## CITY OF NEWTON

## **BOARD OF ALDERMEN**

#### TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

## THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2013

Present: Sgt. Jay Babcock, Newton Police Department; Patrick Baxter, Transportation Engineer; Ald. Ciccone; Jerome Grafe, Citizen Representative and David Koses, Transportation Planner Also present: Ald. Hess-Mahan, Linsky and Fischman Others present: Rob Caruso, Co-Chair, Commission on Disability

Mr. Baxter provided a PowerPoint presentation on these items, attached to this report.

- HP1-13 <u>ADEBA OSMANI</u>, 62 Manet Road, Unit 2, requesting a handicap parking space in front of 62 Manet Road. (Ward 7) [02/13/13 @ 12:25 PM] The Newton Commission on Disability voted on 03/27/13, to recommend to the Traffic Council that a HP space be designated in front of 62 Manet Road. NO ACTION NECESSARY 4-1 (Koses)
- **<u>NOTE</u>**: The petitioner did not attend tonight's discussion.

Mr. Baxter provided Council members with background information and photos. He said that there is a direct path from Manet Road to the front door with three stairs and a handicap ramp is located immediately north at the corner of Manet Road and Commonwealth Avenue. The home has an existing steep driveway and off-street parking in the rear leading into the basement level of the home. The handicap request is for street level parking allowing easy access. He then said that Manet Road has Resident Parking Only, east side, entire length and parking is prohibited, west side, all days. The petitioner's home, 62 Manet Road has Resident Parking Only. Residents of the building on the corner of Manet Road and Commonwealth Avenue are issued Resident Parking Only permits for Manet Road. The permits do not specify a specific address.

Mr. Caruso, Co-Chair, Commission on Disability (COD) said that Ms. Osmani attended the COD meeting in March explaining the reasons for her request. Ms. Osmani has a handicap placard for her daughter, a special needs child prone to seizures and legally blind. It is problematic for Ms. Osmani and her daughter to use the driveway because it is in the basement level of the home. A street handicap parking space would allow easy access and fewer stairs to the home. COD recommends a handicap parking space be designated in front of 62 Manet Road. Mr. Caruso made a site visit and said that the driveway goes down very sharply to the rear of the home. He then said that Manet Road appears to be parked up by Boston College students causing Ms. Osmani parking difficulties. Mr. Caruso explained that if a handicap parking space is open to all drivers with a handicap placard or handicap license plate.

Mr. Koses opened the discussion to members of the public who were present. One resident spoke in opposition of this request and provided detailed information including background

information, status, recommendations and photos proving that there is ample parking available on Manet Road, on file. He said that he is opposed to this request for many reasons. Parking is restricted in front of his home on Commonwealth Avenue forcing him to park on Manet Road. A handicap parking space would restrict parking further. He then said that he has reviewed the City's handicap parking space list, made site visits and cannot support this request because he feels the application fails to fulfill the handicap parking policy requirements and suggested the request be tabled for additional information.

Sgt. Babcock said that a handicap parking space on Manet Road would override parking restrictions. There are nine handicap Boston College students who have contacted the Police Department inquiring where they can park. He said that if this request is granted any handicap driver, including Boston College students, could occupy the parking space. Sgt. Babcock then briefly described the various parking restrictions for Boston College graduation day and football games. On football game days, parking is prohibited on Manet Road, both sides. On graduation day, there are no parking restrictions on Manet Road.

Mr. Koses said that he has made two site visits to Manet Road and noted a moderate level of parked vehicles. Ms. Osmani attended the COD meeting explaining the reasons for her request and met the requirements for a handicap parking space request approval. The path of travel is difficult due to rear parking at the basement level of the home and on-street parking would allow easy access to the home with fewer stairs.

Mr. Koses recommended the approval of this request. He then suggested that if it is determined that a handicap parking space is not appropriate; it can be removed by docketing an item for Traffic Council's consideration. Sgt. Babcock opposed this suggestion, removing a handicap parking space is unfair to others.

Council members discussed this request, expressed their concerns and opposed this request because they feel that photos provided prove ample parking is available on Manet Road.

Mr. Baxter made the motion for no action necessary and said that the petitioner may request Traffic Council for reconsideration. Council members agreed 4-1, Mr. Koses opposed.

- TC40-12 <u>ALD. SALVUCCI</u>, on behalf of Joanne Langione Dance Center, 35 Border Street, requesting "No Parking" signs limited to after school hours (2pm – 6pm), Monday through Friday to facilitate safe drop offs/pickups of students. (Ward 3) [10/03/12 @ 11:37 AM]
   (3) HELD 5-0 on 02/28/13 for 60-day trial. Live Parking, Border Street, north side, in front of 35 Border Street, between 2:00 PM and 6:00 PM, Monday – Friday.
   <u>ACTION:</u> APPROVE 5-0, Live Parking, Border Street, north side, in front of 35
- **ACTION:** All rROVE 3-0, Live raiking, border Street, north side, in front of 35 Border Street, between 2:00 PM and 6:00 PM, Monday – Friday. This item may be appealed through the close of business June 19, 2013.

