

Monday, March 14, 2016

Councilmember Stark and Councilmember Tolbert,

I am an avid cyclist and support efforts to make the city safer for biking. However, I am writing to express my objection to the proposed parking solution for the Cleveland Ave Bike Lane project, and to respectfully request that the City Council not add to the already difficult parking situation in Area 22. I live on Lincoln Avenue, on a block with seven registered student rentals. In addition to the parking pressure placed on our street from the high number of student rental houses, there has been a tremendous amount of new parking pressure placed on Lincoln and Finn with the additional permits issued to residents of the new student housing at 2142 Grand Avenue ("Grand & Finn") building. More pressure will result from the still under construction second Grand Ave apt building. In addition, the University of St. Thomas is planning its own student housing projects on Grand Avenue over the next decade. Now the City Council expects Lincoln Ave to absorb the additional parking needs of yet another project. Specifically, I object to giving Cleveland Ave residents area 22 permits for the following reasons:

- **No rational to replace 22 spaces with 72 permits.** Between Grand and Goodrich (the area 22 zone on Cleveland Ave), there are 12 houses. The bike lane will take away roughly 22 parking spots. The current proposal is to provide 4 permanent permits and 2 visitor permits per house. That is total of $12 \times 6 = 72$ cars. Just to be clear, you are proposing to take 22 parking spots off Cleveland and provide those houses with 72 parking permits. That is beyond absurd.
- **No evidence that Cleveland Avenues houses need or are even requesting permits.** The City's own parking study, presented at the last community open house held at St. Thomas a couple of weeks ago showed that there were very few cars parking on Cleveland Ave during weekends and early in the morning. This observation coupled with the ample alley parking implies that these houses do not need parking permits for area 22, let alone 72 of them.

To summarize, the City Council allowed an oversized private student Dormitory / apartment building to built and has awarded area 22 permits to its overflow cars. In a few months we will have a second private Student Dormitory / apartment building and we understand overflow cars will be allowed to park on Lincoln Ave. Now we have a proposal for another 72 parking permits to be given out because of a third project. Lincoln Ave has already absorbed more than its share of overflow parking. It is time to start reducing the number of parking permits, not adding to them.

In the spirit of closing with a constructive proposal, I suggest as an alternative to the current 4 + 2 permit system, a system based on curb frontage be adopted. For example, if a 40' lot has room for two cars and half cars, that residence could have two permits. If a 60' lot has curb space for three cars, you are allowed three permits. If the new Student Dorm / apartment buildings on Grand Ave have has curb space for 6 cars, that building could have 6 permits. In that way a residence is allowed to purchase the number of parking permits that actually fit on the street in front of their home (this does not count alley or garage space which varies from residence to residence). Likewise, large high density structures would not be allowed to monopolize neighborhood parking beyond the off-street and structured parking that was required when their building plans were approved. The current 4+2 system has become antiquated, and the time has come to reduce the number of parking permits to what actually fits on the street.

Thank you for your time,

Kirk R Wythers
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