

**MINUTES
BLOOMINGTON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2019 4:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
109 EAST OLIVE STREET
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Rickielee Benecke, Ms. Maureen (Reenie) Bradley, Mr. John Corey, Mr. Adam Heenan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Edward Breitweiser

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Jim Karch, Director of Public Works, Mr. George Boyle, City Attorney; Mr. Billy Tyus, Deputy City Manager, Assistant Chief Greg Scott, Police Department; Ms. Melissa Hon, Economic Development Director; Mr. Kevin Kothe, City Engineer; Mr. Philip Allyn, City Traffic Engineer; and members of the public.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Bradley called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm.

2. ROLL CALL: Mr. Allyn called the roll. With four members in attendance, a quorum was established.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

David Park: Has a property on 300 block of N. Main. Concerned with diagonal parking on both sides due to safety of the single, narrow lane. Also concerned that deliveries on that block that would block traffic. Also, there is an alley that holds two dumpsters that need to be moved to be emptied that will further reduce the number of parking spaces. There will be too much traffic in too dense of an area.

Ruben Granados: Owns business on 500 block of Center St. Biggest concern is that business owners and residents move cars around all day to avoid parking limits and take up spaces that should be available for customers. Owners and residents need to park in the parking decks. Residents park on street after 3 pm because they know parking enforcement will not ticket them.

Justin Boyd: Rents office at 411 N. Main St and was also was part of downtown taskforce where this request originated. In favor of reducing number of lanes to improve safety by reducing traffic speeds through downtown. If people are trying to get quickly through downtown, there are options to go around rather than through. Slowing traffic also would help with visibility of businesses. Concerned about deliveries and likes the idea of locating them on the side streets. Would like to extend time of parking enforcement past 3:30 to keep overnight parkers from clogging the spaces during business hours.

Jamie Mathy: Was also on the Downtown Taskforce, which had three goals for Downtown: place making, walkability, and changing perception of downtown parking. Not sure if angled parking as shown is the answer but wants Public Works and the Downtown Stakeholders continue dialogue to ensure all goals are met. Part of those talks should be about how we use our roads for events. One lane with parking on both sides is a good idea to promote walkability and make it easier to cross the street. Roads through downtown are not through streets and should be treated more like parking isles. Supports the ideas of deliveries zones on the side streets and extending parking enforcement until 7 pm at night or potentially allowing free overnight parking in the decks for downtown residents to free up parking for customers.

Gaye Beck: Owns 312/314 N. Main and has been there for 35 years. Largest concern is with delivery trucks. There are semi-trucks parking in a small truck unloading zones and double parking since there are not large enough loading zones. A one-spot freight loading zone won't work because there are numerous

times where there are multiple delivery vehicles. Three buses come by all day and there will be problems as they stop to load/unload passengers if there is just a one-lane road. In the past 35 years, they have needed to push multiple cars out of diagonal spaces after snow plowing blocks in cars that cannot reverse up hill in packed snow and ice. Putting diagonal parking on both sides just compounds the problem. Believes temporary parking markings are wrong and eliminates several spots by the alley. There are several business owners move cars around. Landlords need to provide parking for their tenants. All of Downtown is not the same and the parking can't be the same everywhere. Does not want events downtown that close off streets if they do not support the businesses.

Carmen Champion: Owns business on 400 block of N. Main, and has lived or worked downtown since 2005. Owns a Yoga shop and has concerns about the proposed loading zone on 400 block in the middle of the block. Concerned with eliminating front row parking as most customers are older, retired women and they struggle with climbing stairs already and they need to be able to conveniently park. Believes this loading zone location will isolate this segment of the population. Wants unloading zone on side streets of Monroe and Market in designated locations.

4. MINUTES: Reviewed and approved the minutes of the August 27, 2019 special meeting of the Bloomington Transportation Commission. Mr. Heenan motioned to approve the minutes. Ms. Bradley seconded the motion. The Transportation Commission unanimously approved the motion via voice vote.

5. REGULAR AGENDA:

A. Approval of 2020 Meeting Dates

Ms. Bradley explained that we usually meet on the 3rd Tuesday of each month and asked Mr. Allyn if there were any exceptions in 2020. Mr. Allyn indicated there were none.

Mr. Boyle explained that this was a requirement of the Open Meeting Act that each committee that meets regularly must approve their upcoming meeting dates annually, after which the City Council ratifies annually all meetings.

Mr. Heenan motioned to approve the proposed meeting dates for 2020, Ms. Benecke seconded. Vote was unanimous, and motion carried.

