

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION BRIEFING

PROPOSED RECERTIFICATION OF RESIDENTIAL PERMIT PARKING PROGRAM AREA G

1. INTRODUCTION

On May 25, 1993, Title 5 of the Pittsburgh Code Chapter 549, of the Residential Parking Permit Program (R.P.P.P.), section 549.06 was amended, requiring the Parking Permit Officer to verify to City Council every four years that affected residents still need and desire the program. This ordinance currently reads that in determining to renew a designated area for the R.P.P.P., the Parking Permit Officer (Planning Director) shall certify the continued existence of the primary impactor on which official designation was based, and certify that seventy percent of households, by petition, survey or combination thereof, still desire participation in the program. Part of this verification includes a briefing of the City Planning Commission prior to submitting verification to City Council.

2. R.P.P.P. DISTRICT

The area to be recertified is Area “G” (Allegheny West). Ridge Avenue, Brighton Road, West North Avenue, and Allegheny Avenue generally bound this district.

3. BACKGROUND

The original reason for the lack of sufficient legal on-street parking for residents in Allegheny West, Area “G”, was due to employees and students of the Community College of Allegheny County, stadium event patrons and Downtown commuters.

Allegheny West residents desired to reduce this volume of non-residential parking on residential streets. They chose to establish a residential parking program as a means of achieving this reduction. Residential Parking Permit Area “G” was designated by City Council and the Planning Commission on July 23, 1986, and was most recently expanded on August 9, 2001.

4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Recertification is based on the questionnaire results, a parking survey, an analysis of primary impactors, and feedback from community leaders.

The following is a summary with key points highlighted:

a. QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Questionnaire responses indicated that the majority of Allegheny West residents desire the renewal of the program. Of the 233 questionnaires sent out, 68 (29%) were returned. Of those responses, 88% (18% more than the required criteria) were in favor of the program's continuation.

The questionnaire results also showed that 78%, with an opinion, found parking near their homes to be "easier" or "about the same" since the start of the program; 18% have had a more difficult time finding a parking space.

- 85% of permit holders, with an opinion, were satisfied with the method of issuing permits.
- 87% of permit holders, with an opinion, were satisfied with the boundaries of the program.
- 81% of permit holders, with an opinion, were satisfied with public notification and information about the program.
- 75% of permit holders, with an opinion, were satisfied with the visitor's passes.

Most numerous requests and complaints from permit holders:

- extend the \$100 fine during events (14 comments)
- extend operating hours of the program until 10 p.m. (13 comments)
- Parking Authority needs to enforce more during Heinz Field events (9 comments)
- needs more enforcement in general (7 comments)
- extend hours to cover amphitheatre and Heinz Field events (7 comments)
- wrongly being ticketed with either a permit or a visitors pass visible (3 comments)

Several permit holders expressed their desire to modify the program times and increase the fines given, which would require legislation to enact. We will pursue discussion of these changes at the next available opportunity.

The hours were determined by the residents. Enforcement after dark is problematic and more expensive. While we can consider this, the residents need to understand that extended enforcement will not occur on a regular basis. Enforcement has always been an issue facing residents and the program. There are over 30 different residential parking permit areas for the Parking Authority to enforce. More enforcement as well as longer program hours would require an increase in permit costs. The cost of maintaining the program (office staff, enforcement and supplies) is currently \$673,494. Enforcement costs alone are \$419,137.00. This far exceeds the \$240,000.00 that currently comes in from permit fees. Since the Residential Parking Program does not generate any additional revenue, an increase in enforcement would not be a viable option with the current budget constraints.

Currently, residents who have been issued tickets have three days to contact the Parking Authority to rectify the issue before the ticket is processed. If residents still have questions after contacting the Parking Authority they are to feel free to contact ADA Coordinator, Richard Meritzer, at 412-255-2102 or richard.meritzer@city.pittsburgh.pa.us. Visitors who are issued improperly issued tickets have the right to appeal the ticket in traffic court.

b. PARKING SURVEY RESULTS

The Parking Survey Results showed that the program is still needed for Allegheny West and was effective in providing 30% more spaces for residents to park in on the streets surveyed.

The results of the on-street parking survey were collected in the summer of 2009. The parking survey was unable to be completed on Western Avenue due to ongoing construction. The table on page 4 shows the results calculated from the parking survey of Area “G”.

The Parking Survey Results table provides the amount of resident parkers, non-resident parkers, visitor’s passes and spaces occupied in Area “G”, as well as demonstrating the difference in the spaces occupied prior to the program and currently. The table illustrates that Area “G” has 55% of its spaces occupied. Prior to the program start the area had a parking occupancy rate of 85%.

Due to the program, there has been a 30% decrease in occupied spaces, showing that the Residential Parking Permit Program has been successful for Allegheny West, Area “G”.

c. PRIMARY IMPACTORS

The ordinance requires us to identify that the primary impactors are still in existence. During the recertification process, survey responses by residents and/or concerns raised at community meetings still identified the current impactors as Heinz Field, PNC Park, and the Community College of Allegheny County, along with the North Shore Entertainment District as a future impactor including the Amphitheater and Rivers Casino. Those listed above as well as commuters parking and walking to Downtown continue to be the main contributors to the parking problem.

d. FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Department of City Planning held a community meeting for Area “G” permit holders on March 4, 2009. **All in attendance were overwhelmingly in support of the continuation of the R.P.P.P. in their area.**

5. RECERTIFICATION

In conclusion, our analysis has shown that 88% of the residents, with an opinion, are still in favor of the program, 18% more than the required criteria of 70%. The Residential Parking Permit Program for Allegheny West, Area “G”, has allowed for a 30% decrease in the number of parking spaces occupied since the start of the program. The primary impactors, the community college, the stadiums, downtown commuters and the North Shore Entertainment District, are still in existence and continue to pose a danger to residential parking. Finally, at a meeting where all the permit holders were invited to attend, all were in support of the program’s continuation in their area.

Based on this analysis, it is recommended that the Residential Parking Permit Program Area “G” (Allegheny West) be recertified.

TABLE A. AREA "G" PARKING SURVEY RESULTS

Street Names	Resident Parkers	Non-Resident Parkers	Visitors Passes	Total No. Parkers	Total Available Spaces
Abdell Street	2	4	0	6	15
Beech Avenue	43	15	6	64	111
Brighton Road	0	5	0	5	6
N. Lincoln Avenue	17	7	1	25	49
Allegheny Avenue	2	2	0	4	22
Galveston Avenue	19	14	0	33	39
North Avenue	3	7	1	11	23

Street Names	% Resident Parkers	% Non-Resident Parkers	% Visitors Passes	% Spaces Occupied
Abdell Street	33 %	67%	0%	40%
Beech Avenue	67%	23 %	9%	58%
Brighton Road	0%	100%	0%	83%
N. Lincoln Avenue	68%	28%	4 %	51%
Allegheny Avenue	50%	50%	0%	18%
Galveston Avenue	58%	42.%	0%	85%
North Avenue	27%	63%	9%	48%
TOTAL	58.1%	36.5%	5.4%	55%

	% SPACES OCCUPIED	% SPACES AVAILABLE	% NON-RESIDENTIAL PARKERS
PRIOR TO PROGRAM (Based on program-wide data)	85%	15%	85%
SUMMER 2009 (last survey taken)	55%	45%	36.5%
% DIFFERENCE	30% fewer	30% more	48.5% fewer

MAP OF AREA "G"

