



## Traffic Commission

6801 Delmar Boulevard, University City, Missouri 63130, Phone: (314) 505-8560, Fax: (314) 862-0694

### CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION July 13, 2016

At the Traffic Commission meeting of University City held in the Heman Park Community Center, on Wednesday, July 13, 2016, Chairwoman Carol Wofsey called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. In addition to Chairwoman Wofsey, the following members of the commission were present:

- Curtis Tunstall
- Jeff Hales
- Derek Helderman

Also in attendance:

- Angelica Gutierrez (non-voting commission member – Public Works Liaison)
- Police Department Sergeant Shawn Whitley (non-voting commission member – Police Department Liaison)
- Councilmember Bwayne Smotherson (non-voting commission member – Council Liaison) Mr. Smotherson departed at 7:32 pm

Absent:

- Mark Barnes (excused)
- Eva Creer (excused)
- Bob Warbin

#### 1. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Hales made a motion to move item 5A to the bottom of the agenda to accommodate a citizen who advised that he was running late. Mr. Helderman seconded the motion and was unanimously approved.

Mr. Tunstall moved to approve the agenda as amended and was seconded by Mr. Hales. The amended agenda was unanimously approved.

#### 2. Approval of the Minutes

##### A. June 8, 2016 minutes

Ms. Wofsey noted that Dr. Warbin was listed as an unexcused absence at the previous meeting. Ms. Gutierrez reported that Dr. Warbin contacted her following the last meeting to apologize that he had mixed up the date of the meeting and unintentionally missed the meeting. Mr. Hales indicated that Dr. Warbin is a very conscientious member of the commission and has rarely missed a meeting and never unexcused. Mr. Hales made a motion to amend Dr. Warbin's unexcused absence to excused. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tunstall and unanimously approved.

Mr. Helderman made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, and was seconded by Mr. Tunstall. The minutes were unanimously approved as amended.



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### 3. Agenda Items

#### **B. Ferguson Ave. and Julian Ave. Intersection**

Ms. Gutierrez presented a request from a citizen requesting yield signs on Ferguson at Julian Ave. There are existing stop signs on Julian Ave. at Ferguson. She reported that interactions are controlled by stop signs or yield signs, but not both at the same intersection. Staff suggested adding painted stop bars on the pavement at the stop signs at Julian Ave.

Mr. Tunstall asked and it was confirmed that there are existing stop signs on Julian.

Ms. Wofsey asked if the mixing of stop and yield sign prohibition was in the code. Ms. Gutierrez explained that it is part of the MUTCD national traffic standards which the city adopted and follows.

Ms. Wofsey asked if there could be a speed bump to remind people that there is a stop sign. Sgt. Whitley indicated that the line of site is impaired by traffic parked on Ferguson causing vehicles to edge into the intersection to be able to see oncoming traffic.

Mr. Hales asked about the standard for restricting parking near intersections with stop signs and Ms. Gutierrez confirmed that cars may not be parked within 30 feet of a stop sign. Mr. Hales asked how many intersections have signs reflecting that restriction. Ms. Gutierrez did not know how many streets but indicated that city has tried to either paint the curbs yellow or post signs at intersections where visibility is a known concern. Mr. Hales expressed his hesitation to recommend adding additional stop signs given that the petitioner nor anyone from the neighborhood was present and a recent recommendation to add stop signs was not well received by residents. Mr. Hales suggested that the 30 ft. parking restriction near the intersection of Ferguson and Julian be marked since it is a relatively high traffic street with limited visibility. Mr. Hales also noted that the same problem exists at Purdue Ave. at Pershing Ave. Ms. Gutierrez informed the commission that a citizen had already brought the Purdue intersection to her attention and staff was already planning to install signs there.

Mr. Hales asked Ms. Gutierrez if the recommendation of staff is to paint stop bars on Julian and install no parking signs on Ferguson within 30 ft. of the intersection in accordance with the MUTCD traffic standards. Ms. Gutierrez confirmed that was the plan and it did not require any action of the commission since the actions taken do not require an ordinance and comply with the traffic standards.



