

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2011

Present: Ald. Ciccone (Chair), Johnson, Swiston, Yates, Shapiro, Fuller and Freedman

Absent: Ald. Harney

Also Present: Ald. Danberg and Lennon

City Staff: Clint Schuckel, Traffic Engineer; Captain Howard Mintz, Newton Police Department and David Koses, Transportation Planner

DISCUSSION ITEM: Chairman's Note: At the Chair's request, Clint Schuckel, Associate City Engineer, will provide an update on the Newton Corner Rotary Study, Phase II study.

NOTE: Mr. Schuckel provided Committee members with a PowerPoint presentation, attached to this report. He reviewed the studies, findings and recommendations. Phase I study looks primarily at low cost and short-term improvements. Phase II study looks primarily at high cost and long-term improvements. City traffic has been affected since 1996 when tolls were removed and tolls increased on I-90. The Massachusetts Turnpike hired a consulting firm, URS to complete a study. In 2003, URS recommended the installation of a traffic signal at Park and Tremont Streets.

In 2006, CTP recommended the following:

Summary of Phase I Recommendations:

1. Convert to full signal at Centre Street and Centre Avenue. The City and State believe this would significantly worsen delays and safety, further extending vehicles queues onto the Massachusetts Turnpike. The alternative is to restripe (or narrow) to a single lane approach.
2. Modify signals to control entry at the east side of the bridge. The City and State are looking at alternatives to improve weaving moves.
3. Improve signing at rotary. The State will be advertising a bid soon.
4. Install signal on southbound Centre at Washington Streets to control turns. Traffic Council denied this signal on November 19, 2009.
5. Install traffic signal at eastbound off-ramp at Centre Street. This requires a Traffic Council study and further consultation with the State.

Summary of Phase II Recommendations:

1. Alternative #2 - Add an I-90 Westbound Off-Ramp to North Beacon Street (Route 20). This would be most beneficial to Newton Corner and I-90.

Next Steps:

1. Short-term: Update all signs and markings in summer 2011 to 2012, stripe Centre Street at Centre Avenue as one lane.

2. Mid-term: Add signals – Would require Traffic Council petition and study, coordination and approval of MassDOT.
3. Long-term: New eastbound off-ramp in Brighton. This would require further CTPS feasibility study and funding by TIP or toll revenue.

Chairman Ciccone said he considered docketing an item as recommended for Traffic Council's consideration to install a traffic signal at the intersection of Centre Street and Centre Avenue but will not after discussions with Mr. Schuckel and the Turnpike Authority because they believe it would only make the intersection more problematic.

Ald. Fuller asked if this area continues to be a high volume area for accidents. Captain Mintz answered yes; it is the highest accident location out of the three highest problem areas in the City. Mr. Schuckel said accidents increase when there are higher numbers of vehicles. In Newton Corner, there are approximately 100,000 vehicles traveling the rotary per day. Committee members suggested the installation of additional road and lane direction signs making the area as clear and safe as possible for pedestrian and drivers' safety and perhaps re-routing known traffic areas.

Ald. Lennon again suggested advocating the Executive Department to move forward with Phase II recommendations.

#137-11 ALD. DANBERG AND FULLER requesting possible changes to City Ordinance 19-191, Parking Meter Fees, to require a minimum purchase at long-term parking meters in order to discourage short-term use. [4/26/11 @ 9:52 AM]

ACTION: **HELD 6-0 (Ald. Freedman not voting) on 05/18/11**

NOTE: Ald. Fuller said this item was docketed in order to request the requirement of a minimum purchase at long-term parking meters to discourage short-term use by changing pricing models. Mr. Schuckel said the reason for a setting a minimum cost would discourage the use of long-term meters for short-term parking and the high hourly rate for short-term probably does little to affect peoples' behavior.

Mr. Schuckel provided Committee members with a PowerPoint presentation, attached to this report. Mr. Schuckel described the pros and cons of this request.

Pros -Minimum fee would discourage use of long- term meters for short-term parking and revenue increase. In the future meters will recognize smart cards.

