

**MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING
HELD: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023 AT 10:00 A.M.
WALTHAM CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL**

The Chair accepted a motion and the minutes of the November meeting were approved. Item 3D Trapelo Road & Forest Street was amended to include refreshed pavement markings at the intersection.

1. PETITIONED ITEMS:

A. Stop Sign at Hamilton Rd/Virginia Rd (Councillor Katz)

Councillor Katz is requesting a STOP sign at the intersection of Hamilton Road and Virginia Road. It was recommended to have the Traffic Engineer perform a Stop Sign warrant analysis. **Voted to have the Traffic Engineer perform a stop sign warrant analysis.**

B. Veterans Municipal Parking Resolution

Waltham City Council passed a Resolution to request free parking in the municipal parking lots for all Waltham Veterans. Traffic Engineering recommended free parking for any vehicle, for the time allocated, in any municipal parking lot that displays a veterans license plate, regardless if the customer is a Waltham resident or not. However, arguments were made that not all veterans have a veterans license plate, and therefore, veteran parking placards should be given to said Waltham veterans who do not have a veterans license plate, so that they can receive the same city-wide benefit. **Voted to approve free parking in the municipal lots for any vehicle displaying a Veterans license plate and also allowing the City to issue annual parking placards to Waltham residents who are qualified Veterans to park for free even if they do not have a veterans license plate. The details for how to implement the parking placard program were left to the City departments to determine.**

C. Commercial Vehicle Parking Regulations

Traffic Commission Clerk Lombardo has requested an evaluation of the regulations and definitions for commercial vehicle parking, to see if improvements can be made.

The definitions of a Commercial Vehicle and a Commercial Vehicle, Heavy need to be amended due to the ambiguity related to the gross vehicle weight designation and the difficulty in determining that designation by the Police while enforcing. Several City Councilors including Councilor Robert Logan and Councilor Cathynn Harris have been requesting changes for some time due to the many complaints concerning the overnight parking of these vehicles on residential streets. **Voted to approve the proposed changes to the Traffic Rules and regulations.**

Delete: Article 1, Section 2 Definitions, the definition for a Commercial Vehicle and Commercial Vehicle, Heavy in its entirety.

Delete Article 5, Section 18 and replace with a new Article 5, Section 18

Delete the Title of Article 7, Section 14

**Add: Article 1, Section 2 Definitions
Commercial Vehicle**

Any vehicle which is used in the commercial transportation of goods, wares, merchandise, materials or other property, or **which has a commercial registration plate**, and has one or more of the following characteristics:

- i) Has a carry capacity in excess of two and one-half (2 1/2) tons; or
- ii) Is more than eighteen (18) feet in length or seven (7) feet in width; or
- iii) Has more than four (4) wheels, or more than two (2) axles; or
- iv) Contains more than four (4) square feet of advertising; or
- v) Has a lesser rating as determined by federal regulation; or
- vi) Is designed to transport more than 16 passengers, including the driver; or
- vii) Which transports hazardous materials and is required to be placard in accordance with 49CFR part 12, subpart F; or
- viii) Any vehicle described in regulations promulgated by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles

Add: Article 1, Section 2 Definitions

Trailer

Any vehicle or object on wheels and having no motive power of its own, but which is drawn by, or used in combination with, a motor vehicle.

Add Article 5, Section 18

No driver shall park or stand a Commercial Registered Vehicle and/or motor vehicle attachment (excluding recreational vehicles) or exceeding 24 feet in length between 2:00 AM and 6:00 AM on any part of any street, highway, road or parkway under control of the City, providing that this regulation shall not apply to emergency vehicles, regardless of size, owned or operated by the City, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the United States of America are hereby exempt from these regulations. Each day in which a motor vehicle is in violation of this provision shall constitute a separate offense.