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Mr. Tunstall asked about school traffic at that intersection. Ms. Gutierrez indicated that there are pedestrian crossings for the nearby Pershing Elementary School, but did not have statistics on school crossings or pedestrian traffic at that intersection.

Mr. Helderman made a motion to accept Ms. Gutierrez's recommendation as presented to paint stop bars and install no parking signs within 30 ft. of Julian Ave. Mr. Tunstall seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

### **C. School Zones – Pershing Elementary School**

Ms. Gutierrez presented a request from Ms. Tamika Cook concerning speed limits surrounding Pershing Elementary. The city designated the streets immediately surrounding the school as a school zone with a speed limit reduced to 20 MPH from 25 MPH. Ms. Cook has requested the school zone be increased to include Bartmer, Etzel, and Crest to the east of the school. Staff is seeking input from the commission on extending the school zone.

Ms. Wofsey asked what the code says about school zones. Ms. Gutierrez stated that the city code does not define how school zones are determined, but which specific streets are designated as school zones and indicated that staff was looking for input from the commission on how a school zone should be determined. Ms. Wofsey indicated her interest in exploring this since she lives near a school, but outside of the school zone and has concerns over the speed of traffic on the surrounding streets.

Tamika and Roosevelt Cook (1066 Purcell Ave.) spoke about their concerns about the neighborhood children in the surrounding neighborhoods who live within one mile of the school and cannot be bussed and the safety measures in place to ensure their safety walking to and from school. Ms. Cook indicated that she has experienced two accidents related to speeding, including one where she and her children were nearly hit by a speeding car.

Ms. Wofsey also indicated that there is a playground and a community garden there and regular pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Cook informed the commission that he has seen signs indicated a drug free school zone which extend well outside of the school zone for traffic and noted that the zones were not the same. Sgt. Whitley informed the commission that he believed "drug free school zones" extended 1000 feet around any school.

Mr. Tunstall asked Ms. Gutierrez to confirm that there is no standard for determining a school zone. Ms. Gutierrez confirmed, but indicated that streets designated as school zones are identified in the code, but there is no criteria for determining the area of the school zone.



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Mr. Hales thanked the Cooks for their request and was very interested in looking into the issue. He indicated that he thought looking at the 1000 foot "drug free school zone" might be a starting point and believed that input from the school district would be very helpful to start the process.

Ms. Wofsey asked Councilmember Smotherson if he would like to have neighborhood input. Mr. Smotherson said the Cooks were representing their neighborhood and he thought it was a great request and he would be in favor of expanding the school zone.

Mr. Helderman agreed that this was a good idea that makes sense and asked if there was any data for accidents in this area. Ms. Gutierrez indicated that she would check.

Ms. Gutierrez also indicated that she had communicated with the school district superintendent who indicated that they had no objection to enlarging the school zone, but Ms. Gutierrez was going to work with the school district for data about the number of children who walk in the area.

Mr. Hales asked Sgt. Whitley if schools zones are effective and if there is a higher penalty for speeding in a school zone. Mr. Whitley indicated that he believed that school zones are affective along with enforcement but did not know the specifics of the fines. He indicated that the police recently undertook enforcement actions around Flynn Park Elementary and issued a number of tickets primarily to parents of students at the school.

Ms. Wofsey stated that she believed if we expanded the school zone around Pershing Elementary that we would likely be asked to do the same for other schools and she believes the commission should approach this issue very thoughtfully.

Mr. Hales made a motion that staff provide the data discussed from the school district, input from neighbors, accident history, information on the drug free school zone, school zones from other municipalities, and anything else that would be of value to discuss at a future meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tunstall and unanimously approved.

#### **4. Council Liason Report**

Mr. Smotherson told the commission he was happy to be the new council liaison. He explained his conversation with Mrs. Glickert about the concern about the Enright stop signs being about the added traffic related to the trolley. Mr. Smotherson thanked the commission for their consideration of his recent request from the traffic commission.

#### **5. Miscellaneous Business**



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Mr. Hales welcomed Mr. Smotherson to the commission and wished him a happy birthday.

Mr. Hales mentioned that he had seen a recent comment on social media related to the recent request for a left-turn prohibition from the gas station at Forsyth and Bland. He indicated that the comment was something along the lines of *the citizen makes the request, but staff makes the presentation to the commission*. Mr. Hales asked if the citizen who made the request was invited and encouraged to attend the meeting. Ms. Gutierrez confirmed he was invited and encouraged to attend.

