



# Public Safety & Transportation Committee Report

## City of Newton In City Council

**Wednesday, October 23, 2019**

Present: Councilors Ciccone (Chair), Downs, Noel, Grossman, Lipof, Auchincloss and Markiewicz

Absent: Councilors Cote, Lipof and Auchincloss

Also Present: Councilor Baker

City Staff: David Koses, Transportation Coordinator and Jayne Colino, Director, Senior Services

**#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.

**ACTION: Public Safety & Transportation Approved as Amended 5-0, Referred to Finance Committee**

**NOTE:** David Koses, Transportation Coordinator and Jayne Colino, Director, Senior Services joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Mr. Koses provided Committee members with revised memorandum, attached to this report.

Mr. Koses stated that the Austin Street lot is complete. The proposed language is to request to continue to allow the possibility for vehicles displaying a valid senior citizen's parking sticker to continue to park on Highland Avenue, between Lowell Avenue and Bram Way and to allow parking at metered spaces in municipal lots with a one, two or three-hour parking limit. Ms. Colino added that senior citizen parking stickers are prohibited at six or twelve-hour meters.

Mr. Koses stated that the current City Ordinance states "...that stickers shall be issued at a charge of one dollar annually by the department of Senior Services...." For quite some time, stickers have been issued at a fee of \$3.00 per year, senior citizens renew their stickers every two years paying a total of \$6.00. Ms. Colino stated that she did not realize that there is a \$1.00 fee in the City Ordinances. Mr. Koses stated that the Transportation Division recommends increasing the sticker fee to \$5.00 per year, adding the fee to Chapter 17, revising the fee in Chapter 19, and to refer this item to the Finance Committee.

Ms. Colino stated that she would support the recommendation of a yearly fee of \$5.00 to purchase a senior citizen parking sticker.

Mr. Koses said that perhaps at a later Traffic Council meeting Highland Avenue may be added to the Newtonville Neighborhood Parking District Plan to allow longer parking than one-hour. This would be available to residents and senior citizens only. Parking would be available by Newtonville Resident parking permit only.

Committee members questions and suggestions:

Questions:

- It was asked if Austin Street parking lot was adequate for senior citizen parking? Mr. Koses answered that by allowing seniors to continue to park on Highland Avenue, between Lowell Avenue & Bram Way will free up parking spaces within the Austin Street lot for other vehicles. Senior citizen parking stickers are also valid in the municipal lots at one, two or three-hour metered parking spaces. A driver will receive a citation if parked longer than three hours.
- What effect does parking on Highland Avenue due to the businesses? Mr. Koses answered that Highland Avenue has a one-hour limit for residents and shoppers. Seniors with valid stickers may park for three hours. Ms. Colino stated that she has not heard any feedback from businesses on people parking on Highland Avenue.
- How many senior citizen parking stickers have been issued? Ms. Colino answered that since June 17, 2019 the Senior Center has sold 3,200 senior citizen parking stickers to any person sixty-five years of age or older. Stickers are issued in a two-year cycle.
- It was asked where the collection of fees is allocated? Ms. Colino answered that the collection of fees goes to the general fund of the City.
- A Councilor asked if utilization data was available on where and how often seniors are parking in the municipal lots?
- A Councilor asked Mr. Koses and/or Ms. Colino if they have heard any complaints from the Ward 2 Councilors? Ms. Colino answered that she did not. Mr. Koses answered that he heard of one complaint on the narrowness of Highland Avenue and when vehicles are parked on both sides travel is slow.

Suggestions:

- It was suggested to earmark the funds to the Senior Center for enhancements or for senior citizen transportation. Ms. Colino added that NewMO requires more management than anticipated.
- A Councilor proposed a yearly fee of \$10.00 to purchase a senior citizen parking sticker. Stating that the recommendation of \$5.00 is a small amount and supports the allocation of funds to be earmarked to the Senior Center. A Councilor agreed and stated that seniors would pay much more if a parking sticker was not available and had to pay to park at meters.
- Another Councilor proposed a yearly fee of \$25.00 to purchase a senior citizen parking sticker.

Council members took a straw vote on the proposed fee and all agreed to a \$10.00 per year fee for senior citizen parking stickers.

Chair Ciccone stated that an item would have to be docketed in order to allocate funds to the Senior Center.

Ms. Colino stated that she also would support a yearly fee of \$10.00 and that it makes sense for funds be earmarked for the Senior Center. Ms. Colino then requested that if approved, the fee be implemented in the next two-year cycle.

