

Parking restrictions on Stone Road could be fine-tuned

By Brock Weir

Stone Road residents have won a temporary reprieve on a possible partial parking ban on a stretch of their street.

Councillors voted last week to hold off on a plan to place a parking ban in the vicinity of Holy Spirit Elementary School and reduce speed limits in the area from 50 km/h to 40 km/h. Following debate and correspondence from neighbours, a final decision was held off until September to see if a parking ban only at certain parts of year – such as during school months – would better serve residents.

‘The recommendation is parking be prohibited in the school area and I agree with that,’ said Councillor Evelyn Buck. ‘There are a lot of weeks like now in the summer when the school is not operating. There are evenings and weekends and I would like to ask if it is not possible to have parking prohibited at certain hours during school operations and then residents be permitted the freedom to park outside those hours?’

Although no residents from the Stone Road area came forward during the Council meeting either during Open Forum or as delegations, the handful in attendance for the debate last week to hear the outcome nodded their heads in agreement with Councillor Buck’s comment.

Added onto the meeting’s agenda was a letter to Councillors from resident Dora M. Robinson. In the letter, she opposed all restrictions on Stone Road and voiced her support for on street parking given limited space in their driveways. She added the proposed parking ban of from 44 metres north of the school limit to 138 metres south of the property were unclear and residents’ concerns over sight restrictions posed by on-street parking were not shared by the rest of the neighbourhood.

‘What rankles me the most about this issue is that it is my understanding that one individual resident of Stone Road started this action and that the recommendation is meant to placate this individual,’ Ms. Robinson wrote. ‘It should be noted that this person did not attend the June 10 resident meeting at Town Hall, nor did this person extend regrets.’

‘One individual should simply not have the clout, without the support of the other residents, to effect changes, substantial changes, to neighbourhood interests. I believe that at the June 10 meeting, it was clear there was no appetite for parking restrictions from the group in attendance [and] the resulting recommendation is very perplexing.’

She did, however, note her support for the speed reduction.

Responding to Councillor Buck’s suggestion, Ilmar Simanovskis, Aurora’s Director of Infrastructure, said making parking restrictions dependent on school hours was something they could look into, but the underlying issue was not that parking was taking place in the school area itself.

‘It isn’t specifically related to the school periods as much as it is related to the sight lines around that corner,’ said Mr. Simanovskis. ‘The additional traffic during school hours does exacerbate the issue, but part of the challenge is the sight lines.’

‘That is something [for which] we would probably want to go back with the residents because the current recommendations are based on some input from the community and I would not want to modify the recommendations too drastically without any further consultation.’

With Council’s approval, however, it is back to the drawing board.

‘I am not in favour of taking people’s amenities away from them unless there was a good reason for it,’ Councillor Buck concluded. ‘If there is a possibility of refining that parking restriction to the point you can take care of the problem and leave the amenity at the same time during the hours where it wouldn’t be a problem then I would like to see that happen.’