

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Held On: FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 2021 @ 9:00 AM
Meeting was held in the Government Center Auditorium
located at 119 School Street

Traffic Commission members Robert Waddick and Tim Kelly have called a Special Meeting of the Traffic Commission to discuss the following items only:

Motion made to appoint Lisa Gerlach the acting clerk of this meeting.

1. **Railroad Quiet Zone Discussion** – Mayor McCarthy was present to share communication that she received from the Federal Railroad Administration regarding the Quiet Zone at Waltham's four at-grade crossings. These four locations are South St., Moody St., Elm St., and Beaver St. TE Garvin stated that the Federal Railroad Administration notified the City that we are no longer in compliance with their requirements to maintain the Quiet Zone status. They notified the MBTA to start using the train horns whenever they approach one of our four at-grade crossings. Thanks to City officials, notably Councillor McLaughlin the Federal Railroad Administration has given us a chance to halt the train horns if we implement temporary measures. This would be basically the addition of medians at the four at-grade crossings, which would prevent any vehicle from driving around the lowered railroad gates. The City, through the Mayor, sent a letter to the Federal Railroad Administration with our proposed locations of medians along with a question of what type of median or material would be acceptable so that we can move forward with the temporary measure. We will also be moving forward on what the final design will be for each of these crossings through our consultant Rick Carey with VHB. These final designs should let us be back into a Quiet Zone again permanently. This temporary fix will give us 3 ½ years to design and implement the final solution. The Mayor mentioned that there will be a meeting with Rick Carey and the Feds to go over some of the questions. She has advised Mr. Carey that this will not be a temporary fix, but he said that the medians are a good first step but there are other things you have to do. We will be putting in permanent curbing and barriers during the time which may be in place for some time before the final improvements have been implemented. Traffic Engineering went and marked each of the four at-grade crossings with paint showing where a 60' and 100' median would be located. These layouts were submitted to the FRA, it was noted that the Beaver Street and South Street crossings would need some modifications due to driveways. The FRA has stated that they will maintain their Quiet Zone but they want the City to officially submit our plans to them so that they can comment officially so these ASM's are actually modifications to the railroad crossings. At this time we do not know when the 30 days to have the temporary improvements completed starts. We may be able to use raised channelization devices that are in stock now for these crossings. They will be 1' -2' wide medians with 6" built in curbs,

channelization device on top of the median with appropriate signage. These were reviewed by City Traffic Engineer Mike Garvin, City Engineer Bob Winn and VHB consultant Rick Carey. Councillor LeBlanc would like to have during the final design that review of the Beaver Street crossing look into extending the width of Beaver Street crossing for pedestrians.

Moody St. crossing north of track will be a 60' median and access to City parking lot will be right in only.

Moody St. crossing south of track will be a 71' median with the northern most driveway to Enterprise Car Rental being a right turn in/out only. The driveway to 123 Moody St. will also be a right turn in/out only.

Elm St. crossing north of track will be a 60' median.

Elm St. crossing south of track will be a 88' median and construction barrels will be placed every 30' to block off the left lane for northbound traffic.

South St. crossing north of track will be 60' median with driveway to Aggregate Industries and right in/out only.

South St. crossing south of track will be 72' median to fully block Sawyer Rd. Sawyer Rd. will be a right turn in/out only.

Beaver St. crossing west of track will be a 60' median.

Beaver St. crossing east of track will be a 60' median and the driveway to 95 Beaver St. will be a right turn in/out only.

If we are able to do three out of the four at-grade improvements that could get us enough safety points to accomplish what we want to do. If that is the case the TE Garvin would recommend not doing anything at Beaver St. until the final design. The TE questions to FRA would be is the channelization type acceptable and can we do three out of the four crossings. Residents Joshua Winer, Robin Capello and Davin Bellisano brought questions before the Commission. **Voted to forward the drawings to the Federal Railroad Administration.**

2. **Phantom Gourmet Food Festival Proposal** – Mayor McCarthy presented a proposal for this event which they would like to hold on Moody Street between High/Maple Streets and Margarita's at the bridge. Michael Andelman, Administrator, and Tina Schindler, Assistant, with Phantom Gourmet were present to discuss this event. The Phantom Gourmet Food Festival has been held on Lansdowne Street in Boston for 13 years. Due to current COVID regulations and the future design around Fenway Park they are looking for a new location to hold this event. They are proposing the event be held on Saturday, September 25, 2021 from 11:30 AM - 3:00 PM. They will be in charge and pay for all installation of tents, Police Officers, barricades, trash, private security. They would like to come in the day before to start working on setting up. They anticipate 6,000-7,000 people to attend. Mayor McCarthy is in support of this event. Councillor Paz is in support, but wants to emphasize the cleanup of trash during and after this event. Councillor Harris is in support

and states the importance of parking and planning this event. The Public Works and Public Safety needs to be included in all discussions and music could be added downtown. She wants to also not that the area beyond High/Maple Street should be included along with ALL Waltham restaurants and businesses. The Mayor will activate the Tick Tock Trolley. Surrounding private parking lots will need to be looked into. Doug Waybright with the 128 Business Council said their shuttles are not used on Saturday and could maybe be used from Alewife Station. The Waltham Farmers Market and local Museums would also like to be included. Currently there are no MBTA commuter trains running on the weekend. Traffic Engineer Mike Garvin is concerned with the limited public parking spaces available downtown. The organizers may need to presale tickets with designated parking lot per vehicles. The detours for Pine/Crescent Streets along with the crossing at Chestnut St./Walnut St. going across Moody St. There will be no outside vendor carts (novelty vendors) allowed. All permitting will be handled by Phantom Gourmet. **Voted to approve this event and have Phantom Gourmet work with the Traffic Engineer, Public Works, Wires, Health, Licensing, Police and Fire Departments.**

All members present except Tom Magno. Mayor McCarthy, Councillors McLaughlin, LeBlanc, Harris, Paz present.

Adjourned: 10:47 AM

Respectfully,

Lisa Gerlach
Acting Clerk