



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of Public Works
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3800
www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

MEMORANDUM

To: David Ramsay, City Manager

From: Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Director
David Godfrey P.E., Transportation Engineering Manager

Date: April 25, 2006

Subject: Response to Mr. Kevin St. John regarding an ordinance to prohibit parking in front of mailboxes.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter responding to the comments expressed by Mr. St. John.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

Mr. St. John is requesting passage of an ordinance to prohibit parking in front of mailboxes during certain times of the day. His request stems from an incident where contractors working site near his home blocked mailboxes.

The mailbox-parking conflict comes up from time-to-time. Public Works staff has found that issues can be worked out without need for an ordinance and that nearby cities such as Redmond and Bellevue do not have such ordinances. There are some drawbacks to an ordinance including enforcement difficulty and the lack of flexibility that a blanket ordinance requires. Staff recently met with officials from the post office and continue to believe that solutions outside an ordinance are best for now.

From: kstjohn@rising-light.net [mailto:kstjohn@rising-light.net]

Sent: Sunday, April 02, 2006 8:31 PM

To: John Burkhalter

Cc: City Council; Eleanor Warren; Tim Gunter

Subject: Re: Construction Activity on 9th Ave

By the way, I noticed that many other area cities, and King County, prohibit parking adjacent to "clearly visible residential mail boxes between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on any day of scheduled mail delivery by the United States Postal Service" (King County Code, Title 46.04.60).

Why doesn't the City of Kirkland have a similar code (I'm directing this question to the City Council members)?

Sincerely,

Kevin St. John

DRAFT

May 3, 2006

Mr. Kevin St John
519 9TH AVE
Kirkland, WA 98033

Dear Mr. St. John:

Thank you for your recent email concerning ordinances that prohibit parking in front of mailboxes.

Staff from the Public Works' neighborhood traffic control program has experience with this issue because the conflict between parking and mail delivery comes up from time to time. Our research shows that relatively few cities have ordinances prohibiting parking in front of mailboxes. There is a trade-off between the certainty of an ordinance and the loss of flexibility it brings. Staff has found ways of resolving the limited number of chronic conflicts between mail delivery and parking while stopping short of enacting a blanket ordinance. An ordinance is not the ideal solution because in some cases, neighbors do not wish to have parking restricted. One successful example of a non-ordinance solution was to simply move a set of mailboxes a short distance to an area where vehicles did not park.

Staff recently met with officials from the Post Office as a part of their on-going efforts in this area. The outcome was positive and we feel that future conflicts can be resolved without need for an ordinance. If you have further questions please contact Ellen McMahon of the City's Public Works Department at (425) 587-3868.

Sincerely,
Kirkland City Council

James L. Lauinger
Mayor