

Danielle Delaney

From: David Koses
Sent: Tuesday, June 21, 2022 2:29 PM
To: Danielle Delaney
Subject: Fwd: Comments on proposal for administrative changes to TPR (#362-22)

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From: Jeremy Freudberg <jeremyfreudberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2022 10:36 AM
To: City Council <citycouncil@newtonma.gov>
Cc: Law Department <LawDepartment@newtonma.gov>; David Koses <dkoses@newtonma.gov>
Subject: Comments on proposal for administrative changes to TPR (#362-22)

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Dear City Councilors,

I hope that my thoughts below will be useful to you as you consider item *#362-22 Requesting language modification to the Traffic and Parking Regulations*, which is before the Public Safety & Transportation Committee this week and for which a draft ordinance has been circulated.

Sec. 19-30(c) of the City Ordinances binds the Traffic Council to “make every effort to complete its review of each item within three (3) months” and this effort is indeed made. Unfortunately, it is the case that many items, particularly those initiated by citizen petition, linger for far more than 3 months before being heard by the Traffic Council. I am therefore supportive of the proposed ordinance, to the extent that it will reduce the number of items to be taken up by the Traffic Council and allow the remaining items to be heard more swiftly. I would, however, remind the City Council that volume of items is just one reason why an item may not be taken up for several months, and encourage the City Council to look more closely at the other key reason for delay as set forth in Traffic Council Policy 4, namely that the necessary data collection for more substantial items is one among many responsibilities of the dedicated staff who support the Traffic Council’s work.

One phrase in the draft ordinance is very concerning: “to correct inconsistencies between traffic regulations and signage in the field”. It must be made absolutely clear that administrative authority is only granted to allow changes to the regulations that reflect longstanding field conditions and never changes to field conditions that reflect forgotten regulations. We must recall the significant strife in our community caused by the sudden posting of parking prohibitions on Ward Street near Temple Emanuel, parking prohibitions on Oak Street near All Star Liquors, and stop signs at the intersection of Roosevelt Road and Theodore Road. I recommend that when the review process reveals that a regulation is not properly reflected in the field (either with no signage at all or incomplete signage), the Traffic Council member and DPW staff member undertaking the review shall be obligated by ordinance to refer the matter to the Traffic Council.

I further recommend that the ordinance provide for notification of all administrative changes to the remaining Traffic Council members, who all have great interest in and concern for the traffic and parking regulations.

Finally, as a technical matter, I believe that the reference to “city clerk” in Sec. 19-28(b) as currently drafted should instead be “clerk of the city council”, to be consistent with Sec. 19-27(a).

Respectfully,

Jeremy Freudberg

Alternate Resident Member, Traffic Council