

**MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING
HELD: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2022 AT 10:00 A.M.
WALTHAM CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL**

A motion was made for the minutes of the previous meeting to be accepted. The vote was delayed and accepted after a point of clarification was made when item 2E (Adams/Crescent St) was discussed.

1. PETITIONED ITEMS:

A. Stop Sign Request, Rockridge Road and Summit Avenue – Mayor McCarthy & Councillor Katz. The Mayor and the Councillor are sponsoring a request to install additional stop signs on Rockridge Road at Summit Avenue. Mr. Castellano, the originator of this request, notified the Commission that his request is for traffic on Rockridge Road to stop at the intersection of Summit Avenue. **Voted to direct the Traffic Engineer to conduct a warrant analysis for stop signs at this location.**

B. City Council Resolution: Safety Improvements at Pine Street/Lowell Street

A City Council Resolution requests a solution for safety at the intersection of Pine Street and Lowell Street. Separately, Councillor Paz has requested a study at this intersection, and for pedestrians crossing Pine Street at the Arthur Clark Apartment Building (48 Pine St). Some parking may need to be removed in the area as part of these safety improvements. **Voted to direct the Traffic Engineer to conduct a traffic safety analysis at the intersection of Pine and Lowell St. In addition, the Traffic Engineer is to review traffic calming measures that can be applied at 48 Pine Street at the senior citizen mid-block crosswalk.**

C. Bright Street Improvements – Councillor LaCava

Councillor LaCava is requesting a study for additional safety improvements on Bright Street. A new double yellow center line (DYCL) along the entire length of Bright Street was recently done as a means of traffic calming. The Councilor and the residents are asking for additional considerations such as a painted parking lane, re-painted crosswalks, and another speed study. Traffic Engineering felt a study should be conducted in the Spring 2023 when winter conditions wouldn't significantly affect the speed data. Member Ms. Cagle and Mr. Kelly expressed concerns about delaying a study. A study should be conducted as soon as possible. Police Chief O'Connell stated he would have "extra attention" to address any speeding issues. **Voted to table, have Traffic Engineering conduct another study in the spring, and have the police increase speed enforcing presence on Bright Street during the winter months leading up to the additional speed study.**

D. School Avenue Improvements – Councilor LaCava

Councilor LaCava is requesting a study of improvements to School Avenue, due to drivers traveling in the wrong direction. **Voted to direct the Traffic Engineer to conduct a study to determine whether additional signs are needed.**

E. Commercial Vehicle Restriction Signs on Vernon Street – Councillor Katz

Councillor Katz is requesting improved signs entering Vernon Street, for the purpose of truck restrictions. **Voted to direct the Traffic Engineer to conduct a study to determine whether improved signage is needed.**

F. Brandeis Crosswalk on South Street, Improved Visibility – Councillor Katz

Councillor Katz is requesting that we investigate improving the visibility of the crosswalk crossing South Street at the Brandeis campus. The crosswalk was recently updated with thermoplastic; there is sufficient overhead street lights and the RRFB adds additional visibility when the button is pushed. It

appears that additional measures are not necessary. **However, it was voted to invite the Brandeis University Safety Officer to attend a meeting and discuss any pedestrian issues they may have.**

G. South Street/Highland Street Signal Timing – Councillor Katz

Councillor Katz is requesting that we evaluate re-timing the traffic signal at the intersection of South Street and Highland Street. **Voted to have the Traffic Engineer study the existing signal timings and make a recommendation at a future meeting.**

H. Redesign of Highland Spur – Traffic Commission Member Tom Magno

Tom Magno is requesting that we reconsider whether Traffic Commission would like to redesign the entrance to Highland Spur. As an interim measure, vertical posts were installed to make it necessary for a vehicle to make a slight, but deliberate turn to enter the “spur”. Traffic Engineer Mr. Garvin recommended to install a permanent “bump out” at the corner which would create more of a hard right turn from Highland Street to enter the Highland Spur. **Voted to have this redesign of Highland Spur go out to bid.**

I. Traffic Commission Parking Subcommittee Update

The Parking Subcommittee has requested to update the full Commission on progress on recommendations to adjustment the Parking Rates and Regulations in Waltham. At the October meeting, municipal parking lot rates, which became effective November 21st, were raised to \$1.00 per hour or \$6.00 per day; electric vehicle spaces were raised to \$3.00 per hour. The Sub-Committee will continue to work on other recommendations such as installation of pay-stations; incentives to use parking lots north of the Moody Street Bridge, extending evening hours from 6PM to 8PM; amend employee parking areas in city lots, etc. At the request of the Subcommittee, the monthly and annual rates were amended as follows: **Voted to have the monthly parking pass raised from \$35.00 to \$70.00 per month; and the annual parking pass was raised from \$300 to \$500 per year, effective January 1, 2023.**

J. New Crosswalk – Weston Street at Summit Avenue

The Engineering Department is requesting approval for a new crosswalk at the intersection of Weston Street and Summit Avenue. This item was supported by Mayor McCarthy. **Voted to have a crosswalk painted on Summit Avenue at Weston Street.**

K. Employee Parking Placard for James LaCrosse

Planning Department employee James LaCrosse is requesting an employee parking placard for his use. (Note: Member Ms. Cagle recused) **Voted to approve an employee parking placard for James LaCrosse.**

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

At the November meeting, a vote was taken to have Radar Speed Signs placed on Crescent Street near the intersection of Adams Street facing both Northbound and Southbound traffic for a trial period of 90 days. The Traffic Engineer will evaluate the effectiveness of these signs and report to the Commission after the trial period. In addition, the Commission directed the Traffic Engineer to recommend a set of criteria to be met in order to install permanent Radar Speed Signs. At this time, we do not have a permanent Radar Sign (solar panel, Speed limit sign and radar that has “your speed”). The expected cost is approximately \$6,600 per set. The vote that was taken was for “immediate action”

and an attempt to determine if such a speed sign will have any effect on reducing the speed of motor vehicles in the Crescent Street area. A before and after study must be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of these signs. The portable radar signs that we have will be used continuously 24 hours a day for 90 days; an additional 90 days may be added, if necessary, to determine if a permanent solar panel Speed Radar Sign is to be installed.

