

**MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING
HELD: THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 2023 AT 10:00 A.M.
WALTHAM CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL**

The Chair accepted a motion to approve the minutes of the December meeting.

1. PETITIONED ITEMS:

A. Main Street Westbound Pavement Marking Review – Mayor McCarthy

Mayor McCarthy is requesting a review of pavement markings along Main Street westbound, just west of Linden Street and approaching Elm Street. **Voted to table without discussion.**

B. 51 Hall Street, Condominium Development – Special Permit

A 20-unit residential development is proposed for 51 Hall Street. This will require a Special Permit for the F.A.R. requirement. Ron Muller & Associates prepared a Traffic Study. Attorney Joseph Connors represented the proponent. The study evaluated the traffic impacts of the proposed residential condominium building. As proposed, the project consists of repurposing the existing St. Charles Borromeo Church into 20 residential condominium units. Access to the site will be provided via a driveway on Hall Street. The project is expected to generate 100 weekday daily vehicle trips which is not expected to have a significant impact on traffic in this area. Parking demand on site consists of 41 spaces and no on-street parking is required. The Fire Department will have adequate access to the site. **Voted to accept the traffic study submitted by Ron Muller & Associates for the proposed 20-unit condominium development and forward it to the City Council for their deliberations.**

C. MBTA Better Bus Project Update

MBTA presented an update on the Better Bus Project, highlighting changes from the Draft Map to the Final Map. **Voted to table the item, and request the MBTA to return when the timing of the implementation of the Better Bus Project is known.**

D. MBTA Proposed Bus Stop Adjustments for Bus Route 70

MBTA presented updated requests to modify bus stops along Main Street for the Route 70 bus.

- 1: Main St. @ Hill Rd & Sheridan - - add sign at rear of Stop
- 2: Main @ Edgehill Rd - - relocate stop 200 feet east
- 3: Main @ Malone St. - - stop eliminated (Edgehill relocated to improve service)
- 4: Main @ Wellington - - stop eliminated (Prospect St relocated to improve service)
- 5: Main @ Prospect - - stop relocated from east to west of Prospect St
- 6: Main @ Harvard/Fiske - - stop relocated from west to east of Harvard St
- 7: Main @ Grant - - stop eliminated (Harvard St. relocated to improve service)
- 8: Main @ Daniels Court - - extend existing stop from 40' to 60'
- 9: Main @ #702 Main St - - stop eliminated (Daniels Ct. relocated to improve service)
- 10: Main @ Heard St. - - stop relocated from west to east of Heard St.
- 11: Main @ Craven Cir - - relocate the westbound stop to be between Pleasant & Harris Sts.
- 12: Main @ Pleasant/Townsend St. - - stop eliminated (Pleasant/Harris relocated to improve service)
- 13: Main @ Bowker Rd - - stop eliminated (Beal Road relocated to improve service)
- 14: Main @ Beal Road - - relocate to west of Brigham Road
- 15: Main @ Elm - - add two new stops (on Elm south of Main St)

Voted to accept all the above recommendations.

E. Shifter's 5K for Dana Farber Marathon Challenge

Approval was requested for this road race, scheduled for Saturday, Apr 1. **Voted to recommend a permit to issue.**

F. Scleroderma Foundation 5K Run/Walk Challenge

Approval was requested for this road race, scheduled for Saturday, Apr 29. **Voted to recommend a permit to issue.**

