

MINUTES
Public Hearing of the College Park City Council
Tuesday, September 11, 2007 – 7:30 P.M.

Establishment Of Residential Permit Restricted Parking For
The Lakeland Neighborhood

PRESENT: Mayor Brayman; Councilmembers Krouse, Milligan, Catlin, Perry, Fellows, Stulich, Hampton and Cook. Student Liaison Danielle Kogut.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Joe Nagro, City Manager; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Janeen Miller, City Clerk; Jim Miller, Parking Enforcement Manager; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services.

Mayor Brayman opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m. and invited Bob Ryan to give an overview of the proposed permit-parking plan in the Lakeland neighborhood. Mr. Ryan stated that in response to community concerns about parking, staff met with the Lakeland Citizens Association and conducted field observations. He said it appears there is commuter parking in the neighborhood on a daily or weekly basis. The Citizens Association made a proposal for permit parking restrictions which staff modified to achieve consistency in the neighborhood.

Jim Miller outlined the staff proposal: this would be a residential permit parking zone enforced 24 hours/day from midnight Sunday to midnight Saturday in the entire neighborhood. Residential Permits would cost \$5 per year and visitor permits would cost \$1 each. A maximum of 5 residential permits per household and 2 visitor permits per household would be issued per year. There is a proposed three-hour unrestricted period on 51st Avenue between Pierce and Lakeland, and on Lakeland Road between 51st and 54th to accommodate parking near the churches.

Councilmember Perry asked why permit parking restrictions are being proposed on 54th Avenue, which does not have any residences? Mr. Miller replied that staff does not feel it is necessary but the citizens association requested it, but without the three hour unrestricted period.

Mr. Miller stated that a new zone designation would be assigned to this community, and would be effective as soon as new signs can be ordered and installed, approximately 60 days after approval.

Mr. Ryan clarified that the churches can request “no enforcement” when they have a special event.

Rev. Jenkins, Pastor, Embry AME Church, 5101 Lakeland Road: She was appreciative of the open day on Sunday, but would prefer to see the three-hour unrestricted period expanded to 4 or 5 hours.

Linda Butler, member of Embry AME Church: She does not live in Lakeland but attends church there, and agrees that the unrestricted period should be longer than three hours. She asked why parking isn't enforced the way it is supposed to be and how soon before a special event would you need to request "no enforcement?"

Mayor Brayman stated that enforcement of the 48-hour rule is complaint driven, and that 48 hours notice would be appreciated for special event "no enforcement."

Brenda Purvis, 5015 Lakeland Road: Stated that permit parking is desperately needed because of the problem created by students parking everywhere. She suggested the Sunday open time begin at 6 a.m. instead of 12 midnight because people coming in for parties at midnight on Saturday would clog the streets. She discussed various student behaviors she has seen. She stated that every house has off-street parking so she does not think that 5 permits per household is necessary; suggested reducing it to 3. Asked if students can call for "no enforcement" for their parties? She is concerned that students will take advantage of the 3-hour unrestricted parking near the churches and wanted some hours established.

Clarice M. Briscoe, 5006 Lakeland Road: Supports all of the comments made by Ms. Purvis, and agrees with 6 day vs. 7 day enforcement, and discussed various student behaviors she has seen. She said if you don't have these problems, you couldn't understand them.

There was a discussion of current parking enforcement practices and of counterfeit permits.

Councilmember Stulich commented that permit restricted parking zones do not help with party control. She discussed the noise enforcement program.

Leonard Smith, 5109 Navahoe Street: He thinks permit restricted parking will help the parking problems in the neighborhood. Stated that school buses have a problem making the turn from Rhode Island Avenue to Pierce Avenue because of cars parked on both sides of the street on the corner. He is in favor of helping the churches with their parking problems.

Maxine Gross, 5011 Navahoe Street: She is in favor of the permit parking restrictions. When the Lakeland community first met with staff about the parking problems, staff suggested the community develop a proposal. The community developed a different plan to address the issues and suggested 7 day a week enforcement in some areas that are more congested near the multi-family dwelling units, which staff scaled back to 6 days a week. Embry Church does not have any off-street parking and that should be considered in the proposal. The church on 54th Avenue has Saturday worship and the staff proposal does not meet their needs. She requested that Council look at the community's original proposal to see what they were trying to address. She thinks a five-hour window for unrestricted parking near the churches would be a little difficult because students would figure out that they could park there. She favors putting hours on the unrestricted parking like 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Pastor Stephen Wright, Pastor of the 1st Baptist Church, 5018 Lakeland Road: Asked Council to consider unrestricted parking on Lakeland Road from Rhode Island Avenue to 51st Avenue because sometimes there may be simultaneous events at both churches.

