

**MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING
HELD: FEBRUARY 18, 2021 AT 10:00 A.M.
ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

The Acting Chair Tom Magno accepted a motion and the minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

1. PETITIONED ITEMS:

A. Moody St. – Closing Street for Outside Dining

Jeffrey Abellard, Proprietor, Bistro 781 at 336 Moody St. along with Mayor McCarthy is requesting this item be placed on the agenda. The request is to consider closing Moody Street to through motor vehicle traffic from Pine/Crescent Streets south to High/Maple Streets during the warm months of April to November for outside dining. A questionnaire was sent to 86 businesses asking for an opinion to the following; 79 were returned:

1-Close Moody Street only this year	Response = 4%	(4)
2 – Close Moody Street Seasonally every year	Response = 52%	(41)
3 – Close Moody Street full time 365 days	Response = 6%	(5)
4 – Never again	Response = 37%	(29)

Restaurant owners (19) responded with option 2 or 3; 4 responded they did not want to continue this experience; non restaurant business (56); 27 responded with option 2 or 3. 29 did not want to continue this experience beyond this year. Property Owners (34) were also surveyed and 18 responded. 9 responded with option 2.

The results demonstrate a split decision among the business owners and property owners in regards to whether closing Moody Street is a good idea. Most restaurant owners see the experience as beneficial, but the non-restaurant retail owners are about evenly split. The Traffic Engineer, Mr. Garvin recommended further discussion is needed.

Mayor McCarthy spoke and encouraged additional input needed before a decision is made

Councilor Paz favored additional input for all participants

Councilor LeBlanc expressed the concerns of the small businesses

Councilor Vidal there is a need for positive creative feedback

Councilor Durkee expressed the needs of the elderly and consideration for remote van transportation

Councilor Harris stated the concerns of the Covid virus and also the need to assist the handicapped with increased parking and additional signage.

Commission Member Mr. Waddick stated he would like additional comments from the City Council, and the City's Planning Department. **Voted to table and seek additional input.**

B. City Employee Placard

Nick Abruzzi, Director of Waltham Recreation requested 3 Employee Placards for various employees that will be working over at 14 Church St. Traffic Engineer, Mr. Garvin recommended approval. **Voted to have three placards issued to the Recreation Department to be used in the Church St. parking lot.**

C. 481 Main St. – Future Parking Lot

Mayor McCarthy requested this item be placed on the agenda for future off-street parking and traffic improvement for Main St. The purchase of this property will allow for a 22-space municipal parking lot to be created. Parking could then be removed from the north side of Main Street from Craven Circle to Lyman Street. This would create a right turning lane onto Lyman Street and

relieve some of the congestion at Newton and Main Streets for northbound vehicles traveling from Newton Street to Lyman Street. Funds from the Parking Meter Program (\$36,000.) could be used to create the lot. Councilors McLaughlin and LaCava both spoke in favor of this project. **Voted to have the Traffic Engineer continue to have this proposal move forward and it was voted to request \$36,000. from the Parking Meter Program to create a parking lot at 481 Main Street.**

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

- A. Derby St. at Lowell St. – Traffic Improvements (9/18) – Councilor Harris
- B. Warren St. – Traffic Safety Issues (5/19) – Councilor McLaughlin
- C. Elson Rd. Parking Study (6/19) (10/19) – Councilor Durkee
- D. # 80-86 Orange St. – Whalen Housing Authority (9/19) – Councilor Harris
- E. Review Citywide Street Widths for Minimum 25 feet width (12/19)(11/20)(12/20)(1/21)
- F. Cutting Ln. at Stow St. – Proposed RRFB (2/20) – Councilor Mackin
- G. Spruce St. – 5 Minute Parking (5/20) - Mayor
- H. Crescent St. at Cherry St. – Proposed RRFB (5/20) – Councilor Harris
- I. Main St./Lafayette St. and Gore St./Lawndale Ave. – Proposed RRFB's (5/20) – Councilor LaCava
- J. City Wide Speed Study - (5/20)

K. Woburn St. – Traffic Calming Measures (9/20)(11/20) – Councilor Darcy

The Traffic Engineer Mr. Garvin reported the speed study revealed the speed in both directions to be 32 MPH. The problem appears to be the geometry and the need for reconstruction upgrade. **Voted to place on file**

- L. 560 Moody St. – Coldwell Banker Business All Day Parking 90 Day Trial (9/20) (12/20)
- M. Main St. at Exchange St. – Bus Stop issue (11/20)
- N. Highland St. Spur – Traffic Calming Measures (12/20)

O. Trapelo Rd. at Kingston Rd. – Pedestrian Safety (12/20) (1/20) – Councilor Darcy

The recent repaving and reconstruction added a sidewalk along the southern side of Trapelo Rd. A crosswalk was added at Kingston Road without prior Traffic Commission approval. This crosswalk should have enhanced identification to improve public safety. **Voted to install yellow pedestrian signs (W11-2) in both directions approaching the new crosswalk at the eastern junction with Kingston Road.**

P. Hall St. at Chestnut St. – Proposed Crosswalk (1/21)

The Traffic Engineer, Mr. Garvin, recommended two new crosswalks be approved, one each on Hall Street, north and south of Chestnut Street. **Voted to accept this recommendation.**

Q. Upton Rd. at Trapelo Rd. – Parking Restrictions (1/21) – Councilor McLaughlin

Traffic Engineer, Mr. Garvin, recommended amending the existing 1-hour parking space on the south side of Trapelo Road by one space to help increase the sight distance and improve safety for vehicles exiting Upton Road. **Voted to accept this recommendation as follows:**

In Schedule 1

**Delete Trapelo Rd. S. side, 226'E. of Manning Rd. to Upton Rd., 1 Hr. Parking 6am-6pm
Trapelo Rd, S. side, Upton Rd. to Belmont Town Line, No Parking**

Add Trapelo Rd. S. side, 226' E. on Manning Rd. to 30' west of Upton Rd 1 Hr.