Without further discussion, Councilor Noel made a motion to approve as amended. A fee of \$10.00 will be added to Chapter 17 and the fee will be revised in Chapter 19 of the City Ordinances. This item will be referred to the Finance Committee for consideration. An item will be docketed in order to allocate funds to the Senior Center. Committee members agreed 5-0.

**#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.

**ACTION:**      **Public Safety & Transportation No Action Necessary 5-0**

**NOTE:**      David Koses, Transportation Coordinator and Councilor Baker joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Mr. Koses stated that this request is a discussion about a new commuter parking permit program in Newton to gauge interest in developing a new parking program to sell permits to commuters in a managed way. The City receives many complaints from residents that commuters are parking up their streets. Some options include implementing a two-hour limit in the morning hours to deter commuter parking and to encourage public transit allowing residents use of the street and to develop a program to issue non-resident permits on certain streets.

Mr. Koses said that some aspects of a new commuter parking permit program to be considered may include the following:

- Could and should commuter permits be limited to Newton residents and/or should Newton residents be given priority?
- What is an appropriate fee for parking permits for Newton residents and for non-residents who reside outside Newton?
- 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.

Mr. Koses referenced the map, attached to this report. He provided an example of how commuter parking permits may be initially implemented. He stated that residents would be issued permits and a cap would be placed on the number of non-resident permits in order to encourage public transportation and to share the streets. It is necessary to encourage and improve public transit.

Mr. Koses stated that a similar program to this is the Newton Highlands Parking District plan which was created to issue permits to residents and non-residents (employees of Lincoln Street) who may work in the village but may not live in Newton. The non-resident parking permit allows drivers to park in front of a specific address and is now sold out for the year.

Committee members and Councilors present questions, concerns and suggestions:

Questions:

- A councilor asked if non-resident permits would only be issued on side streets? Mr. Koses answered that it depends on the type of street.
- Has the City thought about the option of the pay-by-plate meter parking app, rather than purchasing an annual permit, you pay by the day (as needed)?
- Please explain the pros, cons and driver behavior while determining the appropriate number of parking spaces for non-residents.
- How will parking permits be allocated?
- How will parking permits be paid, how much is charged and please consider pay by the day. Mr. Koses answered that it would be necessary to discuss this and to have a discussion with the Police Department.
- A Councilor asked where drivers are currently parking? Allowing 2-3 non-resident parking permits does not meet the parking demands. Mr. Koses answered that drivers are parking on streets that do not have parking restrictions. When parking restrictions are implemented, drivers move to nearby streets that do not have parking restrictions.
- What is the cost of a non-resident parking permit?
- Who is entitled to a non-resident parking permit? People of Newton or people from surrounding towns, such as Natick or Boston?
- Is data available regarding bus utilization?
- Where in the City is traffic the largest problem? Data is necessary.
- Is data available on the number of homes with and without driveways? This data may help with gauging the demand of issuing non-resident parking permits.
- What other information is necessary in order to start issuing non-resident parking permits? Mr. Koses answered that he would return with additional information regarding the number of non-resident permits which could be issued on residential streets.

Concerns:

- A Councilor suggested that non-resident permits only be issued to Newton residents. A Councilor disagreed and stated that it may be a 'good thing' to allow surrounding towns to be able to purchase a non-resident parking permit.
- A Councilor said that the Police Department expressed issues with reviewing parking permits on each windshield especially during the winter months. Mr. Koses said that the permit sticker information would be linked to the license plate information making it easier for the Police Department.
- A Councilor stated that they were unsure if residents would accept and agree to non-resident parking permits being issued on 'their street'.
- A Councilor stated that the business districts are different than residential areas and suggested to proceed cautiously with the issuance of non-resident parking permits.
- A Councilor stated that it is necessary to encourage and improve public transit. We cannot risk the express bus being eliminated.

Suggestions:

- A suggestion was made to think holistically with this program, rather than piecemeal.
- A suggestion was made to encourage residents to park in their driveways, rather than the street. A Councilor agreed and stated that this would be helpful in areas of high demand parking areas.

A Councilor stated that the non-resident permits issued in the Newton Highlands has been successful and has helped it become a robust village.

A Councilor stated that when the number of permits is determined, streets will not be overparked and will allow for some commuters to pay for parking without overwhelming residential streets.

Mr. Koses then explained the five different parking plans which have been created in the City and the specifics. He then said that he would obtain additional data and return to the Committee for discussion.

Without further discussion, Councilor Noel made a motion for no action necessary. Committee members agreed 5-0.

