

Traffic Commission Meeting
July 30, 2009

Meeting was held at the TAB Building Cafeteria, 167 Holland St

Attendance: Peter St. Clair, James Polito, George Manzelli, Stan Koty, Robert Trane

Staff: Laura Accaputo, Lawrence Murphy, James Kotzuba, Terence Smith

Other: Alderman Taylor, Stephen Mackey, Ray Zonghetti, William Russo, Fernando Tiangson, Claire Curry, Ellie Blute, Thea Paneth, Skip Schloming, Joel Gluck, Angela Capone, Stan Chesniak, Amanda Cobb, Valerie Shulock, Cortney Koslow, Joe Grafton, Nicholas Linsky, Venuto Solari, Chris Stetson, Linda Desimone, Rose Alsheimer, Rachel Silber, Joseph Lynch Jr, Mary Anne Carlson, Jeremy Vanderheide, Nick Karras, Carol Alexander, Justin Grunau, Lisa McFarren, Cesar Salgado, Peter Tsourianis, Frank Gersony, Costas Tingos, Penelope Tingos, Helen Corrigan, Kay Case, Paul Morse, Briana Pendletin, Erin Hemenway, Moosa Ali

Chairman Koty called the meeting to order @ 5:18pm

Chairman Koty introduced himself and read the following statement:

Before we begin tonight's regular meeting, I want to offer a brief explanation of the way the Traffic Commission works. Let me emphasize that this is a public meeting but it is not a public hearing. No meeting of this Commission ever is. Under City Ordinance, actions taken by the Traffic Commission are posted for public review over three consecutive weeks. If residents object to those actions, they have the ability to appeal by submitting a petition signed by a minimum of 50 registered voters. Such a petition, if certified by the City's three-member Traffic Board, automatically triggers a public hearing and review process by that same Traffic Board, which has the power to reject any action of the Traffic Commission by a simple majority vote. If anyone is here tonight to oppose past actions by the Traffic Commission, you should understand that we do not take comments retroactively, and that it is the Traffic Board, not the Commission, that holds hearings. All of this is laid out in Article VII of the Charter Appendix, which requires of our Commission that "Notice of meetings shall be posted according to the provisions of Section 23b of Chapter 39 of the General Laws and shall be sent to all commission members, the Mayor, the Board of Alderman, and the Planning Director. All of said persons may attend commission meetings and present their views, but only commission members may vote. This evening, the Alderman for Ward 3 has requested the opportunity to present his views to the Commission, and I am happy to accommodate him. Once he speaks, there will be a short recess, and then we will take up tonight's agenda (reading of agenda items). No other topics will be discussed, but anyone who wishes to remain to hear the discussion on these agenda items is welcome to do so. Before we hear from the distinguished Alderman from Ward 3, I have only one more thing to add. Some of you may be here because you received a telephone call alleging that the Traffic Commission was contemplating or had taken an action that would mean that, in the "all tradesmen coming to repair your home or deliver goods to you would be subject to ticketing, resulting in fines that you would ultimately have to pay." That allegation is categorically false: two thirds of the City's public ways already have permit parking, and the residents of those streets know that they can use their visitor permits to enable tradesmen to park on their streets in order to pay house calls. The tradesmen themselves also know that if longer stays are required for extensive repair or improvement projects, Traffic &

Parking will issue temporary permits for the length of the job. In no case can any ticket issued to any motor vehicle owner- anywhere, anytime, or for any reason- ever be charged to anyone other than the person to whom the vehicle is registered. I therefore apologize to anyone here tonight who came here in good faith to express opposition to a policy that does not, and will not ever exist in the City of Somerville. You were misled by false statements-a matter that you may wish to take up with the source of the recent automated calling campaign: the Small Property Owners Association. And now, I would like to call upon Ward 3 Alderman Tom Taylor to present his views.

Alderman Taylor begins speaking about the city-wide permit parking regulation. Chairman Koty rules Alderman Taylor out of order since this is not on the agenda and he may only discuss agenda items. He explains that he can place his statement on file. Traffic Commission secretary accepted his statement and placed it on file.

