

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT
August 26, 2009, 2:05 PM
City Council Chambers

Members Present: Jason Wiener (Chair), Ed Childers, Dick Haines, John Hendrickson, Bob Jaffe, Renee Mitchell, Pam Walzer, Jon Wilkins

Members Absent: Dave Strohmaier

Others Present: Steve King, Kevin Slovarp, Gregg Wood, Doug Harby, Stacy Rye, Ethel MacDonald, Doug Maves

I. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

A. Approval of the minutes of August 19, 2009 – Approved as submitted

B. Announcements

Ms. Rye thanked the Public Works Department for their responsiveness to the concerns of the community for bicycle and pedestrian opportunities. She thought they had done an awesome job addressing those concerns in the last year, and it was sometimes taken for granted.

Mr. Wilkins stated that he would not be present for the back-in angle parking discussion, and was not against it, but they needed to look out for people who can't back up or whose vehicles have more length.

Steve King, Public Works Director, stated that the grand opening of the Higgins Roundabout would be September 3, at 11:00 a.m. There was an onsite celebration planned.

C. Public Comment on Non-Agenda items – Ethel MacDonald of MAC stated she wanted to echo Ms. Rye's comments about Public Works and Steve King. She had hoped the curb extensions would be on the agenda, but it did appear that issue would be resolved to their satisfaction, and she thinks Public Works accepted Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board recommendations. She thinks they need a resolution from Council stating that bike lanes shall remain unobstructed, and that when obstructions occur, they will be removed as soon as reasonably possible.

Wilkins left the meeting.

II. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

1. Confirm the reappointments of Melissa Blunt and Bob Wachtel to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board for a term commencing September 16, 2009 and ending September 15, 2012. (memo).—
Regular Agenda (Mayor Engen) (Referred to committee: 08/24/09) REMOVE FROM AGENDA

Motion: The committee recommends the City Council confirm the reappointments of Melissa Blunt and Bob Wachtel to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board for a term commencing September 16, 2009 and ending September 15, 2012.

Mr. Wiener stated that the Mayor was unable to be present for the discussion, and that both candidates were current members of the board and he could testify to their diligence.

Mr. Childers made the motion to confirm the reappointments.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Consider a right-of-way encroachment permit for the GLR parking lot located on the 200 block of west Pine Street. (memo).—
Regular Agenda (Doug Harby) (Referred to committee: 08/24/09) REMOVE FROM AGENDA

Motion: The committee recommends the City Council approve a right-of-way encroachment permit for the GLR parking lot located on the 200 block of West Pine Street.

Doug Harby, Construction Project Manager, stated that GLR would like to install lift gates to their parking lot to be in operation during business hours. The lift gates would be located on private property, but they would need a card reader to operate them, which would be located just behind the curb out of the walkway. The card readers are designed to be breakaway, so not hazardous. City Engineering supports the encroachment and requests Council approval.

Mr. Wiener asked for clarification of the location of the encroachments. Mr. Harby stated that they would be two feet by two feet at a location four feet off the curb, on the driver's side of the vehicle, and would be aligned with the tree planters. Mr. Wiener was not enthusiastic about the idea. Mr. Harby stated that they had had concerns as well, but that GLR would lose 14 parking spaces if the card reader were on their property. Jeff Smith of WGM Group stated there would be two entrances off Pine Street, and the card readers would sit in line with the tree planters so that it doesn't impede pedestrian traffic any more than the trees do.

Mr. Jaffe stated that he was not sure he understood why the box wasn't closer to the curb. There was parking on both sides of the entrance, so vehicles would not be in the middle of the road when stopping. It would be less of an obstruction. Mr. Smith stated that they could move it. Mr. Harby stated that would be acceptable to Engineering.

Ms. Walzer agreed with moving it closer to the curb, in approximately the same location as a parking meter, and stated it would have visually and functionally the same impact on the sidewalk. She asked if there would be a card reader in the alley as well. Mr. Smith replied that the box in the alley would be on private property.