Cons – Implementation in existing meters will be confusing for users (meters will not register time until minimum money is deposited) and further dependence on collecting and counting coins and inconvenience for users.

Ald. Danberg asked what the projected revenue and expenses would be for re-collecting coin, since the program has been rescinded. Mr. Schuckel said revenue is projected at approximately 1.5 to 1.6 million for FY11. Estimated expenses are the cost of three full-time employees with salary and benefits, cost of two vans and approximately \$15,000 for parts and maintenance. The City pays approximately \$30,000 per year to a coin count service.

Ald. Swiston made the motion to hold this item pending draft Ordinance language from the City's Law Department. Committee members agreed 6-0, Ald. Freedman not voting.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC SAFETY/TRANSPORTATION & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#54-11(2) ALD. YATES, CICCONE, HARNEY, FREEDMAN requesting that Chapter 19 MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC of the Revised Ordinances be amended by reinstating the Community Parking Program in a manner that charges the participants for the full cost of the program. [05/01/11 @ 10:05AM]

ACTION: HELD 6-0 (Ald. Freedman not voting) on 05/18/11

NOTE: Chairman Ciccone said this item was docketed because many Community Parking Program members have contacted the board requesting that the program be re-in-stated. He stated the City would not continue to support and pay for this program at their expense, as the problematic areas are isolated.

Mr. Schuckel provided Committee members with a PowerPoint presentation, attached to this report. He asked should the City have a reserved program. A survey was e-mailed to 81 addresses, as of May 18, 2011 he received 56 responses (69%), complaints were received from 68% who work in Newton but do not live in the City and only 25% would continue if the amount of the program cost rose.

Mr. Schuckel explained the meter transactions, revenue and the average transaction value at the Cypress Street lot parking meter 'Luke'. He then explained parking programs available in Brookline, Cambridge and Somerville. None of these programs provide reserved parking spaces.

Chairman Ciccone said Ald. Linsky offered to work with a group of Aldermen forming a sub-committee to discuss the possibilities, issues and concerns at a Long Range Planning Committee meeting discussing the program. The Long Range Planning Committee would provide solutions determining if the program should be re-in-stated.

Ald. Danberg said the highest problem areas are in Newton Centre and Newton Corner, there are approximately 2,000 employees in Newton Centre. Ald. Fuller stated she is concerned with the administrative costs, burdens and department responsibilities. She is not positive the program should be re-in-stated. She then asked if shoppers or commuters should have differential treatment. Ald. Johnson said if the program is re-in-stated perhaps, it should not include Saturdays. She also is not positive the program should be re-in-stated, as it is a localized program. She is hopeful the discussion will stay within this Committee. Ald. Danberg said commuters should be parking in long-term spaces, shoppers should be parking in short-term spaces, and people do not realize the type of parking spaces they are parking. She feels the program should be re-evaluated. Ald. Swiston suggested contacting Amanda Stout for her professional opinion. Ald. Yates feels the program should be re-in-stated to allow people to conduct business within the City. He suggested contacting the Economic Development Commission for their professional opinions requesting how the program could be re-in-stated. Ald. Shapiro said e-mails received prove that there is support of re-instating the program and 'some-sort' of a program should be implemented. He suggested holding Ward 6 meetings with

the program holders and Mr. Schuckel to address issues and concerns reporting to this Committee. Ald. Danberg suggested conducting an additional survey.

Ald. Fuller asked if it would be beneficial to install another meter, similar to 'Luke' at Pelham Street accommodating permit holders and the administrative burden. Mr. Schuckel said two meters would be necessary.

Ald. Johnson suggested targeting business owners to purchase a limited number of long-term meter spaces for their employee's convenience, being business friendly.

Ald. Shapiro made the motion to hold this item allowing the Ward 6 Aldermen the opportunity to discuss with Mr. Schuckel and the program holders the costs of re-instating the programs, concerns and issues to report information back to this Committee. Committee members agreed 6-0, Ald. Freedman not voting.

