

Potential issues with St. Timothy's proposal to the City of Mesa (Case # BOA18-00919) which outline why the Special Use Permit was opposed and related issues addressed in 1994.

Traffic/Parking:

Past events have shown that even though those attending are asked to park at Dobson High School, the vast majority still park on neighborhood streets. No effort was made by St. Timothy's during these events to redirect those parking in the neighborhood to Dobson High School.

The only way to ensure none of the additional vehicles park in the neighborhood is for the city to set up barricades on the street. This means that no one, including any residents, will be allowed to park on the street during this period. Unfortunately, this still does not ensure the desired outcome as event attendees previously just park further out and walk to the event versus parking at Dobson High School.

Traffic levels increase by over 1,000 vehicles per day in the neighborhood when the St. Timothy lot is closed. Parking for a normal mass every Sunday fills the 300+ spaces at the church, the entire Dobson High School parking lot adjacent to the church and all available curbing which is not red curbed (the only method residents have to eliminate parking adjacent to a home which also means the homeowner cannot park there as well) within 1,000 feet of the church.

Traffic violations greatly increase with the substantial influx of vehicles including blockage of driveways, sidewalks and intersections, fire hydrant and handicapped access, parking in designated no parking areas and accidents involving vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles and property. Also, several city officials allude to the fact but will not state on the record for obvious reasons the increased potential for accidents involving vehicles, pedestrians and property as well as potential access issues for larger emergency vehicles.

Safety:

Not only does the increased traffic cause safety hazards and increases demand on the Mesa PD, but there are additional safety hazards as well.

During the final carnival in 1994, numerous arrests were made. These included gang violence activity, vandalism, public drunkenness, people relieving themselves in neighborhood homes, people sleeping on neighborhood lawns. Ten police officers had to barricade an area on Pennington to alleviate a major scene. Thousands of dollars in property damage as well as numerous public nuisance issues occurred during the final carnival as St. Timothy's only had security personnel for its property but did not provide anything for the public streets. Hence some people left the event to perform various and often illegal activities which continued long after the event ended as many continued to loiter in the neighborhood. The scene as described by a Mesa Police Officer and a representative of Mesa Traffic and Streets called it a mini state fair in a residential neighborhood.

During the final carnival event in 1994 several residents, many of whom were walking their dogs, were advised to return home for their safety. Even though the event closed at 10:00 PM, numerous loiterers were present throughout the neighborhood well past midnight.

Noise/Pollution:

The final carnival and even during recent concerts, the decibel levels registered over 90 which is 20 decibels higher than allowed by city codes. Efforts to lower the noise levels during an event do not change as St. Timothy's and Mesa PD will not respond. It is not accurate to suggest that pointing speakers toward Guadalupe eliminates noise in the neighborhood as history shows that is not true.

For the carnival diesel generators are used creating significant noise and creating potential health issues.

Event takedown has often occurred immediately upon closing lasting late into the night keeping many residents up all night.

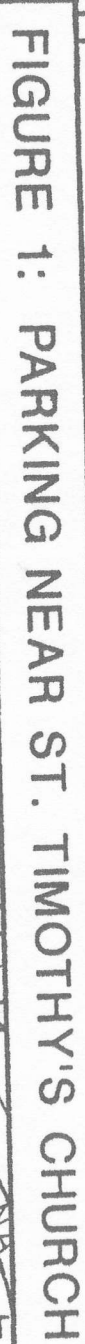


FIGURE 1: PARKING NEAR ST. TIMOTHY'S CHURCH

Church's popularity crowds area

By Kelly Ettenborough
Tribune writer

Residents in a Mesa neighborhood have been considered both angels and demons' pawns in their crusade to rid their streets of overflow church parking.

Now both Dobson Ranch residents and parishioners at St. Timothy's Catholic Community Center say they want to set aside emotions and resolve the real issue causing friction — traffic hazards caused by hundreds of cars parked on residential streets during mass.

"You don't think of parking as being emotional, but when it happens to your house every Wednesday and Saturday evening and all day Sunday, it starts wearing away at you," said Scott Le Roy, who has lived near the church for nine months. "Two Sundays ago at three masses, the fire hydrant across the street from my house was blocked."

Neighbors fume over street parking

Le Roy and others collected 165 signatures and presented them to Mesa's Traffic Safety Committee in June, requesting the committee study the problem and help resolve it.

"The good news is that St. Timothy's is extremely popular and more people are coming to church," said Father Dale Fushak, head pastor. "The bad news is that it is creating a safety hazard for the neighborhood."

Fushak said some residents had anti-Catholic sentiments in the beginning, but "now there is a much more positive spirit among everybody in order to deal with the problem" and both sides are willing to work together and will meet later this month.

Le Roy said he had not heard of anti-Catholic sentiments in the group but knew of incidents where tempers had

flared on both sides.

An average mass at St. Timothy's, 1700 W. Guadalupe Road, draws more than 1,000 people from throughout the East Valley. The church's parking lot holds about 230 cars. The church has permission to use the Dobson High School parking lot across the street, but most people prefer street parking.

Neighborhood traffic problems around churches and businesses are common, said Alan Sanderson, assistant traffic engineer for Mesa, but the issue rarely is resolved only by the city.

"Obviously the ideal is the neighborhood and the church get together and come up with a solution that everyone can live with," Sanderson said.

The residents want permit parking or another way to prohibit church parking on the streets. The Mesa city code has

no current provision for permit parking, Sanderson said. One option is to enforce parking violations.

"(As part of the study) our staff has observed people parking too close to stop signs, blocking fire hydrants and encroaching on driveways," Sanderson said.

In the upcoming meeting, Fushak will recommend hiring a Mesa police officer to assist parishioners at the crosswalk stoplight at Guadalupe and Pennington Drive, and ask the neighbors to define where parking on the streets would be acceptable, he said. The church also may add 85 parking spots to its parking lot.

Fushak said the petition and the upset residents at the safety committee meeting earlier in June surprised him. Residents have periodically called the church over the years when a parishioner has blocked their driveway, and the church refers them to the Mesa police.

Summer school fun

Students' test scores



**CITY OF
MESA**

February 10, 1995

Father Dale Fushek
St. Timothy's Catholic Church
1730 West Guadalupe Road
Mesa, Arizona 85202

RE: SPECIAL EVENT LICENSE

Dear Father Dale:

It appears that some progress is being made to alleviate the parking and traffic congestion problems at your church. We appreciate your efforts in working with the City, Dobson Ranch, and your neighbors in an effort to improve the situation.

Unfortunately, the activities associated with a popular church such as St. Timothy's are not always compatible with surrounding residential uses. We know you are trying your best to be a good neighbor but there are some land use conflicts that simply cannot be resolved.

There is, however, a church-related activity that causes an inordinate number of citizen complaints. Specifically, I am referring to your annual "carnival" which is held outdoors and runs for several consecutive days. I'm sure the success of this event has caused it to grow in scale, intensity and duration over the past several years. Because of this, it may no longer be appropriate to conduct such an event in its present form and at this location. For this reason a Special Event License can no longer be issued by the City.

We welcome the opportunity to work with you and your staff to help find either a more suitable location, or a way to authorize a scaled-back event that would be more compatible with the neighborhood.

Please call me if I can assist you in any way.

Sincerely,

FRANK MIZNER, AICP
Planning Director

JSG:pmb

c: C.K. Luster

(WP)StTim.Ltr

Planning and Community Development

55 North Center Street • P.O. Box 1466 • Mesa, Arizona 85211-1466 • (602) 644-2385 • FAX (602) 644-2757