

PUBLIC SAFETY & WELFARE COMMITTEE

January 4, 2023

The Committee met at 5:00 p.m. in Room 2044 of the Municipal Building. Members present were Alderpersons Davis, Licht and Smith. Also in attendance were Assistant Police Chief Olsen, Assistant City Engineer Beyer, and Street Division Operations Manager Stacy Winkelman. The following citizens were present: Julianne Wedl, Michele Altman, and Harry Shah.

1. **Roll Call:** All Committee members were present except Ald. Schmid.
2. **Receive comments from the public:** No person wished to speak at this opportunity in the agenda, but preferred to wait until their item of interest was being considered.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes for the November 2nd meeting had already been presented to the City Council without correction so those minutes were simply noted at this point in the agenda.
- 4.A **Review and take possible action: An Ordinance to repeal a portion of Section 500-6 Parking Limitations. A. (2) No parking in loading zones.** The property owner at 217 N. Fifth Street requested that the loading zone located on Jones Street near N. Fifth Street, and adjacent to her property, be removed to allow for conventional street parking. The loading zone was created in 2014 at the request of the former property owner/business, The Kid's Palace, which no longer operates at 217 N. Fifth Street. There was no opposition to this change. Ald. Licht made a motion, seconded by Ald. Davis, to make the requested change to the parking designation. The motion passed unanimously. **ACTION: An ordinance will be presented.**

Agenda Item C, without objection, was moved up for the convenience of those attending the meeting.

- 4.C **Review and take possible action: Safety improvement at the intersection of E. Main Street & Seventh Street.** The business owner at 621 E. Main Street contacted the Engineering Division about safety concerns regarding the crosswalks at the intersection of S. Seventh Street and E. Main Street. The intersection is jogged, creating potential hazards, especially for pedestrians. Special signage was added at these crosswalks to enhance safety several years ago. The concern for safety continues and the inquiry sought to promote additional safety improvements. Improvements at these intersections will very likely be made in the 2028 Downtown Main Street Reconstruction Project by the WDOT. While only two property accidents have occurred at the 7th Street intersection during the past five years, there have been many close calls and it is well recognized that automobiles too often fail to stop for pedestrians in the crosswalks. Assistant Police Chief Olsen will push officers to focus on drivers who fail to stop for pedestrians in the crosswalks throughout the downtown area. It was the consensus of the committee that rectangular rapid-flashing beacon signage was prohibitively expensive (over \$10,000 each). The option of continental crosswalk installation was very well received but would be far more effective if it was to be installed throughout the downtown at each crosswalk. To further that goal, the Committee wishes to go on record with the recommendation that continental crosswalks be installed throughout the downtown during the 2028 reconstruction. Ald. Licht made a motion, seconded by Ald. Davis, to forward such a recommendation to the Wisconsin DOT and the Watertown Main Street Reconstruction Committee. This motion carried unanimously. **ACTION: Following endorsement of this recommendation by the full City Council, the Engineering Division will forward these minutes to the WDOT.**

- 4.B **Review and take possible action: An Ordinance to Amend Section 500-9 Parking prohibited in specified places.** A portion of S. Water Street between W. Main Street and Emmet Street was narrowed as part of the 2022 Town Square/S. Water Street Reconstruction Project. It is important that parking in the narrowed portions of S. Water Street be removed for the safe passage of the traveling public. Designated street parking on the reconstructed section of S. Water Street was incorporated into the design and will remain. Ald. Licht made a motion, seconded by Ald. Davis, to restrict parking in the narrowed areas of S. Water Street. This motion carried unanimously. **ACTION: An ordinance will be presented.**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, a motion was made by Alderperson Davis, seconded by Alderperson Licht, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Smith, Chairman