At approximately 10:15 pm, Ald. Shapiro made the motion to adjourn. Committee members agreed 6-0, Ald. Freedman not voting.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan Ciccone, Jr., Chairman

Newton Corner Discussion Item

PS&T May 18, 2011

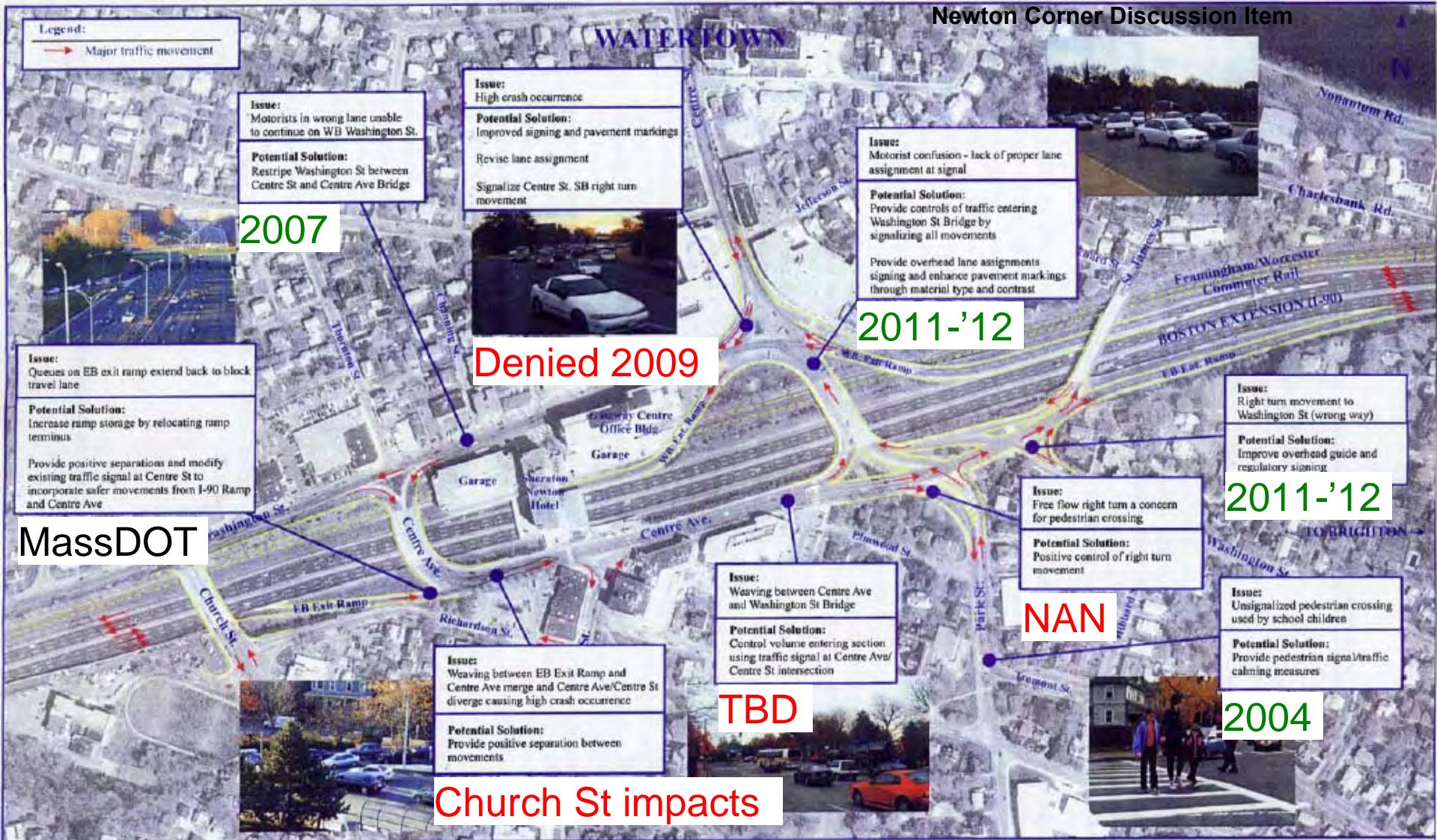