Voted to accept the following recommended criteria:

1: Permanent radar signs can be approved in a School Zone listed in Schedule 16.

Otherwise, if not in a school zone, criteria 2, 3 and/or 4, 5, and 6 must be met.

2: A major street as listed in Schedule 13 (Through Ways)

3: A street listed in Schedule 17 (posted speed limit) with a study speed (85th %) of 5 mph above the posted speed limit

4: A street listed in a Thickly Settled Zone with a study speed (85th %) above 35 mph

5: A 90-day trial period for a speed study to be conducted before and after to determine effectiveness of the radar signs

6: The new speed study results in a reduction of the 85th percent speed of at least 4 mph.

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)

Traffic Engineer Mr. Garvin reported on the use of vertical posts to channel vehicles to the proper lanes. He is concerned that the posts will continuously be knocked over and that the posts will pose a problem for snow plowing operations in the winter. Also, the intent to direct vehicles into the correct lanes will not be accomplished by using vertical posts. Mayor McCarthy expressed concern that the problem at Banks Square extends to Fairmont Avenue along Weston Street. She has respectfully asked the State to look at and study the intersection as well, along with requesting the total number of accidents that have occurred at this intersection in 2022. **Voted to table and direct the Traffic Engineer to provide the Crash History at Banks Square.**

N. Elm St/River St Signal Warrant (Mayor McCarthy*) (5/22)

O. RRFB Request at Lake Street/Princeton Avenue (Mayor McCarthy) (9/22)

The warrant requirement for 20 pedestrian crossings within an hour was not met. The Traffic Engineer recommended another study in the Spring when the playground would most likely have a greater pedestrian crossing. **This was overruled and the majority of the Commission voted, although Mr. Magno opposed, to approve the installation of an RRFB at the crossing of Lake Street at Princeton Avenue. The Traffic Engineer is to seek funding for its purchase and installation.**

P. Lexington Street Bike Path (Councillor Darcy) (9/22)

Q. Charles St. Traffic Calming – Grant St. and Harvard St. (Councillors LaCava and Paz)

Traffic Engineer Mr. Garvin recommended a concept that would change the approach alignment and move eastbound Charles Street vehicles further to the south on Charles Street which would increase the site distance for vehicles exiting Grant Street. However, this would require removing parking on Charles Street in a very high-density area. Although the intersection has a sight distance problem, there

is no record of accidents. Members were reluctant to remove parking in an area that appears not to have a problem. **Voted to table.**

R. Browns Avenue Parking and Safety Study (Councillor Paz) (9/22)

When a vehicle parks up to the corner of Browns Avenue on Charles Street at the intersection of Browns and Charles, the site distance is very small. It was recommended to install a “No Parking Here to Corner” sign on Charles Street to increase the sight distance when exiting from Browns Avenue.

Voted to install a “No Parking Here to Corner” sign on Charles Street, 30 feet west of Browns Avenue.

S. Commercial Vehicle Restriction on Hartwell Street – Mayor McCarthy (10/22)

Members expressed concern that signs entering the City regarding trucks would have the wrong effect and overall impression. An option was for the Police Department, through its social media, to promote an educational message for compliance. Presently, under Art.5 Sec 18, No driver shall park or stand any motor vehicle and/or motor vehicle attachments having a gross vehicle weight of 10,000 pounds or more or exceeding 24 feet in length between 2:00 AM and 6:00 AM on any street under control of the City.

Voted to increase police enforcement and create the educational social media message for compliance.

T. Everett Street Signage and Speed Study – Councillor Katz (11/22)

3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

A. Parking Meter Report – receipts for the month up approximately \$227K

B. Moody St. and Main St. Signage for Mayor’s approval – **Voted to rescind the previous requirement that Traffic Engineering must submit a Sign Approval Permit and receive a signed copy of such permit for any signs to be installed along Main and Moody Street within the limits of the recent sidewalk project. Direct the Traffic Engineer to install all the missing signs along these two streets, in accordance with the approved Rules & Regulations.**

C. Proposed Revisions to Parking Regulations on Gorham Street – revise regulations to match existing signage.

Voted the following: Schedule 1 Parking

Add: Gorham St., North side, Newton St to 60’ west of Newton St, No Parking

D. Proposed Revisions to Parking Regulations on Whitcomb Street - revise regulations to match existing signage.

Voted the following: Schedule 1

Delete: Whitcomb St., west side, 100’ north of Benefit St to Benefit St. No Parking

E. Stop Sign Regulation on McKenn Street at Newton Street

F. Thermoplastic Update – Information

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

4A: Capital Improvement Program

FY2023 – Thermoplastic Paint Service = \$267,000

Construction Beaver St. at Warren St. New Signal = \$500,000.

Citywide signal coordination = \$50,000. (Members requested to raise this to \$100,000 to be more conservative)

Attendance: All members present

Adjourned @ 12:40 PM

Respectfully Submitted

Frank S. Lombardo, Clerk

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