

Village of Schuylerville
Public Hearing Minutes
Wednesday November 13th, 2024
6:00 pm

Present;

Mayor Carpenter

Trustee Baker

Trustee Colvin

Trustee Drew

Trustee LeBaron

Attorney Klingebiel

Treasurer Heyman

Village Clerk Porter

Mayor Carpenter opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

He announced the purpose of the public hearing which was to present proposed local law 2 of 2024 prohibiting parking on Ferry Street at any time from the corner of Broad to the corner of Green Street.

He explained that the board has been working with residents and business owners to try to come to a solution to problems that have been brought to our attention.

This law at this point is just a proposal. He stated that the board is here to listen to all of you to try to determine what is best for our community.

Mayor Carpenter explained the reason for the board's decision to present this local law to the public. He explained the concerns expressed regarding access to the street by firefighting equipment. With cars parked on even one side of the street, it is impossible for emergency vehicles to access this section of Ferry Street. He also stated that when cars are parked on both sides of the street, even passenger vehicles have trouble negotiating this section of Ferry Street. Mayor Carpenter stated that he has consulted with Schuyler Hose Fire Chief Myers, and that Chief Myers stated that if there were to be a fire at the Amigos building, it would not be possible for them to use the ladder truck, as there are extensions that need to come out eight feet on either side of the truck to stabilize the truck in order to raise the ladder for rescue purposes. If cars were parked on even one side of the street in this area, there would not be enough space to set the truck up. At this point Mayor Carpenter noted that Rob Chrust, Restauranter at Amigos, has been dedicated to patrolling the parking at this location in asking patrons to move their vehicles if they are parked on the south side of Ferry, which is prohibited at this point. Mayor Carpenter also noted that very few people adhere to the no parking here to corner at the intersection of Broad and Ferry. Admittedly, we need to improve the existing signage as it is faded to the point that it is not readable. Our hope is that this public

hearing could spark some alternative solutions so that we can find a way to resolve the situation.

First to speak was Linda Lloyd, 72 Green Street. Ms. Lloyd was in support of the prohibition of parking on Ferry Street. She stated that she has observed sheriff's cars experiencing difficulty negotiating the street when there are cars parked on both sides.

Mike Patterson from 51 Green Street asked who is responsible for signage in the village. Mayor Carpenter stated that this is a village responsibility and that the DPW is in the process of completing a sign audit to determine which signs need replacement and which areas are lacking signage entirely. Once the audit is complete and we have made our final decisions on the parking law on Ferry Street, we will order replacement signs.

Richard Behrens 2 Clancy Street of Schuylerville spoke in favor of closing the street to parking. He feels that singling out any one block of the street would be inappropriate. He also stated that allowing parking on only one side of the street would still not alleviate the problem with the emergency vehicles. He stated that enforcement is key in this situation. He wanted to clarify that he does not mean any harm to Amigo's but that he does not feel that losing the eight or so spots will be a deal breaker for them. Mr. Behrens also stated that he would like to see more attention to the planning of parking in the village

Mayor Carpenter stated that the village is addressing the parking issue. The village is considering some possible alternative parking areas.

Dianne Whitten from 26 Pearl Street asked how will people park at Amigos. She feels that Amigos is a big draw for the village and stated that she feels that parking availability definitely affects peoples' decisions on where they are going to eat or shop.

Rob Chrust 42 Ferry Street, owner of Amigo's Restaurant. He stated that this is Amigo's 18th year in Schuylerville. He stated that the restaurant brings a lot of people into town. He stated that he has a better idea of what goes on at that section of street in front of his restaurant. He said where he grew up, the signs would say, tow away zone. He understands the issues that are being expressed as concerns fire safety, but he feels that if the village looked at this situation with a "wider lens" there should be a work around for this situation. He says that persons who are disabled or elderly have a difficult time making their way up the hill. He is concerned that if parking is prohibited on any part of Ferry Street that people will feel let down and not welcomed. He also pointed out that if Turning Point Development builds on the lot next to his restaurant he will lose the parking lot on

the street above him. He also raised concerns about young families crossing Ferry Street.