Patricia Middleton, 5108 Pierce Avenue: Does not favor permit parking. She is not ready to give up the freedom of open parking and does not believe the situation is that bad. She thinks permit restricted parking would hurt the residents of Lakeland. She wants to see the existing rules enforced. Students are there for a short period of time; residents are there for a lifetime and she does not want restrictions imposed on her family. The problem is specific to one area. The community should reach out to the landlords and the Parkside apartments who came in to the community and then gated their lot.

Diane Ligon, 5006 Pierce Avenue: She thinks the community has already lost a lot of control because of so many rental units. Asked if parking permits could be offered to church staff. Mr. Miller stated that would work.

Dwight Brooks, 5014 Lakeland Road: The neighborhood's proposal tried to address all concerns raised in the survey. Thinks that the establishment of permit parking would have good and bad points and might need to be adjusted as time goes on. He sees the problem with buses and trash trucks at Pierce and Rhode Island Avenues due to cars parked on both sides at that corner.

In response to a question from Councilmember Fellows, Mr. Brooks stated that he would prefer a 4 hour unrestricted period near the churches, not a 5 hour window.

Stacey Baca, 8408 49th Avenue: Asked if parishioners can obtain the residential parking permits. Mr. Miller responded "No."

Erma Campbell, 5000 Pierce Avenue: Asked the Council to consider opening up the corner of Pierce and Rhode Island because it is too congested. Asked about enforcement of parking restrictions on holidays. Mayor Brayman replied there is no enforcement on City holidays.

Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services, stated that staff has no objection to restricting parking on the corner of Pierce and Rhode Island Avenues, should the Council move in that direction.

JW Robson, 4710 Harvard Road: Asked if the churches can be given paper permits that they can issue to parishioners and guests similar to the parking passes used at City Hall.

Patrick Parsons, 5014 Pierce Avenue: Believes the problems are very localized and is in favor of permit parking but does not have a problem where he lives. Agrees with restricting parking at the corner of Pierce and Rhode Island. Asked if arrangements could be made with the College Park Community Center to use their lot for church overflow parking. Questioned whether the permit restrictions would cause students to park in that lot unlawfully?

Mayor Brayman read a letter in to the record from Mrs. Elizabeth C. Adams. In her letter she acknowledged that student parking is a problem on Lakeland Road, Rhode Island Avenue across from the Park, and now on Navahoe Street. She requests the City to resolve these parking problems but does not think it is fair for the residents of Lakeland to need Residential Restricted Permits for their parking, because they live there.

Mayor Dervey Lomax, 5013 Navahoe Street: Regarding the window for unrestricted parking near the churches, he recommends starting with 6 hours and then shortening it if needed. He brought pictures to illustrate the parking problems.

Monroe Dennis, President, Lakeland Citizens Association: He sees this as a work in progress and hopes all the important points were captured tonight and the staff and community can go back and discuss it further.

Mayor Brayman stated the options at this point: 1) take no action tonight and continue discussion for the next two weeks, 2) pass something tonight just to get started then revisit it in 6 months to 1 year, 3) act on it tonight and get it right, 4) do nothing. He also recommended getting a formal recommendation from staff about the corner of Pierce and Rhode Island.

Leonard Smith, 5109 Navahoe: Thinks the Council should decide this tonight.

Councilmember Perry asked staff what type of notification is needed for special “no enforcement” requests and how the notification should be made. Mr. Miller replied that 48-hour notice is preferred, and that the notice could come by e-mail, fax, phone call or personal visit.

Staff agreed with the concept of issuing permits for church staff. They prefer a 3- or 4- hour window for unrestricted parking, rather than anything longer. They would leave it up to the churches to create a parking pass that they would issue to visitors. They would work with the churches to create such a pass, but the churches would administer them.

There being no further public comment, the public hearing was closed at 9:38 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk