

Board of Selectmen

22 December 2015

Arlington, MA

Dear Selectmen,

In December 1995 we purchased the home at 40 Irving St, at the corner of Ravine St. Our driveway opens onto Ravine Street.

Due to two different schools sharing the Parmenter School building on Irving St, teaching staff and parents often park their cars on Ravine St. We quickly found ourselves having great difficulty entering, but especially exiting, our driveway due to cars parked too close to its borders.

We came to you, or at least the board as it appeared in early 1996, to request a sign that would regulate the space closest to the north side of our driveway. You agreed, and approved a sign.

The DPW put up a sign that read “No Parking Here to Corner” in the location marked on the accompanying map as point A.

We quickly found that the general public did not seem to understand that the sign prohibited parking next to our driveway, and found ourselves often having to call for enforcement of the no parking area, but with no longterm positive effects. Taking the advice of one of the officers who came to ticket an illegally parked car, we began painting the curb, in the no parking area, yellow. We have continued doing so seasonally to this day. We also purchased reflective sign tape, with writing indicating the word Driveway in the proper sign font, and an arrow pointing right (south , toward the driveway edge). Now the sign read “No Parking Here to Driveway.” And it worked. For about 18 years.

In the fall of 2014, the sign was, inexplicably, removed. DPW had no explanation. Initially denying that a sign ever existed in that location, DPW were provided photos of the sign in place. DPW continued to refuse to replace the sign. Ms Reidy helped us find the minutes from our appearance before the board in 1996, and DPW agreed to replace the sign.

The sign placed (initially in the wrong spot, then rectified) by DPW states “No Parking Here to Corner” with no arrow. The teachers, parents and visitors have once again been parking in the space between the sign and our driveway edge. And they have chosen to interpret the sign as preventing parking between it and Irving St, thus trading three legal spots for one improper one.

To restore the situation to normal, we again purchased reflective stickers with the word Driveway and an arrow pointing to the right (south) and placed them on the sign. This, as we had learned so many years before, ended the problem.

The DPW does not want us to have a sign that actually gives parkers proper information. They have continually removed the stickers from the sign, leaving the sign insufficient to accurately notify parkers where they are and are not expected to leave their cars. Mr. Chouinard advises that his sign shop cannot make a sign without specific approval of its exact wording by the board of Selectmen. While we find it hard to believe that intelligent people cannot use their judgment to make a sign that is proven to work, we request that the board of Selectmen order a sign be placed in location A, which states “No Parking Here to Driveway,” with an arrow facing right (south). We suggest that such a sign will remove all doubt as to the allowed and prohibited parking spaces, and will restore the status quo for the last 19 years.

Thank you for your time and attention

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