

A regular meeting of Bloomsburg Town Council was held Monday, August 22, 2011, beginning at 7:02 p.m. in Council Chambers, Town Hall, 301 East Second Street, Bloomsburg, PA. Present were Mayor Dan Knorr; Council Members Diane Levan, Paul Kinney, Sylvia Costa, W. Carey Howell; William Kreisher and Claude Renninger; Town Administrator Carol Mas and Chief of Police Leo Sokoloski.

Mayor Knorr opened the meeting by going over the changes to the recently adopted permit parking regulations that the parking study task force was presenting to Council this evening. In Zone E, the Pine Avenue Lot, 37 two (2) hour meters will be added to the lot in the area closest to Center Street; six (6) Parking Permit Only signs will be removed; the posts will remain red as this would be an "overlap area" where a person could feed the meter or a permit holder could park; parking from 3:00am until 5:00am will be allowed; and five (5) hour meters will be added in the white meter areas closest to the businesses. In Zone C, the diner lot, 16 spaces around the island behind the diner will have two (2) hour meters put back and the post will be painted white (permits have not been purchased for these spaces); five (5) hour meters will be placed on the meters directly behind the diner; and no parking will be permitted in these areas between the hours of 3:00am and 5:00am.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD – THOMAS EVANS

Thomas Evans, 108 Market Street asked Council to reconsider the removal of the meters on North Market Street. This area has now been designated as a permit parking only which does not allow parking in front of the residences to unload your car nor does it allow a place for visitors to park. Council will forward his concerns to the parking study task force committee.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD – SHERRY AUNGST

Sherry Aungst, owner of Sherry's Hair at 25 East Main Street, requested that Council put the parking meters back in the lot behind the former Cole's Hardware building. If a customer needs to be in her shop for more than two (2) hours, the limit on Main Street, she encourages them to park in that lot. Council will forward her concerns to the parking study task force committee.

Joseph Gushen, 53 West Main Street, owns 14 store fronts on Main Street and is having a difficult time filling the spaces because there is not parking available. Meters allowed patrons a place to park. The town needs to look into a long term solution to the parking problem. The downtown is growing but the town is not growing with it.

C. Renninger knows the parking problem is not new. Years ago a downtown representative noted that students on the second and third floors were subsidizing the commercial businesses on the first floor. He said that Williamsport is looking at a pre-built parking garage which is less costly than the conventional built garages. Council needs to look at partners such as the county since the patrons and employees are not just from Bloomsburg but from throughout the area.

Ralph Knelly, 384 East Street, noted that drivers are now making U-turns on East Street when they discover they cannot park on one side but they can park on the other.

Tim Wagner, 146 East Main Street, asked if customers will be ticketed if they park at the red posts during the holiday season when free parking is offered in the lots. D. Levan said that the permit only signs could be covered during that time.

Dean Kriner, 325 Market Street, agreed with Tom Evans regarding the placement of meters on North Market Street. If they have a funeral at the Lutheran church they have been double parking since they cannot park in a permit only space. The idea of a parking space is to have turnover. There is no turnover at a permit only space.

Mayor Knorr is not happy with the “overlap area” because it deceives both patrons and permit holders that spaces are available.

Speaking on behalf of Downtown Bloomsburg, Inc. (DBI), Tim Wagner offered to help the town by participating with those interested on working on a solution to the parking situation.

On a motion by D. Levan, seconded by C. Renninger and voted on unanimously, Council approved the parking changes in Zone E and Zone C as presented.

MAYOR’S UPDATE

Mayor Knorr reminded everyone of the Public Hearing to be held Tuesday, August 23rd at the Fire Hall. The purpose of the hearing is to take public comment on the transfer of ownership of a liquor license from the owner of Harry’s to the owner of the Hardware Bar located at 22 East Main Street.

APPROVAL OF BLOOMSBURG EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

On a motion by P. Kinney, seconded by D. Levan and voted on unanimously, Council approved the Bloomsburg Emergency Operations Plan submitted by EMA Coordinator Joe Wondoloski. The next step will be to define all the assets and personnel the town could provide in the event of a disaster in Bloomsburg or elsewhere in the county.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

CAROL L. MAS
Town Administrator & Secretary