

TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING

March 20, 2024 (In Person)

5:30 PM

IN ATTENDANCE: Chair Elena Proakis Ellis, Commissioner Parenti, Commissioner Rossi, Commissioner Peart, Councilor Vandiver, Former Mayor Infurna, Chief Faller, Sgt. Goc – Technical Advisor, Jennifer Rosa – Clerk

Elena explains the format of the meeting to our new City Council Member, Kim Vandiver. She explains that the proponent of each item states their reason for requesting their item and speaks on it. Next public comment is opened, so anyone here to speak on a particular item can talk and then once public comment is closed, the commission deliberates and votes on the item.

I. Continued Business:

1. Approve June 2023, September 2023, and December 2023 meeting minutes

The June meeting minutes are ready, however the other two will need to wait until the next meeting. Motion to approve June 2023 minutes is made by Commissioner Rossi, seconded by Commissioner Peart. All are in favor, so the June 2023 minutes are approved. It should be noted that Commissioner Parenti and Commissioner Krechmer are not here for the vote on the meeting minutes.

II. New Business:

2. Resident request to prohibit parking across from driveway of 27 Wentworth Rd (located on Pine St Side)

The proponent of this item, Ray Gillis, is the resident at 27 Wentworth Rd. and states that is difficult to get out of his driveway when cars are parked on Pine St. He is asking if there is some way to prohibit people from parking across from his driveway. Sgt Goc asks if he can generally get out of his driveway and he states that he can. Former Mayor Infurna asks Elena if he could widen the driveway opening at his own expense to make getting out of the driveway easier. Elena states that he has room if he chooses to do this. Commissioner Peart states that the left turn seems easier to do, as she did hit the curb when she was researching the agenda item. She states that maybe widening would be the best option. Motion to open public comment is made by Former Mayor Infurna, seconded by Commissioner Rossi. All are in favor, so public comment is opened.

The current resident of 35 Pine St, Djilali Atba, states that he and his family moved into the home in December. The previous owner lived there for 41 years and there was no problem. He states that they have small babies, one of which has seizures and it is easier to get in on that side. He mentions that Pine St is narrower than other streets but this spot is on a wider side of the street. He wishes that his neighbor would have approached him prior to the meeting to see if this could have been discussed. He feels it would

set a precedent if this was approved. Everyone will start requesting this opposite their driveways. He will do his best to be accommodating. Elena states that we did receive many emails on this item.

Samia Atba, who is the wife of the resident that just spoke, states that the previous owner never had a problem in 41 years. She has a narrow driveway, so this is the easier way and doesn't want the stress of worrying about getting a ticket by parking in front of her house.

Joan Gillis, the wife of Ray Gillis, wants to figure out a solution because people drive very fast down the road, landscapers, etc. She states that they have lived there for over 30 years. She would just like to come up with a good solution.

Motion to close public comment is made by Former Mayor Infurna, seconded by Commissioner Rossi. All are in favor, so public comment is now closed.

Sgt Goc states that there is a lot of work that is going on in that area and we have never allowed signage unless someone could not get out. Commissioner Peart asks about who is parking there. Is it landscapers? Samia Atba states that their baby has a nurse that will come by and park for an hour, but they tell her not to park in front of the driveway. Joan Gillis states that she has been passive throughout the years with the prior neighbors and just wants to come up with a solution for all. Elena states that in the past we try not to consider the no parking opposite driveway because suddenly you have no parking on your street. All the emails received were opposed to this. Elena states that just by getting everyone together in the same room may help the situation get better. Commissioner Rossi is concerned about the landscaping trucks. He is wondering if it's possible to talk to the people having the work done. Elena states that the width of most of Pine St is about 17 ft. wide and, in this location, it is 24 – 25 ft. wide. Elena states it sets a difficult precedent. Former Mayor Infurna's idea about widening the driveway might solve the problem. Former Mayor Infurna states that cars parked on the street will help reduce the speeding cars.

Former Mayor Infurna makes a motion to deny, seconded by Commissioner Parenti. All are in favor, so the motion is denied.