Parking 6am-6pm

Trapelo Rd, S. Side, from 30' west of Upton Rd to Belmont Town Line, No Parking

R. MBTA Bus Stop Accessibility and Safety Improvement Program (1/21)

Ms. Natasha Vance and Mr. Joshua Weiland from the MBTA made a presentation concerning consolidation and changes to local Bus Stops. In addition, McMahon Associates, MBTA consultant, has made several recommendations, to amend stops in Waltham. The elimination (location) of a bus stop is the sole discretion of the MBTA. The Traffic Commission's is asked to approve new recommended bus stop locations.

- 1: **High St./Newton St.** – relocate crosswalks; new ADA ramps; adjust signal timing
- 2: **Lake St./Seminole Ave** – relocate signage easterly; eliminate westerly bus stop
- 3: **Lake St./Bowdoin Ave/Princeton Ave.** – relocate signage; eliminate bus stop west of Princeton
- 4: **Main St./Lafayette St./Bowker Rd.** – relocate signage; reconstruct sidewalk
This stop is in front of St. Jude' Parish. The church has indicated that it does not prefer the bus stop here. **Traffic Engineer, Mr. Garvin recommended the bus stop remain at its present location on the near side (east) of the intersection**
- 5: **135 Beaver St.** - relocate each bus stops to Beaver St./Parsons Ave./Clematis Ave
- 6: **Smith St./Loretta Rd.** – eliminate both bus stops
- 7: **Lincoln St./Silver Hill Ln.** – eliminate both bus stops
- 8: **Lake St./Hibiscus Ave.** – eliminate both bus stops
- 9: **Lake St./Shore Rd.** – eliminate bus stop
- 10: **South St./Old South St.** – eliminate bus stop
- 11: **South St. Shakespeare Rd.** – eliminate bus stop
- 12: **High St./Beech St & Gardner St. / Lowell St.** – relocate bus stop from Beech St. to Lowell Street, relocate bus stop from Gardner St. to Lowell St. The Traffic Commission identified the 15-foot mast arm in the northwest corner as being too short. It is recommended that McMahon Associates **include construction of the mast arms with a more appropriate length and placement outside of the proposed ADA ramps**
- 13: **Dale St./Lexington St.** – reconstruct ADA ramps & sidewalk landings
- 14: **130 Lexington St.** – Install traffic signal - - The proposed rail trail will include a new crosswalk and signal about 250 feet to the north of this location. **It is recommended to deny this placement**
- 15 **South St. @ Brandeis** - -install new crosswalk with a RRFB. It is recommended that this be denied. The Traffic Commission has reviewed on several occasions the locations of crosswalks on South Street and the present location just to the north, that has an RRFB is best suited. Additionally, **Mr. Garvin recommends the MBTA consider relocating the present South Street**

bus stop to a new location; Old South Street in front of Brandeis main entrance. MBTA Mr. Wieland objected to this recommendation because the northbound bus on South Street would be required to make two left turns at unsignalized intersections. (More discussion is needed on this request)

Voted to approve a portion of the proposed modifications to bus stops and deny others as follows:

- 1- Eliminate bus stops at Smith/Loretta Rd, Lincoln St./Silver Hill Ln./ Lake/Hibiscus, Lake/Shore Rd.**
- 2-Relocate bus stops at High/Newton; Lake/Seminole; Lake Bowdoin; Main/Lafayette; 135 Beaver St.**
- 3- Deny to locate a bus stop in front of St. Jude's westbound on Main Street**
- 4- Relocate crosswalks ND ADJUST SIGNAL TIMINGS AT High/Newton**
- 5-Sidewalk and/or ADA improvements at High/Newton; Main/Lafayette; Beaver/Parsons**

3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

- A. Parking Meter Report – meter collections down \$16K from same time period last year
- B. Piety Corner – Update – plans are at Purchasing to proceed
- C. Trapelo Rd. / Waverley Oaks Rd. – Update – funding needed for design of retaining wall. Request for this funding has been sent to Mayor. Awaiting response.
- D. MBTA – Forging Ahead Service Proposal – reduction in service
Route 61: North Waltham weekday frequency decreases in the morning and afternoon
Route 71: Watertown to Cambridge weekday, Saturday & Sunday frequency decreases throughout the day; Around 20% frequency reduction to Green Line, Orange Line, and Red Line service; Up to 5% frequency reduction to Blue Line service

Attendance: All members present. Mayor McCarthy; Councilors McLaughlin; Durkee; Paz; Harris; Vidal; LeBlanc and Darcy. There were 64 participants logged in to this Zoom Meeting

Adjourned @ 12:06 PM

Respectfully Submitted
Frank S. Lombardo, Clerk