**<u>NOTE</u>**: Ms. Langione did not attend tonight's discussion. She provided Council members with photos, signed petitions and emails in support, all on file.

Mr. Baxter provided Council members with background information, various parking restrictions and site photos before and after the trial. He said that he has received positive feedback. The dance center generates a large number of drop offs/pickups of very young children.

Mr. Koses said that Ms. Langione docketed this item hoping to provide student safety. The trial of four-hour parking restriction accommodates safe student drop offs/pickups. There are four parking spaces in front of #35 Border Street. Parents have difficulty parking and double-park in order to drop off/pickup on the safe side of the street.

Mr. Koses said that he received an email requesting the consideration of eliminating parking in front of 55 Border Street because of the difficulty to enter and exit the loading area.

Mr. Koses opened the discussion to members of the public who were present. A merchant said that the trial has helped some, but is still not perfect. Parents are continuing to double-park, park on both sides of the street. The parking valets are monitoring the area but it appears people are ignoring them and continue to park in merchants lots and suggested that the Police Department perform details informing parents of recent Traffic Council actions. He then suggested the installation of a loading zone in front of 45 Border Street for commercial vehicles only. A resident said that the trial has made a significant improvement to Border Street allowing safe drop-offs/pickups improving children's safety and supports the trial becoming permanent. The dance center notified parents of Traffic Council's recent actions.

Ald. Hess-Mahan said that he has not received complaints regarding the trial. Ms. Langione has made a concerted effort to make the loading zone work. He requests the trial become permanent because he has noticed a significant difference noting people are not double-parking, use the live parking area appropriately and the trial has allowed for safe drop-offs/pickups. He is unsure if police details would help or are necessary. Ald. Linsky said that he is pleased to hear the loading zone is working and supports making the trial permanent. Ald. Hess-Mahan then said that commuters park up the street perhaps due to the MBTA charging a \$4.00 per day fee. Few vehicles are observed utilizing the two MBTA parking lots.

Sgt. Babcock stated that the Police Department performed fifteen site visits issuing nine violations. He supports the trial becoming permanent because earlier concerns have diminished. Border Street is much safer because parents are not dropping off/picking up children in the middle of the street, children are not running between parked vehicles and double-parking has decreased. He does not feel police details are necessary. He supports the request of installing a loading zone in front of 45 Border Street for commercial vehicles only.

Ald. Ciccone made the motion to approve the trial of live parking, Border Street, north side, in front of 35 Border Street, between 2:00 PM and 6:00 PM, Monday – Friday. Council members agreed 5-0. Mr. Koses said that this item may be appealed through the close of business on June 19, 2013. Mr. Baxter said that the Department Public Works would install administratively no parking signs between driveways to relieve the parking issues in front of 55 Border Street.

TC27-12DAVID KOSES, on behalf of Jayne Colino and the Department of Senior<br/>Services, requesting eight (8) parking spaces in the rear of the Austin Street<br/>parking lot be designated for the Department of Senior Services. (Ward 2)<br/>[06/08/12 @ 4:40 PM]

## ACTION: NO ACTION NECESSARY 5-0

**<u>NOTE:</u>** Mr. Koses said that this request has become part of the Newtonville Parking Plan. The plan includes parking permits that will be issued to the Newton Senior Center staff as non-resident permits.

Without discussion, Mr. Koses made the motion for no action necessary. Council members agreed 5-0.

TC28-12 JOSEPH CIUFFINI, 188 Cabot Street #2, requesting a Stop Sign or alternative solution at the north-west corner of Cabot Street and East Side Parkway. (Ward 2) [06/14/12 @ 2:23 PM]
 ACTION: APPROVE 5-0, New stop sign on Cabot Street eastbound at East Side Parkway, and new stop sign on Cabot Street westbound at East Side Parkway.

This item may be appealed through the close of business June 19, 2013.

**NOTE:** One email was received in support of this request, on file.

Mr. Ciuffini said that he docketed this item because of the high number of accidents or near accidents, speeding vehicles and blind spots. He provided Council members with the existing situation at the intersection of Westchester Road, East Side Parkway and Cabot Street hoping to slow traffic at the intersection with an additional stop sign. The four-way intersection has only two stop signs. Drivers have the tendency to speed from Centre Street through the Cabot Street intersection.

