

URBANA TRAFFIC COMMISSION  
Tuesday, February 3, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Charles Ball, 308 South Lynn Street  
Stephanie Ott, 308 South Lynn Street

The meeting began at 4:00 p.m.

**Additions to the agenda:**

There were no additions to the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mike Bily moved to approve the minutes as read. Joe Smith seconded the motion. The Commission voted 3-0 to approve the minutes of the December 2008 meeting.

**Old Business**

There was no old business to discuss.

**New Business**

**Item #1- Discussion of parking restrictions on Lynn Street at High Street.**

*At the December 2008 Traffic Commission meeting, Joe Smith explained a safety and visibility concern resulting from a car parked in front of the residence at 308 South Lynn Street. Mr. Smith said that the parked vehicle did not create a safety or visibility problem. He added that there was 60 feet of yellow curbing in front of the residence at 310 because High Street intersected the street at that location, but he continued by saying that there was no reason for restricting parking beyond the current restriction. He stated that the curb was marked as it should be marked.*

Joe Smith summarized the Commission's discussion and findings from the December meeting. He reiterated that the current parking restrictions were adequate for the intersection.

Charles Ball stated that his concern was for the safety of his two small children. He said that his neighbor at 305 South Lynn Street parked her car in front of his home at 308 South Lynn Street, which created a visibility problem for his children when they crossed the street to play at a nearby church parking lot and forced his child to go into the street to access the school bus

stopping in front of their home. He added that eastbound traffic on High Street did not stop at the T-intersection at Lynn Street and High Street. He felt that the traffic coming around the corner travelling northbound would not be able to see his children as they crossed the street or boarded the school bus; and that his children, stepping out into the street to look around the parked car to cross, would not be able to stop to avoid being hit by a vehicle. He continued by saying that when a car was parked there in the winter, the snow plows were unable to adequately clear the snow in the street, which caused the school bus to park in the middle of the street to load and unload passengers. Mr. Ball argued that his neighbor chose to park in the street even though the option of parking in the driveway was available.

Stephanie Ott mentioned that the neighbor's car had been hit two times while parked in front of their home. She added that they frequently have children visiting their home and that she worried about their safety.

Mike Bily asked if they wanted no parking allowed in front of their home.

Mr. Ball said that he did not have a problem with parking being restricted in front of his home. He stated that he believed that eliminated parking in front of his home would make it safer for his children.

Chief Bily asked if Mr. Ball parked in the parking space in front of his house.

Mr. Ball said that he did, but that he parked in the space for a longer duration to keep his neighbor from parking there and that his Cadillac was more compact than his neighbor's Buick. He added that he did have a driveway, so the parking restriction would not create a parking problem for him.

Joe Smith stated that Lynn Street was the main street in that intersection and that a stop sign would be warranted for traffic on High Street even though the traffic volume was very low.

Dennis Roberts discussed some of the neighbor's concerns as expressed in a phone conversation with him. He said that the driveway to the neighbor's home needed repair so the neighbor did not feel safe using the driveway. He added that the neighbor felt there was a visibility concern from a fence adjacent to the property.

Joe Smith stated that the City did not address visibility problems for private driveways.

Bill Gray said that there were standards for driveway and fence construction.

Mr. Smith said that the fence was a cyclone fence with open spacing.

Stephanie Ott said that there was parking on High Street on the south side of the neighbor's house.

Joe Smith expressed concern about restricting parking when it was not necessary. He contended that the parking problem would move to the front of the residence at 303 South Lynn Street.

Mr. Ball stated that the resident at 303 South Lynn Street was fine with cars parking in front of his home.

Joe Smith stated that the warrants were met to install a stop sign on High Street at Lynn Street.

Mike Bily was concerned that the installation of a stop sign would create a false sense of security for the children when crossing the street. He said that the children still needed to be careful when crossing the street and not to rely on the sign to protect them from cars approaching the intersection.

Joe Smith stated that the installation of the sign would not be out of the norm for that type of intersection.

Dennis Roberts moved to install a stop sign for eastbound traffic on High Street at Lynn Street.

Mike Bily seconded the motion.

The motion passed 3-0.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

Discussion continued regarding parking restrictions on Lynn Street, north of High Street.

Joe Smith expressed concern about creating parking restrictions for an area based upon a resident not wanting a neighbor to park in front of his house. He stated that if Mr. Ball would move, the next resident might come back to Traffic Commission asking that the restriction be removed. He said that the Commission did not want to continually establish and remove parking restrictions based upon the occupancy of a residence.

