



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

Parking Solutions Task Force

June 2009 Report

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1. Summary and Context

On May 21, 2009 the Somerville Traffic Commission passed several regulatory changes, outlined below, effecting parking in the City of Somerville.

- Rescinded Article V Section 5-7 “Residential Permit Parking Program Approval Procedures” and implement Residential Permit Parking on all public streets in the City of Somerville Monday through Saturday, 24 hours, effective 8-1-09.
 - All streets not currently designated will revert to Residential Permit Parking Only.
 - All existing 2 Hour Parking except by permit 8am to 6pm spaces will remain. These spaces will be designated Residential Permit Parking Only from 6pm until 8am.
 - All existing 2 Hour Parking Only spaces will be changed to 2 Hour Parking 8am to 6pm and Residential Permit Parking Only from 6pm until 8am
 - All other existing restrictions will remain in effect
- Change to Parking Meter Rates from \$.50 per hour to \$1.00 per hour.
- Extend hours of operation at all Parking Meters (except in Davis Sq and Magoun Sq) to 8pm
- Extend hours of operation at all Parking Meters in Davis Sq and Magoun Sq to 10pm
- Create a new Parking Meter Zone in the Davis Square and Magoun Sq Municipal Parking Lots in the spaces designated for Business Permit Parking Only Monday through Friday 8am to 5pm. The hours of operation for the Parking Meters in this zone will be Monday through Friday 5pm to 10pm and Saturday 8am to 10pm
- Create a new Parking Meter Zone in Davis Square at all Loading Zones. The hours of operation for the Parking Meters in this zone will be Monday through Friday 5pm to 10pm and Saturday 8am to 10pm.

In the beginning of June 2009, Mayor Curtatone created the Parking Solutions Task Force to serve in an advisory capacity and review city plans and options designed to improve parking space turnover through better pricing policies, and to expand the number of spaces available to residents by adopting a citywide residential permit parking policy.

2. Task Force Membership

The Parking Solutions Task Force is a temporary and informal advisory body with members appointed by the Mayor. Composed of representatives from the Board of Aldermen, business community, and municipal staff, members were selected for their professional expertise, relevant role in the community, and/or as concerned business community constituents. Members include:

- Alderman at Large Dennis Sullivan
- Ward 7 Alderman Robert Trane
- Mark Chase (Transportation Consultant)
- Richard Fraiman (Somerville Theater)
- Ray Zonghetti (Heartland Payment Systems)
- Mayor Joseph Curtatone
- James Kotzuba (Traffic & Parking)
- Sean Murphy (Constituent Services & SomerStat)
- Ward 6 Alderman Rebekah Gewirtz
- Ron Bonney (Bonney Automotive)
- Gregory Coughlin (Olde Magoun's Saloon)
- Ian Judge (Somerville Theater)
- Robert Gregory (Redbones)
- Jessie Baker (Mayor's Office)
- Rob May (OSPCD)
- Tom Champion (Communications)

3. Process

The Parking Solutions Task Force met four times between June 10, 2009 and June 29, 2009 to review the changes passed by the Traffic Commission and brainstorm options designed to improve parking space turnover through better pricing policies and use of technology in the City of Somerville.

Mayor Curtatone convened the following meetings:

- June 10, 2009: Kick-off meeting – Changes reviewed, overview of transportation theory and study conducted in Davis Square, initial recommendations proposed by members, and requests for additional data presented.
- June 16, 2009: Second meeting – Additional data presented by City officials and members proposed additional recommendations based on data presented.
- June 25, 2009: Third meeting – Phased draft plan presented to the Task Force that integrated the recommendations made at the first two meetings as well as the transportation theory presented.
- June 29, 2009: Fourth meeting – Final plan and report reviewed and approved by the Task Force

As will be noted in the **Recommendations** and **Next Steps** sections, it is the intention of the Task Force to continue serving in an advisory capacity throughout all phases of plan implementation.

4. Recommendations

Parking Solutions Task Force			
Time Period	Phase	Actions	
July	Phase I	Pilot	Citywide meters: \$1/hour, M-Sat, to 8pm, with strategic 3-hour limit in the lots in Davis Square, Magoun Square, and the spur streets off of the squares.
			Eight main thoroughfares (Broadway, Medford, Highland, Holland, Elm, Somerville Ave, Beacon, and Washington) will change to Resident Permit Parking Only between 2 am and 10 am with non-permitted 2 hour parking and unrestricted permit parking during other times (with meters in business districts).
			Extend hours of business permits from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.
			Creation of a “2nd shift” business permit covering the hours from 6:00 pm to 3:30 am M-Sat.
			The City and business community will heavily promote the availability and use of Park Cards.
			The availability of a non-profit Performing Arts Permit system will be advertised.
			The City, in conjunction with the PSTF, will commence a citywide assessment and inventory of available parking spaces as well as an analysis of the impact of the new policies contained in this document.
			The City will continue negotiations with owners of private lots throughout the city to make additional parking available to patrons and businesses.
September*	Phase II	Pilot	Implement parking kiosks (accepting credit cards and ATM/debit cards as well as Park Cards and coins in the lots in Davis and Magoun Square as well as in the heart of the squares. Adjust meter rates to insure parking availability for customers.
			Strategically placed meters and kiosks in business districts will increase hours of operation to 10 pm where demand warrants.
			Consider options for linking business permits to businesses rather than individuals.
Winter*	Phase III	Final	Full Citywide assessment and plan implementation including a review of all aspects of the pilot phases.
			Implement all feasible advanced technology (pay by cell phone, new smart card programs, meters that accept credit cards, etc.) that demand dictates including pricing for availability to better reflect parking demand.
			Implement further private lot solutions.
			Discuss establishing an improvement district for the squares based on revenue sharing models.
			Implement use of meters on Sundays where demand dictates.

* Date subject to change based on information and technology available.

Note: Some of these actions will require action by the Traffic Commission and will be submitted at the July meeting.

5. Next Steps

As noted above, the Parking Solutions Task Force will continue its advisory role as the three phases of this plan are implemented. As the City moves forward with the comprehensive inventory and assessment, the PSTF will review this data and inform further mitigation actions needed.

In addition to the actions listed above, the PSTF offers the following recommendations to the City for further review:

- Fully communicate this plan to residents and business owners throughout the City of Somerville.
- Continue to work with residents, businesses, and community organizations with special circumstances to ensure that their parking needs are met. For example, the Somerville Museum, the artists communities at Vernon Street and Brickbottom, and the faith communities throughout the city.
- Review parking in all municipal lots and at all municipal buildings to ensure that options for additional parking are available to the public and business community (for example, after-hours at the West Branch Library.)
- During the pilot phases, post information on-line including options for the public to submit their feedback via email or on-line surveys.