Mr. Baxter provided Council members with existing conditions, stop sign traffic warrants, existing traffic data, sight distance data and photos. Criteria for multi-way stop sign warrants shall include a) five or more reported crashes in a twelve-month period that are susceptible to correction by a multi-way stop installation and b) minimum traffic volumes. He said that existing traffic data proves three accidents between 2010 and 2012. The 8-hour traffic volume averages 320 vehicles per hour on Cabot Street and 110 vehicles per hour at East Side Parkway and Westchester Road. Mr. Baxter agrees this intersection meets the warrants for a stop sign because of limited stopping sight distance and limited intersection sight distance. He suggests the installation of two stop signs at 1) Cabot Street eastbound at East Side Parkway and 2) Cabot Street westbound at East Side Parkway. The stop sign will allow for the installation of new crosswalks.

Mr. Koses opened the discussion to members of the public who were present. Four residents spoke in favor of the stop sign request and agree a safety step is necessary. They expressed their concerns and suggestions.

## Concerns

Residents stated they are concerned with drivers having the tendency to speed on Cabot Street and 'roll' through the stop sign at Cabot Street and East Side Parkway. Visibility and site distances are difficult when exiting Westchester Road onto Cabot Street. They have difficulties when exiting their driveways because of speeding or high traffic volumes. One resident expressed concern with the addition of a new stop sign because vehicles may have the tendency to speed at the Cabot Elementary School location to make up lost time.

## **Suggestions**

Residents supported the installation of two stop signs and suggested the installation of raised crosswalks at Blake Street and Cabot Street to provide a safer neighborhood.

Ald. Linsky agrees the area is difficult. He said that previously a rotary was suggested at this location but raised concerns because drivers may have the tendency to speed up to make up lost time, which is dangerous especially at the Cabot Elementary School location. He feels that speeding is not a realistic issue. He supports and is in favor of an improvement in the area including stop signs and/or a raised crosswalk.

Council members expressed their concerns. Ald. Ciccone said that funding is unavailable for raised crosswalks and suggested a trial for two stop signs. Mr. Baxter opposed to a stop sign trial because drivers would rely on them and when they are removed, they may perhaps be involved in an unfortunate incident. He said that this area is not feasible for a roundabout because of high traffic volumes on Cabot Street. Mr. Koses said that he supports raised crosswalks in the area and suggested an item be docketed for future consideration as a traffic calming measure at Blake Street and Cabot Street. He then said that he supports and agrees with Mr. Baxter's recommendation of the installation of two stop signs as the location meets the warrants. Mr. Grafe also supports the recommendation agreeing the intersection requires an additional two stop signs. Sgt. Babcock suggested the following conditions be met if this request is approved, a) installation of stop signs on each side of Cabot Street .

Ald. Linsky said that he would docket an item requesting a raised crosswalk at Blake Street and Cabot Street.

Mr. Koses made the motion to approve a stop sign on Cabot Street eastbound at East Side Parkway and a stop sign on Cabot Street westbound at East Side Parkway with the understanding that Sgt. Babcock's conditions be met. Council members agreed 5-0. Mr. Koses said that this item may be appealed through the close of business on June 19, 2013.

TC62-13LAUREN KOHL, 42 Oakwood Road, requesting that Oakwood Road, from<br/>Upland to the Dead End, become part of the Newtonville Neighborhood Parking<br/>District, and that the regulations change to two-hour limit, except by resident<br/>permit and visitor permit, 8AM-4PM, School Days, both sides. (Ward 2)<br/>[04/29/13 @ 10:36 AM]

## ACTION: APPROVE (5-0) This item may be appealed through the close of business June 19, 2013.

**NOTE:** Mr. Baxter said that this request is to make Oakwood Road, from Upland Road to the dead end section consistent with the neighborhood in the Newtonville Parking Plan. Oakwood Road is 24' wide.

Mr. Koses opened the discussion to members of the public who were present. Petitioner, Ms. Kohl said that the neighbors support the request to change parking regulations to a two-hour limit, except by resident and visitor permit parking, 8AM-4PM, School Days, both sides. Ald. Linsky said that he supports this request.

Without discussion, Ald. Ciccone made the motion to approve this request. Council members agreed 5-0. Mr. Koses said that this item may be appealed through the close of business on June 19, 2013. Signs for the Newtonville Parking Plan will be installed throughout the summer for implementation in the new school year.

TC32-12 <u>ALD. LAPPIN</u>, requesting a full traffic signal at the intersection of Nahanton and Winchester Streets. (Ward 8) [06/29/12 @ 12:53 PM]
 <u>ACTION:</u> HELD (5-0)

**NOTE:** One email was received in opposition to this request, on file.

Mr. Baxter requests this item be held. He is hopeful traffic data would be collected the first week of May.