2. TABLED ITEMS: (Only items in Bold and Highlighted will be discussed at this meeting)

- A. Elson Rd. Parking Study (6/19) (10/19) – Councillor Durkee
- B. # 80-86 Orange St. – Whalen Housing Authority (9/19) – Councillor Harris
- C. City Wide Speed Study - (5/20)
- D. Wyman St. – Proposed RRFB (5/21)
- E. Adams St. at Crescent St. – Proposed All-Way and Corridor Study – Councillor Harris (11/21) (11/22) (12/22)
- F. Trapelo Rd at Clocktower Rd – Proposed Traffic Signal – Mayor McCarthy (12/21)
- G. *Bedford St – Speeding Issues – Mayor McCarthy (12/21) (9/22)
- H. Willow St – Speed Limit Signage, Sidewalks, and Parking – Councillor LaCava (12/21)
- I. Lowell St – Proposed Traffic Study for Pedestrian and Public Safety – Councillor Harris (12/21) (9/22) (11/22)
- J. Main Street at Newton St & Lyman St – Traffic Signal Coordination (1/22) (11/22)
- K. *Harrington Road Speed Study (Mayor McCarthy) (3/22) (9/22)
- L. *Villa Street: Speed Bumps (Mayor McCarthy) (4/22) (9/22)
- M. Banks Square Improvements (Mayor McCarthy) (5/22) (9/22) (12/22) Tabled**
- N. *Elm St/River St Signal Warrant (Mayor McCarthy) (5/22)
- O. Lexington Street Bike Path (Councillor Darcy) (9/22)
- P. Charles Street Traffic Calming – Grant Street and Harvard Street (Councillors LaCava and Paz) (9/22) (11/22) (12/22)
- Q. Everett Street Signage and Speed Study – Councillor Katz (11/22)
- R. 240/265 Beaver Street Traffic Safety Analysis – Councillor Bradley-MacArthur (11/22)

S. Stop Sign Request, Rockridge Road and Summit Avenue – Mayor McCarthy & Councillor Katz (12/22) Traffic Engineer, Mr. Garvin, stated that Summit Ave should have stop signs at Rockridge Road. Stop signs on Rockridge would not be appropriate if the only reason is to control speeding. The appropriate action is to install stop signs on Summit Ave in both the northbound and southbound directions at Rockridge Road.

Voted to accept this recommendation and amend Schedule 11 as follows:

Add: Summit Ave. at Rockridge Road, facing northbound and southbound traffic

T. Safety Improvements at Pine Street/Lowell Street (City Council Resolution) (12/22)

Accident data showed three accidents in three years at this intersection and no accidents in the area of 48 Pine Street. Occasionally, vehicles park on the east side of or block the crosswalk on Lowell Street. Fifteen-minute parking is allowed on the south side of Pine Street in front of the corner store. Some additional signage is needed to clarify the existing parking regulations. **Voted to install a “No Parking Here to Corner” sign on the south side of Pine Street east of the existing crosswalk before the 15-minute parking zone, a “No Parking This Side” sign on the south side of Pine Street west of Lowell Street, and a “No Parking Here to Corner” sign just before the first driveway (approximately 75 feet from Pine St. intersection) on the west side of Lowell Street.**

- U. Bright Street Improvements – Councillor LaCava (12/22)

V. School Avenue Improvements – Councillor LaCava (12/22). A site visit showed that new signage is needed to alert motorists that School Avenue is a one-way street and cannot be entered by way of Willow Street. **Voted to direct the Traffic Engineer to relocate the street name sign, the “Do Not Enter” sign, and the one-way sign to the permanent utility pole, and install new no left turn and no right turn arrow signs on the utility pole opposite the School Avenue exit at Willow Street.**

W. Commercial Vehicle Restriction Signs on Vernon Street – Councillor Katz (12/22). Vernon Street is a one-way eastbound street that requires several intersections to have posted commercial vehicle restriction signs to prohibit large trucks from using the street. Boynton Street intersects Vernon. Commercial traffic at Boynton and Winthrop Street must be warned of the restriction so as not to be trapped at Vernon Street. Vehicles on Auburn Street must be warned of the restriction. At South Street the existing signage should be changed. **Voted to direct the Traffic Engineer to install an advance “Commercial Vehicles Over 2 ½ Tons Prohibited” – Above Vernon Street sign assembly on Boynton Street north of Winthrop Street, and replace the small sign on Vernon Street east of South Street with a larger standard sign, in addition to raising the height of the existing commercial vehicle restriction sign that’s currently attached to a traffic signal at the corner of Weston Street and Vernon Street.**

