

PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday July 8, 2008

ATTENDEES:

Bill Pritchard, Chair  
John Barnes  
Susan Milner  
Arthur Schatzkin  
Monique Shimm  
Al Lang, Town Council Liaison

Absent: Blaney Harper, Larry Lannom, Costis Toregas

Guests:

Rose Miller	7000 Valley Place
Nick Hadley	3907 Rosemary St
Pat O'Rourke	3904 Rosemary St
Betsey Haddad	3906 Rosemary St
Dick Haddad	3906 Rosemary St
David Lamb	6800 Connecticut Ave
Theresa Lamb	6800 Connecticut Ave
M. Peppe	4103 Leland
Donald Farren	4009 Bradley Lane
Matilde Farren	4009 Bradley Lane
David Lublin	4214 Thornapple St
Catherine Okeilia	6808 Hillcrest
Lynne Cynamon	3914 Rosemary St

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm.

Open public discussion of CCES traffic plans. The principal concerns are: maintaining parking on the north side of Rosemary; enforcement; one-way bus traffic on Rosemary street between Connecticut Avenue and Rosemary Circle; the length of no parking restrictions adjacent to intersections and whether they need to be signed; current restrictions within the Town and lack of stoplights on Connecticut Avenue that channel traffic to the light at Rosemary Street.

Following open public discussion of the CCES Traffic Plans and PSC consideration, the following motions were approved by the PSC, modifying the previous recommendations (details are in the attached memo to the Town Council):

**#1: The student drop-off lane should be extended north to the blacktop driveway and south to a point close to the sidewalk access to the street. The drop-off lane should be posted as NO PARKING 8AM-4PM SCHOOL DAYS. The sidewalk adjacent to the drop-off lane should be widened to the east for a width of 4 feet where possible.**

**#2: The north side of Rosemary Street from a point 50 feet east of the Rosemary Street Circle to the eastern edge of the school property line should be posted NO STOPPING 8AM-4PM SCHOOL DAYS.**

**#3: The Town should work with the Montgomery County Public Schools to ensure that buses are limited to travel in only one direction on Rosemary Street east of the Rosemary Street Circle.**

The minutes of the June 10, 2008 meeting were approved.

The Chair reminded members of the Mayor's solicitation for committee volunteers and an indication from current members of their willingness to continue.

**Brief updates:**

**Leland Center playground equipment:**

Susan Milner reports that the playground design is proceeding. The estimated cost of the Town's share is \$30,000 for the proposed upgrades. The PSC approved the following motion:

**The Town should accept the proposal by MNCPPC for the renovation of the Leland Center Playground and contribute appropriate funds as necessary to ensure the completion of the project.**

**Sidewalks:**

Councilmember Lang reviewed the status of the development of sidewalk plans for Thornapple Street and Oakridge Avenue. The sidewalk proposals are to be considered at the July 9 Council meeting. Among the related considerations are the use of permeable vs. non-permeable sidewalk construction and the installation of stop signs and crosswalks at the intersection of Curtis and Oakridge.

**Security:**

Following recent incidents, there has been increase in activity related to security. The sub-committee will meet with relevant individuals including the Town staff, Montgomery County Police and Dave Eason (TOCC liaison to the Police).

The next meeting will be in September.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

**MEMO TO THE TOWN COUNCIL:**

At Tuesday's meeting, the Public Services Committee approved several motions relevant to items on the Council agenda for July 9.

**Chevy Chase Elementary School (CCES) Traffic Plan:**

The PSC met with residents on June 26 and again on July 8 with Joseph Cutro participating. Al Lang, Todd Hoffman and Bill Pritchard also reviewed the plans with Jody Smith, CCES principal. The following modifications are recommended:

**#1: The student drop-off lane should be extended north to the blacktop driveway and south to a point close to the sidewalk access to the street. The drop-off lane should be posted as NO PARKING 8AM-4PM SCHOOL DAYS. The sidewalk adjacent to the drop-off lane should be widened to the east for a width of 4 feet where possible.**

The first two points address a practical matter of how student pickup works in the afternoon. Widening the street to extend the drop-off zone will accommodate more cars. The relaxation of the restriction from NO STANDING SCHOOL DAYS 8AM –4PM will allow parents to stand in the zone until the children exit the school. This latter change in the parking restriction would require modification of Ordinance ITEM #2.

The sidewalk is only 3 feet wide at the drop off lane with a worn footpath on the east side of the sidewalk. Widening the sidewalk toward the school will improve safety and movement along the walk.

**#2: The north side of Rosemary Street from a point 50 feet east of the Rosemary Street Circle to the eastern edge of the school property line should be posted NO STOPPING 8AM-4PM SCHOOL DAYS.**

This change (Ordinance ITEM #7) from NO PARKING ANYTIME to NO STOPPING during school hours is more restrictive when there is heavy traffic and pedestrian use but eliminates the restriction outside of school hours. The change restricts stopping (including parking) to the south side of the street during school hours. Joseph Cutro noted that some of the resident comments reflect the common misconception that slower speeds always mean a safer street. It is true that if parking is prohibited on one side, that local traffic speeds will increase somewhat. On a narrow street like Rosemary, however, any safety reduction resulting from a mild speed increase would be vastly offset by much improved sight lines and fewer surprises involving those (people, animals, objects) that might emerge from between parked cars. There would also be a lesser hazard presented to/by parked cars themselves, and a resulting reduction in property damage potential.

The PSC agrees that the benefits of single side parking outweigh the disadvantages and recommend that the segment be posted as above. The NO STOPPING ANYTIME restrictions in Ordinance ITEM #6 are unchanged.

**#3: The Town should work with the Montgomery County Public Schools to ensure that buses are limited to travel in only one direction on Rosemary Street east of the Rosemary Street Circle.**

Buses traveling in opposite directions (head-on) on Rosemary Street are a major source of congestion, since the street is effectively one travel lane and bus drivers are forbidden to back up while on a street. At one point in the past, buses from Connecticut turned onto Bradley Lane and then onto Hillcrest in order to access the Circle with buses restricted to eastbound travel on Rosemary Street east of the Circle. There is strong support among residents for this type of restriction.

**Leland Center playground equipment:**

**The Town should accept the proposal by MNCPPC for the renovation of the Leland Center Playground and contribute appropriate funds as necessary to ensure the completion of the project.**

The playground is heavily used by families within the Town and, as part of the Leland Center, represents a significant social center for residents. This proposal incorporates the design input of many Town parents and children and represents an investment in a major capital asset of the community.