

CITY OF NEWTON
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2011

Present: Ald. Ciccone, James Danila (Transportation Engineer), Jerome Grafe (Resident member), David Koses (Transportation Planner), Sgt. James Norcross (Police Department) and Clint Schuckel (Director of Transportation)

Also present: Ald. Johnson, Linsky, Merrill and Swiston

City Staff: Robert DeRubeis (Commissioner Parks & Recreation Department) and Danielle Delaney (Clerk)

Mr. Schuckel and Mr. Danila provided a PowerPoint presentation on these items, attached to this report.

TC5-11 ALD. SWISTON, on behalf of Joshua Klevens, 351 Otis Street, requesting speed calming measures on Otis Street between Chestnut and Forest Streets as the posted speed limit and “children” signs are not preventing speeding motorists. (Ward 3) [01/24/11 @ 9:25 AM]

ACTION: Approve 4-0, Grafe not voting. Recommend a series of speed humps on Otis Street between Chestnut and Forest Street.

NOTE: Ald. Swiston said that she docketed this item due to ongoing high volume and high-speed issues. Safety is a top priority, as children must cross Otis Street to attend school. She said that last year, the Police Department clocked drivers speed and found that they were excessive. The road grade is also an issue because people tend to speed. She then said that she was advised that “stop signs” were approved but were never installed. Mr. Koses said that he would check the Traffic Parking Regulations to determine this.

Mr. Schuckel agreed with Ald. Swiston that the speed limit and “children” signs are not effective. He said that stop signs are not considered to be traffic calming measures. Mr. Koses said that the City’s Law Department has advised Traffic Council that they cannot approve stop signs unless they meet the necessary warrants. Mr. Schuckel provided Council members with recent photos, traffic counts, street data, street grades and minimum traffic calming thresholds. He stated that Otis Street is 23’-24’ wide. He then said that speed humps could be installed as possible traffic calming devices because the required criteria are met. Traffic volume on the street is greater than 1,000 vehicles per day, the measured 85th percentile speeds are equal to or greater than 9 mph above the speed limit, and Otis Street is a local street (The City has determined that speed humps can be installed on minor collectors or local streets). Chicanes, raised intersections, crosswalks and mini roundabouts should not be considered at this location for various reasons. He said speed that humps are installed approximately 50’ from driveways perhaps making it difficult to park. Mr. Schuckel provided the following speed hump information:

Speed Hump Information

Length of Otis St. (Chestnut to Lowell): 3500'

Maximum speed hump spacing: 500'

Number of speed humps required: 6

Approximate cost per speed hump: \$7,500

Cost to install on Otis between Chestnut and Lowell: \$45,000

Mr. Koses opened the discussion for public comment. He asked residents to focus on the traffic calming ideas presented. Brian Mazmanian, 354 Otis Street, said that his major concern is speed. Joshua Klevens, 351 Otis Street, said that he petitioned this item for children's safety, concerns and excessive speeds. He is hopeful the most appropriate solution would be considered made before bigger problems arise. He supports the installation of speed humps but does not want to upset neighbors and asked that the best alternative be considered. Patty Egan, 346 Otis Street, said that some cars have been hit and side mirrors removed. Another resident agreed - her major concern regards speed and accidents. She is hopeful that the correct alternative will be decided. Robert Arone, 351 Otis Street, said that he is also concerned about speed. He would support speed humps but is concerned about the noise that is due to people accelerating before approaching the next hump. A resident asked if directed patrols could be provided. Sgt. Norcross answered that he would request that the Police Department to perform directed patrols on Otis Street. A resident asked if neighbors could receive permission to place temporary speed humps on the street. Mr. Schuckel said that the Board of Aldermen would have to approve temporary speed humps.

Ald. Johnson asked for clarification on the process if Traffic Council makes a recommendation. Mr. Schuckel answered that once Traffic Council favorably votes on a petition, it is referred to the Public Facilities Committee for construction review and Finance Committee for funding approval. The Mayor has the authority to initiate funding requests. Ald. Johnson asked if it would be easier to install speed humps when Otis Street is scheduled for repaving. Mr. Schuckel then said based on the photos he does not anticipate Otis Street being repaved for at least five years.

