

Ordinance #2020-51

AN ORDINANCE BY THE MUNICIPALITY OF PRINCETON REGULATING TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS ON WITHERSPOON STREET AND AMENDING THE “CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY, 1964.”

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Princeton requires the consideration of Complete Streets for safe access for all users when designing capital roadway improvement projects; and

WHEREAS, the Engineering Department has undertaken a concept development process to support the design of improvements on Witherspoon Street between Nassau Street (New Jersey State Highway 27) and Green Street, which are partially funded by a Fiscal Year 2019 New Jersey Department of Transportation Municipal Aid grant; and

WHEREAS, the Engineering Department has conducted a public engagement process which included two public information meetings on February 13, 2020 and September 15, 2020, and numerous stakeholder meetings with tenants and property owners along the project corridor; and

WHEREAS, Witherspoon Street in the project corridor is disproportionately allocated to motor vehicle use with two parking lanes and two travel lanes; and

WHEREAS, public feedback and the Complete Streets policy supports the balancing of the roadway for all users by reducing the motor vehicle space by one lane and widening the pedestrian space; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Princeton undertook a successful pilot experiment of a reduction of the motor vehicle space in the project corridor during the current COVID-19 pandemic to allow for outdoor dining and retail operations; and

WHEREAS, McMahon Associates completed a traffic study, utilizing pre-COVID-19 data, of two-way traffic, one-way traffic, and full closure of motor vehicle operations to provide the Municipality of Princeton with data regarding traffic impacts at various intersections under municipal and State control; and

WHEREAS, the traffic study indicates that a modification to a one-way operation on Witherspoon Street between Nassau Street and Spring Street will have insignificant, mitigatable impacts; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Princeton desires to better balance the allocation of space on Witherspoon Street by creating one-way traffic operation, retaining on-street parking and loading operations, and widening the sidewalk areas to better accommodate outdoor dining, green infrastructure stormwater management, pedestrian activities, and bicycle parking; and

WHEREAS, these modifications to create a walkable and attractive downtown space have been proven economic drivers for municipalities statewide and around the country; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Princeton believes this modification will be an intrinsic long term benefit to the town’s businesses and residents.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of Princeton as follows:

Section 1. Section 19-8 of Article II of Chapter 19 of the “Code of the Borough of Princeton, New Jersey, 1964,” insofar as it establishes one-way streets, is hereby amended as follows (additions are underlined; deletions are [bracketed]):

Sec. 19-8. One-way streets designated.

(a) Designated. The following municipally controlled streets and portions of municipally controlled streets in the [borough] municipality are hereby designated as one-way streets in the direction indicated:

Witherspoon Street. In a northerly direction from Nassau Street (New Jersey State Highway 27) to Spring Street.

Section 2. The appropriate signs shall be posted to implement the requirements of this ordinance.

Section 3. All ordinances and resolutions or parts thereof inconsistent with this ordinance are repealed.

Section 4. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct, and independent provision, and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion thereof.

Section 5. This ordinance shall be published as required by law.

Section 6. The Municipal Clerk shall transmit a certified copy of this ordinance to the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Transportation within 30 days of adoption, together with: a copy of the Municipal Engineer's certification, a statement of the reasons for the Municipal Engineer's decision, detailed information as to the location of streets, intersections, and signs affected by the ordinance, and such other information as appropriate.

Section 7. This ordinance shall take effect upon approval by the Commission of the New Jersey Department of Transportation, and shall become part of the new Princeton Code once completed and adopted.

The foregoing ordinance was introduced at a meeting of the Mayor and Council of Princeton held on December 7, 2020 and will be further considered for final passage after a public hearing thereon at a meeting of said Mayor and Council to be held on December 21, 2020 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Delores A. Williams, Municipal Clerk

Liz Lempert, Mayor

Ordinance Introduced:

Ordinance Adopted:

The purpose of the ordinance is to establish a one-way northbound operation on Witherspoon Street between Spring Street and Nassau Street (New Jersey State Highway 27) in accordance an endorsement from the Engineering Department.