

Traffic Commission Meeting
May 21, 2015

Meeting was held at the Tufts Administrative Building, 167 Holland Street, 2nd floor

Meeting was called to order at 6pm by the Chair

Attendance: Stan Koty, James Polito, Thomas Graney, Robert McWatters
Staff: Laura Accaputo, Suzanne Rinfret, Terence Smith, Austin Faison
Other: Sofia Perez, Kamal Hadidi

Item #1 – Minutes from the April 16, 2015 Traffic Commission Meeting accepted unanimously

Item #2 – Request for Handicapped Parking
9 Harold St

- Terence Smith stated the application meets criteria and Traffic and Parking has no objection to the request.

Lt. Polito made a motion to approve the request for 9 Harold St, seconded by Thomas Graney. Motion passed: 4-0.

15A Porter St

- Terence Smith stated the applicant owns the property and has a driveway and therefore Traffic and Parking does not support the request.
- Alderman McWatters stated that there were extenuating circumstances as to why the applicant could not use his driveway and suggested the Commission consider approving for a 90 day trial period.

Alderman McWatters made a motion to approve the request for 15A Porter St for a 90 day trial period, seconded by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 4-0.

41 Sterling St

- Terence Smith stated the applicant owns the property and has a driveway and therefore Traffic and Parking does not support the request.

Alderman McWatters made a motion to deny the request for 41 Sterling St, seconded by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #3 – Request to change the location of two previously approved items (2015-13, 2015-14) from Medford St to McGrath Hwy. The full text with amendments to read:

2015-13 Article V Section 5-5 “Parking Locations and Prohibitions” is amended as follows: No Parking Anytime on McGrath Highway, north side, from Washington St to Somerville Av, for the duration of the construction associated with McCarthy Overpass Project. (Effective April 2, 2015 per Article III Section 3-6 “Authority to Make Temporary or Experimental Rules”)

2015-14 Article V Section 5-5 “Parking Locations and Prohibitions” is amended as follows: No Parking Anytime on McGrath Highway, south side, from Prospect Hill to Washington St, (for the duration of the construction associated with McCarthy Overpass Project. (Effective April 2, 2015 per Article III Section 3-6 “Authority to Make Temporary or Experimental Rules”)

- Terence Smith explained the original request came from OSPCD and listed Medford Street as the address since that was the original street name, however it was changed to McGrath Highway and the restriction should be for McGrath Highway.

Lt. Polito made a motion to approve as requested, seconded by Thomas Graney. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #4 – Request for a Loading Zone
382 McGrath Hwy (Mon-Sat 7a-5p)

- Terence Smith explained there is a No Parking Restriction at this location due to ongoing construction and therefore a Loading Zone cannot be installed at this location.

Lt. Polito made a motion to deny the request, seconded by Thomas Graney. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #5 – Request for the approval of a Temporary Disability Parking Permit Program

- Terence Smith stated the request was submitted by Betsy Allen, ADA Coordinator. The proposed program is modeled after a program in the City of Cambridge and Traffic and Parking has no objection to the request.

Alderman McWatters made a motion to approve as requested, seconded by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #6 – Request for Traffic Calming devices
Madison St

- Alderman McWatters explained the residents of this street submitted a petition for Traffic Calming, including speed bumps and turning restrictions, and as a result he asked the Police Department to initiate speed radar checks on the street.
- Lt. Polito explained the Police Department conducted a speed analysis for four hours on a busy day and found only one person speeding, a resident of the street. He stated it does look as though cars are speeding because the street is narrow but they are not.
- The Chair suggested the Police Department have some residents stand with them during the radar checks and Lt. Polito stated some were out there with him. The Chair also asked if any signage could be installed to caution drivers of children playing on this street.
- Lt. Polito stated he made 118 speed observations on May 5th and the average speed was 21mph with 85% of the vehicles were traveling at a speed of 25mph and 90% traveling at 26mph.
- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking made two separate observations for turning movements; On May 5th between 7:45a-8:45a he found 53 cars made a

turning movement from Sycamore St onto Madison St and 70% of them made an illegal move. On May 6th between 7:30a-8:45a he found 75 cars made a turning movement from Central St onto Madison St and 68% of them made an illegal move. He stated very few turn legally. He stated given all of the data collected from the speed and turning observations, this street will receive a low priority on the list for Traffic Calming tables. He also agreed that Traffic and Parking could install a Caution Children sign on the street.

- Alderman McWatters stated he would like to see a speed bump installed on this street. He understands the data does not support it but as the Ward Alderman he fully supports the request and asked that it be given high priority.
- Lt. Polito offered to conduct 3 more observations on the busiest traffic days which are typically Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday before the school year ends.
- Kamal Hadidi, 38 Madison St, noted that since the construction in the area began traffic has been backing up on Madison St which has lowered speeds.
- Sofia Perez, resident, agreed with Mt. Hadidi.

Alderman McWatters made a motion that Traffic and Parking install a Caution Children signs and that Madison Street be given 1st priority for Traffic Calming Tables, seconded by the Chair. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #7 – Request for a Fire Lane

Greenville Terrace, south side, entire length

- Thomas Graney explained the Fire Department has received complaints from neighbors that the travel lane is blocked and they are concerned that fire apparatus cannot get down the street when cars are parked on the south side.
- Alderman McWatters stated it is a public safety concern and he has no objection to the request.

Lt. Polito made a motion to approve as requested, seconded by the Chair. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #8 – Request for relocation of two hubway stations

- a) Beacon/Washington Street- previously in two (2) parking spaces on Beacon St., near Dial A Pizza, proposed Relocation: 402 Washington St. in front of Kappa Dental (also temporary location in 2014)
- b) Davis Square East- previously two (2) metered parking spaces at Summer Street and Cutter, proposed Relocation: On- street next to plaza at Kenney Park (Highland Ave.), two (2) metered parking spaces

Lt. Polito made a motion to table this request, seconded by Thomas Graney. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #9 – Request to eliminate one parking space on the west side of Lowell St, south of Wilton St, for a distance of 20' from the existing fire lane.

- Terence Smith explained this request came from a resident of the area as a result of the chicane on Lowell St. The resident stated he was having a problem with sight distance at this location. Mr. Smith noted the Ward Alderman supports the request.

- The Chair stated there is a 20ft restriction at all intersections and approving this request could set a precedent.
- Thomas Graney stated he hadn't had a chance to conduct a review of this location and recommended the item be tabled until the next meeting.

Thomas Graney made a motion to table this request, seconded by Alderman McWatters. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #10 - Request for Traffic Commission Signature for Mass Dot Special Speed Regulation #7935 (15 mph on Columbus Ave eastbound beginning at the junction of Walnut St and ending at the junction of Washington St and westbound beginning at the junction of Stone Av and ending at the junction of Washington St).

- Terence Smith explained this came as the result of a speed study conducted by the Somerville Police Department and an engineering study conducted by Traffic and Parking which showed that 95% of the vehicles driving on this street were traveling at 15mph. The study was submitted to Mass Dot and they support the change in speed limit to 15mph.
- Alderman McWatters thanked both the Police Department and Traffic and Parking for their efforts and stated it is terrific to see the speed limit reduced on this street.

The speed regulation was accepted and signed by the Traffic Commission.

Item #11 – Prior Business

Handicapped Parking space at 65 Perkins St approved for a 60 day trial period (Feb 2015)

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has not received any complaints regarding this space and has no objection to a permanent approval.

Lt. Polito made a motion to approve this space permanently, seconded by Alderman McWatters. Motion passed: 4-0.

Thomas Graney made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40pm, seconded by the Chair. Motion passed: 4-0.