Ms. Wofsey reminded the commission that citizens can come to any meeting and address concerns to the traffic commission during the Miscellaneous Business portion of the meeting and the commission is welcoming to all citizens' concerns at any meeting.

Mr. Hales mentioned the previous issue about adding flashing yellow lights at pedestrian crossings on Delmar several meetings back. He asked if it might be possible to have solar powered lights that were programmed to flash during those hours of heavy pedestrian traffic. Ms. Wofsey suggested speaking with the Rabbi. Ms. Gutierrez indicated she could ask the county if that would be possible.

Ms. Wofsey asked about the status of our Traffic Commission annual report. Ms. Gutierrez said it would be coming back at the September meeting.

### **3. A. 7300 Block of Forsyth Blvd – North side only parking restriction**

Ms. Gutierrez indicated that she had received a traffic request from Steve Arnold (7305 Forsyth Blvd.) on Forsyth requesting a parking restriction in front of his property. She explained the residential parking permit system and that it is an issue and a warranted change.

Mr. Arnold indicated that he had been living at his current residence for almost three years and knows most of his neighbors. He was surprised to see no parking signs appear on the south side of Forsyth in front of the new condominium buildings. He stated that the way the signs are, it's not clear to drivers that there is parking allowed just west of Manhattan and the north side of the street has been impacted significantly with business parking and Washington University parking. He has observed some cars parked all day, some cars parked all weekend, as well as cars parked all day while their owners use Metrolink to commute. He noted that on the way to the meeting, he dropped his wife off at home and a Toyota that had been parked their all day was still parked at the very edge of his driveway. In addition to not being able to park in front of his property, Mr. Arnold stated that he now has to park in the driveway which is very dangerous to back out of with cars parked to the edge of it. He stated that he recently tried to back out of his driveway and was nearly hit by a car turning from Manhattan. Since the restrictions were implemented on the south side of Forsyth, Mr. Arnold stated that an employee of Colleen's Cookies will regularly park in front of his property all day and that the business was



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not responsive to his request that the employees not park all day. He indicated that he has no problem with customers coming and going and parking, but the situation is very inconvenient and unsafe for residents who have nowhere else to park. He also expressed that some of his neighbors are elderly and have difficulty parking in front of their homes as well. He noted that the condominiums across the street have large wide new driveways, but the properties on the north side of the street have narrow driveways which make visibility more difficult when cars are parked up to the edges of the driveways. He indicated that he did not understand the need for parking restrictions on the south side of Forsyth particularly to the west of the buildings and believes changes are needed for safety and resident parking.

Mr. Tunstall suggested that a residential parking permit is probably the place to start because this is affecting his neighbors as well.

Ms. Gutierrez stated that she provided a sample residential parking permit petition and stated that Mr. Arnold's block qualifies.

Mr. Arnold asked if he had to do the petition for the entire block and was informed by Ms. Wofsey that the commission would need to determine that area.

Mr. Arnold asked if the signs between 7300 and 7310 Forsyth could be changed because changed to indicate that parking is allowed between the signs because drivers are not recognizing those spaces as being available. Ms. Wofsey asked that staff look into the feasibility of better marking those available spots.

Ms. Wofsey asked the commissioners for input on the affected are for a residential parking permit request.

Mr. Tunstall expressed his understanding of the frustrations experienced by Mr. Arnold.

Mr. Arnold asked how the south side restriction happened without residents on the north side of Forsyth being informed since it impacted them directly. Mr. Tunstall explained that they filled out a petition and made their case to the commission.