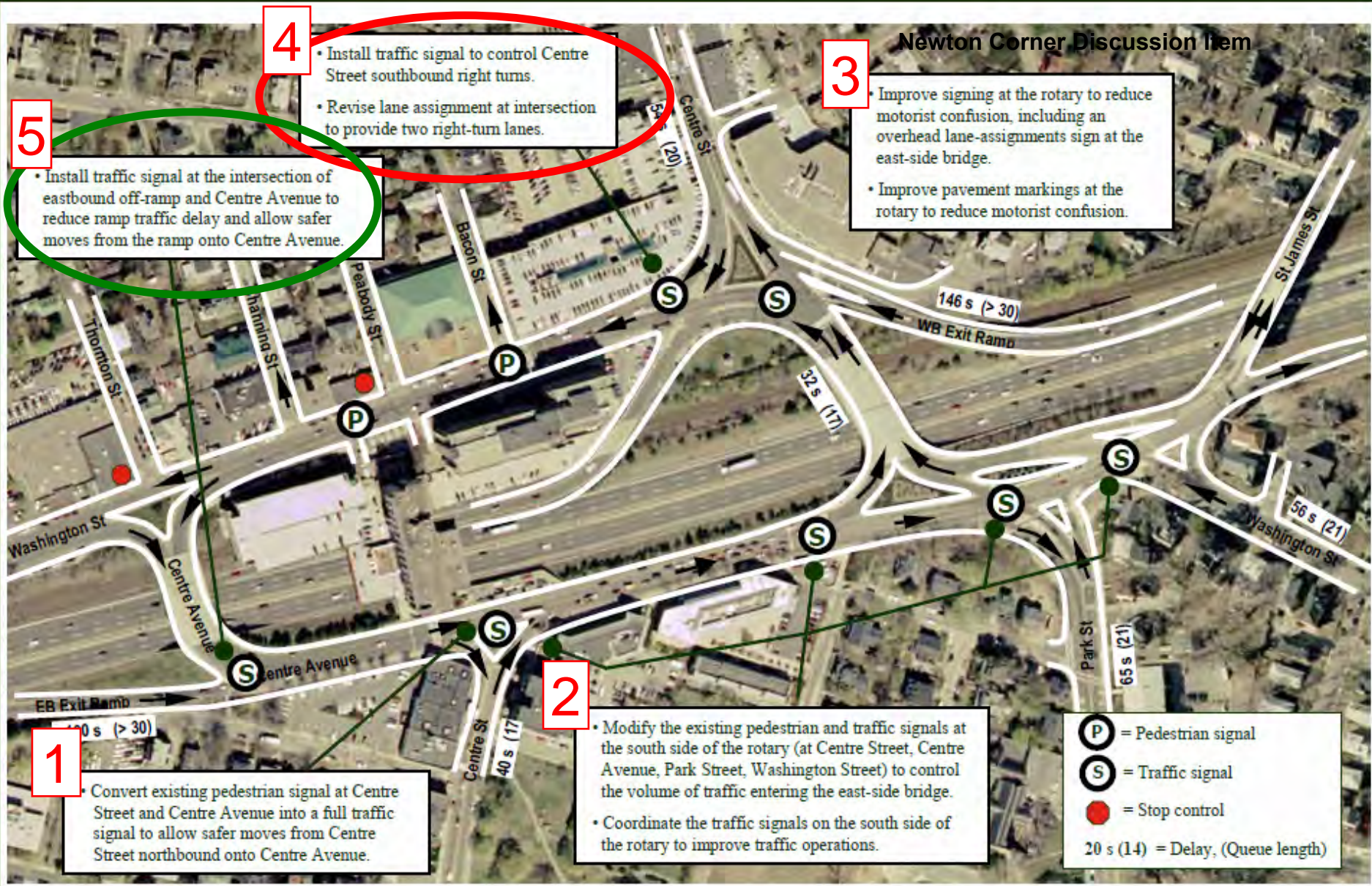
FIGURE 4
 URS Issues and Potential Solutions

ISSUES AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS
 Interchange 17
 Boston Extension

Figure ES-2

Source: URS Corp. The Effects of the July 1, 2002 Boston Extension (I-90) Toll Increase on Newton Neighborhoods

