

City Council of the City of New Castle
Special Meeting
Town Hall, 201 Delaware Street, New Castle
Thursday, October 29, 2015 at 7:15 p.m.

Call to order: 7:22 pm

Roll Call:

Councilperson Megginson – present
Councilperson Vannucci – present
Council President Ratchford – present
Councilperson Petty – present
Councilperson Di Mondì – present

Also present:

William Barthel, City Administrator
Donald Reese, Mayor
Daniel Losco, City Solicitor
Janet Carlin, City Treasurer

Reading of Proclamation recognizing November 2, 2015 as “Color the World Orange Day”
in recognition of awareness of Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy, also known as Complex Regional Pain Syndrome.

The Proclamation was read by City Solicitor Losco and Mayor Donald Reese and presented to Sharron Snavelly.

Old Business

Second Reading and Motion, Discussion and Vote on Ordinance 503; an Ordinance to revise and restate Chapter 172 of the New Castle Code, regarding the restriction of trailer parking.

Ordinance 503 was amended to reflect a change suggested by the City Solicitor in the Public Hearing to add “for more than 24 consecutive hours” to Section 1. C. to read, “No person shall park any trailer on any public roadway, dedicated private roadway, front yard areas, or lawn areas of apartment buildings or complexes in a residential district for more than 24 consecutive hours.”

President Ratchford read Ordinance 503.

The **Motion** to consider Ordinance 503 was made by Councilperson Megginson and seconded by Councilperson Vannucci.

Ordinance 503 passed unanimously.

New Business

Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution 2015-50, regarding creating a Handicapped Parking Space in front of Town Hall.

The addition of the handicap parking space in front of Town Hall is the result of a suggestion from Police Chief Tjaden.

The **Motion** to consider Resolution No. 2015-50 was made by Councilperson Vannucci and seconded by Councilperson Petty.

President Ratchford read the resolution.

Resolution No. 2015-50 passed unanimously.

Discussion of request to designate Plum Alley and William Street as No Parking , as requested by Fire Chief Chris Robinson from Good Will Fire Company.

Fire Chief Chris Robinson requested that Plum Alley and William Street be designated as no parking due to the inability of emergency vehicles to use these streets, but was not present to provide further information. The two streets were considered separately.

PLUM ALLEY

Councilperson Vannucci believes that the issue is that the handicapped space was placed in middle of the street and needs to be changed.

President Ratchford added that there are encroachments on Plum Alley of gardens and signs that should also be corrected.

Councilperson Di Mondì doesn't want any more parking places eliminated on any streets that would only increase parking issues.

Tom Whitehead of 2nd Street agrees with Councilperson Di Mondì. One of the problems is that house at Plum Alley and The Strand tripled in size. Plum Alley is a 20 foot right-of-way with a telephone pole and stop sign within the street. Evergreen tree branches reach into the right of way. West 3rd Street is 18 feet wide and accommodates parking on one side of the street. East 3rd is 24 feet wide between Harmony and Chestnut with parking on both sides of the street.

Councilperson Vannucci added that a fire truck can't make the turn onto Plum Alley from 2nd Street and would need to enter from The Strand.

Mr. Whitehead believes that if the encroachments were addressed and the signs and telephone pole were moved, the road would be fine since there is not much traffic.

Sean Boyd of Plum Alley owns the only home that fronts on Plum Alley. There is regular traffic on the street including Fed Ex delivery trucks and garbage trucks that come through without a problem. It would be impossible for a fire truck to enter from 2nd Street.

Karen Hunt of East 2nd Street and her family have been parking in Plum Alley for more than 100 years. As new tenants move into the Dressler House, it always takes a while to adjust. The handicapped parking space in the alley is for her husband and the one on 2nd Street is for her parents.

Katy McCormick of Plum Alley wanted to echo what the other residents have said - everyone that lives there has not a problem with parking or with driving on Plum Alley. Large commercial vehicles drive through all the time.

President Ratchford asked the City Administrator to review the placement of the handicapped parking space and the encroachment issues.