Ms. Walzer stated that she appreciated having private parking lots like this open to the public after business hours, and asked whether it was required by ordinance or if GLR was doing it out of kindness. Mr. Smith replied that it was GLR's choice to keep it open after hours.

Mr. Jaffe stated that they should require by ordinance that private parking lots be open during off hours.

Mr. Wiener asked whether the details of the placement of the post needed adjustment in the paperwork.

Ms. Walzer made the motion to approve the permit.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Consider a right-of-way encroachment for Office City, 115 West Broadway. ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Doug Harby) (Referred to committee: 08/24/09) [REMOVE FROM AGENDA](#)

Motion: The committee recommends the City Council approve the right-of-way encroachment for Office City, 115 West Broadway.

Mr. Harby stated that the encroachment application was for an awning extending four feet from the building. They are doing a new face and access on the building and the awning is part of the architectural design. When City Engineering proposes changes to Title 12 of the Missoula Municipal Code, they intend to suggest small awning encroachments like this be approved administratively.

Mr. Hendrickson made the motion to approve.

The motion passed unanimously.

4. Set a public hearing to consider an ordinance and an emergency ordinance of the Missoula City Council amending Missoula Municipal Code Title 10 entitled Vehicles and Traffic, Chapter 22 entitled

Stopping, Standing, and Parking Section 10.22.110. ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Steve King(Referred to committee: 08/24/09) **REMOVE FROM AGENDA**

Motion: The committee recommends the City Council set a public hearing for September 28, 2009 to consider an ordinance amending Missoula Municipal Code Title 10 entitled Vehicles and Traffic, Chapter 22 entitled Stopping, Standing, and Parking for the purpose of allowing back-in angle parking by amending Section 10.22.110.

Mr. King stated that staff wants to consider an emergency and a regular ordinance related to changes on Spruce Street for back-in parking. Current traffic laws specify the orientation of the vehicle must be with the front tires to the curb. The back-in angle parking is experimental at this point, and they want to take it to the public and see if they want to continue. So far, people are taking to it well. They worked with the ward reps and the Parking Commission, added signs, gave advance notice in the area, and put the stripes down. Missoula Municipal Code (MMC) 10.04.020 and 10.04.030 allow the City Engineer to test traffic control devices under actual conditions and to make temporary regulations to deal with special conditions. They want to amend the ordinance to allow back-in parking under special conditions. He recommended they set the public hearing for September 28.

Mr. Wiener asked if the department had distributed a flyer similar to the one attached. Mr. King stated that it was not in production yet but they had discussed it.

Mr. Childers stated that if the City Engineer could set experimental rules, they don't need to do an emergency ordinance. If it is a trial run, they don't need to set a public hearing, but having one would provide an opportunity for public feedback on what happens.

Mr. Childers made the motion to set a hearing for the back-in parking ordinance.

Mr. Childers read a citizen comment that trucks in narrow lanes tend to encroach into the bike lane, and deliveries in blocks with no alleys cause them to park in the street. Backing out of driveways is also problematic in narrow lanes because he ends up in the other lane.

Mr. Hendrickson stated that he would support the motion, and asked what the time frame was for determining whether the parking was a success. Mr. Slovarp stated they would see how people take to it within the first month or two before the snow falls and see if they were getting used to it. When it is time to restripe the road in a year or two, they will take a comprehensive look at vehicle accidents and reports.

Ms. Mitchell asked what implications the parking would have for deliveries on streets with no alleys, because some trucks have trouble backing in.

Mr. King stated they have loading zones throughout downtown for businesses, and if there were requests for one, they could work with the Parking Commission to establish it. Most of the area is residential or has alleys, but they will be responsive if it comes up.

The motion passed unanimously.

III. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discussion on the leaf removal program ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Jason Wiener) (Referred to committee: 06/08/09) **REMOVE FROM AGENDA**

Mr. Wiener stated that during budget discussions, he saw that 4,800 hours were spent on leaf removal, and it brought up questions.