3. Resident request for parking restrictions surrounding the driveway to 976 Main St

Louis Carbone is the proponent of this request and states the building was built in 1972, when all that existed was sedans and station wagons. He states that it is very difficult to get out of the driveway. Traffic backs up and it makes it difficult to make a left-hand turn onto Main St. He would like a no parking or restricted parking times. He doesn't want no parking all over the street, just restrictions between 7-9am and 4-6pm. He has watched people try to take a left hand turn for almost five minutes. He is just asking for about 20 ft from the driveway to allow people to make left-hand turns.

Commissioner Rossi asks about the spot on the southbound side of the street to the north of the driveway. There are always cars parked straight up to the driveway. At one point there were signs for timed parking. One suggestion is No Parking Here to Corner.

Elena states that after talking through this request, she understands it better. She mentions that there is 21 ft between the two driveways. If it is just the one parking space to the left causing these issues, the city

has regulations that you cannot park within five feet of a driveway. If you subtract the five feet from each side, then you do not have a legal parking space.

Elena mentions that there is no one here from the public, so public comment is not opened for this item.

Commissioner Rossi states that we should put no parking signs between both driveways. Commissioner Rossi make a motion to restrict parking 5ft south of the driveway to 976 Main St and extending on the west side five feet north of the driveway to 986 Main St. Elena states that technically we don't need a vote because it is by statute. The decision is made to not vote. The signs will go up without a vote reinforcing the existing regulations. DPW's highway foreman will place the signs where they are most visible and do line striping as well if necessary.

4. City request to prohibit parking any time along the northeast side of Glendower Rd at the Hoover School abutting the sidewalk between the entrance and exit to the teacher parking lot

Elena states that this was a joint effort between the Principal, the Hoover School, Melrose Police Department and the DPW. The issue is that when the sidewalks were added along the side of the teacher parking lot, people assumed they could park along the curb. This year we have new parents and a new principal so suddenly people are idling and blocking other cars from coming in. There is total gridlock up to Echo St and it makes it so cars cannot drive all the way through at pick up. We put in barrels to temporarily restrict parking. The principal reported that the problem has been solved with the barrels and would like to put up permanent signs. The proposal is No Parking Anytime.

Motion to open public comment is made by Former Mayor Infurna, seconded by Councilor Vandiver. All are in favor, so public comment is opened.

Resident George McCarthy lives at 62 Echo St. He states that when the school was built in 1964 the school received a lot of vandalism. Gates were put in to prevent cars from going there in the evening. There was no through traffic to the school. You used to enter and exit on Echo St. In the 2000s they opened all the gates so cars could flow through and added extra parking. Once they added the modular classrooms this added more kids and more traffic. The city then received the grant and put the sidewalks in and made it safe for the kids and the roadway width was reduced. The problem is that in the afternoon cars stop and park at pick up. They had a meeting, shifted the no parking on Echo St. There were no issues. What changed? New principal. She started allowing drop off in front of the school and by doing that the communication is that you can do whatever you want. The barrels have helped and his recommendation is to enforce the no parking no standing, ask cars to slow down or use circular drop off.

Motion to close public comment is made by Former Mayor Infurna, seconded by Commissioner Rossi. All are in favor, so public comment is closed.

Commissioner Rossi asks about parking in front of George's house on the left side. He states that It is clear where you should park, however with enforcement it may stop. Parking will stay on that side in front of his house. Commissioner Rossi asks how should the sign read to avoid idling? Elena states that it should really read No Parking, No Standing. Sgt Goc has not heard from the principal, but he went up there and

observed. He stated that the driving behavior up there is not good and feels the barrels should stay with the addition of the no parking signs. Chief Faller feels that the barrels should stay as well and Elena feels that pavement markings will go a long way. The barrels will be placed back out in September at the start of the school year until the parents get accustomed to the pickup and drop off procedures.

Motion by Commissioner Rossi to have No Parking, No Stopping, No Standing Anytime on the north side of Glendower, seconded by Former Mayor Infurna. All are in favor, so by unanimous vote the motion is approved.

Motion to adjourn is made by Former Mayor Infurna, seconded by Commissioner Rossi. All are in favor, so the meeting is adjourned at 6:59 PM.