Mr. Grafe suggested altering Otis Street with planters to deter speeding. Mr. Schuckel answered that speed humps are more cost effective because drainage and road modifications do not have to change.

Ald. Ciccone made the motion to approve this item recommending speed humps. Council members agreed 4-0, Grafe not voting. Mr. Koses said that this item could not be appealed and that the recommendation of speed humps would have to be docketed for the Board of Aldermen's consideration.

TC15-11 ALD. JOHNSON, ALBRIGHT & LINSKY requesting the removal of the "No Right Turn on Red" sign at the intersection of Crafts and Watertown Streets. (Ward 2) [04/14/11 @ 8:25 PM]

ACTION: Approve 3-1, Ciccone opposed, Grafe not voting removal of "No Right on Red" sign from southbound Crafts Street to westbound Watertown Street.

Approve 3-1, Ciccone opposed, Grafe not voting removal of "No Right on Red" sign from eastbound Watertown Street to southbound Crafts Street.

Deny 2-2, Ciccone, Koses opposed, Grafe not voting, removal of “No Right on Red” sign from northbound Crafts Street to eastbound Watertown Street.

This item may be appealed through the close of business October 12, 2011.

NOTE: Ald. Johnson said that this item was docketed as a request from citizens. Drivers do not stop at this intersection and cannot see pedestrians at this intersection. She asked if this sign could be removed on a trial basis.

Mr. Schuckel provided Council members with the MUTCD guidelines and recent intersection data including vehicle counts. He said that there are both pros and cons of removing this restriction. He recommends only keeping the “No Right Turn on Red” sign westbound to Watertown Street primarily because of the Fire Station exit and site distance.

Ald. Johnson asked if the installation of a “Right Turn after Stopping” sign would be effective. Mr. Schuckel answered yes because it enforces state law. Mr. Koses and Mr. Grafe agreed. Ald. Ciccone said if this type of sign is installed it becomes dangerous because drivers think the same sign is located at each corner. Mr. Grafe asked if a “Yield to Pedestrian” sign would be beneficial. Sgt. Norcross feels additional signs is confusing.

Mr. Schuckel made the motion to approve the three motions listed above. Mr. Koses said that this item could be appealed within 20 days.

TC18-11 RICHARD PASCARELLI, 435 Newtonville Avenue, requesting establishment of a loading zone in the vicinity of 432 Newtonville Avenue. (Ward 2) [04/26/11 @ 4:43 PM]

ACTION: **Hold 4-0, Grafe not voting**

NOTE: Ald. Ciccone stated Mr. Pascarelli telephoned him requesting this item be held because he was unable to attend tonight’s discussion. He then asked that this item be held until October 2011.

Mr. Danila would like to obtain delivery times, length of trucks and length of stay.

Mr. Koses made the motion to hold this item. Council members agreed 4-0, Grafe not voting.

TC16-11 TERESA RICE, 68 Gardner Street, requesting parking restrictions on Gardner Street. (Ward 1) [04/14/11 @ 11:08 PM]

ACTION: **Approve 4-0, Grafe not voting restrict parking, tow zone, all day, both sides of the 90-degree bend of Gardner Street.**

Approve 3-1, Norcross opposed, Grafe not voting one-hour parking limit, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM, school days, portion of the west side of Gardner Street immediately abutting the Lincoln-Eliot School.

This item may be appealed through the close of business October 12, 2011.

NOTE: Items TC16-11, TC48-11 and HP2-11 were discussed together. The one e-mail received is attached to this report.

Mr. Danila said that Gardner Street is 24’ wide; it is wide enough to allow parking on both sides of the street. He provided Council members with current parking restrictions, photos and the

average number of cars observed in September 2011 parked on Gardner Street. Data shows about ten cars parked in front of Lincoln-Eliot School during pick-up times. During six to seven site visits, there was an average of six cars parked when school was not in session. Mr. Danila said that the fifteen- minute parking zone is not enforced because it is not legal.

