

Traffic Commission Minutes
April 8, 2021

Date: Thursday April 8, 2021 at 5:30pm held virtually
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/717456733>

In Attendance: Thomas Graney, Mark Niedergang, Lena Webb, Jill Lathan
Staff: Laura Accaputo, Anna Rebelo, Suzanne Rinfret, Jackie Stagnari, Nancy Bacci, Adam Polinski, Dan Amelin, Dan Bartman
Other: Joe Rancatore, Reeba Garafalo, Debra Pacini, Jane Carpineto, Nancy Lowenstein, James Takasugi

Meeting Chair Jill Lathan, interim DPW Commissioner called the meeting to order at 5:35pm

Meeting Ground Rules:

1. Listen to the other side
2. Focus on issues, not personalities
3. Avoid questioning motives
4. Be polite

Item #1 – Acceptance of Minutes from the March 11, 2021 Traffic Commission Meeting
A Motion to Approve was made by Mark Niedergang, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 4-0.

Mark Niedergang requested the Commission reorder the agenda take up Item #5, there were no objections.

Item #5 – Request to change the regulation (2019-91) in Article XV Section 15-2.1 by striking the language shown in red “**certificate of occupancy**” and replacing with “**building permit**”

Parking permits are prohibited for residents of any residential address that was not issued its first ~~certificate of occupancy~~ **building permit** prior to January 15, 2020 for any property shown on a map designated as Map A hereto appended, to which reference is made, and which Map A is specifically incorporated in this Section. The Director of Parking shall maintain a schedule of addresses, certified by the Inspectional Services Department, subject to the parking permit prohibition.

- Dan Bartman explained this was a minor tweak to the regulation created in 2019 which prohibits residents of new developments access to residential parking permits. The proposed change allows the 5 or 6 buildings that were in process during the time of this rule change to have access to permits.
- Mark Niedergang agrees with the change and noted this rule was not part of the deal when people agreed to move in.
- Reeba Garafalo stated he has been invested in the Powder House School project for a long time and while he understands the logic of the original proposal he signed his Purchase and Sale agreement long before the new ordinance took effect and he would not

have if he knew of the restriction. He also thanked Councilor's Niedergang, Ballantyne and Ewen-Campen for their support of this request.

- Jane Carpineto echoed Mr. Garafalo's words and stated as senior citizens they need their vehicles and a place to park.
- Nancy Lowenstein also agreed and stated as seniors they may need caregivers and aides down the road and they will need permits to park.
- James Takasugi stated he believes the sellers should be required to tell people they cannot get a permit and asked if he would fall into the category of being allowed a permit for his property at 17 Holland St if this passes. Dan Bartman replied he would since the first building permit for this location was issued in 2017.

A motion to Approve was made by Mark Niedergang, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #2 – Request for temporary changes due to construction

- a) Temporary No Parking Mon-Fri 7am-5pm and Permit Parking Only 5pm-7am – in the first 4 parking spaces in front of the Central Library, 79 Highland Av, from the High School Concourse heading east
 - Suzanne Rinfret explained this is a temporary restriction (until October) for access to the park being built.

A motion to Approve was made by Thomas Graney, 2nd by Mark Niedergang. Motion passed: 4-0.

- b) Temporary 15 minute pickup/drop off zone 7am-5pm and Permit Parking Only 5pm-7am- in the remaining 2 parking spaces in front of the Central Library, 79 Highland Av
 - Suzanne Rinfret explained this is a request from the School Department. They are currently using the High School for elementary students and a closer pickup/drop off zone is needed for safety. This will also be temporary until the school is back to regular capacity.

A motion to Approve was made by Lena Webb, 2nd by Mark Niedergang. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #3 – Handicapped Parking

- a) 21 Cutter Av
 - Nancy Bacci stated there is no driveway at the property and she recommends approval.

A motion to Approve was made by Mark Niedergang, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 4-0.

- b) 638 Mystic Av
 - Nancy Bacci stated this is on the corner of Moreland St. Mystic Av is a state road with no parking allowed. The space would be placed on Moreland St alongside a building whose entrance is on Mystic Av. She recommends approval of the HP space on Moreland St as close to Mystic Av as possible.

A motion to Approve as recommended was made by Mark Niedergang, 2nd by Thomas Graney. Motion passed: 4-0.

- c) 16 Perry St

- Nancy Bacci stated she spoke with the applicant and although there is a driveway it is narrow and since the vehicle is large it is very tight and difficult to get in and out of. She recommends approval.

A motion to Approve was made by Thomas Graney, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #4 – Request to permanently remove (2) metered parking spaces in front of 60 and 61 Union Square (Master Printing and El Potro) to connect a separated bike lane along the Union Square Plaza with the existing bike lane on Bow St

- Dan Bartman stated the request is related to the Somerville Av Project and the intent is to connect a separated bike facility to another separated bike facility that heads up Bow St.

A motion to Approve was made by Mark Niedergang, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 4-0.

- Adam Polinski asked the Chair if Items 6-10 could be discussed as a whole, the Chair agreed but noted the items must still be voted on separately.
- Adam Polinski explained these requests are part of the Eastern Washington St Project and phase 2 of a partnership project with the MBTA that began last spring during the pandemic to improve bus service in this corridor which has the highest ridership in Somerville. To accommodate a bus lane approaching McGrath Highway eastbound and westbound and approaching Innerbelt Rd eastbound and westbound this will require the removal of parking spaces and minor modifications to existing bus stops.
- Lena Webb stated was happy to see improvements to the bus routes since bus ridership was the mode that kept the most ridership during the pandemic.
- The Chair called for a vote for each item.

Item #6 – Request to convert 3 on-street parking spaces that are currently designated as 2 Hour Parking except by Permit to a bus lane on the south side of Washington St between Rossmore St and Mansfield St

A motion to Approve was made by Mark Niedergang, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #7 – Request to convert 18 on-street parking spaces that are currently designated as 2 Hour Parking except by Permit to a bus lane on the south side of Washington St between Myrtle St and Inner Belt Rd

A motion to Approve was made by Lena Webb, 2nd by Mark Niedergang. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #8 – Request to convert the bus stop on the north side of Washington St at Franklin St to 3 parking spaces designated as 2 Hour Parking Except by Permit.

A motion to Approve was made by Mark Niedergang, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #9 – Request to remove the bus stop on the north side of Washington St at Inner Belt Rd.

A motion to Approve was made by Thomas Graney, 2nd by Mark Niedergang. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #10 – Request to convert 2 on-street parking spaces that are currently designated as 2 Hour Parking except by Permit to a bus stop on the north side of Washington St between Mt Vernon St and Pinckney St

A motion to Approve was made by Mark Niedergang, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 4-0.

A motion to adjourn the April 8th Traffic Commission meeting at 6:10pm was made by Mark Niedergang, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 4-0.

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