

**AGENDA OF THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING
HELD ON: DECEMBER 20, 2018 AT 10:00 A.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL**

Motion to appoint Lisa Gerlach as Acting Clerk. Voted and approved.

The Chair accepted a motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting. Voted and approved

1. PETITIONED ITEMS:

A. Lincoln St. at Curve St. – Proposed All-Way Stop

Mayor McCarthy requested this item be on the agenda after attending a neighborhood meeting regarding sidewalks on Lincoln St. **Voted to approve this request and direct the Traffic Engineer to study this intersection to determine if an All-Way Stop is warranted and report back with his findings.**

B. Dale Street entire length – Proposal to Reduce Speed Limit to 20 MPH

Councillor Romard is requesting the speed limit be reduced from 30 to 20 MPH. Councillor Romard was unable to attend the meeting but submitted an email to be read into the minutes supporting this request to have the Traffic Engineer conduct a full traffic and speed study in effort to help support the speed reduction and /or possible alternative options to address these issues. The Councillor also supports the Mayor's prior request for a full traffic study in this area to include but not limited to Prospect Hill Rd., Prentice St. and Tomlin St. **Voted to approve this request and direct the Traffic Engineer to conduct a study for Dale St., based on recently collected speed data to determine whether it meets the guidelines for implementation of a 25 MPH speed zone or a 20 MPH safety zone.**

C. Shifter's 5K for Dana Farber

Mr. Rich Horgan is requesting permission to hold this event on Sat., March 30, 2019 at 1:00 PM. **Voted to approve this request.**

D. Smith St. at Trapelo Rd. Eastbound – Proposed No Turn On Red

Ms. Karen VanKederpelt, # 110 Smith St. is requesting a No Turn On Red restriction. The Traffic Engineer understands the difficulty the resident is having in exiting their driveway due to the steady flow of vehicles during the peak hours. By prohibiting the right turns on red, it would allow fewer cars to turn right during each cycle of the traffic signal, which would lead to even longer queues and delays for eastbound Trapelo Rd. The ability to turn right on red should be based on the visibility and safety of allowing those cars to turn right during the red phase of the signal. **Voted to deny this request.**

E. 54 Fourth Ave. Proposed Hyatt House Hotel

Attorney Richard Dacey is representing Waltham Suites, LLC regarding this project. The existing Hyatt House Hotel was built 20 years ago by Special Permit in the old suite room style. They are seeking to convert 135 rooms (including multi-bedroom suites) to 186 rooms which will require a Special Permit. The existing 135 rooms have either one or two bedrooms. The proposed renovations will reconfigure 51 of the suites into "lock-off" rooms which will allow one of the bedrooms to be booked to a separate guest. Currently business travelers prefer the one bedroom over the suites during the week, but during the weekends there is still a need for two-bedroom suites for family travelers and sport teams. A traffic study was conducted in October by their consultant MDM Transportation Consultants at the existing hotel. Based on this study at full occupancy the existing hotel generates 61 vehicle trips in the AM peak hour, 64 vehicle trips in the PM peak hour, and 73 vehicle trips in the Saturday peak hour. With the proposed renovations in place, the hotel would generate an increase of 23 vehicles in the AM peak hour, 24 vehicles in the PM peak hour, and 28 vehicle trips in the Saturday peak hour. Though this is a minor increase in vehicle trips, these vehicles will most likely be traveling through the Winter St./Wyman St./Totten Pond Rd./Third Ave. traffic signal which currently operates at a LOS F in the AM and PM peak hours. These additional vehicle trips will only make the intersection worse. Attorney Dacey added that the petitioner is willing to voluntarily contribute \$25,000 to the Traffic Safety and Infrastructure Fund to help expedite the work or hire a consultant to supervise the work at the intersection. City Traffic Engineer Mike Garvin

recommends that this traffic study from MDM be accepted as being complete and accurate, but that the Traffic Commission direct him to prepare a memorandum detailing the reservations that the Traffic Commission has regarding this amount of additional traffic on Third Ave. The memorandum should also include a recommendation that the hotel renovations should only be permitted to proceed once the new northbound Route 128 on-ramp opens at the intersection of Third Ave./Prospect Hill Ln. with the new traffic signal. Commission member Cagle noticed that there was no reference in the study regarding pedestrians or bicycles, she would like that included in the memorandum as well. **Voted to accept the Traffic Engineer's recommendation.**

