

**DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY  
FIRST HILL PARKING WORKGROUP  
JULY 1, 2003  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
6:00 – 7:30 PM**

**ATTENDEES**

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Mike Brewer, resident  
Tamara Bunnell, Resident  
Karen Lee Kimber, Swedish Hospital  
Kristin O'Donnell, Yesler Terrace  
Community Council  
Michael Sletten, Seattle University  
John Stowell, resident  
John Valentine, Polyclinic

Julie Erickson, Seattle Department of  
Transportation (SDOT)  
Meghan Shepard, SDOT  
Randy Wiger, SDOT  
Mark Troxel, Department of Design,  
Construction, and Land Use (DCLU)

Notes prepared by Randy Wiger

**ACTION ITEMS**

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- Julie will investigate the concern that certain blocks display RPZ signs, but do not display hours, such as those on the 400 block of Terry Ave between Jefferson and Alder, and around the Providence campus.
- SDOT will provide a summary handout of the Residential Parking Zone (RPZ) information provided at this meeting.

**MEETING SUMMARY**

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**Follow-Up Items**

The "Quick Reference Sheet for Making Changes to On-Street Parking Regulations" was distributed as a follow up to Billy Jack's (SDOT) presentation at the May 29, 2003 meeting. It briefly describes the changes it is possible to make to on-street parking and the process associated with each change. Meghan also reported that she had begun the fieldwork needed to convert the no longer needed reserved Medical Examiner spaces at Harborview's south end to general use spaces, and she will continue to work with Linda Johnson from Harborview.

**RPZs WITH JULIE ERICKSON, SDOT RPZ PROGRAM**

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Julie Erickson, coordinator of SDOT's RPZ Program, addressed the meeting topic of RPZs (Residential/Restricted Parking Zones) and specifically Zone 7. She began by commenting that it is always a challenge when one division (in this case SDOT's Traffic Control Division) creates a program - such as the RPZ Program, and another division (SDP Parking Enforcement Division) enforces it.

**Zone 7 Background**

The Zone 7 RPZ on First Hill was created in 1972. At that time the ratio of residents eligible for permits to the number of on-street spaces available was not addressed. In 1994, major changes

were made to how RPZs are designed and administered, including a requirement that all stakeholders be involved in deciding how to implement an RPZ. The idea of limiting the number of permits to more closely match the number of on-street spaces was raised at that time. The City is considering reconvening the stakeholder group soon to consider this idea.

Zone 7's three-hour parking around Harborview was installed as part of an agreement with Harborview to accommodate hospital visitors. The 3-hour restriction can be changed to 2-hours on a block-by-block basis. Harborview has demonstrated their cooperation in part by allowing the RPZ to be installed on a block adjacent to their property - RPZs are not normally put in adjacent to non-residential property - and they are receptive to converting to the 2-hour restriction here.

In order for an RPZ to be installed, a parking study must be conducted and the results must show that at least 75% of the on-street spaces are regularly in use, and that 25% of those must be regularly used by non-local commuters. A consultant usually is hired to do the study and they basically go out starting early in the morning and count spaces in use and track the license plates throughout the day to determine who is using the on-street parking and in what way.

Part of what an RPZ study does is to identify possible boundaries for the proposed RPZ. Once an RPZ goes in, people not eligible for permits do park just outside the boundaries which can increase the on-street parking on streets surrounding an RPZ. Therefore, one of the things a study does is determine where the boundaries should be to reduce the impact of this behavior on the streets surrounding a proposed RPZ.

Over the last few years the program has begun to use meters in conjunction with RPZs so that the RPZ goes into effect when the meters end at 6:00 p.m. (the RPZ hours must go later than the meter ending time). The meter operation takes precedence over the RPZ, so RPZ Permit holders who park in such a dual use space would need to move their car when the meters start at 8:00 a.m., and if they park there during meter operation hours then they would need to pay the meter just like anyone else.

## **QUESTIONS FOR JULIE ERICKSON AND COMMENTS**

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### *1. How are RPZ Guest Permits Monitored?*

Changes have been made over time to make RPZ Guest Permits harder to illegally reproduce. They began as a photocopied sign on colored paper, and now are a specially-made plastic card. When people apply for a new one, the old permit is canceled thus preventing it from being used illegally. PEOs currently have better access than before to RPZ Guest Permit lists and are more able to investigate permit abuse.

### *2. Attendees commented that there are a number of blocks in the RPZ that are signed "No Parking" (except for RPZ permit holders).*

Julie commented that the creation of an RPZ with a "No Parking" restriction can be difficult for residents since guests literally cannot park for even a minute while going to get a Guest Permit to put in their window.