B. Downtown Parking Configuration

Mr. Karch introduced this item and provide greetings from the City Manager, Tim Gleason. This item is a listening activity and no decision has yet been made on what the Downtown parking will look like. There are many different philosophies we can have with our downtown parking and we have time to get information. We have a blank slate after the street was repaved. He explained that the current markings for parking are only temporary to establish guides for drivers and parkers while we work through this process. The city is not looking for action or decision tonight but is looking to gather information and comments, so city staff can make additional recommendations at a future meeting. He also introduced the Deputy City Manager Billy Tyus, Economic Development Director Melissa Hon, and City Engineer Kevin Kothe.

Ms. Bradley thanked Mr. Karch, agreed with his comments, and thanked the public for coming to speak. She believes this will be a good forum for starting the discussion among all parties, to continue on past this meeting.

Mr. Allyn explained that this item was returning to the Commission to get more input and involvement from Downtown Stakeholders. The first option is similar to what was in place prior to the resurfacing but with minor adjustments to meet current City Code. The second option adding angle parking to both sides of the street based on City Parking Code. The third option adds the angle parking but also includes

dedicated loading zone areas. The shown loading zone locations are representative only and will be adjusted as needed based on local needs if that option moves forward.

Ms. Bradley asked if there were options between 45° and 60° angle parking that may allow a better balance between number of spots and lane width. Mr. Allyn explained that those degree angles have calculated dimensions in the City Zoning Code but he could look at pro-rating the dimensions to develop some other options. He explained safety reasons for why wider lane widths are needed as the parking angles moves closer to 90° to the curb. Studies have shown that parallel parking results in fewer crashes than angled parking if all other factors are equal, such as traffic volume, speed, surrounding environment, etc. Ms. Bradley expressed concern for bicycle and motorcycle safety with narrower single-lane width and all-angle parking.

Mr. Heenan asked how angled parking would affect snowplowing. Mr. Karch explained that snow plowing downtown is always a challenge because there is nowhere to go with it. For cars, it will be more difficult to back uphill when there is snow or ice. From an operations perspective, there will likely be difficulties regardless of the final configuration. He also reiterated that all options are still on the table and these three options are just a start. There are other things that may be included such as having one side of the street be compact car only to help with the lane widths. The discussion needs to determine what is the overall philosophy that is desired for the Downtown.

Ms. Bradley asked where this discussion goes from here. Mr. Karch explained that we would take all this information back to the City Manager and work with everyone for the best solution.

Mr. Heenan asked about the length of time before the temporary markings need to be replaced. Mr. Karch said that the markings should generally be good through the winter, although some may get damaged with plowing. There is not a need to have a decision prior to next spring. The permanent pavement markings should last 10-15 years, so we want to make sure we have the best solution prior to placing them.

Mr. Tyus added that over the fall and winter, the City would have more time to have conversations with other stakeholders. Ms. Bradley asked about the type of forum the public and other interested parties will have to get information or express opinions. Mr. Titus explained that details were not finished yet and the City was working to figure out how best to accommodate those with varying work schedules and other time commitments.

Mr. Corey mentioned that he expected there to be some amount of angle parking. Has the City has looked at back-in parking like Peoria has in their downtown? Mr. Allyn explained that it has been mentioned but not strongly considered to this point. Studies have shown back-in angled parking to be safer than front-in angled parking. Mr. Corey stated his concern with angled parking is the blind backing into traffic. The the back in parking, drivers are able to pull out with better vision of oncoming traffic.

Mr. Heenan asked if there were any other communities that do compact car parking only. Mr. Allyn explained that we already have some individual spaces around town, such as between driveways where a full size spot may not fit, he does not know of any communities that do it in large areas as a matter of practice. Staff did look at a number of communities for other examples of angled parking on both sides of a one way street. Only one block was found in a Chicago suburbs that was relatively narrow that had a single lane and extremely short parking spaces of 12' to 14' that would only fit compact cars, but there did not appear to be signs restricting it to such. It's not common.

Ms. Benecke asked how much the city has reached out to Downtown stakeholders so far. Mr. Tyus explained that there have been a variety of discussions and there was a Downtown Task Force that discussed this and many other topics but there has not been a focused, organized, intentional discussion on this exact topic.

Ms. Bradley asked the commission to be kept informed as this moves forward.

C. Information: September 2019 Citizen Comments/Complaints Summary

Mr. Allyn provided the background for the report and how it is organized. He discussed the various means for residents to submit requests or concerns.

There were no questions from Commissioners.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

No Old Business.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

No New Business.

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Mr. Heenan welcomed the new commission members and thanked everyone in the public for attending.

9. ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Heenan made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Benecke seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm.

Respectfully,

Philip Allyn
City Traffic Engineer