Mr. Koses opened the discussion for public comment. Mary Scott, 106 Gardner Street, disagreed with the number of cars parking on Gardner Street. Staff and parents have the tendency to block her driveway and emergency vehicles have difficulty accessing the street. Joyce McCarthy, 22 Gardner Street, said that both her sister and husband have a disability. She is concerned about the ability of emergency vehicles to accessing the street. Drivers have the tendency to speed and people block her driveway (especially commuters and local businesses) after 9:00 am when the parking restrictions are lifted. Ms. McCarthy stated that a parking restriction is necessary. Petitioner, Teresa Rice, 68 Gardner Street, said that cars (parents and staff) are parking on both sides of the Gardner Street making entering and exiting her driveway difficult. She is hopeful that a parking restriction will be implemented. George Lee, 72 Gardner Street, feels that the Lincoln-Eliot School should be providing parking for staff and parents as it is highly utilized. He disagreed with the number of parked vehicles on the rest of the street and provided Council members with a photo (taken on 9/21/11 at about 5:30 pm) showing a low number of cars parked on Gardner Street. Joseph McCassie, 83 Gardner Street, said that emergency vehicles have damaged cars trying to access and travel on the street indicating a major problem.

Ald. Ciccone asked if all Gardner Street residents had driveways. Residents answered yes. Sgt. Norcross said that when parking restrictions are implemented, residents must also oblige. Mr. Koses stated parked vehicles also act as measure to calm traffic and reduce speed. Sgt. Norcross suggested the implementation of a 2-hour parking restriction in both the am and pm hours to deter commuters.

Mr. Danila recommends permanently restricting parking, all day, both sides of Gardner Street near the "elbow" where the street turns 90 degrees, to allow for emergency vehicle access. Sgt. Norcross recommends that this area be designated as a Tow Zone. Mr. Danila then suggested a one-hour parking limit, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM, school days, on the west side of Gardner Street immediately abutting the Lincoln-Eliot School. Council members voted the above actions. Mr. Koses said that this item could be appealed.

TC48-11 JOYCE McCARTHY, 22 Gardner Street, requesting parking restrictions on Gardner Street. (Ward 1) [08/03/11 @ 2:47 PM]

ACTION: NO ACTION NECESSARY 4-0, Grafe not voting

NOTE: See TC16-11. The one e-mail received is attached to this report.

Mr. Danila made the motion to vote no action necessary on this item because it is a duplicate of TC16-11. Council members agreed 4-0, Grafe not voting.

HP2-11 JOYCE McCARTHY, 22 Gardner Street, requesting a handicap parking space in front of her residence. (Ward 1) [8/03/11 @ 2:47 PM]

The Newton Commission on Disability voted on 09/12//11, to recommend to the Traffic Council that a HP space be designated in front of 24 Gardner Street.

ACTION: Approve 4-0, Grafe not voting

NOTE: Mr. Koses reviewed the Handicap Policy with Ms. McCarthy. Ms. McCarthy said that she requested the handicap parking space hoping that it would be safer for her blind sister. The van would not have difficulty parking in front of her home, entering and exiting the van would be safer.

Mr. Koses said that if this space was approved, any person with a placard could park in this space. He then said that if parking restrictions were implemented on the south side of Gardner Street, a handicap space could not be approved.

Mr. Koses made the motion to approve this handicap parking space. Council members agreed 4-0, Grafe not voting. This item cannot be appealed.

TC47-11 PLANNING DEPARTMENT, requesting changes to the parking restrictions on Centre Street between Church Street and Centre Avenue, to include new parking meters. (Ward 1) [08/25/11 @ 8:18 AM]

ACTION: Approve 4-0, Grafe not voting, two-hour parking, 8AM-6PM, Monday to Friday, west side of Centre Street from Richardson Street to the “No Parking” zone located north of Church Street. No new parking meters will be installed.

Approve 4-0, Grafe not voting, two-hour parking, 8AM-6PM, Monday to Friday, east side of Centre Street between a point north of Church Street and a point south of Centre Avenue. No new parking meters will be installed.

This item may be appealed through the close of business October 12, 2011.

NOTE: Robert DeRubeis, Commissioner Parks & Recreation Department; said that he is requesting approximately seventeen spaces (fourteen spaces for employees who are often in and out, and three spaces for full time employees). There are five parking spaces in the on-site parking lot of the new Parks and Recreation Department home (site of the old Newton Corner branch library).

Mr. Danila provided Council members with area parking regulations, parking meter limits on Richardson Street, proposal for Centre Street, new parking regulations that are needed and various Parks & Recreation Department parking options.