Add the following

Title Article 7, Section 14 Commercial Vehicles of Certain Streets

Commercial Vehicles of Certain Streets

D. Chaffee Ave/Canterbury Rd All-Way STOP

A petition has been submitted to convert the intersection of Chaffee Avenue and Canterbury Road to an All-Way STOP control. It was also requested to include an All-Way stop warrant analysis for the intersection of Chaffee Avenue and Ellery Road. **Voted to direct the Traffic Engineer to conduct a speed study and All-Way Stop warrant analysis at these two intersections.**

E. Watch City Steampunk Festival, Saturday May 11

The annual Steampunk Festival is planned for Saturday May 11, 2024. Traffic Commission approval is needed. Carter Street will be closed during the event, for the entire length of the street on Saturday from 6:00 AM to 6:30 PM to facilitate safe and orderly set-up and break-down. Free use of parking spaces in the Carter Street Lot, the upper deck of the Central Square Deck, and the parking spaces along Elm Street adjacent to Waltham Common (west side) will be available for Festival Staff, Volunteers, Performers, and Exhibitors. MBTA will be contacted for relocation of busses during the Carter Street closure. **Voted to approve this request.**

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

- A. Elson Rd. Parking Study (6/19) (9/19) (6/23) – Councillor Durkee
- B. Adams St. at Crescent St. – Proposed All-Way and Corridor Study – Councillor Harris (11/21) (11/22) (12/22)
- C. *Bedford St – Speeding Issues – Mayor McCarthy (12/21) (9/22)

D. Lowell St – Proposed Traffic Study for Pedestrian and Public Safety – Councillor Harris (12/21) (9/22) (11/22)

From previously collected speed data, it is clear that most vehicles on Lowell Street travel between 25 and 30 miles per hour. This is a reasonable expected speed on a street of this type and classification. However, due to the narrow width of the road and the on-street parking, concerns regarding pedestrian safety and visibility were raised. There are 12 crosswalks from Pine Street to Derby Street. In an effort to increase pedestrian safety and visibility in 2023, vertical posts were installed to mimic what it would look like with sidewalk curb extensions, typically referred to as “bump outs”. It appeared to be successful in increasing visibility for pedestrians waiting to cross Lowell Street. There are nine crosswalks where it is possible that curb extensions could be constructed. Adjustments for drainage (catch basins) and fire hydrants may be necessary. **Voted to direct the Traffic Engineer to request funding to hire a consultant to design curb extensions along Lowell Street, taking into account pedestrian safety, maintaining available on-street parking, and allowing adequate turning radii for firetrucks.**

- E. Main Street at Newton St & Lyman St – Traffic Signal Coordination (1/22) (11/22)
- F. *Harrington Road Speed Study (Mayor McCarthy) (3/22) (9/22)
- G. *Villa Street: Speed Bumps (Mayor McCarthy) (4/22) (9/22)
- H. *Elm St/River St Signal Warrant (Mayor McCarthy) (5/22)
- I. 240/265 Beaver Street Traffic Safety Analysis – Councillor Bradley-MacArthur (11/22) (6/23)
- J. Brandeis Crosswalk on South Street, Improved Visibility – Councillor Katz (12/22) (1/23)
- K. MBTA Better Bus Project Update (1/23)
- L. Elm Street Northbound Approach to Railroad Crossing (5/23) (6/23)
- M. Review of Parking Regulations on Berkley Street – Mayor McCarthy (9/23)
- N. Left Turn Restrictions from Fiske Ave and Fairmont Ave onto Weston St – Councillor Katz (9/23)

O. Boynton/Winthrop Switch Stop Sign Approaches – Mayor McCarthy (9/23)

A previous speed study showed the 85th percentile speed to be 20 MPH. The accident history shows no patten of crashes. None of the All-Way stop warrants have been met. However, Councilor Katz favors the idea of switching the stop signs. Additionally, Member Mr. Magno supports an All-Way Stop, despite the data suggesting otherwise. Traffic Engineer, Mr. Garvin stated that the West End Traffic Study has been awarded to BSC Group and that before any potential stop-gap solutions are implemented, it would be most beneficial for BSC Group to conduct their own analysis and incorporate the concerns of this intersection into their study, to achieve a more comprehensive solution for the neighborhood. **Voted to install two additional stop signs on Winthrop St to make this intersection an All-Way stop.**

In Schedule 11 (Stop Signs) in the Traffic Rules & Regulations, add:

Winthrop St at Boynton St, facing eastbound and westbound traffic

- P. High Street Parking Limit – Councillor Harris (10/23)

Q. Maple Street Traffic Safety Study (Mayor McCarthy) (11/23)

The most recent accident was the result of high speed. The crosswalks are faded and would benefit from being refreshed in thermoplastic. Maple Street has been included in the thermoplastic list once the contractor resumes operations in Spring 2024. The dimly lit area would also benefit from increased lighting. **Voted to have the thermoplastic contractor refresh the Maple Street pavement markings (specifically crosswalks) as soon as possible, as well as suggest to the Wires Department to install a new street light at this location.**

R. RRFB at Crosswalk on Lincoln Street at MacArthur School (Councillor Dunn) (11/23)

S. Proposed Chase Bank ATM at 1030 Main Street, Traffic Impact Study (11/23)

Voted to table at the request of the petitioner.

