that he planned to deconstruct the properties and turn the properties into parking areas.

Dennis Roberts asked if he had any concerns about on-street parking along Springfield Avenue.

Mr. Foste stated that he did not, but that he hoped that the parking lots might alleviate parking congestion in that area.

Joe Smith moved to create two parking spaces 40 feet west of Birch Street on Springfield Avenue, which would be in front of 402 West Springfield Avenue. He requested that the spaces allow 2-hour parking from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Mike Bily seconded the motion.

Chief Bily stated that he would discuss the enforcement of these spaces and of the spaces on Birch Street with his officers to make sure they are aware of the parking restrictions.

Dennis Roberts stated that many businesses in the area would benefit from the addition of the short-term parking spaces.

The motion passed 3-0.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

Item #2- Discussion of parking in loading zones near Mumford Drive and Anderson Street on Sundays for church attendance.

Joe Smith explained that there was an existing 15-minute loading zone on the south side of Mumford Drive and parking was allowed on the north side of the street. He added that short-term loading zone was allowed for student pick-up and drop-off during the school year. Mr. Smith stated that during the school year the width of the street was constricted for short durations of time; he was concerned that the width of the street would be constricted for long periods of time if motorists were allowed to park in the loading zones for several hours on Sundays.

Nate Williams said that it would be short-term parking from approximately 9:15 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. He believed that if the width of the street was reduced to 17 feet that would be adequate for two-way traffic.

Dennis Roberts asked if the church was asking for a loading zone or for a temporary parking area.

Nate Williams stated that they had a parking problem. He said that when they purchased the building, they were under the impression that the Urbana School District would allow church parking in the Yankee Ridge School parking lot. He added that after they purchased the building, they found out that they could not use the school parking lot.

Dennis Roberts asked how many people were in the congregation.

Nate Williams stated that there were approximately 75 to 100 people in their church. He added that if they had a visiting church attending, they wanted to have enough parking for the visitors. He hoped that the older members of the church could park on the north side of the street and the younger members could park in the loading zone area.

Willie Williams stated that there was parking on the west and east side of Anderson Street.

Joe Smith stated that Anderson Street was wider north of Mumford Drive.

Mike Bily said that if the church needed assistance during a funeral service, the church needed to contact him.

Nate Williams asked that a supplemental sign be added to state that the loading zone was in effect except on Sunday.

Joe Smith said that the loading zone was designated for any vehicle to load and unload as long as it was for 15 minutes.

Dennis Roberts asked what the consequences of narrowing the street would be.

Joe Smith stated that cars would have to park close to the curb to allow two-way traffic to pass. He added that Mumford Drive was a busier street than most streets in the area.

Dennis Roberts asked if residents were contacted.

Only Urbana School District and the church were contacted for the meeting.

Mike Bily asked if both Mumford Drive and Anderson Street were needed for parking.

Joe Smith suggested that the City staff should be contacted to see if the restrictions impacted emergency services.

Mike Bily asked if anything could be done on a trial basis.

Joe Smith stated that a trial period could be done. He said that if the Fire Department or the Police Department had any issues with the restriction, they could let the Traffic Commission know.

Dennis Roberts asked if both the loading zones on Anderson Street and Mumford Drive were to be changed.

Nate Williams said that vehicles would have to move over for emergency vehicles anyway and this restriction would force vehicles to do so.

Dennis Roberts mentioned that the parking would make it difficult when it is for longer periods of time as opposed to short-term parking. Mr. Roberts thought that a temporary change would be helpful to determine if any problems would arise as a result of parking on both sides of the street.

Dennis Roberts moved to change the parking restrictions on the south side of Mumford Drive and the east side of Anderson Street to allow parking on Sundays in the loading zones on a trial basis for 90 days once the signs have been installed.

Mike Bily seconded the motion.

The motion was passed 3-0.

This item will be reviewed after the trial basis has expired.

New Business

Item #3- Discussion of the installation of two-way stop signs for northbound traffic on Beacon Hill Circle and southbound traffic on Rutherford Drive, both at Beringer Circle.

Joe Smith explained that as development has continued in the Beringer Commons Subdivision, Beringer Circle has become as major traffic feeder.

Joe Smith moved to install stop signs on Rutherford Drive at Beringer Circle for northbound traffic and on Beacon Hill Circle for southbound traffic.

Mike Bily seconded the motion.

The motion passed 3-0.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

The next meeting will be held August 5, 2008 at 4:00 p.m. at the Urbana City Building, 400 South Vine Street, second floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stiehl
Recording Secretary