

**City of Kalamazoo
TRAFFIC BOARD
Minutes
November 8, 2018**

Stockbridge Main Conference Room, 1st Floor
415 E. Stockbridge, Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Traffic Board Members Present: Eric Arnsman, Traffic Engineer
 David Thomas, Public Safety
 Christina Anderson, City Planner, CP&D

Members Excused: Jeff Chamberlain, Deputy City Manager
 Jim Ritsema, City Manager

City Staff: Karen Rutherford, Recording Secretary

Guests: Richard Wheeler, Resident
 Arthur Brill, Resident
 Allen LaReau, Resident
 Patricia Nichole, ESPK, Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo
 Elia Rosetta, Resident

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Arnsman called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Mr. Arnsman conducted roll call and determined that the aforementioned members were present and quorum existed.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no changes to the November 8, 2018 Agenda. Ms. Anderson supported by Mr. Thomas, made a motion to approve the November 8, 2018 Agenda. With a voice vote, the motion was carried.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (October 11, 2018)

There were no changes to the October 11, 2018 Traffic Board Minutes. Ms. Anderson supported by Mr. Thomas, made a motion to approve the October 11, 2018 Traffic Board Minutes. With a voice vote, the motion was carried.

5. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business at the November 8, 2018 Traffic Board Meeting.

6. OLD BUSINESS

Parking Sign Placement - Broadway Ave. from Crosswinds Dr. to Winchell Ave.

- Mr. Arnsman stated a decision was made regarding parking sign placement on Broadway Ave. from Crosswinds Dr. to Winchell Ave. The board decided not make any changes the placement of signs, the signs will be placed from block to block. Mr. Arnsman stated if there is any other request for the signage or for removal, the same petition process is required using the official petition form. The signed petition would be submitted and presented at the traffic board for discussion and decision.
- Mr. Wheeler stated at the last meeting that Ms. Anderson stated he could present a letter asking to remove the signs from the three addresses noted in the request he submitted on November 7, 2018; 2212, and 2222 Broadway and 2325 Crosswinds. Mr. Arnsman told Mr. Wheeler the request would need to be submitted on the proper petition form which he submitted to the committee today. Attached with the petition was a request to have the signage on the school and church properties remain and remove the signage that is in front of the three properties. He stated the residents of Broadway believe the signs beyond the school and church do not present any value for the purpose for the signs which was to protect the children, parents, and employees.
- Mr. Wheeler stated he had a phone conversation with Mr. Arnsman yesterday asking him if the board could find a compromise without putting the board in a position of not following to the letter of placing the signs block to block. It is stated in the petition the signs are placed 200 feet apart. When he spoke to Jesse Okeley, the Traffic Tech, he was told depending on trees or other obstacles the signs could be placed a 100 – 200 feet. Mr. Wheeler stated he measured the sign placement and on the east side of Broadway, at the north end of the church and school property, just north of that is a sign on 2325 Crosswinds property, he and the residents are asking that sign remain there and the next sign up from there be removed. This would space the signs at about 125 feet. On the opposite side of the street (Broadway) from this location, is the same situation. Removing the one sign would leave the signs spaced within the 200 foot distance. Mr. Wheeler stated they understand the rules and laws in the City have to be followed and they agree with that. But they feel rules and regulations can be administered.
- Mr. Arnsman stated he spoke to the traffic tech and they will be going out next week to measure the signs to see if some of the signs that were placed can possible be moved. He believes the signs were placed at 75 feet apart. With that said the application of that request would come from Traffic Engineering Division. Mr. Arnsman presented a map of the location on Google Maps and stated there will need to be something to establish the limits. Mr. Arnsman stated the signs would be placed block to block and they would not be varying from that. The proper limits have to be known for those parking on the block and for public safety to monitor.
- Mr. LaReau stated he is most affected by this because the signs have been placed on his property. He stated the intent was to make the school drop off safe and the signage would make it safe for kids. He stated it makes no sense to place the sign in the residential area.

There is an obvious boundary limit at the end of the school property and the private residential property beyond that. Mr. LaReau stated you have to look beyond the letter of the law and look at the intent. Esthetically it looks like there are 100 signs there. Mr. LaReau states there has never been parking issues in front of his house or Elia Rosetta's house as long as they have lived there.