Changes needed

New parking regulations on Centre Street, east side, from a point 170' north of Church Street to Centre Avenue would allow eleven spaces, perhaps employee parking. New parking regulations Centre Street, west side, from Richardson Street to a point 135' south of Richardson Street would allow six spaces, perhaps employee parking.

Mr. Koses said that the Eliot Church contacted him regarding their parking concerns on Centre Street especially on the weekends. Mr. Danila said that these items would not affect the Eliot Church or Underwood School. Ald. Merrill stated he is opposed to installing parking meters on Church Street and agrees with the Eliot Church's concerns due to funerals, masses, etc. He asked if the Neighborhood Association was contacted for their input.

Amy Beckler, Underwood School, Safe Routes to School said that she is concerned because of safety; students are not walking or bicycling because the area is too dangerous. She said parents

are upset in the morning when they try to find parking. The school does not have a blue zone. She feels if the Parks & Recreation Department gets permit parking then the Underwood School employees should receive the same. In her survey, approximately fourteen teachers park on either Vernon or Eldredge Street. There are twenty parking spaces available in the school parking lot. She asked if one-hour parking meters could be increased to three hours. Sgt. Norcross said that her request would have to be docketed.

Council members expressed various suggestions and concerns, including the following:

Suggestions

Utilize seven underutilized parking spaces on Richardson Street.

Utilize ten parking spaces in the Richardson Street parking lot without removing or bagging existing meters.

Eliminate the possibility of using Centre Street for the program due to the high demand for parking on Centre Street.

Discourage employees from using one-hour meters in Richardson Street parking lot.

Creating a shared parking program for the minimum number of requested spaces.

Concerns

It may be more difficult for Parking Control Officers to enforce the program.

The City may lose meter revenue if a program is implemented, meters removed or bagged.

Local businesses have expanded requiring more parking.

Hesitant to approve the program due to the precedent it sets.

Mr. Koses and Mr. Grafe were strongly against removing the seven parking meters on Richardson Street. They strongly preferred an option which would have left the seven parking meters in place, so that they could be used by the general public, but which would have allowed Parks and Recreation employees with stickers to park at these on-street meters without paying the meter. This would be no different from how Parks and Recreation Department employees would park at the (non one-hour) Richardson Street parking meters without paying them. Other members felt that the Richardson Street meters were very underutilized and could be removed – with the area dedicated to Parks and Recreation employees only between 8AM and 5PM weekdays.

Mr. Danila made the motion to approve this item. Council members voted the above actions. Mr. Koses said that this item could be appealed.

Commissioner DeRubeis stated that he would request employees to use the Richardson Street parking lot prior to using Richardson Street. He is grateful with the number of spaces given. Sgt. Norcross said that he would work with Commissioner DeRubeis to develop a sticker program allowing employees to park in the Richardson Street parking lot and Richardson Street without paying the meters.

TC46-11 PLANNING DEPARTMENT, requesting creation of a permit program for the Parks & Recreation Department to accommodate their relocation to Newton Corner. (Ward 1) [08/25/11 @ 8:18 AM]

ACTION: Approve 4-0, Grafe not voting, vehicles displaying a Parks and Recreation Department sticker may park at any meter in the Richardson Street Parking Lot that is not designated as a one-hour meter, without paying the meter.

Approve 3-1, Koses opposed, Grafe not voting, seven parking meters located along Richardson Street approximately across from 46 Richardson Street will be bagged or removed, and replaced by a “Parks and Recreation Department Vehicles Only 8AM to 5PM, Monday-Friday” zone.

Approve 4-0, Grafe not voting, the Parks and Recreation Department may issue parking stickers for up to twenty employees at once, to be issued by the Parks and Recreation Department, to be valid at the following locations: at any meter in the Richardson Street Parking Lot that is not a one-hour meter, and in the “Parks and Recreation Department Vehicles Only 8AM to 5PM, Monday-Friday” zone located across from 46 Richardson Street.

This item may be appealed through the close of business October 12, 2011.

NOTE: See TC47-11. Mr. Danila made the motion to approve this item. Council members voted the above actions. Mr. Koses said that this item could be appealed.

Respectfully submitted,

David Koses, Traffic Council Chair

Traffic Council

City Hall
Room 222
Thursday, September 22, 2011
7:00 p.m.