T. Proposed Crosswalk at 100 Trapelo Road (11/23)

As a result of the study, Traffic Engineering reported that installing a crosswalk at 100 Trapelo Road would be unsafe, as the sight distance for oncoming vehicles is limited due to the horizontal curvature of the road and the stone wall. Installing a crosswalk at this location would give pedestrians a false sense of security, crossing the street, when oncoming vehicles wouldn't have adequate stopping sight distance. Alternatively, a safer location to install a crosswalk was found about 350 west of 100 Trapelo Road at the intersection of Trapelo Road and Briarwood Road. A crosswalk at this location would require a new street light as well as a new ADA ramp on the south side of Trapelo Road. **Voted to approve a new crosswalk crossing Trapelo Road at the intersection with Briarwood Road after a new street light and ADA ramp have been installed.**

3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

A. Parking Meter Report: As of the end of November, total parking collections have amounted to approximately \$511,000, up from approximately \$327,000 at this time last year, which is an overall increase of approximately \$184,000 from parking collections in November 2022.

B. Traffic Commission Status Report. The following have been completed:

- 1 Crescent/Cherry St. - new RRFB
- 2 Warren/ Candace – funding for RRFB
- 3 Hartwell St. - new No Parking Here to Corner sign
- 4 Villa/Fiske – add “Traffic From Left/Right Does Not Stop” signs
- 5 Andrea Rd. – install signs for park
- 6 21 Parmenter Rd/ - relocate crosswalk sign closer to curb

C. **Traffic Signal Inventory:** Smith Street/Wyman Street/Lincoln St. - no deficiencies observed

D. **Traffic Signal Inventory:** Trapelo Road/Waverley Oaks Rd. – fix the crosswalk signal heads at K & L (crossing Waverley Oaks northbound east turn lane) and proceed with the approved design to upgrade this intersection (Approved Design Alternative 4 from Nitsch)

E. **Revision to Traffic Rules & Regulations:** Stop Signs on Hazel St, Murray St, Dale Cir, Leonard St, Caughey St, Plympton Cir (Missing regulations). **Voted to add the following:**

Add to Schedule 11

Caughey St @ Dale St, facing northbound traffic

Caughey St at Plympton St facing southbound traffic

Dale Circle at Dale St, facing northbound traffic
Hazel St at Dale St, facing northbound traffic
Leonard St at Plympton St. facing southbound traffic
Murray St at Dale St. facing northbound traffic
Plympton Circle at Plympton St, facing northbound traffic

F. Revision to Traffic Rules & Regulations: Remove Loading Zone on Guinan St
Voted to remove from Schedule 5 (Service Loading Zone)
Delete In Schedule #5 - from of #58 Guinan Street

G. Revision to Traffic Rules & Regulations: Remove Portable Pedestrian Crosswalk Sign on
High St. Sign is continuously being hit
Voted to remove from Schedule 25 Schedule 25 (Portable Pedestrian Crosswalk Signs)
Delete in Schedule – High Street at Cedar St

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

4A: Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget. Voted to approve the proposed Traffic Engineering CIP request.

Attendance: All members.
Adjourned @ 12:13 PM

Date of the Meeting: December 21, 2023

Please Print

Name of Speaker	Address # Street, City	Item of Interest	Affiliation i.e. Attorney Abutter Interested party – Traffic Engineer Petitioner
Joe Giordano	74 Morton St	Veterans Parking	Interested Party
Paul Katz	89 Cedarwood Ave		City Councilor W-7
Melissa Honig	985 Trapelo Rd #15	Watch City Steampunk	Organizer
Sean Durkee	185 Hammond St		City Councilor
John Allen	7 University Pk		Interested Party
Michael Russo	119 School St	Veterans Parking	Interested Party
Alice Taylor	81 Elison Park	Crosswalk Trapelo Rd	Constituent guardian
William Kennedy	15 Arlington Rd	Veterans Parking	
John McLaughlin	42 Beal Road	Veterans Parking Chaffee/Ellery Rd	W C C
Cathyann Harris	42 Hovey Road	Veterans Parking Commercial Parking	W C C