

MINUTES
Public Hearing of the College Park City Council
Tuesday, February 23, 2010 - 7:30 p.m.

Petition Request For The Withdrawal Of Permit Parking
In The 8100 Block of 54th Avenue

PRESENT: Mayor Fellows; Councilmembers Nagle, Wojahn, Catlin, Perry, Stulich, Afzali and Mitchell.

ABSENT: Councilmember Cook.

ALSO PRESENT: Joe Nagro, City Manager; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Janeen Miller, City Clerk; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Becca Lurie, Deputy Student Liaison.

Mayor Fellows called the Public Hearing to order at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Ryan provided an overview. This hearing is based on a petition received from the Washington Brazilian Seventh Day Adventist Church located at 8108 54th Avenue. They want the Residential Permit Only parking that was established in 2007 throughout Lakeland eliminated from the 8100 block of 54th Avenue. The church is the only structure on that block. Permit Zone 5 restricts parking to people with residential or visitor permits Monday – Saturday 24 hours a day, with the exception of three- hour free parking zones adjacent to two churches in Lakeland. A similar accommodation was discussed with the petitioner, but they chose to proceed with the request to lift the permit parking in that block.

Mr. Perry asked how many visitor permits the other churches have. Mr. Ryan said permits are given to those churches for them to distribute to their visitors and the number is sufficient to accommodate their needs. Mr. Ryan said Parking Enforcement Manager Miller did discuss this option with the petitioner.

Monroe Dennis, 8117 51st Avenue, President, Lakeland Civic Association: He was part of the initial petition that enacted the permit parking program in Lakeland. The civic association has not been able to meet with Pastor Barrozo because of the snow. The problems that initiated the permit parking program in Lakeland still exist, so for that reason the civic association would not be in favor of removing permit parking on that block. He understands the reason for their request and thinks there should be some negotiations with the church.

There was discussion about the prior parking problems in Lakeland that led to the permit restrictions. Commercial vehicles were sometimes parked for long periods of time, especially on that block; personal vehicles were parked in the neighborhood by people who then walked out of the neighborhood -- sometimes those vehicles would be there for a week at a time. There was

speculation that college students parked their cars in Lakeland to avoid purchasing a parking permit from the University of Maryland. The problem is not with people parking who are attending the church.

Mr. Ryan clarified that Permit Zone 5 is enforced Monday – Saturday. The other two churches in Lakeland celebrate their Sabbath on Sunday. The Washington Brazilian Seventh Day Adventist Church celebrates their Sabbath on Saturday, so some adjustments would be needed. For events at other times, the churches have parking permits they give to their visitors.

Leonard Smith, 5109 Navahoe Street: The community and City worked together for several months to develop the permit restricted parking to solve the parking problems in Lakeland. He would not want to see 54th Avenue abandoned now. The same accommodations given to the other two churches in Lakeland would also apply to this church. He discussed the parking problems that existed before the restrictions were imposed and believes the permit zone has solved the problem. If they take the signs down it would create another problem. He thinks it would be wrong, given the time and money the City has invested, to take the signs down. If they take the signs down for this church, then the other churches may also request the same thing. If this church has a problem, they are welcome to come to the civic association and they will solve it together.

Pastor David Barrozo, 5108 54th Avenue, Washington Brazilian Seventh Day Adventist Church: This is a vibrant congregation with lots of activities. Even though they have off-street parking, the street parking is important. He hates to see the street empty.

Luciene Barrozo (the pastor's daughter): They tried to live with the permit restricted parking but now realize that they need extra space to park. They don't think the three hour time frame would accommodate them. They hate to see the street empty. There are no houses on the block. The street parking would benefit the congregation.

Councilmember Perry asked how many parking spaces are on the property. There are about 50 outlined spaces and additional parking on the basketball court and on the grass. The church has a membership of 250.

Mayor Fellows asked if the church leadership and the civic association would be willing to meet and then come back to the Council; they agreed.

Mr. Ryan stated that Parking Enforcement always accommodates special events when they have been notified. He suggested that this church may need a four- or five-hour solution, instead of the three hours that work for the other churches.

There being no further testimony, Mayor Fellows declared the public hearing adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller, CMC Approved
City Clerk