

**MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING  
HELD: THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2023 AT 10:00 A.M.  
WALTHAM CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL**

**Voted to accept the minutes of the February meeting.**

**1. PETITIONED ITEMS:**

**A. Moody Street Proposal, Summer 2023 (Mayor McCarthy)**

Mayor McCarthy is proposing a new setup for outdoor dining for the Summer of 2023. Councillor Paz is also proposing a discussion of Moody Street for this year. Mayor McCarthy stated the Covid emergency powers relative to public dining will be ending shortly. The Mayor proposed to close Moody Street in a hybrid approach. During the weekdays (Sunday evening to Thursday afternoon) Moody Street would be made one-way from Pine/Crescent southbound to Maple/High. A 24-foot center lane for one-way southbound traffic with a speed limit of 10 MPH would be in place from Memorial Day (May 28) to Labor Day (September 4). All on-street parking would be removed. On Thursdays at 4:00 PM to Sunday at 7:00 PM, Moody Street would be closed to all traffic and there would be no on-street parking allowed. The "Upper" end of Moody Street should be included to have outside dining, as it had in the past. Appropriate permits must be obtained from the City Council (for use of space on sidewalks) and Liquor Commission. Councillor Paz spoke in favor of a downtown "Market Place" that should have a three-year commitment and would mirror the same set-up utilized in the past, with recommendations for additional beautification in the area and free parking in the municipal lots prior to 4pm.

Traffic Engineer, Mr. Garvin spoke of the restrictions needed to have safe traffic movement in the area. Under the Mayor's proposal, during the week (when Moody Street is open to one-way traffic), all traffic entering Moody Street must turn southbound. When it is closed to traffic, all the side streets must be blocked and no traffic can enter Moody Street. This would necessitate converting Cushing Street and Chestnut Street (between Moody Street and Hall Street) to two-way travel, with the removal of all on-street parking on those two blocks. Mr. Garvin also stressed the importance of continuing to require payment for parking in the municipal lots in order to ensure proper turnover of the parking spaces for the customers of Moody Street businesses. Commission members wanted to hear public opinions on the restrictions that may be imposed. Discussion should include trash pick-up and delivery trucks. **Voted to have a Public Hearing on Thursday March 30, 2023 at 6:00 PM and invite all who wish to express an opinion.**

**B. Nathan Road Safety Study (Councillor Katz)**

Councillor Katz is requesting a safety study of Nathan Road, focusing on visibility turning from Nathan Road onto Main Street. **Voted to direct the Traffic Engineer to conduct a safety study at the intersection of Main Street and Nathan Road, and report results at a future meeting.**

**C. Commercial Truck Restrictions Between Weston Street and Main Street (Councillor Katz)**

Councillor Katz is requesting a study of existing truck restrictions on the streets connecting Weston St (Rte. 20) and Main St (Rte. 117), including Stow St, Everett St, Nathan Rd, and Eddy St. Residents have expressed concerns of large trucks using the side streets (Stow Street, Everett Street, Nathan Road and Eddy Street) to access the 1265 Main Street development, particularly Market Basket. Commercial trucks are prohibited on Stow Street and Eddy Street from 7pm to 7am. It is recommended that the Police Department continue to enforce the existing truck restrictions overnight on Stow Street and Eddy Street. **Voted to suggest the Police Department enforce the existing truck restrictions and replace any inadequate signage.**

**D. Rte. 117/Green St/Rte. 20 Design Update (Rob Nagi, VHB)**

VHB presented an update on the progress of the design of the Main St (Rte. 117)/Green St/Weston St (Rte. 20) project. Mr. Nagi summarized a report that 100% design plans have been submitted to MassDOT for consideration. There will be a “sound wall” along I95 from Rt.117 to Rt. 20 ramps. Construction is expected to start in April 2023 for this year and again in the Spring of 2024 for completion. This project is privately funded and is a “by-right project”. Banks Square and Tavern Square are being reviewed for possible improvements to help reduce neighborhood drive through traffic. Councillor LaFauci asked if some consideration could be given for a bike path in the Green Street area. **Information Only**

**E. 1250 Main St, Marijuana Dispensary Traffic Study Update (Shaun Kelly, Vanasse & Associates)** Vanasse & Associates has updated the previously approved traffic study for the marijuana dispensary proposed at 1250 Main St. Mr. Shawn Kelly appeared on behalf of Vanasse & Associates Inc. (VAI), the traffic consultant, for the proposed Adult-Use Marijuana Dispensary. The existing building will be demolished, and a new 2,900 square foot dispensary building will be constructed. Project-related traffic increases are expected to generate approximately 618 vehicle trips on a typical weekday, 56 trips during the weekday peak hour. On a typical Saturday, the trip generation is expected to be 758, with a peak hour trip of 84. The facility will have 33 parking spaces which is adequate for the peak hour demands. **Voted to accept the Traffic Impact Report and forward it to the City Council for their deliberations.**