Charles Ball stated that he moved to his house because it was located in the Leal Elementary School district. He said that he planned to stay there for a long time because his children's friends lived in that area.

Mike Bily asked Mr. Ball why he parked his car in front of his home when Mr. Ball stated that a parked car located there was a safety issue for his children.

Mr. Ball answered that his car didn't move as often as his neighbor's car did when it was parked there.

Mike Bily stated that he would like to receive more input from the residents at 303 and 305 South Lynn Street. He asked that the item be moved to the next Traffic Commission meeting and that those residents be encouraged to attend.

Dennis Roberts summarized that the ordinance to install a stop sign on High Street at Lynn Street would go to Council and the issue of parking restrictions would be discussed at the March Traffic Commission meeting.

**Item #2- Discussion of establishing a parking meter zone on Clark Street between Gregory Street and Lincoln Avenue.**

Bill Gray discussed Vermilion Development's plans for the building located at the southwest corner of Lincoln Avenue and University Avenue. He said that the developer had a restaurant that was interested in locating in the building. Bill Gray received a request from the developer asking for short-term parking (two hour) from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, on Clark Street between Gregory Street and Lincoln Avenue. Mr. Gray stated that he had contacted the property owners (Howard Wakeland, Campus Property Management and Les Busboom) within that section of Clark Street and they had no objections to the metered parking zone. He added that all of the properties had off-street parking available to their tenants and that Mr. Busboom charged for the use of the off-street parking.

Dennis Roberts asked if the developer had adequate spaces when the project was presented to Council.

Mr. Gray stated that the parking needs were met for the building as the developer would purchase rental space from the parking deck located at University Avenue and Goodwin Avenue. He added that the developer asked for the short-term parking to produce turn over in the parking for the possible restaurant locating in the building.

Mike Bily moved to recommend to the Mayor to establish a parking meter zone on Clark Street between Lincoln Avenue and Gregory Street.

Joe Smith seconded the motion.

The motion passed 3-0.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

**Item #3- Discussion of parking restrictions at 108 South Scottswood Drive.**

Joe Smith said that this request came from the Urbana Township Road Commissioner, Jim Prather. He stated that Mr. Prather had asked for the parking restriction to improve visibility on the curve that extended from 108 South Scottswood Drive to 112 South Scottswood Drive. He added that 108 South Scottswood Drive was located within the Urbana city limits; 110 and 112 South Scottswood Drive were located within Urbana Township. Mr. Smith continued by saying that parking restrictions were already on the west side of the curve and the additional restrictions on the east side would improve visibility for motorists travelling in that area. He said that Mr.

Prather had discussed the concern with the residents and the Urbana Traffic Commission had invited these residents to add input at this meeting.

Joe Smith moved to restrict parking in front of 108 South Scottswood Drive where the curve occurred.

Mike Bily seconded the motion.

The motion passed 3-0.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

Mr. Smith stated that he would try to leave one parking space in front of 108 South Scottswood Drive to provide some parking for the residents.

**Item #4- Discussion of the installation of a crosswalk on Washington Street between the bus barn and the parking lot on the south side.**

Joe Smith received a request from employees of First Student Bus Service asking for a crosswalk on Washington Street where the employees cross from the bus service to a parking lot on the south side of the street. Mr. Smith pointed out that the people crossing were adults wearing the fluorescent green jackets and that there was a median in the middle of Washington Street that provided a refuge for pedestrians to cross half of the street to wait for traffic to clear on the other side. He said that at least 20 people needed to cross within an hour to warrant the installation of a crosswalk, which that crossing did not meet.

Mike Bily said that there was not enough information to allow the installation of a crosswalk. He added that there were other parking options that did not require the employees to cross Washington Street, such as along the street on Glover Avenue and in a parking lot located to the west of the bus service on Glover Avenue.

Joe Smith expressed concern that adding the crosswalk might create a more hazardous situation since the volume of pedestrians crossing was so low. He felt that the crosswalk might encourage pedestrians to cross when motorists were not expecting them to do so.

Dennis Roberts stated that the crosswalk should not be installed if the warrants were not met.

No action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

The next meeting will be held March 3, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. at the Urbana City Building, 400 South Vine Street, second floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Stiehl  
Recording Secretary