Mr. Hales stated that he was not ready to start the discussion about the residential parking permit. He indicated that he did not recall the vote on the recommendation over the restriction on the south side, but there were reservations expressed about the impact to the north side of Forsyth. He stated that he recently observed the impact of the restrictions and the number of cars parked on the north side and he believed the commission did not give enough consideration to the residents on the north side of the street and in retrospect, questioned why any building or buildings should on the south side of the street should be given greater consideration than others. Mr. Hales sympathized with Mr. Arnold having experienced a similar situation living near a commercial business. He expressed that he does not understand why the distance of the restrictions around the driveways on the north





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side of the street are greater than those given at streets with stop signs and suggested that the commission revisit the restrictions recommended on the south side of the street when the entire commission is present. Mr. Hales also stated that the parking for the nearby commercial district extends all the way to Manhattan and suggested that the commission consider whether a new ordinance should be considered for this block and others near commercial districts that would restrict parking to 1 hour except by residential permit. He stated that such a restriction would not need to require petitions, but every resident would be entitled to residential parking permits to be exempt from the time restrictions. He expressed that such a restriction would accommodate customers and business and residents as well and that this is a prime example of where a different solution is needed because of the nature of the business district and residential properties. He expressed his concern that a residential parking permit system on his block would essentially be “kicking the can down the road” which would upset businesses and create parking problems elsewhere.

Ms. Wofsey agreed that had the commission had greater foresight, the commission would have approached the south side restrictions to include the impact on both sides of Forsyth and the piece by piece approach has come with some problems. She stated that she believed that with the additional proposed development related to Centene, that there will likely need to be a complete rethinking of traffic patterns and associated parking, but believed that a residential parking permit program would solve part of the problem. Ms. Wofsey stated that if we are going to rethink the parking on Forsyth, the commission should consider the 7000-7200 blocks as well and perhaps ask for a traffic engineering report.

Mr. Hales stated that he disagreed with the notion of reexamining the residential parking in front of the single family homes. He stated that he strongly felt that if the commission were to recommend a residential parking permit petition for Mr. Arnold's block, it would likely be very difficult to make contact with many of the non-resident property owners on his block. Mr. Hales asked what staff's opinion of the feasibility of a new ordinance restricting parking to one hour except by residential parking permit on the 7300 block. Mr. Hales also asked Mr. Arnold if he felt that a restriction of that type would be helpful.

Mr. Arnold indicated that he thought it was not bad idea and was open and willing to sharing the street with the neighboring businesses customers. He explained that his difficulty is not with customers but with long term parking by non-residents. He asked if something could be negotiated with Washington University to allow for employee parking on their West Campus lot.

Mr. Helderman stated that he believed both options were viable. He asked if Mr. Hales' proposed restriction could be enforced.

Sgt. Whitley stated that it could be enforced because it's a relatively concentrated area. He stated that police could place a penny on the tire as they do with cars



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parked for more than 5 days and indicated that he liked the idea of the hourly parking except by residential permit. He also suggested the possibility of metered parking for non-residents in front of those properties but noted that would have an additional cost. Sgt. Whitley noted that St. Louis has a very liberal policy on free parking compared to other cities.

Mr. Hales asked if the city's parking control chalks tires the way Clayton does and if there are time limits to parking meters in University City. Ms. Gutierrez stated that the meters in the Loop allow for up to four hours and many of them are older parking meters. Mr. Hales asked if cars parked at a meter are required to move after the maximum time in a space. Sgt. Whitley did not know, but stated that if the city does, the police do not mark tires. Mr. Hales suggested that enforcement could be accomplished by the parking control vehicle coming by once an hour or two hours and chalking the tires while checking the metered lot next to Krugers and meters in front of Krugers. Mr. Hales asked if that could be feasible for the city's parking control. Sgt. Whitley stated that he believed that it would be feasible.

Mr. Tunstall stated that he hoped the city does not become like Clayton and noted that they mark and ticket even commercial vehicles parked on the street.

Ms. Gutierrez asked Mr. Hales if he was on the commission when the commission discussed the 200 block of Linden. In that instance, she indicated that residents on the east side of Linden were given the option of mimicking Clayton's 1 hour parking restriction or a residential parking permit. She informed the commission that the residents chose the residential parking permit option. She suggested that the commission could ask the nine property owners on the north side of Forsyth what their preference would be. Mr. Hales stated that in fairness to all parties, he would also want to get some feedback from businesses on Forsyth how long of a restriction would best work for them because a solution is needed that has more of a balance for all on the street than exists now.