URS Study: January 2003



Summary of Phase 1 Recommendations

1. **Convert to full signal @ Centre St/Centre Ave**
 - City and State believe this would significantly worsen delays and safety, further extending vehicles queues onto the Masspike
 - Alternative: restripe (or narrow) to a single lane approach
2. **Modify signals to control entry @ east side bridge**
 - City and State looking at alternatives to improve weaving moves
3. **Improve Signing**
 - Now out to bid (MassDOT project # 605913, 3/30/11)
4. **Install signal on SB Centre @ Washington St to control turns**
 - Traffic Council denied 11/19/09
5. **Install traffic signal at EB Off-Ramp @ Centre St**
 - Requires Traffic Council study, further consultation w/ State

CTPS Phase 2 Alternatives

Evaluation of Alternatives

Objectives	Alt. 2 Add a I-90 WB Off-Ramp to Rt. 20	Alt. 3 Add I-90 WB On- and EB Off- Ramps at Int. 16	Alt. 4 Add I-90 EB Tolls at Ints. 16 and 17	Alt. 5 Operational Improvements at East-Side Bridge
Reduce Traffic Congestion at Newton Corner	●	○	●	◇
Reduce Traffic Congestion at Interchange 16	◇	●	○	◇
Reduce Traffic Congestion at Interchange 18/19/20	●	◇	◇	◇
Divert Traffic from Local Streets to I-90	●	◐	◇	◇
Improve Traffic Operations and Safety at Newton Corner	◐	○	◐	○
Improve Traffic Operations and Safety on I-90	●	○	○	◇
Improve Traffic Operations and Safety at Other Locations	○	●	○	◇
Minimize Right-of-Way Impacts	◐	●	○	◇
Minimize Construction Costs	◐	●	○	◇

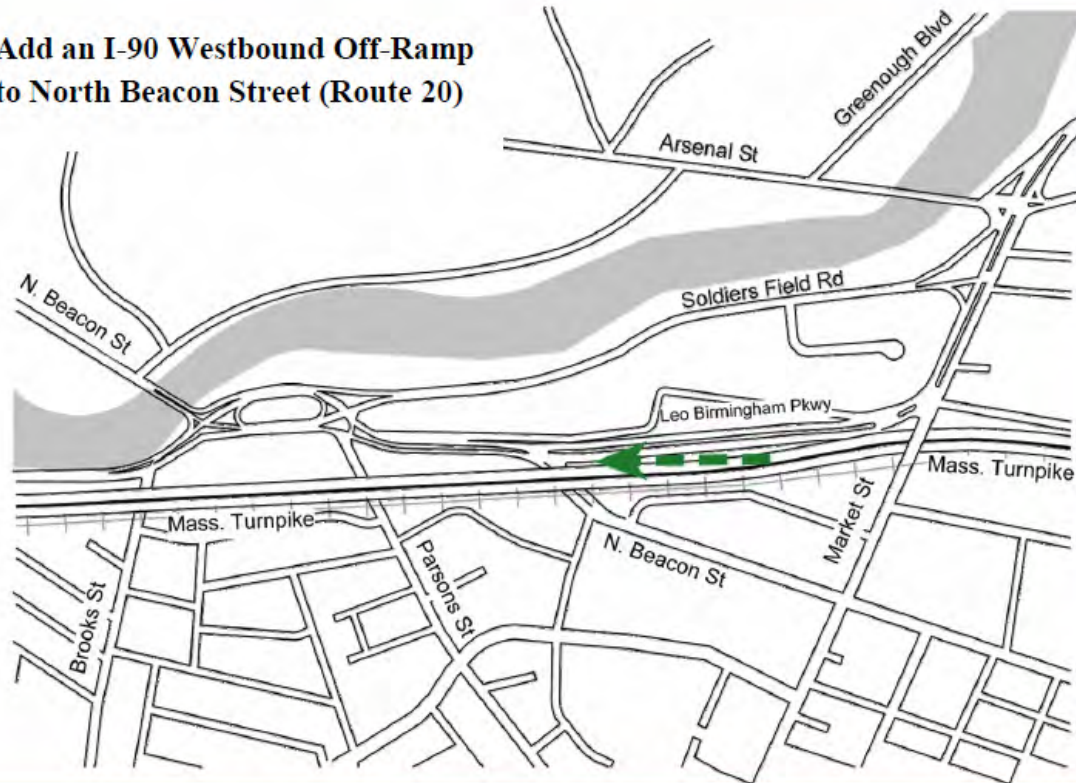
Legend				
Benefits	● Significant	◐ Moderate	○ Some	◇ Negligible
Impacts	● Significant	◐ Moderate	○ Some	◇ Negligible



