

Council OKs curb pickup

Racine
City

23130

By Kevin Kraft
of the Journal Times

8-19-81

The Racine City Council approved mandatory curblines and alley pickup of solid waste Tuesday night, a change supporters said will save the city \$500,000 annually.

Before the new ordinance was adopted, placement of trash at curbs or alley lines had been voluntary.

Beginning Oct. 19, all households served by the city's garbage crews must place trash at the curbside or on the alley line in neighborhoods that have alleys. Containers may not exceed 50 pounds or 30 gallons.

The only exceptions are for handicapped, disabled or elderly people "not reasonably able to place solid waste within the street right-of-way." They will be required to fill out a waiver explaining their reason for requesting special pickup, according to the new ordinance.

City Public Works Commissioner Fred Larson said he does not expect more than 1 percent of Racine's households will require special pickups.

He said garbage crews could possibly handle special pickups for up to 5 percent of the households before it became necessary to add crews to handle special pickups.

Larson said the new ordinance contains no provision for someone who may become temporarily disabled.

"It's no different than when you go on vacation," Larson said. "You have to make arrangements to have someone cut your grass, remove the snow or pick up your mail. There are neighbors willing to do this."

The new plan is expected to save a half-million dollars annually by reducing the number of garbage routes from 21 to 13 and by eliminating 16 jobs in the solid waste collection division.

Larson said jobs will be cut through attrition rather than layoffs. On the average, he said, nine to 10 employees leave the department annually.

Garbage collectors, represented by Local 67 of the State, County and Municipal Employees Union, opposed the change and supported the current system in petitions given to the council.

The vote to approve the new measure was 13 to 3, with Aldermen Robert Turner, 8th, Dorothy Constantine, 6th, and Patricia Obernberger, 2nd, opposed.

Turner said he wanted to refer the ordinance to the council's Committee of the Whole for more discussion.

"A change as drastic as this, I think the public should have the opportunity to come down again," he said.

But Alderman N. Owen Davies, 3rd, said the ordinance is "workable and one that will make the department efficient and please the citizens of Racine."

Davies said it would take 60 days to implement the plan. He urged the council to pass the measure so it could begin before winter.

Constantine said she preferred a second alternative. It would have continued curblines pickup on a voluntary, rather than a mandatory, basis and would have reduced the number of routes from 21 to 17.

"Every year, more people are going to curbside voluntarily," she said. "The public has been showing some responsibility and I think we should let that continue."

Several aldermen said the people they represent feel as Alderman George Bray's constituents in the 17th District said they feel in a survey he conducted.

"They're all for saving money," Bray said. "But the people in my area do not like the word 'mandatory.' They're doing the job without being told to do it."

In other action, the council adopted an Executive Committee report proposing a new 35-acre industrial Park east of Mount Pleasant Street and south of Melvin Avenue be named after Fred M. Young.

Young, 87, is president and founder of Young Radiator Co., 2825 4 Mile Road.

He originally sold the land to the city, which sold it to Massey-Ferguson Inc., 2200 DeKoven Ave.

Thomas Wright, director of city development, today said Massey-Ferguson sold the land back to the city for its purchase price — \$169,000 — when it decided not to build a plant on the site.