

Traffic Commission Meeting
July 20, 2017

Attendance: Thomas Graney, Robert McWatters, James Polito, Stan Koty

Staff: Laura Accaputo, Anna Rebello, Suzanne Rinfret, Terence Smith, Mike Tremblay

Official: Mark Niedergang

Other: Ilana Krepchin, Yvonne Ilton, Mark Chase, Seamus Moriarty, Joanne Manning, Mike Cahill, Lucia Foulkes, Nick Dorf, Michael Canny, Matt Dormeus, Emily Lalka, Michael Lalka

The meeting was held at the Tufts Administrative Building, 167 Holland St, 2nd floor, Senior Center

Alderman McWatters called the meeting to order at 6:30pm

Lt. Polito made a motion to go into recess until the Chair arrives, 2nd by Thomas Graney. Motion passed: 3-0.

The Chair called the meeting back to order at 6:45pm, seconded by Alderman McWatters. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #1 Minutes from the June 15, 2017 and June 22, 2017 Traffic Commission Meeting accepted unanimously

Item #2 Request for the following parking regulation changes, on a 90 day trial basis:

Removal of one resident permit parking space on the north side of Murdock St, approximately 30ft east of Cedar St to allow extension of the intersection setback from 20ft to 40ft (letters from residents unable to attend meeting included in packet)

- Alderman Niedergang stated he supports the proposal. There have been several developments in the last year and the street is small with poor infrastructure, neighbors are upset. Major infrastructure improvements are needed such as crosswalks and implementation of one way. At a meeting with Traffic and Infrastructure residents in attendance were in favor of the removal of 4 parking spaces in the interest of public safety. Traffic and Parking came back with this proposal. Neighbors discussed and asked if the 20ft restriction on the north side can be striped rather than restrict an additional 20ft and lose a space. He asked the commission to consider input from several residents in attendance.
- The Chair asked those in favor to speak
- Lucia Foulkes stated she related to the concerns of the loss of a space however it is not safe when walking and she is concerned for the elderly, children, and strollers. She supports the request.
- Emily Lulka stated she lives close to the corner and understands the resistance of the loss of a space. As a pedestrian and mother of 3 she believes it is not safe to walk and she has to dodge between parked cars. There are no sidewalks and given the current state she supports the request.
- Mike Lulka stated as a pedestrian and a driver he believes the problem is with the narrow opening at Cedar St, which causes jam ups with cars entering and exiting. He believes this will improve safety.

- Mike Canny supports the request and believes this is a public safety issue and asked not to wait until someone gets hurt.
- Nick Dorf stated the angle of Murdock at Cedar lends to cars turning quickly onto street and exacerbates the problem. He supports the request.
- The Chair asked for those in opposition to speak
- Joanne Manning stated she understands the safety concern but does not believe this is the right solution. She stated the problem is the speed cars are traveling. She listed some more effective solutions such as a raised table, speed bumps, flashing stop signs, flashing lights on the bridge, crosswalks on the bridge or a few houses down, one way in either direction, lowering the speed limit to 5-10 mph, enforcement of existing speed safety zone speed on Cedar St. She noted 9 and 11 Murdock St have no driveway and the loss of the space will be awful.
- Matt Dormeus stated parking is competitive and he does not believe this is the best solution to the problem. He also asked if approved temporarily how will the stripes be removed after the trial period?
- Michael Cahill stated he does not want to lose a space and supports the existing 20ft restriction only. He noted all those in favor have driveways. He believes making the street a one way or installing raised tables will work.
- The Chair asked Alderman Niedergang if he was willing to accept striping the existing 20ft restriction or is he asking for an additional 20ft restriction?
- Alderman Niedergang stated he wants the additional 20ft restriction but believes striping the existing 20ft restriction is better than nothing.
- The Chair asked Terence Smith if he had a recommendation. Terence stated on advice of the City Solicitor he must recuse himself from the item due to a conflict.
- Mike Tremblay stated striping the first 20ft would be a safety improvement but believes an addition 20ft restriction would enhance public safety.
- Joanne Manning stated this will create a funnel as the street will narrow moving the problem further down the street.
- Mike Tremblay stated its especially dangerous at the intersection
- Alderman McWatters stated there are compelling arguments on both sides and noted there are dangerous sight lines throughout the city. He asked if there was any additional information such as the number of accidents. Lt. Polito said he would have to look that up.
- The Chair stated he does not think the 20ft intersection restriction is enforced enough throughout the city. He asked for more enforcement at Murdock and Cedar, he believes more enforcement and striping the first 20ft will help. He also asked Lt. Polito to research the accident history at this intersection and do speed studies. He noted chicanes are coming to Cedar St which should slow traffic.

