



Public Safety & Transportation Committee Agenda

City of Newton In City Council

Wednesday, October 23, 2019

7:00 PM
Room 205

Items Scheduled for Discussion:

- #336-19** **Discussion and potential change to Senior Citizen's Parking Sticker program**
DAVID KOSES, TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR requesting a discussion and potential change to the Senior Citizen's Parking Sticker program to allow the possibility for vehicles displaying a valid Senior Citizen's Parking Sticker to continue to park on Highland Avenue, between Lowell Avenue & Bram Way, thereby freeing up parking spaces within the Austin Street Parking Lot for other vehicles.
- #337-19** **Discussion regarding a new commuter parking permit program in Newton**
DAVID KOSES, TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR requesting a discussion about a new commuter parking permit program in Newton.

All other items before the Committee will be held without discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan Ciccone, Jr. Chair

The location of this meeting is accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711.

City of Newton



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

110 Crafts Street
Newton, MA 02460

Ruthanne Fuller

Mayor

DATE: October 18, 2019

TO: Members of the Public Safety and Transportation Committee

**FROM: Jason Sobel, P.E., PTOE, Director, DPW Transportation Division
David Koses, Transportation Coordinator**

RE: #336-19 Discussion and potential change to Senior Citizen's Parking Sticker program

CC: Jayne Colino, Director, Senior Services

MEMORANDUM

Sec. 19-198 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Newton currently states the following:

Senior citizen sticker parking. (a) Metered parking in municipal lots shall be free to senior citizens who procure a sticker from the department of senior services and display the same on their motor vehicle; provided, however, that the time limit restriction at that particular metered location shall be obeyed. Newton senior citizens shall each be entitled to one such sticker annually for motor vehicles registered in Newton to them. Stickers shall be issued at a charge of one dollar annually by the department of senior services under such rules and regulations as the director of senior services shall promulgate with the approval of the city council. (b) For the purposes of this section, "senior citizen" shall mean any person sixty-five (65) years of age or older.

Staff suggests the following revision to the first sentence of the ordinance:

(a) Parking on Highland Avenue between Lowell Avenue and Bram Way shall be allowed and parking at metered parking spaces located within municipal parking lots with a one, two, or three-hour parking limit shall be free to senior citizens who procure a sticker from the department of senior services and display the same on their motor vehicle; provided, however, that the time limit restriction at that particular ~~metered~~ location shall be obeyed...

This revision is being requested so that Traffic Council will have the option at an upcoming meeting to continue to allow visitors to the Senior Center to park along Highland Avenue after the reconstructed Austin Street Municipal Parking Lot opens to the public.

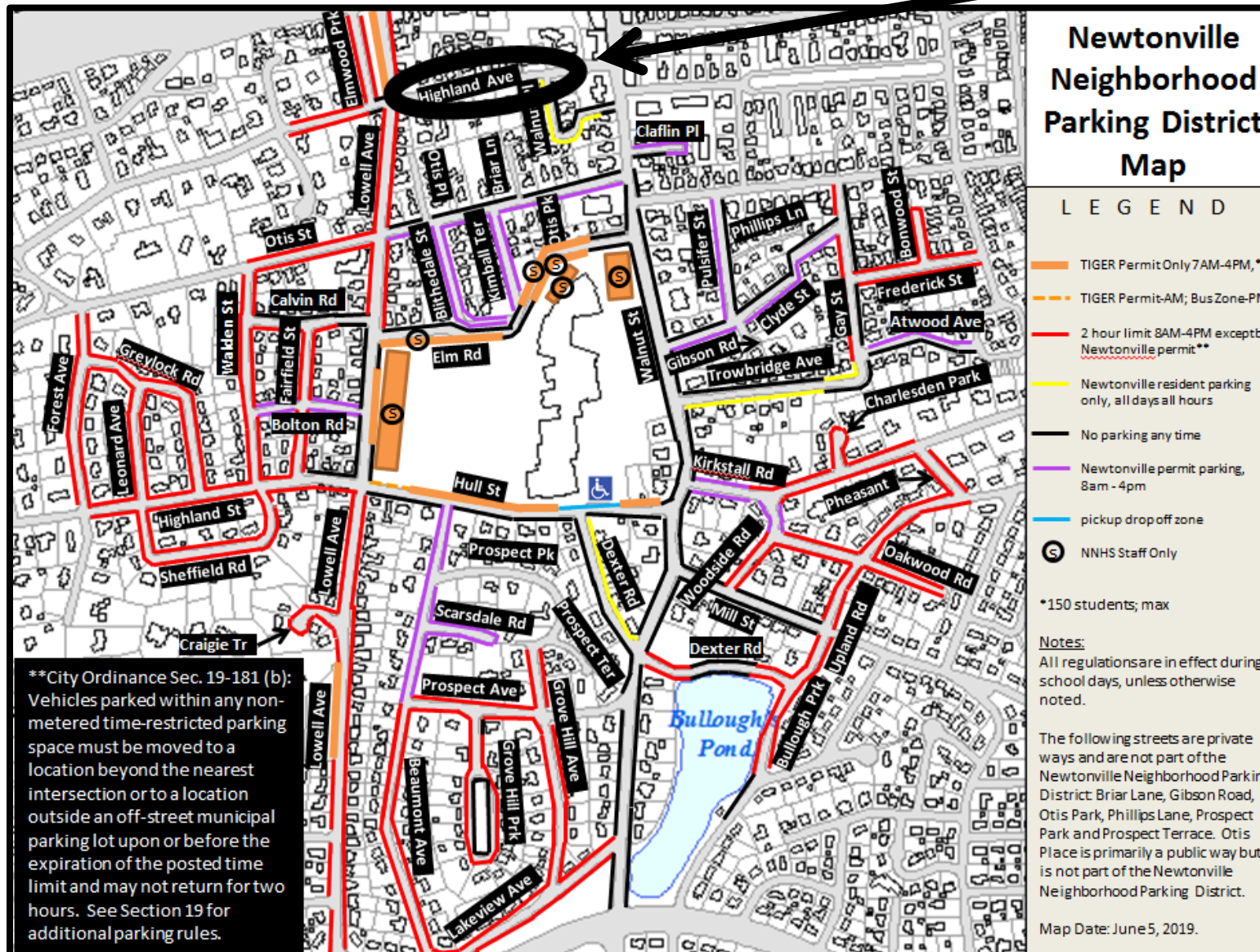
The following bullets describe some of the potential benefits associated with this change:

- Vehicles displaying a senior citizens parking sticker would have the option to continue to park along Highland Avenue, which for some seniors would be more conveniently located to the Senior Center than the Austin Street Parking Lot.
- Seniors visiting the Senior Center would be able to park on Highland Avenue for longer than the current three-hour time limit historically available within the Austin Street Parking Lot, without the need to move their vehicle before the time expires. This is especially important to volunteers, who currently sometimes receive an overtime parking ticket while working at the Senior Center in excess of three hours.
- Paid parking spaces located within the Austin Street Parking Lot would be less likely to be occupied by vehicles displaying senior stickers, and the overall supply of parking spaces available to the general public would increase.
- It is envisioned that Highland Avenue could be woven into the Newtonville Neighborhood Parking District. The current District is shown in Figure 1. The block of Highland Avenue between Lowell Avenue and Bram Way is not currently included in the Newtonville Neighborhood Parking District and has a one-hour parking limit (7am to 4pm, including Saturdays) in place. This section of Highland Avenue could potentially be added into the District and could be restricted entirely to vehicles displaying either a resident or a senior parking permit. This change would benefit residents of the street who would be entitled to a parking permit which would allow all-day parking on their street.
- The parking meters located on Highland Avenue between Bram Way and Walnut Street would not be changed, would remain metered parking spaces. The Senior Center staff could help to notify users of the Senior Center that Senior Parking Stickers are not valid in these on-street metered parking spaces.

One downside would be added complexity. Senior parking stickers would remain valid only in off-street metered parking lots, in one, two or three-hour spaces, with the only exception being the on-street parking spaces along the stretch of Highland Avenue between Lowell Avenue and Bram Way.

If this change were to create an unsafe or negative situation for motorists and/or residents of Highland Avenue, the parking regulations could be changed through the Newton Police Department and through the Traffic Council process. Of course, if a change were to occur to the location of the Senior Center, the parking regulations and characteristics of the Senior Parking Program would be changed, as appropriate.

Figure 1: Newtonville Neighborhood Parking District Map, highlighting Highland Avenue



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DATE: October 18, 2019

TO: Members of the Public Safety and Transportation Committee

**FROM: Jason Sobel, P.E., PTOE, Director, DPW Transportation Division
David Koses, Transportation Coordinator**

RE: #337-19 - Discussion regarding a new commuter parking permit program

MEMORANDUM

Two of Newton's most important transportation and parking objectives include:

- (1) Working toward ways to share our streets among various users; and
- (2) Working toward ways to encourage the use of public transportation.

In Newton we have been moving in the direction of sharing our public streets, in various ways, including through the development of our Village Parking Districts¹. These Village Parking Districts have allowed residents as well as some "non-residents" of the street to obtain parking permits that can override the posted time limit. So far, the "non-residents" who have received parking permits have either been employees who work in the neighborhood or school staff who work nearby.

In terms of encouraging the use of public transportation, the Newton Traffic Council regularly hears requests from residents who ask to add a parking restriction on their street because of the high number of commuters who are parking on their street. The result has often been the addition of parking regulations streets across the City, which has resulted, in some cases, in fewer parked vehicles than the actual parking demand, limited availability for residents to use their own street, and commuters forced to park elsewhere or potentially driving all the way to their destinations.

¹ Village Parking Districts have been implemented on certain areas of Auburndale, Newton Highlands, Newtonville, Waban and on portions of Linwood Avenue and Nevada Street.

This discussion has been docketed in order to gauge interest in the development of a new parking permit program for commuters. If such a program were to be supported, created and approved, Traffic Council would subsequently have the option of allowing a limited number of commuters to park on certain streets, where it makes sense.

As an example, Figure 1 presents three streets in Newton Corner (Playstead Road, Ricker Road and Ricker Terrace), where residents have requested permit parking due to too many commuters parking on their street. As part of an initial Newton Corner Parking District, it may be good public policy, to approve parking permits for residents, but also to reserve a limited number of parking permits for non-residents. These non-residents may be commuters who would like to park and use the Express Bus to travel into Boston. As another example, several streets around the Eliot Green Line station may be good candidates for permit parking, to be shared among residents along and a limited number of commuters, as part of an expanded Newton Highlands Parking District.

Some aspects of a new commuter parking permit program to be considered may include:

- Would a new commuter permit program be beneficial overall?
- Could and should commuter permits be limited to Newton residents and/or should Newton residents be given priority?
- What should the fee be for commuter parking permits for Newton residents? For residents who reside outside Newton, if at all?
- How many commuters should be allowed to park on each street? For example, is one commuter permit per 250 feet of usable curb space appropriate?
- What is the impact on the Traffic Bureau, which must manage the increasing number of permit programs in the City.

Figure 1: Example of how Commuter Parking Permits may initially be implemented (total of 5 “non-resident” commuter permits, 1 or 2 on each street)