- Mr. Arnsman stated the policy is in place to make it fair for everyone. They have to look at it from the stand point of the entire City. It does not matter if the property is residential, commercial, or a school, the signs have to go from block to block. One reason for this is to prevent people asking for no parking only in front one house. To keep it fair for everyone in the City, they will maintain the block to block policy.
- Mr. Rosetta stated he understands the regulations and understands Mr. Arnsman statement of making it fair for everyone. He stated he does not understand why it would not be fair to have people park where there is not a problem with parking in front of the homes in question.
- Ms. Anderson stated when we get request to change parking; we look at it from an entire block prospective. Part of the reason for this is for public safety to know and understand how to enforce the parking throughout the city. If we allowed parking by lot instead of by block it would be nearly impossible for them to enforce. If it is allowed in this situation it opens it up to allow it in other areas.
- Mr. Rosetta stated he does not know why it would be difficult to enforce. You have a church and school and then houses. Ms. Anderson stated this scenario is a little clearer than other ones. However, if it is allowed in this situation it opens it up the door to allow it in other areas.
- Mr. Brill asked if all the signs could be removed and parking put back to its original place. Mr. Arnsman stated yes. You would need to submit another petition, which would come to the Traffic Board for a decision.
- Mr. Arnsman asked what would be the reason for removing the signs. Mr. Brill stated it is because of the appearance. Mr. LaReau sated it is an overkill. It looks like an airport runway. Mr. Arnsman stated he will be out next week to look at the sign placement.
- Mr. Arnsman asked if the issue is for the safety of the school, which at the last meeting Mr. Wheeler stated that was the intent, but the City's policy requires sign placement to go block to block, then why do you want the City to divert from this rule.
- Mr. LaReau stated it is an issue with the spirit of the law and the letter of the law. He stated we are all rule following people. We are not rebels or trouble makers. There is a clear delineation between the properties of the school and church and resident properties. Mr. LaReau stated you think you are going to have other people come to you saying you did this for the LaReau's and his neighbors you can do this for us. Mr. Arnsman stated this does happen because Mr. Wheeler brought him a request for the flashing stop signs and the reason he is requesting it is because he saw that another street had them. Mr. Arnsman stated there is precedence for that and it does happen.

- Ms. Anderson stated there are two issues: 1) the appearance of the signs. The traffic engineer will be going out to look at the quantity of signs and their spacing; 2) if the issue is safety of the kids crossing back and forth to the school, then possibly coming together with the churches, school, neighbors and have more discussions about what other mechanism can be done since we cannot change the block to block parking rule. In lieu of having no parking, how can we work together to come up with a solution.
- Ms. Anderson stated we can choose to leave the no parking sign in place and have these discussions or we can choose to do a petition to have the no parking signs removed and then have the discussions.
- Mr. Brill stated he appreciates Ms. Anderson's suggestion for having more conversations to come up with other solutions. Mr. Rosetta agreed it makes sense to do this.
- Mr. LaReau stated he has family visiting all the time and now they cannot park in the street. Ms. Anderson stated she understands his statement because she lives where there is no on-street parking, has limited driveway space, and she appreciates the on-street parking as a valuable asset, as does Public Services.
- Ms. Anderson stated she is happy to organize a meeting with the neighborhood, the churches, and school to have additional discussions on how and what can be done.
- Mr. Wheeler stated when you park on both sides of the street you narrow the street down. In the winter when the streets get plowed, they get even narrower. This is an issue that will not be taken care of unless there is no parking on both sides of the street. Mr. Wheeler stated he spoke to the principal months ago and he was very supportive of no parking. He went to the school board and they were supportive. He spoke to the church who was supportive. He said they are all laughing because he has had to go back three times about something that is so simple. Mr. Wheeler asked why is this being made so hard. Mr. Wheeler stated they want the signs that go beyond the north boundary of the school and church to be removed. He stated the officer at the last meeting was supportive of it. Mr. Wheeler stated the board is trying to take something that is so simple and make it very difficult.
- Mr. Wheeler stated he brought the request for flashing signs because last year at the Neighborhood Association meeting they had a discussion about ideas. One of the ideas he brought was the flashing signs. This is not something that came about recently but many months ago. Mr. Wheeler stated he saw the idea was already in place and that is why he referenced it in the petition for the flashing signs. Mr. Wheeler stated they are all good neighbors and good people and they are approaching the board, who are our neighbors as well, and look at it from that perspective and not just block to block. Mr. Arnsman stated if no parking is there, it will always be at the north end to establish the limits of the no parking. Mr. Arnsman stated he will look at the spacing of the parking signs next week and make a determination as to whether they can be moved or keep them in place.
- Mr. Rosetta stated Ms. Anderson presented another path forward to have additional discussions and it is his opinion that it would be worth exploring. Ms. Anderson stated she

would be happy to organize a meeting, meet with the school and have additional discussions as soon as possible.