Alderman McWatters made a motion to deny the request and instead paint stripes for the existing 20ft restriction, seconded by the Chair. Motion passed: 4-0.

Alderman McWatters made a motion to take the next item out of order and go to item #5, seconded by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #5 – Request for Somerville Neighborways to paint a permanent mural at the intersection of Waldo Av and Dimick St

- Mark Chase, founder of neighborways, stated he submitted the request on behalf of the neighbors.

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking had no objections to the request providing the neighbors and Ward Alderman support it and all required permits are obtained.
- Alderman McWatters stated one neighbor was opposed.

Alderman McWatters made a motion to Approve, seconded by the Chair. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #3 Request for Do Not Enter Restriction from 7am-9am and 4pm-6pm, except city residents and bicycles

- Skehan St at Dane St
 - Properzi Way at Beacon St
 - Eliot St at Park St
 - Village St at Dane St
- Alderman McWatters stated Village St is a private way
 - Terence Smith stated he is waiting for the opinion of the city solicitor if this can be established on a private way. He also noted Traffic and Parking typically does not support these types of restrictions but the city solicitor has stated they can be considered as long as enforcement can be implemented.

Alderman McWatters made a motion to Approve Item 4a,b,c and Table Item 4d, seconded by the Chair. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #4 Request to make Merriam St a One-Way from Charlestown St to Somerville Ave

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has no objection to the request.
- Thomas Graney stated this will increase traffic on Linden and Allen Streets.

Alderman McWatters made a motion to Approve, seconded by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 3-1 with Thomas Graney in opposition.

Item #6 Request to designate a Speed Safety Zone (20 mph) on Webster Av, from approximately 50ft south of Washington St to approximately 50ft north of Newton St (approximately 600ft total), both directions, to take effect on July 29th

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking will defer any questions regarding this request to Traffic and Infrastructure.

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

Item #7 Request for No Left Turn from 7am to 9am and 4pm to 6pm, except city residents and bicycles onto Grandview Av from Walnut St

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking typically does not support these types of restrictions but the city solicitor has stated they can be considered as long as enforcement can be implemented.

Alderman McWatters made a motion to Approve, seconded by the Chair. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #8 – Request for Handicapped Parking

46 Putnam Rd

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

Alderman McWatters made a motion to Approve for a 90 day trial, seconded by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #9 – Request to standardize existing and future regulations restricting vehicles from turning and/or entering onto certain streets during certain hours with the following language:

“Do Not Enter or No Left/Right Turn, from 7am-9am and 4pm-6pm, except city residents and bicycles”

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

Item 10 – Request to allow legal contraflow bicycle traffic along Hancock St between Charnwood Road and Summer St (approximately 170ft) and between Summer St and Elm St (approximately 800ft) (pending approval of signage and pavement marking plan by Traffic and Parking)

- Mike Tremblay asked the item be tabled until a future meeting.
- The Chair stated before this comes back if Traffic and Infrastructure is going to support it he suggests they have Lt. Polito look into due to the proximity of the school.

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

PRIOR BUSINESS

Item #11 – Handicapped parking space 34 Putnam St, approved for 90 day trial in March 2017

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has not received any complaints.

Alderman McWatters made a motion for permanent approval, seconded by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 4-0.

Item #12 – Change to the hours of operation at meter C221A, C220, C219, CR009, CR008, C216 (Chester St) from 8am-8pm to 11am-8pm, approved for 90 day trial in March 2017

Item #13 – Loading Zone on Chester St from 7am-11am at meter C221A, C220, C219, CR009, CR008, C216, approved for a 90 day trial in March 2017

- Terence Smith stated Item 12 and 13 are joint items and Traffic and Parking has received no complaints for either.

Alderman McWatters made a motion to permanently Approve both items, seconded by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 4-0.

Lt. Polito made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30pm, seconded by the Chair. Motion passed: 4-0.