Agenda

1. TC5-11: requesting speed calming measures on Otis Street. (Ward 3)
 2. TC15-11: requesting removal of No Turn on Red restriction at the intersection of Watertown St. & Crafts St. (Ward 2)
 3. TC18-11: requesting loading zone in the vicinity of 432 Newtonville Ave. (Ward 2)
 4. TC16-11 & TC48-11: requesting parking restrictions on Gardner St. (Ward 1)
 5. HP2-11: requesting Handicap Parking in front of 22 Gardner St. (Ward 1)
 6. TC47-11: requesting changes to parking restrictions on Centre St. between Church St. and Centre Ave. (Ward 1)
 7. TC46-11: requesting creation of a permit program for the Parks & Recreation Department in Newton Corner. (Ward 1)
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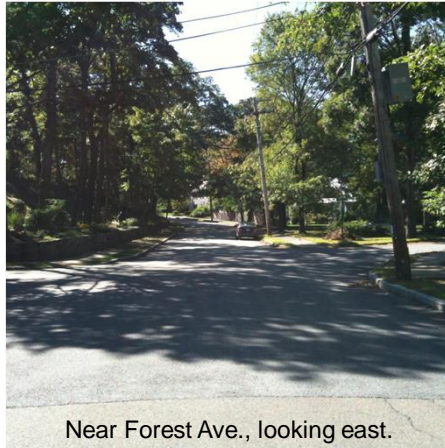
TC5-11

Requesting speed calming measures on Otis Street between Chestnut and Forest Streets. (Ward 3)

Study Area



Approach Photos



Traffic and Road Info

- ADT: 1,227 vehicles per day (September, 2010).
 - 2% trucks.
- Speed Limit: 25 mph.
 - Median speed: 29 mph.
 - 85th percentile speed: 35 mph.
- Road width: 23q24q
- Hill peaks near Balcarres Rd.
 - Max grade of 6% between Balcarres and Forest.
 - Max grade of 9% between Forest and Lowell.
 - Max grade of 7% west of Balcarres.
 - MassDOT recommended maximum grade: 7%.

Minimum Traffic Calming Thresholds

- ✓ Traffic volume on street is greater than 1,000 vehicles per day.
- ✓ Measured 85th percentile speeds are equal to or greater than 9 mph above the speed limit.
- ✓ For vertical deflections, street classification shall be minor collector or local street.
 - ◇ For raised crossings, the minimum criteria established by the city crosswalk policy shall be met.

Possible Traffic Calming Devices: Speed Humps



Not considered: Chicanes



- Otis St. too narrow.

Not considered: Raised Intersections & Crosswalks



- Pedestrian volumes likely aren't high enough.

Not considered: Mini Roundabout



- Grade and right-of-way limitations.

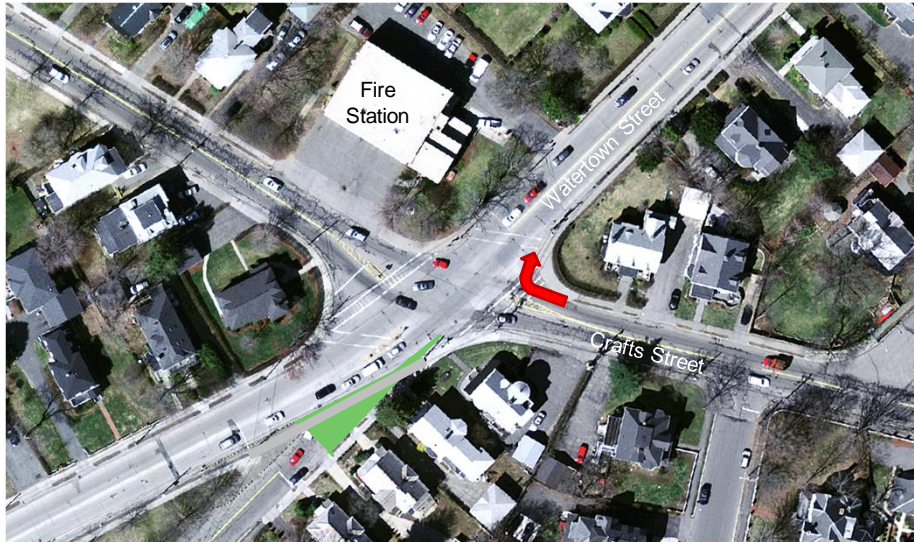
Speed Hump Information

- Length of Otis St. (Chestnut to Lowell): 3500q
- Maximum speed hump spacing: 500q
- Number of speed humps required: 6
- Approximate cost per speed hump: \$7,500
- Cost to install on Otis between Chestnut and Lowell: \$45,000.