- Mr. Arnsman stated the board would not vary from its decision regarding the block to block placement of the no parking signs. He stated he would look into the spacing of the signs. If they choose to have the signs removed, they can petition to do that and present the petition to the board for a decision.
- Ms. Anderson stated the city will be doing traffic studies around the city and look into what tools work and what can be applied.
- Mr. Rosetta stated it is most important to keep the kids safe.

Vine Neighborhood Parking Discussion

- Ms. Anderson stated the study has been completed. She will now begin to set up meetings with the Vine Neighborhood Association and set up a focus group to work out some ideas to take to the neighborhood. Her goal is to complete this by winter's end and in the spring do parking signs.

Wildlife Signage

- Mr. Arnsman stated the signs have been approved and this is a closed issue.

Speed Bumps

- Mr. Arnsman stated the speed bumps have been placed and this is a closed issue.

Northside Neighborhood Parking

- Mr. Arnsman stated they have started the study of the Northside neighborhood parking and the goal is to have the study done by December 21st.
- Ms. Anderson stated she would like to set up an unofficial meeting in January to discuss the results of the study. Mr. Arnsman stated that would be fine.
- Mr. Thomas asked what the study was for. Ms. Anderson stated they are looking into studying the No Parking, No Standing, No Stopping regulations in several areas of the north side neighborhood. Mr. Arnsman stated it is an all-encompassing parking study.
- Ms. Nicole stated the signs on her block were erected in 1995 to restrict some of the drug activity that was going on at that time. They were placed temporarily signs and over time the signs were left there. Ms. Nicole stated the drug activity is not what it used to be in this area. The signs are affecting their quality of life.

- Ms. Nicole stated one of the first issues she has is the way the petitions are written up because in the north side and east side neighborhoods the resident are not homeowners. She stated she felt it is not equitable to have a petition that says property owners when the property owners do not live in the community. She spoke with Rebekah Kik and the wording on the petition was supposed to change. Mr. Arnsman stated the wording of the petition has not changed and they have had internal discussions to determine if that is a change they are going to make.
- Ms. Nicole stated there are some initiatives they are trying to start. They want to get everyone from every block involved. The parking signs were one of the starting points of the initiative. Instead of it going petition by petition, they want to have a traffic study done and indicate on a map where all the parking signs are block by block. There are only a few streets that have the No Parking, No Standing, No Stopping signs. Then have meetings with the City, Public Safety and the neighborhood to discuss the findings of the study and make a plan. Then they can present the recommended plan to the Northside Neighborhood Association.
- Ms. Anderson stated they are doing a study in the Northside Neighborhood. Some of the things they are looking at is width of the road and what type of parking can be placed on what road. There are a lot of things to look at and consider and this will be a long process to figure out.
- Mr. Arnsman stated there is a process and we want to get it right. The process takes time and they want what works best for everyone involved. Mr. Arnsman stated they have just completed a study in the Vine Neighborhood. They need the Northside neighborhood study completed before they can begin making plans. The discussions most likely will not be until January or February.
- Ms. Nicole asked what happens with the signs in the neighborhood until then. Mr. Arnsman stated he does not have a good answer at this time. These are internal conversations we need to have. Ms. Anderson stated these conversations should include KPS.
- Mr. Thomas stated KPS is open to discussion. They may not always come to the same conclusion but sometimes they do.
- Ms. Anderson stated they can plan a meeting next week. Ms. Nicole stated she was happy they can make a change.
- Mr. Arnsman stated City's main concern is for public safety and doing things right for everyone involved. Unfortunately, it takes time for the process to take place.

7. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS OR CONCERNS

None

8. NEXT MEETING

- Date: Thursday, December 13, 2018 at 2:00 P.M, 415 E. Stockbridge, Kalamazoo, Stockbridge Main Conference Room, 1st Floor
- Agenda items submitted to Karen Rutherford (rutherfordk@kalamazoo.org) by December 5, 2018.

ADJOURN

- Mr. Arnsman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- **Ms. Anderson supported by Mr. Thomas, made a motion to approve to adjourn the meeting. With a voice vote, the motion was carried.**
- The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Submitted by: Karen Rutherford
Recording Secretary

Date: 3-14-19

Approved by: [Signature]
Staff Liaison

Date: 3/14/2019