F. 180 Third Ave. – Parking Variance

Kathleen Keen with VHB presented this report. A Special Permit has already been granted for this proposed office building which will contain 270,000 sq. ft. of office space. The Special Permit requires the project meet the zoning parking ratio of 1.00 space per 330 sq. ft., which results in 900 parking spaces. VHB completed a parking study by surveying similar parking facilities in the area to determine the prevailing ratio of occupied parking spaces. The study included 500 Totten Pond Rd., 77 Fourth Ave. and 230 Third Ave. Based on their study findings they are seeking a variance in the parking zoning requirement to provide 0.85 spaces per 300 sq. ft. of office space. The City Traffic Engineer is recommending we accept the parking analysis and endorse the proposal to reduce the required number of parking spaces to a ratio of 0.85 spaces per 300 sq. ft. **Voted and accepted the Traffic Engineer's recommendation.**

2. TABLED ITEMS:

- A. Highland St. "Spur" at Curtis St. – Removal of "No Right Turn" Restriction (9/12)(10/12)(5/16)(6/16)
- B. **Amend Art. 5, Sec. 18 GVW (3/16)(11/18) Councillor's Logan and Harris request this item be tabled until January.**
- C. Trapelo Road at Waverley Oaks Road – Proposed Right Turn Lane (4/17)(5/17)
- D. Cabot St. Area – Traffic Calming Measures (10/17)(12/17)
- E. Totten Pond Rd. at Veterans Memorial Ice Rink – Proposed Traffic Signal (2/18)(4/18)
- F. **Moody St. at Alder St. – Proposed RRFB (4/18) Councillor Harris request this item be filed. Voted and approved to file.**
- G. Waverley Oaks Rd. at Wilson Rd. – Proposed RRFB (6/18)(9/18)
- H. Main St. from Church/Elm St. to Newton St. – Parking spaces (9/18)(11/18)
- I. Derby St. at Lowell St. – Traffic Improvements (9/18)
- J. **Briarwood/Mallard Way – Traffic Calming measures (10/18)(11/18)** Traffic Engineering conducted a speed study on two sections of Mallard Way and on Briarwood Rd. The first section of Mallard Way was counted from Tue., Oct. 30 to Mon., Nov. 5, and is north of Briarwood Rd. It showed northbound average daily traffic volumes of 116 per day with an 85th Percentile speed of 30 MPH. The southbound average daily traffic volumes showed 97 per day with an 85th Percentile speed of 30 MPH. The second section of Mallard Way is east of Briar Hill Ln. and was counted from Tue., Nov. 27 to Fri, Nov 30. It showed eastbound average daily traffic volumes of 132 per day and the 85th Percentile speed of 29 MPH. The westbound average daily traffic volumes showed 164 per day and 85th Percentile speed of 29 MPH. Briarwood Rd. between Mallard Way and Briar Hill Ln. was counted from Tue., Nov 27 to Fri. Nov. 30. The northbound average daily traffic volumes showed 168 per day and 85th Percentile speed of 29 MPH while the southbound average daily traffic volumes showed 123 per day and 85th Percentile speed of 29 MPH. Since the recorded 85th percentile speeds are 29 to 30 MPH and the traffic volumes are very low, it is recommended that no traffic calming measures are warranted. **Vote to deny this request.**