TC15-11

Requesting removal of the No Turn on Red restriction at the intersection of Crafts St. and Watertown St. (Ward 2)

Aerial Photo



Approach Photos



Approach Photos, cont.



MUTCD Guidance

- A No Turn on Red sign should be considered when an engineering study finds that one or more of the following conditions exists:
 - Inadequate sight distance to vehicles approaching from the left;
 - Geometrics or operational characteristics of the intersection that might result in unexpected conflicts;
 - An exclusive pedestrian phase;
 - An unacceptable number of pedestrian conflicts with right-turn-on-red maneuvers, especially involving children, older pedestrians, or persons with disabilities;
 - The skew angle of the intersecting roadways creates difficulty for drivers to see traffic approaching from their left.
-

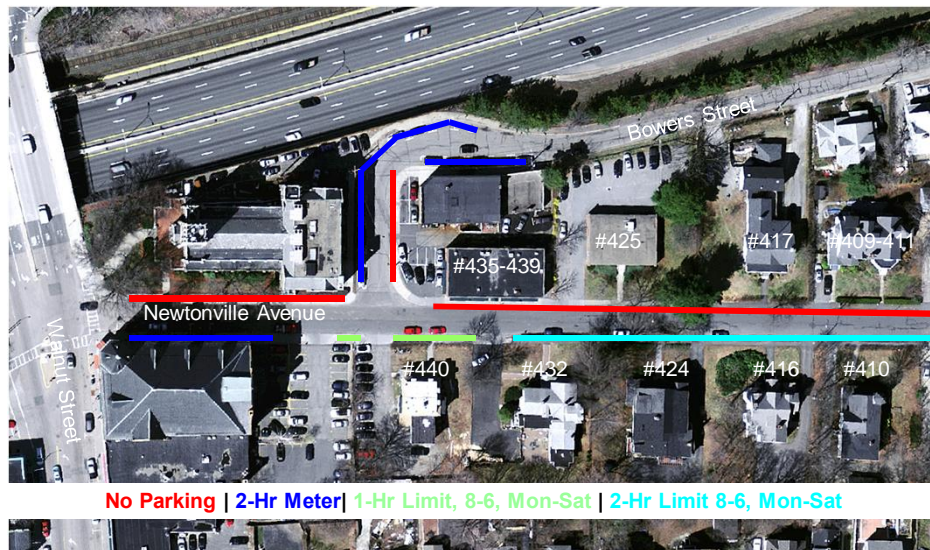
Intersection Data

- Right turn from Crafts onto Watertown:
 - 7-9 a.m.: >100 vehicles.
 - 4-6 p.m.: >130 vehicles.
 - Intersection does operate with an exclusive pedestrian phase.
 - Intersection is staffed with a crossing guard.
-

TC18-11

Requesting establishment of a loading zone in the vicinity of 432 Newtonville Ave. (Ward 2)

Aerial Photo



Looking East (towards Harvard St.)



Looking West (towards Walnut St.)



TC16-11 & TC48-11

Requesting parking restrictions on
Gardner Street. (Ward 1)

HP2-11

Requesting a handicap parking space in
front of 22 Gardner Street. (Ward 1)

Aerial Photo



Near Lincoln-Eliot School



Looking west from Jewett St.



Looking east from Jewett St.



In front of #22 Gardner



Average # of cars observed parked.