Item #1 – Minutes from June 18, 2009 Traffic Commission Meeting accepted unanimously

A motion was made to suspend the rules and take an item (#5) out of order by Robert Trane, 2nd George Manzelli, unanimous

Item #5 – Request for extension of hours at existing Loading Zone

152 Highland Av – currently Mon-Sat 8am-6pm, requesting Mon-Sat 8am-11pm

Applicant Moosa Ali spoke regarding his request. A motion to **Approve** was made by George Manzelli, 2nd Robert Trane, unanimous

While under suspension of the rules another item (#6) was taken out of order

Item #6 – Basil Tree commercial vehicle parking issue

Valerie Shulock owner of Basil Tree explained that they have always purchased Business Permits from the city to allow them to park in the Magoun Sq Lot during the day and that she does leave 5 vans in this lot overnight in the business permit spaces. Alderman Trane explained that he had asked her to appear after receiving numerous complaints from local businesses about these vans being parked their 24-7. Ms. Shulock then asked if there is an evening business permit available that she could purchase. Alderman Trane explained that even if there were an evening business permit available it still would not allow for parking all day and evening. Ms. Shulock then asked if the city would for a fee reserve for them two parking spaces in the lot in which if vehicles parked in tandem could actually accommodate 4 vehicles. Alderman Trane explained that the city cannot reserve spaces for any one business and that employees of other businesses could also utilize these tandem spaces. Ms. Shulock then pointed out that the city does in fact reserve spaces for Zip Car to which Alderman Trane responded that Zip Car is a community accessible vehicle and provides a service to the area residents. Ms. Shulock then stated that they've been in Magoun Sq for 25 years and take up 3 retail spaces and maintain a viable business, was there any type of fee based arrangement she could make. Alderman Trane responded that he understands that this is a tough economy and suggested that she meet with James Kotzuba, Acting Director of Traffic & Parking to try and work out a solution. No action was taken on this item and a motion was made by Robert Trane to refer this matter to James Kotzuba and Terence Smith, Traffic Engineer.

While under suspension of the rules another item (#7) was taken out of order

Item #7 – Request for an amendment to the city-wide permit parking regulation on main streets (Broadway, Holland St, Elm St, Highland Av, Somerville Av, Beacon St, Washington St, and Medford St) as follows (unless otherwise posted):

- 2 Hour Parking Except by Permit 10am-2:30am
- Permit Parking Only 2:30am-10am

After a lengthy discussion with several residents and business owners (available in its entirety upon request at a later date) a motion was made by Robert Trane to **Table** this item pending further review and recommendations from the Parking Solutions Task Force, 2nd James Polito, unanimous

Item #2 – Request for Handicapped Parking

12 Montgomery Av

Motion to **Approve** made by James Polito, 2nd George Manzelli, unanimous

Item #3 – Request for Removal of Handicapped Parking Space

29 Putnam St

Motion to **Approve** made by George Manzelli, 2nd James Polito, unanimous

Item #4 – Request for Fire Lanes (submitted by Chief Kelleher)

Skilton Av – east side, from the end of the property line at 222 Pearl St extending 85ft south

Summer St – starting at the driveway of #117 Summer St extending 15ft west

Montrose St – at Jerome St, extend existing fire lanes to 20ft in both directions

Preston Rd – at the bend, shorten existing fire lane by 6ft

Motion to **Approve** (all) made by George Manzelli, 2nd Peter St. Clair, unanimous

Item #8 – Request to extend the hours of daytime business permits from 5pm to 6pm

Motion to **Approve** made by George Manzelli, 2nd James Polito, unanimous

Item #9 – Request for the creation of a “2nd Shift” business permit, 6pm to 3:30am, locations to be determined at a later date based upon requests, rate will be the same as the daytime business permit rate

Motion to **Approve** made by James Polito, 2nd Peter St. Clair, unanimous

Meeting adjourned @ 7:30pm