- K. **1077 and 1093 Lexington St. – Proposed Pedestrian Crosswalk (10/18)(11/18)** As requested at last months meeting, we reviewed pedestrian accident history in this area. In the past three years there were two accidents in this section that involved pedestrians. The Police summary for both indicated that the pedestrians were crossing multiple travel lanes and the driver did not see them due to moderate to heavy traffic, multiple travel lanes and/or turning vehicles into or out of the plaza driveways. The Traffic Engineer feels that a painted crosswalk would not make this any safer for the pedestrians to cross in this section. By painting a crosswalk in this section, it would only imply that it is safe to cross. The pedestrians should cross at the traffic signal at the intersection of Trapelo Rd./Lexington St. or at the crosswalk just north of the Lexington Town Line, which has a flashing yellow overhead light and has only two lanes of traffic to cross. **Voted to deny this request.**
- L. **Central St – Speeding Issues (10/18)** Central St. is a major one-way cut through travelling eastbound from Elm St. to Newton St. A speed study was conducted from Tue., Oct. 30 to Mon., Nov. 3. The study showed average daily traffic volumes of 1,431 with an 85th percentile speed of 29 MPH. This study did not show any speeding problem and the Traffic Engineer does not recommend any changes at this time. **Vote to deny this request.**
- M. River St. at Jackson St. – Proposed RRFB (10/18)
- N. **Trapelo Rd. at Smith St. – Proposed Right Turn Lane (11/18).** Mr. Paul Tracey requested a designated Right Turn Lane for eastbound Trapelo Rd. The Traffic Engineer conducted a study and determined that the eastbound left turn lane is the critical lane for eastbound traffic. During the peak hours it often takes more than one signal cycle for a left turning vehicle to clear the signal. The left turn storage length is about 250 feet long. The maximum queuing during peak hours exceeds 400 feet for these left turns. When the vehicle queue exceeds the storage length, they block eastbound through vehicles from getting into the middle lane. When the queue in the middle lane exceeds 250 feet it blocks access to the left turn lane. If approved this would cause adverse impact to the left turns and through vehicles. **Voted to deny this request.**
- O. **1490 Trapelo Rd. – Various Signage (11/18).** Mr. Murtaza Qureshi requested a "Blind Driveway" sign in advance of his property. The homeowner states that vehicles exiting the I-95 northbound off ramp travel at a high speed which is dangerous and has caused many accidents. A site visit showed that his driveway is as visible as all other driveways along Trapelo Rd. Though his driveway is the first one reached when vehicles come off the exit ramp, it is true that when vehicles are not queued up at the red light at the signal they tend to travel at a high speed, but a "Blind Driveway" sign will not be effective in slowing vehicles down. **Voted to deny this request.**

3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

- A. **Parking Meter Report** – Revenue through November shows \$451,062.02 which is a \$41,100 increase from the same time last year.
- B. **Piety Corner – Update** – We recently received a letter from Mass Historical Commission stating they have no comments for this project. We can now proceed with the design and demolition of the house. We are still awaiting approval of our funding request to the Mayor for a Hazardous Material review of the property before any demolition can take place. In the meantime, we will schedule a meeting with the designer, to commence the 25% design.
- C. **Hammond St. at School/Columbus** – No Parking 50' North on east side. Due to vehicles parking too close to the intersection on the east side of Hammond St., it makes it difficult for northbound vehicles to turn onto Hammond St. **Voted to approve this request and add the following to Schedule 1 – Parking Restrictions:**

Hammond St., east side, from School St./Columbus Ave. to a pt. 50' N., No Parking

- D. **Clarification of Law Dept. opinion regarding installation of signs.** At the November meeting it was requested to request Assistant City Solicitor Michelle Learned to attend this meeting to clarify

who has authority to make, erect, and maintain signs on public City streets in Waltham. Our interpretation of the Legislation that created the Traffic Commission is that Traffic Commission, and by extension the Traffic Engineer who is hired by the Traffic Commission, has the exclusive authority to fabricate and install traffic signs on public streets in the City of Waltham. Attorney Learned states there is a conflict that may exist between the Traffic Commission and the Mayor's authority. In the Special Acts of 1965, Chapter 93, Section 3 ***"the Commission shall have exclusive authority, except as otherwise herein provided."*** She states that later in the section it references that ***"Nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize the commission, or to modify or limit any power or authority, or any power now vested in the Mayor, City Council or heads of departments with reference to the issuance of licenses or permits for the opening, using or occupying of streets and sidewalks."*** This means that the Mayor which is in charge as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) oversees the issuance of licenses and permits for the use on streets and sidewalks. Ms. Learned stated that there can arguably be a conflict between our Ordinances and what this board is permitted to do, but they must be read together given the language provided to have a harmonious result. She did say that what the Traffic Commission has the exclusive authority to do is specifically referenced and it does not include giving licenses and permits for the use on the streets and sidewalks or the things that are in the streets and sidewalks. Ms. Learned states that it indicates that the Mayor is involved with the process of approving the location of signs. Its important to put this in the context of Main Street and Moody Street and that the Mayor does have an obligation to preserve the public improvements that were just installed in her capacity as CEO, because it is the personal property real estate of the City. This was exactly carved out as an exception because the Mayor is the CEO that's in charge of the lands belonging to this City. Mr. Garvin asked if the commission approves a sign on a street that requires a new post in the sidewalk, is a specific permit or license required. Ms. Learned states that according to our Special Act she disagrees that we have authority and that this section specifically reserves that right to the Mayor and City Council and heads of departments to govern the issuance of permits and licenses. It is true the commission is the body that deals with making sure that safety issues are handled and followed, and must follow state law. The commission is the body to decide speed limits, pavement markings and anything dealing with safety issues, but where the sign is located on City owned property real estate the Mayor is part of the process. Chief MacPherson asked if there does need to be a form it can either be the license or the Mayor can grant permission. The Chief's concern is if the Traffic Engineer says a sign needs to be installed here and the Mayor disagrees. Ms. Learned states that the way the Special Act and the Ordinances are set up, there is a potential for legal conflict between the commission and the Mayor. If we need to set up a more formal procedure or something in writing as opposed to verbally than that is the procedure that should be set up. The Chief states that we should just follow what the Mayor is asking regarding seeking her permission before any signs are installed on Main Street and Moody Street and go on as usual with the other streets. He is still concerned if there is any conflict with the sign locations which when lacking cause concern in enforcement. Ms. Learned added or other areas where recent public improvements have just been done.

