

Traffic Commission Minutes
July 19, 2018

Attendance: Stan Koty, Thomas Graney, Lt. Polito, Lena Webb, Mark Niedergang
Staff: Laura Accaputo, Terence Smith, Suzanne Rinfret, Adam Polinski

The meeting was held at the Department of Public Works, 17 Franey Road

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30pm

Item #1 – Minutes from the May 17, 2018 Traffic Commission Meeting accepted unanimously

Item #2 – Request for the seasonal removal (March-November) of approximately two parking spaces on the south side of Highland Av west of Crocker St for the installation of a Blue Bikes station, and waive the 3 week advertising period

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has no objection to the request but is concerned about waiving the 3 week advertising period since this is not an emergency.
- Alderman Niedergang stated both he and Alderman Ewen-Campen support the request and asked why the advertising period had to be waived.
- Adam Poliski explained the installation schedule would have to be revised if the advertising period isn't waived, otherwise we could have the stations in 2 weeks. The Chair recommended a motion be made amending the request to waive a 2 week advertising period.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve, with the amendment of waiving the 2 week advertising period, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #3 – Request for the seasonal removal (March-November) of the two metered parking spaces on the west side of Grove St north of the community path for a Blue Bikes station, and waive the 3 week advertising period

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has no objection to the request but still has the same concerns regarding waiving the advertising period.
- Thomas Graney advised them not to block the gate.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve, with the amendment of waiving the 2 week advertising period, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #4 – Request for the seasonal removal (March-November) of approximately two 2-hour parking spaces on the north side of Washington St, just east of Myrtle St, for a Blue Bikes station, and waive the 3 week advertising period

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has no objection to the request but still has the same concerns regarding waiving the advertising period.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve, with the amendment of waiving the 2 week advertising period, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #5 – Request for conversion of 2-hour parking space on the north side of Washington St between Washington Terrace and Mansfield St to metered parking

- Terence Smith stated this request came from the Ward Alderman and Traffic and Parking has no objection to it.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve, 2nd by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #6 – Request to allow legal contraflow bicycle traffic along Marshall St between Pearl St and Broadway (approx. 1600ft) for a 12 month trial period, beginning upon the installation of associated pavement markings and signage

- Alderman Niedergang stated he supports this request
- Lena Webb agreed and believes it may helpful with the upcoming bridge closing
- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has no objections but this was done a year ago on Marshall St and there were problems with traffic exiting the street. He stated Traffic and Parking recommends a 12 month trial period to determine if there are any safety issues.

Lt. Polito made a motion to approve for a 12 month trial period, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #7 – Request for a bike corral in the 2-hour parking spaces on the east side of Webster Av, just south of Everett St, for a 90 day trial period

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has no objection to the request.

Lt. Polito made a motion to approve, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #8 – Request for Safety Zones at the following locations:

- a) School St – from Medford St to Oxford St (Somerville High School)
 - b) Summer St – from Porter St to Lowell St (Morse-Kelley Playground)
 - c) Grand Union Boulevard – from Route 28 to Great River Rd (Sylvester Baxter Riverfront Park)
 - d) Great River Rd – from Grand Union Boulevard to Artisan Way (Sylvester Baxter Riverfront Park)
- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has no objection to the request.

Lt. Polito made a motion to approve, 2nd by Thomas Graney. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #9 – Request to change two 2 Hour Parking Spaces to metered spaces in front of 483 Somerville Av

- Terence Smith stated this request came from the Ward Alderman and Traffic and Parking has no objection to it.

Lena Webb made a motion to approve, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #10 – Request for Do Not Enter restriction, 7am-9am and 4pm-6pm except city residents and bicycles on Governor Winthrop Road at Shore Drive

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking does not support peak hour turning restrictions as they do not convey a clear message and are confusing to the motorist. Unless there is a police presence the signs are unenforceable and ineffective and diminish the respect for all other regulatory signs. Traffic and Parking does not support this request.
- Lt. Polito agreed and stated the police department has no capacity to properly enforce all of these restrictions and the court dismisses these violations when appealed. He stated the Somerville Police Department does not support the request.
- Alderman Niedergang stated the request was submitted by the Ward 4 Alderman and he requests they explain why this is important.
- Terence Smith noted in the past these have been approved for a 90 day trial period.
- Lt. Polito stated the issue is that people expect daily enforcement; he has no problem with installing a sign as a deterrent.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve for a 90 day trial period, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #11 – Request for Do Not Enter restriction, 7am-9am and 4pm-6pm except city residents and bicycles on Fenwick St at Broadway