**F. Phantom Gourmet Food Festival 2023 (September 23)**

Phantom Gourmet is requesting approval for the Food Festival on Moody Street in Waltham on Saturday September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Ms. Tina Schindler, VP of Events for Phantom Gourmet, presented their proposal for this event. The proposal is similar to last year, closing Moody Street from Pine/Crescent to Maple/High from 6am to 6pm. A center fire lane will be maintained, with an entrance to the area only at High/Maple and Pine/Crescent St. The Carter Street lot will be used for handicap parking only. Some additional no parking restrictions on Pine Street and Crescent Street were requested. Traffic Engineer Garvin suggested that the request to close Moody Street for on-street dining should be extended to Sunday September 24 (Labor Day was chosen to end the on-street dining) if this proposal is approved. Mayor McCarthy spoke in favor, but some improvements must be made for the rubbish cleanup and the breakdown time may need to be adjusted. In addition, the summary of expenses will be reviewed. Councillor Harris spoke in favor of the proposal, as an estimated 7,000 people attended this event last year. **The Commission voted to approve the request. The Traffic Engineer was directed to attend coordination meetings with the applicant, and other City Departments.**

**G. 200 Smith Street, Traffic Impact Study**

VHB has submitted a Traffic Impact Study for the proposed expansion of 200 Smith Street, for a Special Permit. Mr. Rob Nagi, Traffic Consultant at VHB, appeared on behalf of the proponent. The existing building at 200 Smith Street, named The Post, is proposed to expand. The existing building is about 259,000 square feet (office, lab/manufacturing, and warehouse) with 1,254 parking spaces. The proposed expansion will add about 117,000 square feet and increase the parking to 1,537 spaces. The AM peak hour will increase by 104 vehicle trips and the PM peak hour by 108 vehicle trips. Traffic counts were taken when the east side of the Trapelo Road overpass had full capacity of the existing businesses in the area. At the southerly driveway, exiting vehicles will be encouraged to turn right only and the north drive for left turn only. It was recommended to upgrade the “Do Not Block Box” at the senior living facility on Smith St. Smith and Trapelo Road operated at LOS D and it is expected to remain the same. Signal timings should be optimized to address any existing vehicular backup and to help accommodate the increase in traffic due to this expansion. Member

Mr. Kelly asked the proponent to conduct an updated traffic count for the City Council to consider for its vote.

Mr. Harold Stevens, Ms. Melanie McDonough, and Mr. Robert Coleman all submitted letters of concern addressing anticipated problems that the increased traffic would create for the residents in the area. Also, they expressed concerns regarding the signalized intersections from Trapelo Road north into the Town of Lexington. Councillor Darcy also spoke in opposition to this proposal. He asked for improvements at the intersection of Smith and Trapelo Road to improve the walk signal. He also asked for new traffic counts for the Council review. **Voted to accept the Traffic Impact and Access Study, prepared by VHB for the proposed expansion at 200 Smith Street, and request a new traffic count to be provided to the City Council for their deliberations.**

#### **H. Railroad At Grade Crossings – Elm Street, Moody Street, South Street**

Traffic Commission requested recommendations for improvements at the three remaining at grade crossings, other than Beaver Street, which is being redesigned. Mayor McCarthy reminded the Commission that the City must comply with FRA guidelines to redesign any of the railroad crossings. Traffic Engineer, Mr. Garvin, reported that Beaver Street will have an upgrade to replace the raised medians with a Four-Quad Gate system. This will have lowered gates for each entering and exiting direction, preventing any vehicle from crossing the tracks while a train is approaching.

Traffic Engineer, Mr. Garvin, will now consider improvements at the other three at-grade crossings. **Elm Street** – the raised median reduces the lane width of the northbound approach. Removing the median and installing a Four-Quad Gate will increase the northbound travel width in order to restore two lanes.

**Moody Street** – the existing medians do not impede traffic operations and should remain in place.

**South Street** – the raised medians restrict turning movements particularly for Aggregate. It is recommended that a Four-Quad gate be installed.

