

CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS
CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 25, 2023

Committee Chairman Councillor Craig Cormier called the Public Safety Committee meeting to order at 8:45 a.m. in the Council Chamber, Room 219, City Hall. Committee members Councillors Karen Hardern and James Boone were also present.

Also present was Police Chief Eric McAvene; and Assistant City Clerk John Olivari.

Committee Chairman Councillor Craig Cormier announced: Any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the Chair forthwith. All Documents referenced or used during the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to the Chair of the Committee, pursuant to the Open Meeting and Public Records Law. All documents shall become part of the official record of the meeting.

A constituent from the audience announced that he was recording the meeting.

I. Public Hearing

#10861 - An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the City of Gardner, Chapter 600, Entitled "Vehicles and Traffic," Section 42, Entitled "One Way Street."

Councillor Craig Cormier announced thrice if anyone wishes to speak in favor of the proposed ordinance amendment.

Ronald Cormier, 55 Wickman Drive spoke in favor of the ordinance. Mr. Cormier is also a City Councillor. He stated that an event at Annunciation Parish Church and traffic can be difficult in that area with two way traffic. There are several multi-family homes in the northern area of Regan Street, which also means there are multiple residents and cars parked on the road. Two-way traffic can be difficult. Other solutions purposed was one-side parking only, but it would create terrific hardship on individuals that live there. A one-way on Regan Steet would be an inconvenience to some, but for safety reasons with wintertime, snow, ice and plowing, Mr. Ronald Cormier is in favor of the ordinance amendment.

Councillor Craig Cormier stated that Dennis Cormier od 218 Regan Street, submitted written testimony speaking in favor of the ordinance amendment. He has been a resident for 37 years. His letter states: "One way oftentimes, especially lower Reagan, two cars cannot pass by each other especially where there are cars parked on both sides of this narrow road. It is even worse in the winter with snowstorms. Often times this poses a safety hazard."

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Police Chief Eric McAvene spoke in favor of the ordinance amendment. He stated that “something needs to be done,” because he has witnessed vehicles having to stop to allow vehicles on the opposite end to pass. If this amendment doesn’t pass then there needs to be other options to put into consideration.

Councillor Craig Cormier announced thrice if anyone wishes to speak in opposition of the proposed ordinance amendment.

Jeffrey Palmier of 69 Greenwood Street spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance amendment:

- Mr. Palmieri is a former City Councillor at Large.
- A few years ago, there was a petition for residents in opposition of Regan Street being a one-way.
- He had some questions for the Police Chief regarding safety and wanted to know if there were any accidents or injury data history on Regan Street or if this proposed ordinance is to prevent future accidents.
- Police Chief McAvene responded that he can only speak from personal experience and witnessed that there have been several complaints received. He does not have the data on him but could get the data from the Police Department.
- Mr. Palmieri stated that he did not receive the abutters notice and that the information regarding the public hearing did not have enough information. Only residents on Regan Street received the notice. He is an abutter who lives at the corner of Greenwood – Moran Street.
- Making Regan Street a one way will create traffic on Moran Street and some cars can’t make it up the hill in the winter.
- He has spoken with 25 residents who live on Regan Street and about 13 residents who had concerns with the proposed ordinance. The residents did not want to sign his petition but expressed concerns.
- After speaking with DPW Director Dane Arnold, Mr. Palmieri learned that parking on both sides of the street that has two-way traffic, there should be 36 feet. Mr. Palmieri measured the street himself and found that there is only 32 feet and stated that there should be no parking on both sides of the street, only parking on one side.
- His suggested proposal is to make no parking on one side of the street.
- The biggest complaint is that cars can’t get by unless someone pulls over.

Robert Pelletier of 47 Regan Street spoke in opposition of the proposed ordinance. He has been a resident of Regan Street for several years and his concerns are during the school hours

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when students are being dropped off and picked up. He has safety concerns during those times. The one-way street will be counterproductive with Nichols Street.

Public Hearing closed at 9:05 AM.

II. **10861 – An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the City of Gardner, Chapter 600, Entitled “Vehicles and Traffic,” Section 42, Entitled “One Way Street.”**

Councillor Karen Hardern informed the Committee that “we need to start somewhere.” It should start with making it a one-way then come back and make it parking on one side. A lot of the roads in Gardner are narrow. She spoke in favor of the proposed ordinance.

Councillor James Boone appreciate the public hearing and residents attending to express their concerns. He agrees with Councillor Hardern and spoke in favor of the proposed ordinance.

On a motion made by Councillor James Boone and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, it was voted to recommend to the City Council that the following ORDINANCE ought to pass:

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE CITY OF GARDNER
CHAPTER 600, ENTITLED “VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC”, SECTION 42, ENTITLED “ONE
WAY STREETS”**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GARDNER AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1: Section 42, of Chapter 600 of the Code of the City of Gardner, entitled “One Way Streets” by amended by adding the following:

<u>Name of Street</u>	<u>Direction of Travel</u>	<u>Location</u>
Reagan Street Street	Northerly	From Baker Street to Parker

SECTION 2: This ordinance shall take effect upon passage and publication as required by law.

III. **#10882 – An Application for Motor Vehicle Dealers License, Class II, Gardner Five Star Auto Sales, 407 Chestnut Street.**

On a motion made by Councillor James Boone and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to APPROVE *An*

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Application for Motor Vehicle Dealers License, Class II, Gardner Five Star Auto Sales, 407 Chestnut Street.

IV. **#10883 – An Application for Motor Vehicle Dealers License, Class II, Riverside Auto, 65 Riverside Road.**

On a motion made by Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor James Boone, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to APPROVE *An Application for Motor Vehicle Dealers License, Class II, Riverside Auto, 65 Riverside Road*

V. **#10884 – An Application for Motor Vehicle Dealers License, Class III, Riverside Auto, 65 Riverside Road.**

On a motion made by Councillor James Boone and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to APPROVE an *Application for Motor Vehicle Dealers License, Class III, Riverside Auto, 65 Riverside Road.*

VI. **New Business**

Councillor James Boone mentioned that he would like to see security cameras placed in City Hall near the drop box, for reasons of security and safety.

On a motion made by Councillor James Boone and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, it was voted to recommend to the Mayor to investigate placing cameras on the drop box at City Hall

Councillor Craig Cormier plans to recommend to the full council more time on item #10861. Regan Street is in Ward 3 and there is no Councillor for Ward 3 at the moment. Until the seat is filled, he will be recommending more time.

Adjournment

On a motion Councillor Karen Hardern, and seconded by Councillor James Boone, it was voted viva voce to adjourn at 9:15 a.m.