E. **FY2024 CIP Request** – Voted to submit the following CIP items:

- Misc. Neighborhood Traffic Improvements - \$400,000
- Trapelo Rd./ Waverley Oaks Rd. Design & Reconstruction of Intersection & Traffic Signals - \$500,000
- Winter St. Redesign around Goose Pond - \$250,000
- Radar Traffic Counters (6) - \$25,000
- Parking Lot Improvements Design and Construction - \$500,000
- Pay By License Plate Keypads for Existing Machines - \$75,000
- Carter St. Transit Hub Design and Engineering - \$200,000
- River S./ Elm St. Design and Engineering for Proposed New Traffic Signal - \$100,000
- Lexington St./ Dale St. Design and Engineering for Proposed New Traffic Signal - \$100,000
- Grove St./Gore St./Seyon St. Design and Engineering for Proposed New Traffic Signal - \$100,000

- F. **Church St. Parking Lot – Update** – Sunshine Paving has completed a majority of the work including paving the binder coat and paint temporary parking lines for the winter. The new Pay Station was installed this week and our City crew will be installing the space numbers and other signage. Sunshine Paving will return to install the lighting and lot name sign when they arrived. In the Spring, Sunshine Paving will return to complete the top coat and thermoplastic parking lines.
- G. **High/Joyce/Hamblin intersection Design – Update** – The Mayor has not approved the funding request for a survey to design the ramps. We have requested drawings from Engineering and ITS to help assist. It may require that a City representative be present when the contractor constructs the ADA ramps to assure proper slope.
- H. **River/Farwell/Seyon – Signal Update** – Our signal contractor Dagle Electric discovered issues at two of our locations that showed the conduit was previously damaged. We are working with CPW and Wires Depts. to resolve this issue so that we can proceed with the work. There is still money available in the account, so we can request funding to complete this work. It may cost anywhere from \$12,000 - \$25,000 per location to repair. **Voted and approved to direct Traffic Engineer to request funding not to exceed \$50,000.**
4. **LATE FILES ITEMS: Voted and approved to accept these late filed items.**
- A. Councillor Harris request study at Moody/Maple/High for an exclusive pedestrian phase for crossing of pedestrians. **Voted to approve this request and direct the Traffic Engineer to conduct a pedestrian study and report back with his findings.**
- B. Councillor Harris request study at Woerd Ave./Crescent St. for pedestrian crossing safety. **Voted to approve this request and direct the Traffic Engineer to conduct a pedestrian study and report back with his findings.**

Meeting adjourned @ 12:09

Attendance: All members present. Clerk Frank Lombardo was absent.

Respectfully submitted:

Lisa Gerlach, Acting Clerk
Off Committee Speakers

Name of Speaker	Address, Street, City	Item of Interest	Affiliation i.e. Attorney, Abutter, Interested Party, Traffic Engineer, Petitioner
Ken Evans	34 Madison Ave., Cambridge	180 Third Ave.	Petitioner
Rob Nagi	101 Walnut St., Watertown	180 Third Ave.	VHB – Traffic Engineer
Kathleen Keen	101 Walnut St., Watertown	180 Third Ave.	VHB – Traffic Engineer
Richard Dacey	707 Main St., Waltham	54 Fourth Ave.	Attorney
Dan Mills	28 Lord Rd., Marlborough	54 Fourth Ave.	MDM – Traffic Engineer
Mark Wolman	914 Harford Turnpike, Waterford, CT 06385	54 Fourth Ave.	Principal in Waltham Suites, LLC – Petitioner
Nick Skolis	101 Walnut St., Watertown	180 Third Ave.	VHB – Civil Engineer