Richard Behrens spoke again stating that he respects the concerns raised by Rob Chrust. Having spent half of his career in education and knows what is involved in taking care of people with special needs and that he is sympathetic to that. He pointed out that prohibiting parking would not prevent people from picking up or dropping off in front of the restaurant. He feels this would be safer than the current situation where if all of the spots are taken in front, then people have to drop off in the middle of the street as opposed to curbside.

Rob Chrust spoke again and expressed concern regarding issues that will arise if there are repair service vehicles that need to be able to park in close proximity to the building to access tools and equipment from their trucks.

Dwight Jepson, 47 Ferry Street, spoke. He pointed out that eight parking spots could be a lot of people, as generally people do not go out by themselves. He feels that if vehicles were only on one side, if people slowed down coming down the street there would not be such an issue.

Martha Czuhanich-Sherman 60 Ferry Street expressed concerns regarding the small houses with short driveways on Ferry Street. If anyone on this street has a friend over, there will be no place for them to park. She said her friends are in their 70's to 90's and parking on Green and walking to her would not be safe. She also stated that the library is really doing well, and they have such a small parking lot that losing the Ferry Street parking could be a big problem for them. She also pointed out that people are not stopping at the stop sign, which adds to the unsafe situation.

Wendy Lukas of 77 Green Street stated that she felt that the restrictions should be limited to the business areas. She also noted that a lot of people have been speeding on Green Street and asked that this be addressed. She hopes that the village can go back to the drawing board on this matter.

Alex Czuhanich of 77 Pearl Street does not feel that there is an issue with parking on Ferry Street. He feels that if parking is prohibited on Ferry Street this will have a large impact on Amigo's business. He stated that if people are running the stop signs and if there are no cars parked on the street that this will only encourage more speeding on this street. He also feels that this could negatively impact the library.

Mr. Behrens spoke again to reiterate that he feels this is a public safety issue. He feels that the safety of people should outweigh any other issues.

Doug Mitchell 121 Pearl Street voiced his opinion on the matter of encouraging businesses. He suggested that the village should focus on improving the parking situation. He stated that he was coming to Amigos long before he lived here in the village and that he used to park on Church Street, as he did not like parking on the hill. He suggested that if there is any parking on Ferry Street it should be only handicapped. He has observed elderly people having to be let out in the street between the car letting them out and a parked car at the curb. He feels that the real solution is in enforcement. People park too close to the corners on all of the streets. In fact, he noted, 30 feet from an intersection would pretty much take care of all of the parking on Ferry Street, if it were enforced.

Enforcement was discussed. Mayor Carpenter spoke regarding the discussions that have taken place at nearly every village board meeting to try to resolve this issue. A police force is not a financially feasible option for this village. Annual cost for this would be somewhere in the vicinity of \$400,000 to \$450,000 on a 1.2-million-dollar budget. This would be an increase of a minimum of 35% on all village taxes. There has been discussion of a possible village constable to help with parking enforcement, but as we do not have our own court, we would need to rely on the Town of Saratoga to assess a fee that would be paid to the Village of Schuylerville to help pay for this expense.

Linda Lloyd suggested drop off only signs in front of Amigos. Rob Chrust stated that he has requested a handicapped spot in front of his restaurant but has not received one to date.

A question was raised regarding how would snow removal be achieved if there was parking on one side of the street only. Rob Chrust suggested that there could be light up signs that could be activated during snowstorms to say no parking snow removal.

Mayor Carpenter asked if there were any more public comments on this matter. Trustee Baker stated that he did not feel that the board would be moving forward on this law at this point and that he appreciated the input that we received at this public hearing. Any changes to the law will be brought, like this one, to the public for comment.

Trustee Baker made the motion to close the public hearing and table the matter to a later date, Trustee Colvin seconded the motion, all in favor public hearing closed.

Recording Secretary,

Cory Heyman