“PS&T Committee Preferred”

Alternative 2

Add an I-90 Westbound Off-Ramp
to North Beacon Street (Route 20)



Next steps

- Short-term: Update all signs & markings
 - Summer 2011 to Summer 2012
 - Stripe Centre St @ Centre Ave as one lane
- Mid-term: Adding signals?
 - Traffic Council petition/study
 - Coordination/approval of MassDOT
- Long-term: New EB off-ramp in Brighton?
 - Would require further CTPS/feasibility study
 - Funding via TIP or toll revenue

Sec. 19-189. Manner of parking in parking meter spaces; unlawful parking.

(a) Whenever any vehicle shall be parked next to a parking meter, the operator of the vehicle shall park within the area designated by the curb or street marking lines, and upon entering the parking space shall immediately deposit in the meter one or more five cent (\$0.05) or ten cent (\$0.10) coins or a twenty-five cent (\$0.25) coin. It shall be unlawful for any person to fail or neglect to deposit such coins or to fail to park within the limits designated. Such parking meter space may be used by such vehicle during the time limited according to the sum thus deposited and such vehicle shall be unlawfully parked if it shall remain in such space beyond the period of time for which the operator shall have deposited coins in the meter.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to cause any vehicle to be unlawfully parked as provided in paragraph (a); however, it shall not be unlawful for any person to park a vehicle in a metered parking space without depositing coins in the meter, provided the meter does not show that the time for such parking has expired and further provided that the total period of time used shall not exceed the total period of time to which such metered parking space is limited for use. (Rev. Ords. 1973, § 13-155; Ord. No. 53, 2-18-75)

Sec. 19-190. Overtime parking.

No person shall park a vehicle for a longer consecutive period than the limit specified and between the hours specified on any of the streets or parts of streets designated as parking meter zones in which parking meters and parking meter spaces are to be established pursuant to this chapter. (Rev. Ords. 1973, § 13-156)

Sec. 19-191. Parking meter fees.

The fees for parking in a parking meter space during the days and hours designated for parking meter zones shall be as follows:

(a) For parking meter zones with a time limit of four hours or less, the fee shall be five cents (\$0.05) for each four (4) minute period or part thereof; and

(b) For parking meter zones with a time limit of greater than four hours, including those parking meter zones that have no time limit, the fee shall be five cents (\$0.05) for each six (6) minute period or part thereof.

(Rev. Ords. 1973, § 13-157; Ord. No. 53, 2-18-75; Ord. No. 70, 5-5-75; Ord. No. 318, 3-5-79; Ord. No. R-28, 3-16-81; Ord. No. S-29, 12-5-83; Ord. No. W-44, 5-29-01; Ord. No. X-207, 4-18-06; Ord. No. Z-58, 12-21-09)

Sec. 19-192. Feeding meters; tampering with, injuring or destroying meters unlawful.

It shall be unlawful for any person to deposit or cause to be deposited in a parking meter any coin for the purpose of extending the period of permissible parking as shown by such meter beyond the maximum period of parking as prescribed for such parking meter space. It shall be unlawful for any person not authorized to do so to open, tamper with, break, injure or destroy any parking meter. (Rev. Ord. 1973, § 13-158)

Sec. 19-193. Collection, deposit of fees; inspection of meters; parking meter fund subject to appropriation.

