Transportation Committee July 27, 2011, Agenda Item #5; File No. 10-1673

1 message

Shannon <probaterfa2001@yahoo.com>   Tue, Jul 26, 2011 at 12:00 PM
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To the Honorable Councilmembers of the Transportation Committee:

Re: File No. 10-1673

The Motion sounds good in principle, but may not be sound in practice and in terms of enforcement. It may also conflict with some of the sections of the Los Angeles Municipal Code that relate to emergency vehicle access (fire, paramedics, etc.). Current regulations have width size for side yard access and driveways. Blocking driveway access with vehicles may lead to unknown negative and potentially deadly impacts. I therefore urge the Committee to seek direction from both the City Attorney and the Department of Transportion prior to making any recommendations one way or the other on this Motion.

Issues that should be considered and questioned include:

1.   Will implementation of this motion conflict with those sections of the Los Angeles Municipal Code ("Muni Code") that work to provide access to emergency vehicles?

2.   Is there a way to mitigate each of the conflicting provisions of the Muni Code relating to side yard and driveway access?

3.   How will parking enforcement determine whether a car parked crossing the driveway is the owner's car or a car that has been given consent or authority to block the driveway?

        A.   Often, especially around schools where parents "briefly" pick up and drop off their children, driveway access becomes blocked, either wholly or partially. Sometimes these parents/guardians forget, meet up with another parent or teacher, or find it necessary to spend time at the school and forget that their vehicle is illegally parked.

        B.   The elderly who have doctor and hospital visits, and the workforce, having set hours of employment, are often inconvenienced from being able to get in or out of their driveways due to a vehicle partially or wholly blocking access. This scenario happened just a few weeks ago by my neighbor with a medical condition trying to get out of his driveway on a street washing day. His neighbor parked her car on his side of the street partially blocking access and he could not get out of his driveway. Fortunately, he knew the car and was able to cross the road and request the neighbor move her car. What if, however, it was

a car that he did not know and he needed to get to an appointment on time? He would have to find the telephone number to call parking enforcement, call the number within the hours they are open, try to get them to come out immediately, or call a towing company to move the car. What if this had happened when parking enforcement is closed? All of this takes time – time that could have significant negative impacts such as loss of job and, if there is an emergency situation, potentially a loss of life.

4.   Will implementation create an increased (or impossible) role for Department of Transportation parking enforcement? How will parking enforcement determine which car is legally parked across a driveway and which car is not?

To the extent members of the public wish to amend and expand this Motion to include Apron Parking, aside from Brown Act requirements, please consider the following comments against that proposal:

1.   There is a reason why the City enacted this law in the first place: to allow access by emergency vehicles and to provide sidewalk access to pedestrians and the disabled.

2.   Often apron parking creates substantial difficulty for paramedics and the fire department getting to residents in need of their services because there is nowhere to park and bring up to the units and down from the units the medical gear that is needed -- getting people on stretchers to the ambulance is not easy in any respect, but it is made more difficult by all of the cars blocking the path to and from the ambulance. Further, on those portions of a street, such as Beverly Glen, that are very curvy, the danger to the fire dept. employees and their vehicles is significant. Thus, it is not simply an issue of inadvertently moving a vehicle onto a pavement making access limited or impossible, but it creates limited or impossible access in an emergency situation.

3.   Single family residences are required to have on-property parking. Owners should have sufficient parking on their property for all of their vehicles. To the extent they do not, often these areas have residential permit parking, for which the City of Los Angeles collects annual revenue for up to three vehicles. Simply because a home owner elects to use a garage as a storage facility or for another purpose does not mean the City should give up the parkway for additional parking or storage. To allow parking on the parkway is to allow people to place anything other than vehicles on the parkway as well. This area should not be a permanent dumping or storage ground.

4.   The owners of Multi-family units often have sufficient garage parking, but have taken advantage of the non-enforcement of apron parking to use the garages previously given to tenants for their own personal use, whether it be as storage, an office or for some other purpose. Rather than continue non-enforcement, or enact a new ordinance allowing this potentially lethal conduct, a determination should be made as to how many of these multi-family units have garages that have either been converted to other purposes, or are not being given to the tenants who rent a unit.

5.   Those who park their cars, whether in their driveways or on the aprons are often not mindful that their cars often block the sidewalk making accessibility not only difficult for the

disabled, but dangerous.

6.   There was previously a proposal by the Hon. Jack Weiss (File No. 07-2248) introduced on July 13, 2007 that did not get past the Transportation Committee.

Respectfully,
Shannon Burns
(A resident of Council District 5)