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking does not support peak hour restrictions as they do not convey a clear message and are confusing to the motorist. Unless there is a police presence the signs are unenforceable and ineffective and diminish the respect for all other regulatory signs. Traffic and Parking does not support this request.
- Lt. Polito agreed and stated the police department has no capacity to properly enforce all of these restrictions and the court dismisses these violations when appealed. He stated the Somerville Police Department does not support the request.
- Alderman Niedergang stated the request was submitted by the Ward 4 Alderman and he requests they explain why this is important.
- Terence Smith noted in the past these have been approved for a 90 day trial period.
- Lt. Polito stated the issue is that people expect daily enforcement; he has no problem with installing a sign as a deterrent.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve for a 90 day trial period, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #12 – Request for Do Not Enter restriction, 7am-9am and 4pm-6pm except city residents and bicycles on Durham St at Beacon St

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking does not support peak hour restrictions as they do not convey a clear message and are confusing to the motorist. Unless there is a police presence the signs are unenforceable and ineffective and diminish the respect for all other regulatory signs. Traffic and Parking does not support this request.
- Lt. Polito agreed and stated the police department has no capacity to properly enforce all of these restrictions and the court dismisses these violations when appealed. He stated the Somerville Police Department does not support the request.
- Alderman Niedergang stated the request was submitted by the Ward 4 Alderman and he requests they explain why this is important.
- Terence Smith noted in the past these have been approved for a 90 day trial period.
- Lt. Polito stated the issue is that people expect daily enforcement; he has no problem with installing a sign as a deterrent.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve for a 90 day trial period, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #13 – Request for the removal of a parking space at 96 Concord Av to enable safe transit for large service vehicles

- Terence Smith stated Traffic & Parking does not like to eliminate parking spaces. Director Rinfret discussed this concern with the Alderman and he amended his request to the regulatory 20ft intersection restriction with the caveat that this particular intersection has No Parking signage installed.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve as amended, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0

Item #14 – Request for the removal of a parking space on Beacon St at Eustis St to improve visibility

- Terence Smith stated Traffic & Parking does not like to eliminate parking spaces. Director Rinfret discussed this concern with the Alderman and he amended his request to the regulatory

20ft intersection restriction with the caveat that this particular intersection has No Parking signage installed.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve as amended, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0

Item #15 – Request for Handicapped Parking

a) 15 Russell Rd

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking does not support this request as the applicant owns the property and has a driveway. He noted the ADA Coordinator, Nancy Salamoun, has requested we table the item until next month.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to table the item, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0.

b) 6 Houghton St

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking has no objection to this request.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve, 2nd by Lt. Polito. Motion passed: 5-0.

Item #16 – Request to extend the existing Fire Lane on the north side of Woodbine St an additional 115ft for a total length of 265ft

- Terence Smith stated Traffic and Parking in conjunction with the Somerville Fire Department support this request. There is a new development at this location and the extended fire lane will cover the entire length of the new building.

Lt. Polito made a motion to approve, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0.

PRIOR BUSINESS

Item #17 – Request for Handicapped Parking

14A Cherry St (tabled from May 2018)

- Terence Smith explained the applicant owns the property and has a driveway and Traffic and Parking does not support the request, it was tabled from the May meeting at the Chairs request since all members were not in attendance.
- Alderman Niedergang asked about the medical documentation and the Chair explained any discussion regarding this would have to be done in Executive Session.

A motion to go into Executive Session at 5:45pm was made by Alderman Niedergang, seconded by Thomas Graney. The Chair called for a roll call vote: Alderman Niedergang – yes; Lt. Polito – yes; Thomas Graney – yes; Lena Webb – yes; Chairman Koty – yes: Motion passes: 5-0.

The Traffic Commission came out of Executive Session at 5:55pm.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve the request, seconded by the Chair. The Chair called for a roll call vote on the motion to approve: Alderman Niedergang – yes; Lt. Polito – yes; Thomas Graney – yes; Lena Webb – yes; Chairman Koty – yes. The motion to approve passes: 5-0.

Item #18 - No Right Turn from 7am-9am and 4pm-6pm except city residents and bicycles onto Church St from Summer St (approved for a 90 day trial period March 2018)

- Terence Smith stated no complaints have been received and Traffic and Parking has no objection to permanent approval.

Alderman Niedergang made a motion to approve, 2nd by Lena Webb. Motion passed: 5-0.

Lt. Polito made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:56pm, 2nd by the Chair. Motion passed: 5-0.