3. *Tamara commented that on the 400 block of Terry Ave between Jefferson and Alder the RPZ signs do not have the hours of the RPZ on them. Karen said the same is true of RPZ signs around Swedish-Providence.*

Julie said she would investigate these signs. She finds it surprising that RPZ signs would not display the length of time for which non-permit holders can park.

4. *Residents observe a lot of car storage with little turnover on Broadway to 12<sup>th</sup>, and on Terrace to Spruce, and residents generally don't call for enforcement on cars here which they know to belong in the neighborhood. Residents have observed an increase in ticketing in this area.*

Julie said that the City has recently hired seven new Parking Enforcement Officers (PEOs) and are targeting RPZs all over the City.

4. *Is there any particular area in the RPZ where there is problem with abandoned vehicles?*

Julie stated that SDOT does not have that information at its fingertips tonight but the PEO Division will be glad to do a 72-hour sweep if a neighborhood observes a lot of abandoned vehicles.

5. *Kristin commented that Yesler Terrace (SHA) manages the RPZ Permits that their tenants use, and they allow only one Permit per household. She went on to say that the Yesler Terrace Community Council receives complaints when an apartment manager rents a building's parking spaces to non-tenants thus causing the tenants to have to find parking on the street.*

6. *Is it possible to change the hours on the Zone 7 RPZ, and if so what is the process?*

Julie responded that it is possible to change the hours, but the request would need to be handled like a new RPZ, with a study confirming the conditions exist to justify the longer hours. The Zone number would stay the same. Currently two other neighborhoods are on the waiting list for an RPZ study - the RPZ Program lost funding for a couple years which slowed the rate at which the City could install new RPZs, but funding is available again and the requests can be processed in the order received. The first step would be either a letter from an area organization such as a community council, or a petition signed by 25 residents, specifically with five residents signing from each of five adjacent blocks in the RPZ. Kristen indicated the Yesler Terrace Community would probably be willing to send such a letter if the nearby community wanted to do so.

8. *Tamara asked what does it take to form a community council, and to be recognized as such?*

Randy said that the City has no criteria per se, but that generally neighborhood groups gain validity by the consistency of voices over time if the people participating are legitimately "of the neighborhood." Interested neighborhood residents should contact the Neighborhood District Coordinator from the City's Department of Neighborhoods who, for the First Hill area is Jose Cervantes (684-4574).

9. *Tamara says that around where she lives the Harborview night shift starts at 11:00 p.m. and wondered if the RPZ could be extended to later in the evening?*

Julie stated that one option could be to investigate if a "No Parking 6:00 p.m. to midnight" restriction could be installed on the five closest blocks. Possibly the community and SDOT could leave the 3-hour restrictions in place along the Harborview sides of the street while

changing the residential sides to a "No Parking 6:00 p.m. to midnight" restriction, keeping in mind that this restriction would also impact the visitors of residents.

10. *Tamara expressed concern over petition-gathering challenges in the vicinity of her building including the presence of a women's shelter, alcohol treatment center, and a senior center. Obtaining 60% approval from this transient population could be difficult.*

Julie said that in these cases SDOT may only require the property manager to sign. Meghan added that it could be an option to hire someone to professionally gather the signatures, and that the Making The Parking System Work program has resources that could be used for this purpose if that is what the workgroup wants.

## **NEW TOPICS**

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### **Construction Impacts to On-Street Parking**

Mark Troxel (DCLU) addressed a variety of issues and questions about how construction impacts on-street parking. When a development is being planned special conditions for handling impacts to on-street parking around the development site for when construction is underway can be written into the Master Use Permit (MUP). Contractors are required to arrange for the placement of the "No Parking from such-and-such date" signs, though sometimes SDOT crews do this if it fits with their work schedule. Contractors are only required to give 24-hour notice to vacate on-street spaces. A comment was made that many residents may only check their car once every 72 hours, and feel that 24-hour notice is insufficient. Julie commented that a car cannot be towed unless a violation has been documented by a PEO first.

Mark went on to say that DCLU is developing proposals for changes to parking requirements for new developments in First Hill. Current data shows that car ownership rates are .56 for rental units, and .75 for owner-occupied units (e.g. condos) in First Hill. This is also the rate in the Pike/Pine and Cascade neighborhoods. In Belltown the average car ownership rate is .6 per unit, although currently there is no minimum requirement for parking in new construction there, but 1.5 spaces per unit is typical for owner-occupied units because it is used as a selling point.

Meghan shared that the next meeting will have two topics (to be determined) and that she and Randy will create a quick reference guide on RPZs similar to the one distributed at this meeting on changes to on-street parking.

### **Meeting Adjourned**