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March 14, 2007

**REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY
AND TRAFFIC AND PARKING**

The Committees on Public Health and Public Safety and Traffic and Parking convened in Joint Session on March 14, 2007, with Chairmen William White and Dennis Sullivan presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Walter Pero and Robert Trane also present and voting. Also present were Aldermen Maryann Heuston, Thomas Taylor and Rebekah Gewirtz and interested members of the public.

A public hearing relative to Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety was held. Several members of the public made statements before the committee, summarized herein:

Eric Fellingner

- Prospect Hill is a traffic cut-thru area
- The city is encouraged to consider the use of traffic calming measures, e.g., table-top intersections
- City ordinances should contain requirements for streetscape improvements by developers
- City should consider parallel pedestrian crossing
- Police cruisers have been observed traveling up Boston Street the wrong way
- 30 MPH is too fast on many of the city's streets

Maryellen Gill

- Vehicles are speeding on Adrian St.
- Russell Disposal is a prime offender for traffic violations on the street
- Cars back down the street and travel in the wrong direction
- Cars being damaged
- The situation needs to be addressed before the before new school opens

Allison Schultz

- Children walk to and from school in some areas where there are no pedestrian signals, forcing them to walk in street
- Cars are parked in pedestrian areas blocking sidewalks

- Dump trucks park in traffic lanes on Linwood Street, waiting to enter the lot
- The problem has been going on for over 12 years
- The sidewalks on Joy Street are being used as parking lots by ambulances and cars
- Russell Disposal parks their vehicles on sidewalk on Somerville Ave. Extension
- Linwood Street being used as a test drive. road by the local Mercedes dealership

Frank Martelli:

- There are problems on Allen St.
- Police are allowing vehicles to park on the sidewalks
- Vehicles are speeding on the street
- Traffic calming measures should be considered

Bob Hardy:

- 18 wheel trucks are coming up Summer Street
- the city needs a truck route
- Summer and Lowell Streets should have a working traffic light
- The direction sign at Summer and Bow Streets needs to be replaced so that truckers don't confuse Summer St. with Somerville Ave.

Alderman Heuston said that the problem is one of enforcement and she asked her colleagues to help in resolving the problems, saying that the city's residents should be able to walk safely. People are ignoring the rules and running stop signs and red lights. Alderman Heuston also stated that Cambridge's traffic patterns dump traffic into Somerville.

Alderman Sullivan noted that citywide speed limits don't work for all streets and noted that Representative Toomey has been trying for years to pass legislation that would give the city the authority to set speed limits in various areas. Several home rule petitions regarding speed limits have died over the years. Alderman Sullivan also expressed concern that the request to add into the report all the senior buildings for safety improvements had not been done.

Alderman Pero suggested that the city should have community PCO's to talk to about problems and enforcement.

Alderman Trane told those present that the police need to monitor crosswalks for violations and cite offender, as the Town of Arlington does.

Alderman Sullivan's motion *that the Brickbottom area be added to the list of priority locations*, was approved

Alderman Taylor's motion *that a follow-up meeting relative to Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety be held with the appropriate city officials present* was approved

Alderman Heuston's motion, (made with the unanimous consent of both committees), *that representatives of the Traffic Commission, the Director of Traffic and Parking, the Police Chief and other relevant police and Inspectional Services personnel attend the next meeting of the committee*, was approved.

Alderman Taylor's *amendment to include the City Solicitor and Chief Financial Officer* was approved

Alderman Trane's *amendment to include the City Traffic Engineer to address the issues of parking on sidewalks and traffic calming measures* was approved.

Alderman Taylor's motion *that Steve Winslow attend next meeting of the committee and provide the senior survey* was approved.

Alderman Heuston's motion *that the Traffic Commission consider means to address traffic speeding and the failure of vehicles to observe the STOP sign on Adrian Steet,* was approved.

Alderman Heuston's motion *that the Traffic Commission consider means to address the parking on sidewalks on Merriam, Linden and Allen Streets* was approved.

Alderman Heuston's motion *that the City Solicitor determine what can be done to strengthen the city's code of ordinances to deal with traffic offenders* was approved.

Chairman White stated that he would keep the record open to receive additional written testimony.

No papers were acted on.

Alderman William White, Chairman
Committee on Public Health and Public Safety

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Joint Committees on Public Health
and Public Safety and Traffic and Parking, March
14, 2007

In Board of Aldermen

Clerk