

Traffic Commission Minutes  
December 13, 2018

The meeting was held at the Department of Public Works, 17 Franey Road

Attendance: Stan Koty, Lt. Polito, Mark Niedergang

Staff: Laura Accaputo, Suzanne Rinfret, Terence Smith, Nancy Salamoun, Mike Tremblay, Dan Amelin

Other: Mary Jo Rossetti, Mike Wiser, David Webster

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30pm

**Item #1** – Minutes from the November 8, 2018 Traffic Commission Meeting accepted unanimously

**Item #2** – Request for the removal of three metered parking spaces (K156, K157, K158) on Revolution Drive to be replaced with a Valet Parking Station

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has no objection to the request but deferred to David Webster of Federal Realty Investment Trust (FRIT).
- David Webster explained this request came from a potential restaurant tenant. He asked for conditional approval and once a lease is signed the tenant can complete the application and provide all the details. He also noted the valeted cars will be parked in the garage.
- Mike Tremblay asked if he thought the tenant would have an issue if the reserved area was used as a general pick up/drop off zone and David Webster replied he believes the preference would be for valet use only, although the meters do not have to be removed and can remain operational until the restaurant opens in the afternoon.

**The Chair made a motion for conditional approval of the valet zone, meters are to remain in place and in effect except during the hours the restaurant is open, pending the signing of the lease and submission of the application, final details to be worked out with the Traffic Commission, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Niedergang. Motion passed: 3-0.**

**Item #3** – Request for an exception to the Snow Emergency regulations

- a) Whitman St, request for odd-side parking only during snow emergencies
  - Seven letters of support were forwarded to the Traffic Commission Secretary by Alderman Niedergang and emailed to the commission members prior to the meeting.
  - The Chair asked the Secretary to read a memo into the record received from the Administration just prior to the meeting (full text of memo available upon request to the Traffic and Parking Office). The memo addressed a discussion from the last meeting asking the city to consider exempting Whitman St and similar streets that have dramatically less on-street parking available on one side from the alternating snow emergency parking policy and to conduct a study to determine how many streets there are city-wide that fall into this category and establish a rule for exempting such streets. The Administration assessed the feasibility of undertaking the requested study and stated they do not have the ability, proper data, or resources to examine on street parking citywide at this time. They also restated that while the data is not perfect, analysis of 311 calls did not show wide spread opposition from constituents. The recommendation is to stand by the original intent of the policy in order to equitably distribute the hardships resulting from snow removal operations.

- Alderman Niedergang stated his displeasure that the memo came out just prior to the meeting.

**Alderman Niedergang made a motion to Approve and review in one year.**

- The Chair stated he spoke with the Superintendent of the Highway Department and he agreed to prioritize Whitman St for snow removal.
- Mary Jo Rossetti stated while she respects the Chairs vow to prioritize Whitman St she suspects priority will be given to hospitals and schools. She also noted she held many calls at bay that would have been complaints made to 311 while the Administration was making their decision. She asked the commission to approve a one year pilot as they've done for other issues in the past.
- Mike Wisner stated the memo from the Administration didn't address specific points he raised and he doesn't understand the reason for their decision since neighbors on both sides of the street support the request. He also stated he believes the 311 data is not accurate.

**Alderman Niedergang withdrew his motion to Approve.**

**Alderman Niedergang made a motion to Table the item until it can be discussed and voted on by the full board, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 3-0**

**Item #4 – Request for Fire Lanes**

- a) Tannery Brook Row, east side, from Elmwood St to Cameron Av, for a distance of 197½ ft.
- b) 73 Elmwood St, for a distance of 23 ft

**Item #5 – Request for No Parking Anytime**

Elmwood St, northwest side, from Tannery Brook Row to the City Line, approximately 75ft

- Terence Smith stated Items 4 and 5 were all related and were the result of conditions placed on a new development by the Engineering Department. Both requests were made after several site visits by the Fire Department and Traffic and Parking supports the requests.

**Alderman Niedergang made a motion to Approve Items #4a, 4b, and 5, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 3-0.**

**Item #6 – Request to temporarily relocate (during the construction on Somerville Av)the existing loading zone at 257 Washington St 20ft west (eliminating one residential permit parking space during the loading zone hours of 7am-6pm) in order to extend the adjacent bus stop by 20ft for public safety and if approved to waive the advertising period and become effective immediately**

- Terence Smith stated the request came from SPCD and although Traffic and Parking has no general objections they are opposed to waiving the advertising period.
- The Chair agreed and stated there have been too many requests to waive the advertising and typically this should be done for emergencies only.
- Dan Amelin stated this request is part of the Somerville Av project and will increase public safety.

**Lt. Polito made a motion to Approve, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Niedergang. Motion passed: 3-0.**

**Item #7** – Request for the temporary removal of 4 metered parking spaces on the south side of Medford St just east of Broadway for a temporary (approx. 12 months) MBTA bus stop associated with the Green Line extensions closure of the Broadway rail bridge

- Mike Tremblay distributed a memo to the Commission members (full text of memo available upon request to the Traffic and Parking Office) detailing why this location is ideal for the bus stop and the preferred location of the MBTA. He explained the MBTA did offer a compromise of only taking up 3 spaces but 4 spaces is preferred so the buses don't stick out into traffic.
- Alderman Niedergang stated he would appreciate receiving these memos in advance of the meeting. He also noted the previously forwarded email from the MBTA did not mention anything about the buses sticking out if only 3 spaces were approved and asked for further explanation.
- Mike Tremblay explained the T prefers 110ft for a bus stop. He noted most cars that park illegally in a bus stop tend to park towards the front of it.
- Alderman Niedergang stated if they approve 3 spaces and it becomes a safety issue then they can request an additional space.

**The Chair made a motion to Approve with the amendment of removing only 3 metered spaces, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Niedergang. Motion passed: 3-0.**

**Item #8**– Request for Handicapped Parking

**50 Evergreen Av**, City Hall Annex, to be placed on Thurston St

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking reviewed and although neither space north nor south of the crosswalk are optimal, the space south of the crosswalk would be better.
- Nancy Salamoun stated the Project Manager Rob Cassano wants approval as requested but she supports the recommendation of the Traffic Engineer for public safety.

The Chair made a motion to Approve as amended to be located on the south side of the crosswalk, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Niedergang. Motion passed: 3-0.

**Lt. Polito made a motion to Adjourn the meeting at 6:05pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> by the Chair. Motion passed: 3-0.**