



VILLAGE OF WILMETTE

1200 Wilmette Avenue
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091-0040

MEETING MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, JULY 27, 2011

7:00 P.M.

SECOND FLOOR TRAINING ROOM OF VILLAGE HALL

Members Present: Chairman Clay Weaver
Commissioner Eileen Miller-Girson
Commissioner Cathy Albrecht
Commissioner Paul Chouinard

Members Absent: Commissioner Mark Wagstaff
Commissioner Pat Lilly
Commissioner Keith MacKenzie

Staff Present: Brigitte Mayerhofer, P.E., Director of Engineering Services
Jorge Cruz, P.E., Assistant Director of Engineering
Brian King, Police Chief

Guests Present: Claire Gao, 217 Thelin
Liz Manning 228 Thelin
Ron Klein 139 Thelin
Garry Ioffe 240 Thelin
Mr. and Mrs. Erickson, 201 Thelin
Harry Poulos 3019 Old Glenview Road
Shrinath Thdopurath 212 Thelin
Moishe and Esther Raitman 237 Thelin
Joe Han 209 Thelin
Carlen Klein, 139 Thelin
Judy Thalman, 2912 Old Glenview Road
John and Joan Henrick, 205 Thelin

CALL TO ORDER.

Chairman Weaver called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES; TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING OF JUNE 8, 2011

Chairman Weaver directed the Commission's attention to the draft minutes of the Transportation Commission meeting of June 8, 2011. Commissioner Chouinard moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Albrecht. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. **The motion passed.**

I. REVIEW OF A PETITION FROM THELIN COURT RESIDENTS REQUESTING REINSTATEMENT OF THE OVERNIGHT PARKING BAN

Ms. Mayerhofer introduced the discussion by indicating a petition was signed by the majority of the residents of Thelin Court to reinstate the overnight parking ban. This request will reverse a recent decision by the Transportation Commission to eliminate the overnight parking ban.

Chairman Weaver asked for resident comments.

Mr. John Henrick, 205 Thelin Court, noted he is a 41 year resident of Thelin Court. He penned the letter to the Commission asking that the parking ban be reinstated. He said the majority of the residents support the request.

Shrinath Thdopurath, 212 Thelin Court also supports the petition. He lives near a hydrant and if cars park on the street it is difficult for him to exit their driveway. He also believes it is a security risk if cars are left parked on the street overnight. He is concerned about peeping toms.

Mr. Gary Ioffe, 240 Thelin Court, asked what happens to the other streets that allow overnight parking. Are there accidents? He noted the street is 24-feet wide which is wide enough to turn around. He said people should just drive safe. Chief King indicated there are very few accidents between 2:00 AM and 5:00 AM.

Chairman Weaver indicated there are inconsistencies with how overnight parking is established in Wilmette. Ultimately, it is up to the residents to submit a petition to change the parking restrictions on their street. If on-street parking becomes a problem anywhere in the area, the Transportation Commission could vote to restrict overnight parking. In general, however, the Village Board directs the Commission to listen to the residents.

Mr. Gary Ioffe asked if abandoned cars are a problem. Chairman Weaver indicated they do occur from time to time and are addressed appropriately by the Police Department.

Liz Manning, 228 Thelin Court, supports the ban because it will ensure the street is free from parked cars which makes walking her dog easier. She also believes an open street is safer and easier for the Police Department to patrol Public Works to plow.

Joe Han, 209 Thelin Court, agrees with the ban indicating someone stole a laptop from his home while they were sleeping. It will be easier for the police to locate a suspicious vehicle if there is a parking ban.

Carlene Klein, 139 Thelin, is a 36 year resident who used to live near 13th and Washington. She thought that was a busy area, but now believes Thelin Court is the busiest street in Wilmette because people try to avoid traffic signals on Skokie. She indicated there is traffic in the middle of night. She is in favor of the all-night parking ban.

Rabbi Moishe Raitman, 237 Thelin Court, does not support the petition. He indicated he hopes the Commission will read both petitions and common sense prevail. He stated there are over 30 streets in the area that do not have a 2:00 AM to 5:00 AM parking ban. A list of the streets is provided in his package. He stated he has not heard any plausible reasons to ban overnight parking. He has lived on Thelin Court for 15 years and has received numerous tickets for parking overnight. He referenced 3/28 and 4/12 as dates of his last tickets. His home has a single space driveway and he and his wife have to rearrange cars if one of them wants to exit. Rabbi Raitman noted he often hosts out of town guests and does not have space in his driveway for all of the cars. He noted that he has received exemptions from the police, but they do not allow more than 12 per year. He noted the original petition to eliminate the overnight parking ban was well-received by his neighbors. He believes the fears related to security issues are unfounded. He questioned the validity of the petition being reviewed at this meeting, stating one individual signed both petitions. He confronted this person and they vehemently denied supporting the current petition before the Commission.

