

Thank you for your time and interest on the Galloway Parking Ramp issues

4 messages

Downtown Neighborhood Association of Eau Claire <info@dnaofec.org>

Fri, Dec 13, 2024 at 1:13 PM

To: Dave Solberg <dave.solberg@eauclairewi.gov>, Billie Hufford <billie.hufford@eauclairewi.gov>, Bridget Coit <bridget.coit@eauclairewi.gov>, brandon.dohms@eauclairewi.gov, leah.ness@eauclairewi.gov, "lane.berg@eauclairewi.gov" <lane.berg@eauclairewi.gov>
Cc: Dianne Lueder <dluedert@gmail.com>, Deb Lockhart <lockhadk@uwec.edu>, Tom Lockhart <thomlock@gmail.com>, Jim Mattson <jgmattson@outlook.com>

Hello Dave (and Billie, Lane, Leah and Brandon [standing in for Bridget]):

Thank you for meeting with the four of us from the Downtown Neighborhood Association on Monday December 9 to discuss our concerns with the noise and safety issues at the Galloway Street parking ramp. We discussed several concerns and potential solutions which were met with varying degrees of interest and practicality. We know there are no single "silver bullet" remedies and that it's likely several different tactics will need to be deployed to reduce (if not eliminate) the continuing problems of scofflaw behavior in the ramp.

Part of our frustration has been with not knowing who is in charge of the various aspects of managing the ramp. Given the distributed nature of responsibility among various people and departments, this will likely be an ongoing impediment. Also, we don't know how to stay informed as to what has been done, keep up with what is in process, and what the timelines are for various solutions. It seems to be a painfully slow process to get anything done, even though we know you do sincerely understand the issues. Maybe it's time for Eau Claire to consider a Parking Authority or Parking Manager role that centralizes overall responsibility for this function? Our hope is that now that we all know each other better, we can keep lines of communication open. We have an email address that Deb M. checks regularly, and would encourage using that when there is helpful information to share (info@dnaofec.org).

We heard a few things that are actionable, so are including them in this email:

1. **Speed bumps** – Leah and Lane are already working on this, and will prioritize action on low-cost options that will not impair the integrity of the ramp – such as using a glue that will not damage the surface. This option includes appropriate placement of the speed bumps, and may include narrowing the traffic lanes. Leah will keep us informed of updates, and we will check back with her monthly. It seems to us that there must be other municipalities that have addressed this issue already. We are big fans of "who will do what by when and how do we follow up" action planning.

2. **Passport app for ramp usage** – In Dianne’s research, it appears that the version the Passport app the City has was not designed for ramps but only for street parking (which does beg the question why it was initially purchased or installed here if it wasn’t designed for that). Dianne found and talked with Reggie Begley, the parking manager in Hyattsville, Maryland. On January 1, they will be a beta test site for Passport’s new module for their multi-use ramp (it has public access and private parking for apartments and business users). Leah agreed that she would contact Reggie later in January to see how that is going, and perhaps consider it for Eau Claire.

3. **Signage** – Although we understand that putting up signs will probably not stop scofflaws, at least they can’t say they didn’t know. The signs with all the ordinance violations listed are only in the stairwells where drivers don’t see them, so should also be at the entrances. Even painting “Safety First”, “Slow Down!” or “Drive Safely and Quietly!” in various places throughout the ramp may be helpful – and inexpensive!

4. **Cleaning** – Lane indicated that power washing the ramp at least once a year to clean the stairwells and remove all the spider webs may be doable. That would surely help – if a place looks crummy, it tends to promote crummy behavior.

One other thing we talked about but didn’t resolve. Mailing parking violation fines letters to people who do not pay just seems to make sense. If parking ordinances are such that you can’t fine people unless you actually physically put a parking ticket on their car, what can we do as citizens to advocate for changing that limitation? If that is in place, and the police stop a scofflaw and their license plate shows non-payment of fines, would that be one more thing that could be used in the arsenal of tactics to discourage this behavior? As said before, it will likely take several different tactics to make the ramp safer, minimize noise, and improve revenue.

Although we still contend that gate-controlled access would solve a myriad of problems, it was clear to us that no one in the room thought that was viable. The problems of the past in this ramp indicate to us that there were probably issues with how it was set up and managed. There surely are thousands of ramps in the country with controlled access that have figured out how to do this well. Perhaps keeping this option on your radar screen would be worthwhile, and consulting with other municipalities will provide better solutions than those already tried.

We VERY MUCH appreciate the additional police patrols in the ramp – they do seem to be having a positive impact. Although winter usually means less activity, it does NOT mean the scofflaw behavior stops.

Thank you again for the time invested in this meeting, and I hope we all listened well, got to know each other better, and can work together to improve this issue. Although it

technically only directly affects less than a hundred people, we as downtown residents are certainly influencers/ambassadors to the entire city and to many visitors to our area.

We are as eager as you are to hear the results of the parking study!

Respectfully,

Deb Marshall, Dianne Lueder, Deb & Tom Lockhart
Downtown Neighborhood Association of Eau Claire

--

**Downtown Neighborhood Association
of Eau Claire, Inc.**
www.dnaofec.org