Ms. Wofsey asked Mr. Arnold if he would like for the commission to determine the affected area for a residential parking petition. Mr. Arnold expressed that it's a long block and he would prefer to that it be the last 4 or 5 buildings on the block because the buildings to the east are larger and some are condominiums.

Ms. Wofsey asked Ms. Gutierrez how the commission has counted condominiums in residential parking permits in the past. Ms. Gutierrez indicated that the commission would count each property or condominium owner.

Mr. Hales stated that he did not want to convey that he did not want to solve this problem, but strongly felt that the commission would be doing the same thing if it were to proceed with a residential parking permit for the north side of the 7300 block of Forsyth because the long term parkers would move from in front of Mr. Arnold's house to Del Lin and Northmoor and create problems there. He believed that it would not be wise to go down the same road that created the problem that the





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commission is now trying to address. He stated that the commission has an opportunity to look at the consequences of some of these changes and not make the same mistake and at the same time, he stated he believed the commission needs to take a look at the recent restrictions imposed on the south side of Forsyth. Ms. Wofsey asked Mr. Hales if he had a specific suggestion. Mr. Hales suggested that public works staff and the police department consider the suggestion and the feasibility of a new ordinance with limited 1 or 2 hour parking for the 7300 block with the exception of residents with a residential parking permit and advise whether it might be a viable solution.

Ms. Wofsey asked if anyone was opposed, no objections were raised.

Mr. Hales asked Mr. Arnold if it was acceptable to him for the commission to look into this option and discuss further at the September meeting. Mr. Arnold indicated that was okay with him, but asked if he should also take a petition for the residential parking.

Mr. Helderman expressed concerns about splitting the block up for the petition and made a motion that the affected area include all of the residential properties from the east of Colleen's Cookies to Manhattan on the north side of Forsyth. Mr. Arnold asked how many buildings that would be. Mr. Hales stated that we would need to determine if any of the buildings were condominiums. Ms. Gutierrez indicated that she could determine the list of property owners and show Mr. Arnold how to look up the owners in the county property records. Ms. Wofsey stated that there was still not a second. Mr. Hales stated he did not want to second the motion. Mr. Tunstall stated that he did not want to second the motion.

Mr. Hales stated that he understood Mr. Helderman's concerns about splitting the block up, but reminded the commission that is exactly what it did across the street with the parking restrictions on the south side of Forsyth. He expressed concern for fairness and that the commission should not give different consideration to the north side of Forsyth when the commission gave consideration to just part of the block on the south side. He expressed that he did not believe a residential parking permit for any part of the north side of the 7300 block would serve anyone well and would create further problems elsewhere particularly if the affected area included the entire block.

Ms. Wofsey asked if Mr. Hales would like to make a different motion. Mr. Hales made a motion that the affected area include the 5 properties to the west of Manhattan from 7301 through 7315 on the north side of Forsyth.

Mr. Helderman agreed with Mr. Hales' concerns about the precedent that was set on the south side of Forsyth and agreed that it had caused problems, but expressed that he didn't believe it was a good precedent and going forward the commission should look at the entire block and stated that he was willing to revisit at the recent restrictions imposed on the south side of Forsyth.



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Ms. Gutierrez reminded the commission that every property owner on the south side of Forsyth was contacted regarding the recent parking restrictions, but just one other property owner responded. She indicated that a survey was also sent to residents on the north side, but only 2 responses came back.

Ms. Wofsey asked if we were at the stage where we needed to hear from more neighbors on the north side of Forsyth. Mr. Hales stated he was in favor of that and would be interested in any statements from neighbors that Mr. Arnold might be able to obtain from those who cannot attend the meeting.

Ms. Wofsey asked Mr. Hales to restate his motion, which he did and asked for a second. No member seconded the motion.

Ms. Wofsey suggested that Mr. Arnold talk to his neighbors and indicated that staff will be looking into the other suggested options and hoped that we would have a full commission to revisit this in September.

Mr. Arnold raised the issue of the parking proximity to driveways and safety. Mr. Hales stated that this was an issue that had been mentioned in previous meetings and asked that parking issues related to the distance cars can be parked next to driveways be placed on the September agenda meeting for discussion.

### **6. Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm

Minutes prepared by Jeff Hales, Traffic Commission Secretary