X. Brandeis Crosswalk on South Street, Improved Visibility – Councillor Katz (12/22) Brandeis University Chief of Police attended the meeting and discussed measures to improve visibility of the crosswalk on South Street. Members agreed that more education on the part of Brandeis is needed. The Chief asked for more pre-warning signs, and consideration for a “passive” actuation of the existing RRFB. Members expressed concern with the use of a passive actuation system as it may not be practical; the lights would come on when no-one is crossing the street. The Chief asked for more time so he could research this option that Brandeis is willing to install. **Voted to table, and request the Brandeis Chief of Police to return to Traffic Commission with options.**

Y. South Street/Highland Street Signal Timing – Councillor Katz (12/22) Upon review, traffic engineering found the signal timing to be incorrect. The settings will be adjusted to match the settings on the permit. When the new signals at South and Bedford Street are installed, the two intersections will be coordinated. **Voted to present the Commission with a list of all signalized intersections in the City to prioritize which intersections should be studied first, with the goal to have Traffic Engineering review all traffic signal timings throughout Waltham, to ensure that all signal timings are in agreement with the signal permits.**

Z: Lexington Street Pavement Markings Between School Street and Main Street

The Traffic Engineer reported the consequences of adding on-street parking spaces on the west side of Lexington Street, south of School Street. The Traffic Engineer expressed concerns about pedestrian safety at this new mid-block crosswalk at 25 Lexington Street, in the absence of the parking lane. In order to prevent a “multiple threat pedestrian crash”, a parking lane was approved so that vehicles nearing the crosswalk would be in a single southbound lane instead of two southbound lanes. Traffic Commission at the time could only approve the mid-block crosswalk if the Traffic Engineer was willing to recommend it. The Traffic Engineer would only recommend the crosswalk if the approach was limited to a single lane, since it would eliminate the possibility of a multiple threat pedestrian crash. Traffic does occasionally back up close to the intersection of School and Lexington Street, but this is caused by the inefficient signal timing at Main Street and Lexington Street, not because of the parked vehicles. The majority of the southbound Lexington Street traffic turns left onto Main Street. The Traffic Signal at Main & Lexington, which presently is a pre-timed signal, is inefficient and affects the traffic on Lexington Street. The Traffic Engineer

reiterated his clear opposition to removing the parking spaces, since it would be a liability issue for the City, should any multiple threat pedestrian crash occur here. At this time, the majority of members felt parking should be removed and when the signals along Main Street become updated/coordinated, this could be revisited. **Voted to black out the parking spaces and channelized pavement markings, and install a “No Parking” sign; Lexington Street to be returned to two southbound lanes from School Street to Main Street. (Note: Chief O’Connell voted opposed).**

3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

- A. Parking Meter Report – The year 2022 had an increase of approximately \$31,660. There were 3,748 Pay by Phone transactions in the lots.
- B. Proposed Modification to Stop Sign Schedule in Rules & Regulations – add Ash St westbound at Parmenter Rd. (Note; missing from Schedule 11)
Voted to amend Schedule 11 as follows:
Add Ash Street at Parmenter Road facing westbound traffic
- C. Remove Disabled Parking Space at 38 Oak St – Resident moved
Voted to Remove 38 Oak Street from Schedule 6
- D. Remove Disabled Parking Space at 100 ½ Prospect St – Resident passed away
Voted to Remove 100 ½ Prospect Street from Schedule 6

AND ANY LATE FILED ITEM(S) THAT MAY COME BEFORE THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION.

Adjourned @ 12:15 pm
All members except Ms. Cagle

Respectfully Submitted

Frank S. Lombardo, Clerk

Please Print

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