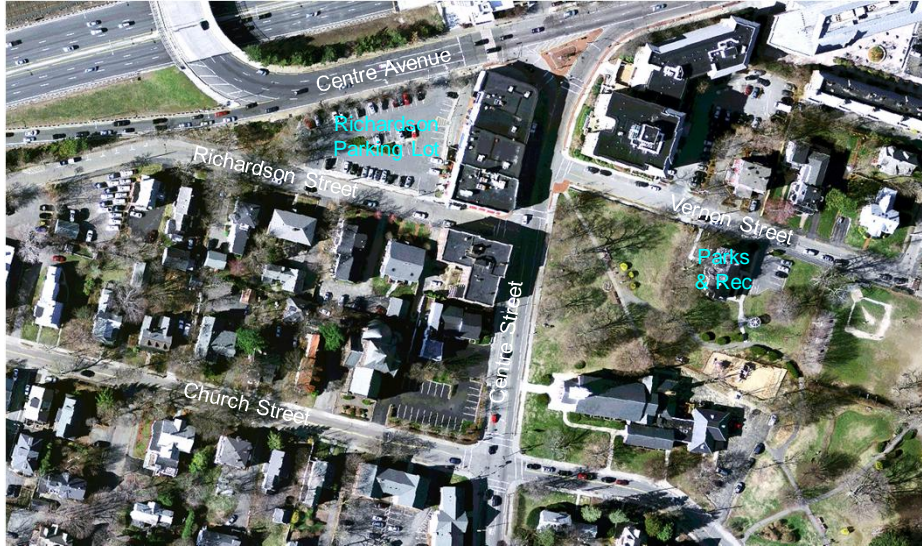
TC47-11

Requesting changes to the parking restrictions on Centre St. between Church St. and Centre Ave. to include new parking meters. (Ward 1)

TC46-11

Requesting creation of a permit program for the Parks & Recreation Department to accommodate their relocation to Newton Corner. (Ward 1)

Aerial Photo



Area Parking Regulations



No Parking | **1-Hr Limit 7-7** | **3-Hr Limit 7-7** | **1-Hr Meters**
No Parking 7-9 & 4-6 + 1-Hr Limit 9-4 | **No Parking 7-9 & 4-6 + 2-Hr Limit, 9-4**

Richardson St. Meters



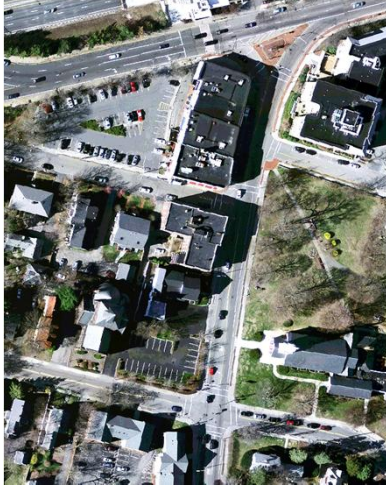
- 1-Hr Meters: 10
 - Avg. Occupancy: 4
- 3-Hr Meters: 19
 - Avg. Occupancy: 7
- No Limit Meters: 30
 - Avg. Occupancy: 15
- On-Street No Limit Meters: 7
 - Ave. Occupancy: 1

Centre St. Proposal



- Clean up parking regulations on Centre St. between Church St. and Centre Ave.
- Provide parking opportunities at all times.
- Keep Centre St. as a single lane through Centre Ave.
- Provide opportunity to add future bike accommodations to Newton Centre.

Changes needed



- New parking regulations: Centre St, east side, from a point 170qnorth of Church St. to Centre Ave.
 - 11 %ew+spaces.
- New parking regulations, Centre St., west side, from Richardson St. to a point 135qsouth of Richardson St.
 - 6 %ew+spaces.
- +_ # of additional spaces for Parks & Rec.

Danielle Delaney

From: "Greg Tutunjian"
To: "Traffic Council Dist List" <trafficcouncil@newtonma.gov>
Subject: Board of Alderman Meeting September 22nd; TC-48-11, TC-16-11
Date sent: Thu, 8 Sep 2011 19:35:24 -0400

Hi,

My name is Greg Tutunjian. I live at 13R Gardner Street. I am traveling and unable to attend this meeting. I would like to add my support to Joyce McCarthy's and Teresa Rice's requests. There is an inordinate and dangerous level of all-day non-resident parking on Gardner Street. Gardner Street is already narrow, and these vehicles greatly constrict traffic flow. They also make it difficult to receive guests at residences (as our driveways are often for more than one residence and there is no off-street parking for guests.)

Thank you for adding my voice to these requests.

Regards,

Greg Tutunjian

13R Gardner Street



Danielle Delaney

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