WILLIAMS STREET

Anthony Gambacorta believes the City should not take away parking. When they built the two homes on Williams Street, the requirements of the City Code were met. If parking is taken away, it will become very difficult to rent and the property value would decrease.

Suzanne Souder of West 4th Street asked what has changed. People have always parked there. When there was a fire a few years ago, the fire trucks got there and put it out. Ms. Souder suggested restricting the size of vehicles that can park on the street.

Ryan McNiff of 2nd Street suggested that instead of talking about taking away parking why not discuss adding parking. Maybe some paid metered parking? Mr. McNiff is curious about City Council's thoughts. Councilperson Vannucci replied that the City has been working on parking since 1990. There is currently a Parking Committee.

President Ratchford stated that City Council will take some action.

Councilperson Megginson stated that Council designated three spots for parking but the studies continue.

Dawn Kackley of West 4th Street read a letter on behalf of Claire Clark of West 4th Street. She has been a resident of West 4th Street for 24 years and there has been parking has been on Williams Street the entire time. Nothing has changed. In addition to the residents, church members regularly use Williams Street to park. Eliminating parking on Williams Street would add a burden to West 4th and West 5th Street. If needed, perhaps there is a compromise by using the space along grass.

Councilperson Di Mondì advised that HAC could have required off street parking for the new homes but didn't. Maybe the fire company should buy a truck that fits on narrow streets.

Pauline Gambacorta suggested removing the sidewalk and moving the poles on the Fire House side of street to widen the street.

President Ratchford asked the City Administrator to look at this issue.

Councilperson Vannucci suggested that the Fire Chief be asked to come to a City Council meeting to explain why he wants to restrict parking.

Karen Hunt of 2nd Street added that there was fire on plum alley in '95 or '96 and fire trucks were able to get there.

Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution 2015-51, on creating a No Parking zone at the entrance to Buttonwood Avenue.

Councilpersons Petty and Megginson worked on the restriction. Councilperson Megginson invited concerned residents of Buttonwood in attendance to look at a map with the proposed restrictions.

Councilperson Petty explained that this is a safety concern because drivers can't see oncoming cars at the intersection. Trees were cut back but the view is still restricted.

Fred Johnson of Buttonwood Avenue sees Councils' concern. He is fairly new to the neighborhood and hasn't experienced a parking issue. Lighting and speeding might be an issue and if addressed might reduce the risk at the intersection.

Councilperson Petty stated that if there is parking on both sides of Buttonwood Avenue, it will be difficult to pass and fire engine couldn't get through. The new houses have off street parking.

Marlicia Johnson of Buttonwood Avenue stated that the community mailbox is on corner and they need to be able to park there to get their mail. She pointed out that the homes with driveways still need street parking for guests. She questioned if additional homes are approved to be built, how can parking be taken away? She asked if the cause of the accident is known so that can be addressed and requested that some research be done.

Mark Shupe of Buttonwood Avenue stated that the curve can be bad particularly if they are speeding. They need additional parking for the homes along Buttonwood Avenue.

Councilperson Petty asked if Mr. Shupe inquired how many parking spaces were included when he bought the house. Mr. Shupe did inquire and he has two spaces. When church is in session, cars are parked all along block.

Ed Hitchens of East 4th Street asked why off street parking wasn't mandated before the homes were constructed.

Councilperson Di Mondì stated that these people took a financial risk buying homes and the builder took risk. There's no alternative to parking in the street available. Don't just pick on this street.

Marlicia Johnson asked when and how residents were notified that the parking restriction was being considered.

The **Motion** to consider Resolution No. 2015-51 was made by Councilperson Megginson and seconded by Councilperson Petty.

President Ratchford read the resolution.

Resolution No. 2015-51 passed with four affirmative votes as follows:

Councilperson Megginson – affirmative

Councilperson Vannucci – affirmative

Council President Ratchford – affirmative

Councilperson Petty – affirmative

Councilperson Di Mondì – opposed

The motion to adjourn was made by Councilperson Megginson, seconded by Councilperson Petty and passed unanimously. Council adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Wurtzel
Clerk of the City of New Castle