Rabbi Raitman stated ten other streets have the same or narrower width than Thelin Court. With respect to public safety, he noted there are 33 streets that allow overnight parking and the Police Department has not offered any indication of higher crime on these streets. With respect to the concern about backing out of driveways, he noted most people do not back out between 2:00 AM and 5:00 AM and again, other streets do not share this concern. He stated if parked cars were truly problematic, they would be so all day, not just overnight. He noted he has no problem exiting his driveway. He indicated Thelin Court is not used for overflow mall parking, especially overnight. He addressed his neighbor's additional points related to access for emergencies, snow plowing and the street looking like a junk yard.

Finally, Rabbi Raitman addressed specific points to residents. He stated John Henrick indicated he would "go with the flow" regarding parking. As it relates to the street flooding, Rabbi Raitman indicated he does not want to be inconvenienced all year round by not parking on the street for a flood that may happen one or two times a year. Rabbi Raitman conveyed a story in which he parked on Old Glenview Road overnight and received a phone call two days

later from the Police Department asking why he was parking there. Regarding his neighbor at 209 Thelin, he indicated the laptop was stolen at the time when overnight parking was not allowed. Such incidents can happen anytime. To his neighbor that said Thelin Court is a busy street, he noted the only cars on Thelin at night are with the Police Department and they issue parking tickets.

Joe Han, 209 Thelin said the Rabbi should find another solution. If someone is having party, they should ask their guests to leave by 10:00 PM.

Joan Henrick, 205 Thelin, is unhappy that the integrity of the petition is called into question. She said the original petitioners may not have known what the original petition meant when passing it around. She said husbands don't pay attention to things like that. Finally, she noted that her household has many cars in the driveway and they can manage. Rabbi Raitman apologized to the petitioners noting he was referring to the signature of one neighbor that denied signing the revised petition.

Claire Gao, 217 Thelin, noted her home is located on the side of the street with the sidewalk. She helped Dorothy collect signatures and indicated many people did not know what the original petition was for. Her husband thought it was signing to attend the meeting and two of her neighbors thought the same thing. She said many neighbors asked that the no parking signs be put back. The fact that so many residents showed up to protest the original petition is indication of how they feel. She stated managing one's driveway and guest parking is their personal business.

Mrs. Raitman, 237 Thelin, said people are afraid of change. She inquired why every street did not have a parking ban if there were so many benefits. Why ban only this street originally?

Chairman Weaver asked the Commissioners to comment.

Commissioner Albrecht asked Chief King if there is any reason to reinstate the ban. Chief King indicated it is easier for officers to patrol with open visibility. From a public safety perspective, however, he noted this is not a high crime neighborhood. He noted prowlers on a street with a parking ban could potentially be identified sooner than neighborhoods without bans. This said, there are no compelling public safety reasons to ban parking. He noted snow removal is generally more efficient on streets with no parking. With respect to abandoned vehicles, if there are no regulations, the Police Department has to wait until plates expire to impound vehicles. Chief noted that some communities ban parking on all streets, but in Wilmette, the Village Board lets residents decide. Finally, Chief noted the parking exemptions are limited to 12 per year. This is not a police department policy, but Village-wide policy.

Commissioner Albrecht indicated she supported the will of the neighborhood last time and will again.

Commissioner Chouinard asked if it would be possible to assign permit parking for 2-5AM hours. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated this is not supported by the Village Code. Chief King stated resident permit parking only applies to high parking areas including next to schools, public transportation and business districts. He said this is based on a Supreme Court precedent.

Commissioner Chouinard stated it would be nice to split the block with a portion of it no parking. He recognized this cannot be accomplished.

A discussion ensued regarding the last meeting and the number of residents who spoke out against the petition. Commissioner Chouinard noted no one spoke out in favor of lifting the ban at the last meeting. Commissioner Albrecht noted she can't disregard this petition.

Rabbi Raitman asked what would happen if someone submitted a petition for no parking 24 hours a day. Chief King indicated there typically needs to be a public safety reason to ban parking on both sides.

A discussion ensued regarding the exception process. Chief King indicated the Police Department keeps a database and tracks calls.

Commissioner Miller-Girson stated she agrees with the petitioners. They have a majority. She asked if the neighbors and Rabbi Raitman could work on a solution to his parking problem.

Commissioner Chouinard made a motion to approve the request to reinstate the 2:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. parking ban on Thelin Court. Commissioner Albrecht seconded the motion. Voting yes: Commissioners Albrecht, Miller-Girson, Chouinard and Chairman Weaver. The motion carried.

II. OLD BUSINESS

None

III. ADJOURNMENT.

At 8:19 p.m., Commissioner Chouinard motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Albrecht and approved by unanimous voice vote. **The motion carried.** No further discussion occurred on the motion.

The meeting was thereafter adjourned.

Minutes Respectfully Prepared by Brigitte Mayerhofer, P.E., Director of Engineering Services