At approximately 8:40 p.m., Councilor Noel made a motion to adjourn. Committee members agreed 5-0.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Allan Ciccone, Jr. Chair**

City of Newton



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

110 Crafts Street  
Newton, MA 02460

**DATE:** October 23, 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

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## MEMORANDUM

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

### Current Language

Sec. 19-198. 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 revisions:

### Proposed Language

Sec. 19-198. Senior citizen sticker parking.

(a) Parking on Highland Avenue between Lowell Avenue and Bram Way and metered parking spaces in municipal 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 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 five dollar 5 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.

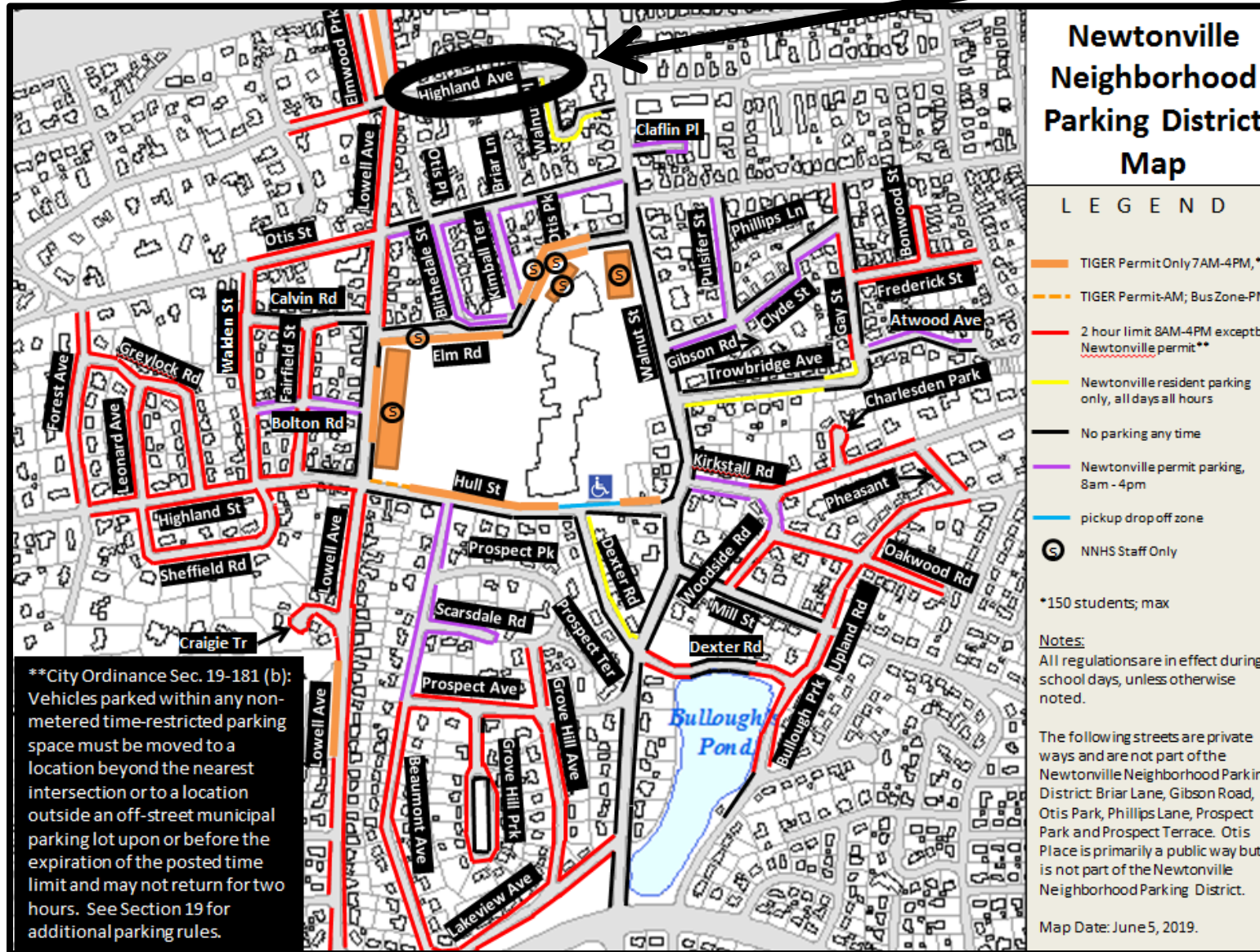
Staff also suggests the following addition to Section 17:

Sec. 17-19. Fees to be paid to Senior Services Department

1) Senior citizen sticker parking Per Year (Sec. 19-198)..... \$5.00

*\$10.00*

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





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

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### 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 Districts<sup>1</sup>. 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.

<sup>1</sup> 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)**