Mr. Koses said that once data is collected. The JCC, farm stand and the Condominium residents who are abutters would be notified when this item will be discussed, perhaps in June.

Without discussion, Ald. Ciccone made the motion to hold this item. Council members agreed 5-0.

TC6-13 DAVID KOSES, requesting a left turn prohibition between 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM from Bridge Street southbound onto Watertown Street eastbound. (Ward 1) [02/14/13 @ 3:35 PM]
 ACTION: APPROVE (5-0) This item may be appealed through the close of business June 19, 2013.

**NOTE:** Without discussion, Ald. Ciccone made the motion to approve this request. Council members agreed 5-0. Mr. Koses said that this item may be appealed through the close of business on June 19, 2013.

Ald. Ciccone said that he would docket an item requesting a left turn prohibition from Watertown Street eastbound onto Bridge Street between 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM.

TC8-13PATRICK BAXTER, requesting a Stop Sign on Varick Road at Beacon Street.<br/>(Ward 5) [03/06/13 @ 12:23 PM]ACTION:APPROVE (5-0)<br/>This item may be appealed through the close of business June 19, 2013.

**NOTE:** Two emails in opposition and photos were received, on file.

Mr. Baxter provided Council members with background information and photos. He reviewed the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) guidelines for a stop sign. He said that he docketed this request due to the large volume of vehicles parking at the Varick Road island while attending hospital appointments. The stop sign will allow for the installation of a crosswalk across from Varick Road and striping would direct traffic around the island indicating that all traffic should keep to the right side of the island when entering and exiting.

Mr. Koses suggested future considerations of reducing parking or implementing a two-hour parking restriction on Beacon Street. Sgt. Babcock said that the Police Department enforces the area frequently issuing citations. Mr. Koses suggested restriping this section of Beacon Street.

Without further discussion, Mr. Grafe made the motion to approve. Council members agreed 5-0. Mr. Koses said that this item may be appealed through the close of business on June 19, 2013.

# TC10-13 <u>PATRICK BAXTER</u>, requesting a conversion to one-way circulation on Beecher Terrace. (Ward 6) [03/18/13 @ 9:25 AM] <u>ACTION:</u> DENY (5-0) This item may be appealed through the close of business June 19, 2013.

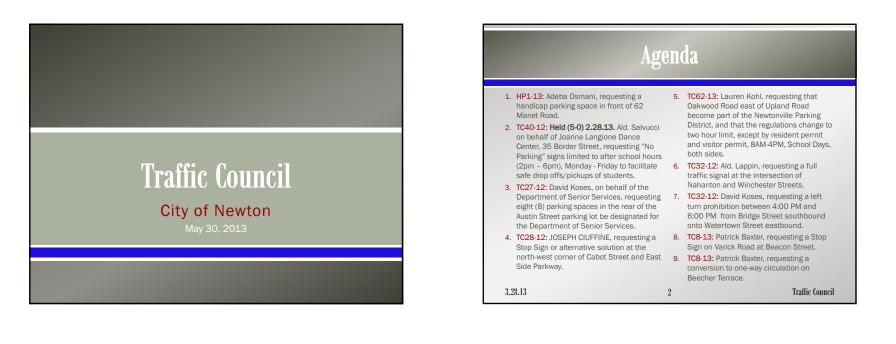
**<u>NOTE</u>**: Mr. Baxter said that he docketed this item due to an accident complaint. He provided Council members with the existing conditions and photos. He said that Beecher Terrace is a private road, paved width is 10 feet. Mr. Baxter is requesting converting Beecher Terrace to one-way configuration allowing residents to enter by the east leg and circulate clockwise allowing easier access for residents to enter and exit their driveways.

Mr. Koses summarized the one email received in opposition, on file. The email states that Beecher Terrace is a private road so the resident is unsure if a one-way conversion would be legal or enforceable.

Mr. Koses opened the discussion to members of the public who were present. Approximately five residents spoke expressing their concerns and opposition. They all disagree with the proposal. Winter months exasperate the issues because the east section of Beecher Terrace is not usually plowed, challenging, quite steep, sharp turns, potholes and parked vehicles have the tendency to block the road. The west section allows for easier and safe access. A resident requested the City install a convex mirror on the telephone pole to provide better site distance. Without further discussion, Mr. Baxter made the motion to deny his item. Council members agreed 5-0. Mr. Koses said that this item may be appealed through the close of business on June 19, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

David Koses, Traffic Council Chair





Background Information	HP1-13
<ul> <li>Council on disabilities voted to recommend that Traffic Council approve a handicap parking space on 3.27.13</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Home has existing driveway and off-street parking in rear</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Path direct to front door (exterior stairs)</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>HP Ramp provided immediately north at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue</li> </ul>	
5.30.13 4	Traffic Council