The commissioner of public works shall collect or cause to be collected weekly or more often, at his discretion, all coins deposited in parking meters, and shall inspect such meters or cause the same to be inspected weekly to see if they are in proper working order. He shall turn over all money collected from such parking meters on the same day as collection is made to the city collector-treasurer who shall keep a separate account of such monies designated as the "parking meter account." The mayor shall have authority to require employees of the department of public works engaged in the collection of such monies to be bonded in such amount as he may deem advisable. The parking meter account shall be subject to appropriation by the board of aldermen upon recommendation of the mayor for all

137-11

Minimum Purchase for Long-Term Parking Meters

PS&T May 18, 2011

Why set a minimum?

- Discourage use of long-term meters for short-term parking
- Higher hourly rate for short-term (75 cents vs 50 cents) probably does little to affect behavior



Smart cards someday?

Pros/Cons

- Pros
 - Minimum fee would discourage use of long-term meters for short-term parking
 - Revenue Increase
- Cons
 - Implementing in existing meters will be confusing for users (won't register time until minimum \$ is deposited)
 - Further dependence on collecting/counting coins, inconvenient for users

54-11(2) Community Parking Permits




PS&T May 18, 2011

CPP Survey

- Email sent to 81 unique addresses
- 29 responses (36%) as of 4pm 3/23
- 56 responses (69%) of 5/18




1. Please select the choice which best describes you.

 Create Chart  Download

		Response Percent	Response Count
I am a Newton resident		12.5%	7
I work in Newton		67.9%	38
I live and work in Newton		19.6%	11
		answered question	56
		skipped question	0




1. Please select the choice which best describes you.

 [Create Chart](#)  [Download](#)


		Response Percent	Response Count
I am a Newton resident		12.5%	7
I work in Newton		67.9%	38
I live and work in Newton		19.6%	11
		answered question	56
		skipped question	0




2. I purchased a commercial parking permit because

[Create Chart](#)[Download](#)

		Response Percent	Response Count
It provides a reserved parking space		83.9%	47
I don't have to bring change to work everyday		1.8%	1
Other (please specify) Show Responses		14.3%	8
		answered question	56
		skipped question	0






3. In my opinion, the City's management of the permit program is:

 [Create Chart](#)  [Download](#)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Excellent		61.8%	34
Fair		34.5%	19
Poor		3.6%	2
		answered question	55
		skipped question	1

4. The biggest complaint I have about the parking permit program is (you may select more than one):

[Create Chart](#) [Download](#)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Someone frequently parks in my space		21.4%	12
Snow was blocking my space several times this winter		33.9%	19
My parking space was not posted by the start date		10.7%	6
No complaints		30.4%	17
Other (please specify) Show Responses		26.8%	15
		answered question	56
		skipped question	0

5. If the City increased the permit fee to \$200/month, I would:




[Create Chart](#) [Download](#)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Go back to using the meters		23.2%	13
Continue to purchase a permit		25.0%	14
Find another way to get to work		16.1%	9
Other (please specify) Show Responses		35.7%	20

answered question 56
skipped question 0

6. If the City parking meters accepted debit or credit cards, rather than just coins, would that change your answer to # 5 above?

 [Create Chart](#)  [Download](#)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		7.3%	4
No		83.6%	46
Other (please specify) Show Responses		9.1%	5
answered question			55
skipped question			1

Luke's May Stats



Transactions:

#54-11(2)

Cash: 1,446 (78%)

Plastic: 406 (22%)

TOTAL: 1,849

Revenue:

Cash: \$1,759.80 (62%)

Plastic: \$1,060.70 (38%)

TOTAL: \$2,820.50

Avg. Transaction Value:

Cash: \$1.22

Plastic: \$2.61

*Cash= 40% coin, 60% \$ bills, so ~75% of revenue is non-coin!

Other Programs

- Brookline
 - Sells on-street permits in residential areas w/in $\frac{1}{4}$ mile walking distance (\$500 per year)
 - Sells permits in lots for \$78/month + \$25 application fee
 - Has “permit only” meters, i.e., must buy permit just for “right” to feed meter (\$25/year + meter fee)
- Cambridge
 - No program
- Somerville
 - On-street & lot permits= \$100 to \$150/month
- None of these programs provide reserved parking spaces.