

Traffic Safety Committee
February 25, 2019

Present were: Chair Rozek, Council Members Theberge, Remillard, and Otis

Others present: City Manager James Wheeler, Public Works Director Eric Grenier, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Police Chief Pete Morency, Ralph Collins (6:05 p.m.), Claire Stiles (6:00 p.m.)

Chair Rozek called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

Councilor Theberge moved to accept the minutes of the January 28, 2019 Traffic Safety Committee meeting; Councilor Otis seconded and the motion carried.

Handicap Parking Guidelines

Chair Rozek noted that the baseline for approving handicap spaces would help guide when such requests come in. Mr. Wheeler explained that the concern is that we are using the ADA placard which implies that there is an ADA parking spot; however the space has not been measured up against the ADA requirements. Conforming to the ADA would mean major reconstruction for every sign. Mr. Wheeler went on to say that we did not get a clear answer from legal. Mr. Grenier spoke to other communities and Conway does not put these spaces out at all. If there is a handicap sign, an attorney could say that the space should comply with generally accepted practices. Where does this put the liability?

Mr. Wheeler added that from his research, he has found that on street parking has to be provided. Under Title II, 5% of parking spaces should be for the disabled. The general public has the ability to park on a public street and the disabled get that ability as well but not with special exclusive parking in front of their house. Councilor Otis asked if the handicap sign is acceptable or not. Mr. Wheeler noted that we should not be doing these signs anymore; handicap space would have to be on private property. The request would have to be taken up with the landlord.

Chief Morency asked if ADA supersedes what is reasonable accommodation. Mr. Wheeler indicated that as long as we have at least 5 % of parking available for handicap individuals, we are providing the same opportunity to them as to everyone else. This is different than having a handicap spot in front of the house. Councilor Remillard stated that it is not up to the city to make the accommodations for every disabled person.

Mr. Wheeler commented that when someone is seeking an ADA spot or handicap parking, we will look to comply with the 5% rule in the neighborhood.

Councilor Rozek noted that this would eliminate 95% of the requests. Chief Morency asked what we would do with the existing spaces. Mr. Wheeler replied that we should look at them and see how many spaces exist in the neighborhood where they are.

Mr. Grenier stated that he is concerned about using the internationally recognized symbol for handicap parking and not providing what is in the guidelines. Mr. Wheeler noted that we are supposed to provide for handicap what we provide for everyone else and we want to do that within reason.

Councilor Theberge asked what other cities do and if there is State law regulating the issue. Councilor Remillard said that we could see how many we have and work on it through the summer. Chair Rozek asked how we want to act on the proposed matrix. Mr. Wheeler suggested that the proposed rules be revised to fit with the 5% of total spaces being dedicated to handicap parking.

Councilor Remillard moved to table the proposed ground rules for ADA parking; Councilor Otis seconded and the motion carried.

Request for Handicap Parking at 345 Willard Street

Councilor Otis moved to deny the parking request; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried.

Request for Handicap Parking at 159 Oak Street

Councilor Otis moved to deny the parking request; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried.

Other

Councilor Otis mentioned that an address on Western Avenue was granted “no parking” and the resident who asked is no longer living there. There are other old signs that need to be addressed. Councilor Remillard noted that before removing the signs, a certified letter should be sent to those affected. Chief Morency indicated that the PD could identify some of the faded signs while on patrol.

Hampshire Street Lighting

Councilor Theberge stated that he viewed Hampshire Street, which was on the January 14 agenda, at night and found that it is the same as any other street in that area. Mr. Wheeler agreed saying that the surrounding streets are exactly the same. If we start cherry picking streets to add additional light to, we will spend more money. Councilor Remillard wanted to be sure that we were not setting precedence and that all of these are treated the same.

Councilor Otis moved to deny lighting on Hampshire Street tabled on 1/14; Councilor Remillard seconded. Chair Rozek asked that the motion be withdrawn so that the item can be removed from the table. Councilor Otis withdrew his motion and Councilor Remillard withdrew the second.

Councilor Otis moved to remove the item from the table; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried.

Councilor Otis moved to deny lighting on Hampshire Street tabled on 1/14; Councilor Remillard seconded. So moved, the motion carried.

There were also items regarding lights on Hutchins Street. Mr. Wheeler noted that these were referred to the capital plan.

Adjournment

Councilor Otis moved to adjourn; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Tremblay
Administrative Assistant

Minutes are unofficial until they have been accepted by the Traffic Safety Committee by motion.