

Received: Wed 6/26/2024 9:50 PM

From: karen@clarityllc.us <karen@clarityllc.us>

To: Traffic Commission <trafficcommission@somervillema.gov>

Cc: 'Shiso Kitchen' <shisokitchen@gmail.com>; 'Dave Lewis' <dave@bradleyprops.com>; 'Toni Shelzi' <toni@abgrealty.net>

Subject: FW: Washington St. Parking Usage & Need

Good evening,

We were given this email address to publish a public comment regarding the hearing tomorrow night with an appeal for some parking availability changes on Washington street.

In March of this year I acquired Sweet Laundry, on Washington street. I was really quite pleased with the work being done on the sidewalk, having the bike lane there, and general upgrades. But then my next door neighbour, Jess, owner of Shiso Kitchen, told me that our parking spaces were going away – being replaced with handicap accessible space and a loading zone. We respectfully request and strongly urge you to consider our business needs, and our notes below.

Shiso Kitchen and Sweet Laundry are the only businesses on the block; her customers need a minimum of several hours, and my customers need a minimum of an hour and a half, most stay for 2-3 hours to wash, dry and fold. It's really critical we be able to have customers park, I'm not sure how that could be in question. I've asked a few of my customers if they would be able to use a handicap space, or the loading zone and the answer is no. Doing laundry, you come in with even one load, put more money on your laundry card, load the machine, put in soap and then wait 30-50 minutes for it to be done. **A loading zone won't work: no one drives away and then comes back to park again.** The for the dryer, it takes a few minutes to load, and again, no one is going to drive away for 30-60 minutes and then come back and park again. Often customers use our folding tables, so they need the drying time, and then the folding time. **Please - you will drive away customers if you take away our parking.** Not only for the laundromat, but for neighbouring businesses that the customers walk to: they often set the washer, walk out and walk back in 30 minutes with a Whole Foods bag, or a coffee or soda or snack – they often shop while their clothes are in the washer and dryer.

I've cc'd Shiso Kitchen for additional comments, and also Dave Lewis and Toni Shelzi, who own and manage the residential units, and the building that Shiso and Sweet are housed in. Their tenants would lose all street parking, and there is no other parking for the tenants in this building.

I'm going to try to make the hearing tomorrow night, but we had a large volume of orders that are due tomorrow, and several more pickups as well. Please, consider the way our customers use these spaces. Consider the tenants living on the street who need to park here.

Best

Karen

www.sweetlaundromat.com

Doing good? We want to help. Ask about pricing for humanitarian/advocate organizations.

Received Thu 6/27/2024 10:18 AM

From: Shiso Kitchen shisokitchen@gmail.com

To: Jacqueline Stagnari <jstagnari@somervillema.gov>; Traffic Commission <trafficcommission@somervillema.gov>; Adam Polinski <apolinski@somervillema.gov>
CC: Dave Lewis <dave@bradleyprops.com>; Toni Shelzi <toni@abgrealty.net>; Marisa Morales <marisa@bradleyprops.com>; richard.nilsson@nilssonassociates.us; karen@clarityllc.us; Jesse Moos <jmoos@somervillema.gov>

Re: FW: Washington St. Parking Usage & Need

Hi All-

I want to address the Traffic Commission, and Adam's comments specifically.

I have been ringing the alarm regarding the absolute need for parking on our section of street for YEARS. The fact that you, Adam, specifically talked about the 'Year Long Community Process' is hypocritical- 1. NO ONE has ever contacted us business owners directly to ask what our actual need was, and 2. I responded to all of the surveys, sent e-mails, submitted photos, and voiced concern to literally every person I've come in personal contact with from the city since there were whispers of a street planning change up years ago. (Jesse, you know this). Not ONE person responded to me personally. Are WE not an integral part of this community? I've been at 374 Washington Street for 11 years.

If your 'community process' sample area is too large, then that defeats the purpose of Somerville's entire small neighborhood system design. We are not the same neighborhood as Union Square, and we have different needs and access. How come no one ever takes us into consideration? If your theory that the community need on the whole is greater than 1 or 2 voices, then you're also hypocritical in putting a handicapped spot right outside of our businesses, that will only serve 1 person but not the greater whole of the actual community need. It will be empty for most of the day, when many people will be fighting to find parking elsewhere. You clearly do not understand the nature of our businesses, and have demonstrated by your actions that you don't care. What about the residents? You want to literally push out everyone with a vehicle? That's discriminatory.

As I've mentioned on MANY occasions before, while we absolutely love hosting the neighbors as customers, Shiso Kitchen's business is NOT just based on the folks walking in from down the block to enjoy a night out. We are bringing in people from ALL over New England to enjoy a trip to Somerville, explore the area, and frequent businesses. These people cannot and will not use the bike lane, and are being treated with hostility for driving a car. I cannot tell you the amount of customers I have who already complain about how terrible the access is in Somerville, and that's with the current parking scenario. I cannot believe you've made the decision to eliminate 80%+ of what the need is, WITHOUT ever talking to us. When you conducted your surveys, you did not consider the outside factor of

bringing people and commerce to the city. You've reduced us to a statistic on a paper without taking an accurate survey sample.

Plans can be changed, as we've already witnessed with the construction and then demolition, and reconstruction that we've been dealing with. You've forced our businesses to endure endless construction mess and mistakes. Where is the accountability for that? We beg of you to hear our voices for once. The reality is we NEED parking.

For the Traffic and Parking Commission:

We absolutely need 2 hour parking (permit excepted) outside our businesses, and along Washington Street. I legitimately fear that our businesses will be forced to permanently close if we do not have at least this as an option.

We do not need a loading zone.

To quote Adam re: the handicapped spot right outside: "[These spaces provide better access for those who rely on it most, and can serve any resident or customer coming to the area. Removing this space would contradict that commitment.](#)" Again, our businesses in the commercial area do not actively need a handicapped spot right out front, when there is one just kitty-corner across the street (please refer to Karen's prior comments). If this is true that it can serve "**Any** Resident or Customer coming to the area", please elaborate how non-disabled people can use this spot when it's not in use with a handicapped permit? As you say, it should serve ANY resident or customer coming to the area.

I beg you to reconsider, and allow some sort of compromise for any parking allowance on the odd side of the street, even if it's just after 6PM or 7PM after rush hour is over. You are clearly not part of the neighborhood, and do not see just how many people park on there every day.

Dave, Toni, Marissa- This absolutely affects your properties, tenants, and business in addition to ours. I can't imagine how bad this is going to get in August when the students & faculty come back.

Please, I'm again begging, hear us and what the actual need is for the neighborhood. We absolutely need any and all parking, but most importantly by the 2 hour (except permit) all along the street.

Thank you, Everyone. This has been a super stressful and awful time for us. I appreciate everyone taking the time to hear our needs, even at this late hour, and consider our needs.

Sincerely,
Jess Roy
Owner, Shiso Kitchen