Bruce Bender, Chief Administrative Officer, stated that leaf collection is also street cleaning, and they designate it leaf collection as a simple way to manage hours and categorize it. About 15 years ago the City started allowing residents to put their yard waste in the streets in addition to the street cleaning. The question is how much extra time it takes to haul the yard waste, which is hard to

estimate. Boulevard area trees are the biggest waste area, and they have always allowed boulevard tree waste to be put in the road. The City collects the waste and takes the waste to Eko Compost so that it doesn't end up in plastic bags at the dump. Approximately 2/3 of the time for leaf collection is street cleaning, and 1/3 is hauling leaves. If there were no leaf collection program, the City might be able to do more street maintenance if the weather were good, but that would require a larger asphalt budget.

Ms. Walzer asked whether they could compare the costs of spring street cleaning with fall and get a rough idea of the difference. Mr. Bender stated that in the spring they have five sweepers and a flusher, but in leaf collection they have sweepers plus front-end loaders and trucks, so it is not an even comparison. Ms. Walzer stated it might be helpful to limit parking on odd or even sides of the street on certain days like they do for spring cleaning.

Mr. Jaffe asked whether an analysis of the efficiency increase if there were better compliance on parking had ever been done. He asked if they approached it like they do chip-sealing, where they give a date and tow any cars in the way, whether it would be more or less expensive. Mr. Bender stated that they have areas like that now, in the University area and the residential area north of downtown. They are unable to get those areas clean without that regulation due to the amount of parking. They do have to hire a tow truck, and he believes the budget for that is about \$15,000 per year. When they are unsuccessful in a particular area, they put up signage indicating the vehicle will be towed, so it is labor-intensive. Coming back to clean also occurs because people forget and put their leaves out after the deadline. Mr. Jaffe stated he would be supportive of a more aggressive program, and putting out signs the day before for streets they would clean the following day. Mr. Bender stated that if they cleaned the streets effectively twice a year instead of three times, it might work better.

Mr. King stated that had discussed efficiency with Brian Hensel, Street Superintendent. The problem is going back to collect leaves later in the fall or spring. They recommended a stricter program with a narrower time slot, and not allowing people to put their leaves out after the deadline. It would require training and communication with latecomers, and there would be difficulties.

Mr. Childers stated they used to ticket people for not moving their cars before street cleaning, but people got upset, and the Council changed it. They can have stricter enforcement and make people unhappy, or not pick up leaves and make people unhappy, or try good notification and a tight schedule, which might help.

Ms. Walzer stated that often the trees are still loaded when they pick up the first areas and she liked that they were accommodating, but it would be nice to have something narrowing the window of time to one day. When flyers show up weeks in advance, people forget. They should put placards up everywhere like they have downtown.

Mr. King stated that it is a dynamic situation with the weather. If there is snow, priorities shift.

Ms. Rye stated that she had seen signs out the night before the streets were cleaned, but they need to be more explicit and say "move your car" because people don't pay attention.

IV. ITEMS TO BE REMOVED FROM AGENDA

1. Discussion item to consider vacating portions of an 1896 petition County road on the westerly side of Miller Creek Road. ([memo](#)) (Monte Sipe) (Referred to committee: 10/6/08) **REMOVE FROM AGENDA**
2. Discussion of local, city-sponsored energy production ([memo](#)). (Ed Childers) (Referred to committee: 12/22/08) **REMOVE FROM AGENDA**

V. HELD AND ONGOING AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discussion on the sizes of grease interceptors for the restaurant industry ([Grease Interceptor PowerPoint](#)) ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Stacy Rye and Bob Jaffe) (Referred to committee: 04/21/08)

2. Consider restructuring the city's Sewer Loan Program along the lines of the recently approved change to the Sidewalk & Curb Loan Fund.—Regular Agenda ([Chapter 3.16 – Sidewalk & Curb Loan](#)) ([Chapter 3.18 Sewer Loan](#)) ([Ordinance 3344](#)) (Ed Childers) (Referred to committee: 06/26/06)
3. Information item to present the City's Master Sidewalk Plan. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Doug Harby) (Referred to committee: 01/12/09)

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica S. Miller
Office Manager
City Public Works Department