**Voted to direct the Traffic Engineer to work with Engineering and CPW to perform an official survey to verify if there is enough ROW width to restore the 2 northbound traffic lanes on Elm St before exploring the Four-Quad gate solution for this intersection. The Traffic Engineer will work with the Purchasing Department to release an RFP for the design of a Four-Quad Gate system at Elm Street and South Street.**

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

- A. Elson Rd. Parking Study (6/19) (9/19) – Councillor Durkee
- B. # 80-86 Orange St. – Whalen Housing Authority (9/19) – Councillor Harris
- C. City Wide Speed Study - (5/20) (9/20)
- 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. \*Elm St/River St Signal Warrant (Mayor McCarthy) (5/22)

- N. Lexington Street Bike Path (Councillor Darcy) (9/22)
- O. Charles Street Traffic Calming – Grant Street and Harvard Street (Councillors LaCava and Paz) (9/22) (11/22) (12/22)
- P. Everett Street Signage and Speed Study – Councillor Katz (11/22)
- Q. 240/265 Beaver Street Traffic Safety Analysis – Councillor Bradley-MacArthur (11/22)
- R. Bright Street Improvements – Councillor LaCava (12/22)
- S. Brandeis Crosswalk on South Street, Improved Visibility – Councillor Katz (12/22) (1/23)
- T. MBTA Better Bus Project Update (1/23)
- U. Adams Street Speed and Safety Study (2/23)

**V. RRFB Request for Dale Street at Caughey Street (2/23)** The Traffic Engineer used the standards established by the Wayside Rail Trail in the warrant analysis for the RRFB request for Dale Street at Caughey Street. RRFBs are only warranted in locations where the speed of vehicles is 35mph or less, and where the traffic volume is at least 150 vehicles and pedestrians are at least 20, during the peak hour. On a school day on March 6, during the morning peak hour, only 11 pedestrians used the crosswalk. In the afternoon, a total of 12 pedestrian crossed. Mayor McCarthy spoke of the heavy traffic that uses Dale Street as a cut-through and this street is a problem for pedestrians. Councillor McMenimen also spoke in favor for the RRFB because this is not an ordinary travel street. Councillor LaFauci also spoke that Dale Street is not an ordinary street and consideration should be given. Members felt that another review should be made in a warmer month and to reconsider the recommendation. **Voted to table and have the Traffic Engineer conduct another study during a warmer month where more pedestrians might utilize the crosswalk.**

### **3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

- A. Parking Meter Report – funding is up \$35K
- B. Traffic Commission Status Report - Information
- C. Removal of Disabled Parking Spaces on Cross Street – **Voted to remove two HP spaces on Cross Street; one at #14 and the other at #16**

**Attendance: All members present.**

**Note: Member Planning Director, Ms. Cagle, retired on March 3, 2023**

**Adjourned @ 1:04 PM**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Frank S. Lombardo, Clerk**

**Waltham Traffic Commission****Date of the Meeting: March 16, 2023**

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<b>Name of Speaker</b>	<b>Address # Street, City</b>	<b>Item of Interest</b>	<b>Affiliation i.e., Attorney Abutter Interested party – Traffic Engineer Petitioner</b>
<b>Paul Katz</b>	<b>89 Cedarwood Ave</b>	<b>Everett/Nathan</b>	<b>Ward 7 Councillor</b>
<b>Jeannette A. McCarthy</b>	<b>91 Hamilton Rd</b>	<b>1A – 1F – 1H</b>	<b>Mayor of Waltham</b>
<b>George Darcy</b>	<b>23 Hobbs Rd</b>	<b>200 Smith St</b>	<b>Ward 3 Councillor</b>
<b>Cathyann Harris</b>	<b>42 Hovey Rd</b>	<b>Moody St</b>	<b>Ward 8 Councillor</b>
<b>Robin Capello</b>	<b>Warren St</b>	<b>Moody St Phantom</b>	
<b>Nathan Sigel</b>	<b>160 Worcester Ln</b>		
<b>Shigara Singlt</b>	<b>482 Moody St</b>	<b>DaVinci Ptio</b>	
<b>Dave Becker</b>	<b>469 Moody St</b>	<b>Sweet Basi</b>	
<b>Jonathan Paz</b>	<b>8 Curtis St</b>	<b>Moody St</b>	<b>Ward 9 Councillor</b>
<b>Tina Schindler</b>	<b>Phantom Gourmet</b>	<b>Moody St</b>	
<b>Shaun Kelly</b>	<b>VSI</b>	<b>1260 Main St</b>	
<b>Robert Nagi</b>	<b>101 Walnut St Watertown</b>	<b>1G &amp; 1E</b>	<b>Traffic Consultant</b>