

CITY OF NEWTON
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2011

Present: Ald. Ciccone; Jim Danila, Transportation Engineer; Jerome Grafe, Citizen Representative; David Koses, Transportation Planner and Sgt. James, Newton Police Department
Also Present: Sgt. Glenn Chisholm, Newton Police Department; Ald. Blazar, Freedman, Lappin, Fuller, Fischman and Alderman-Elect Kalis

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

TC39-11 ALD. SHAPIRO, DANBERG, BLAZAR AND FREEDMAN, requesting a discussion and action on parking changes within the vicinity of Homer and Grafton Streets to improve pick-up, drop-off and parking during Little League events. (Ward 6) [07/08/11 @ 2:00 PM]

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0 (Grafe not voting) live parking zone on Homer Street, south side, between the park access walkway and the driveway to #46 Homer Street.

APPROVED 2-1-1 (Koses opposed, Danila abstaining, Grafe not voting) live parking on Homer Street, north side, for the first five car lengths to the west of the Homer Street crosswalk at Grafton Street.

This item may be appealed through the close of business January 4, 2012.

NOTE: The one email received on this item is attached to this report.

Ald. Blazar stated the implementation of a tow zone, bump out and crosswalk on Homer Street has made the area safer and has improved sight distance.

Edward Engelman, 67 Bow Road, presented Council members with current and proposed maps of parking and restrictions in the area, attached to this report. He agreed the crosswalk and bump out has made the area safer. It remains an issue because parents cannot drop-off their children safely and continue to park illegally. He suggested the installation of a crosswalk pylon sign, no parking signs and drop-off zone locations on Homer Street to make the area safe. Mr. Danila recommends live parking zones rather than proposed drop-off zones. Sgt. Norcross said that he is concerned with the elimination of parking on Homer Street because parked cars have the tendency to deter speeding. Mr. Danila agreed. Ald. Freedman proposed implementing a shorter live parking zone on Homer Street between the park and driveway to #46 Homer Street. Mr. Danila agreed due to limited sight distance.

Mr. Danila and Sgt. Norcross made motions to approve this item. Mr. Danila said that the request for a crosswalk pylon sign is installed at the discretion of the Public Works Department. Council members agreed on the above actions as noted. Mr. Koses said that this item may be appealed through January 4, 2012.

TC54-11 ALD. DANBERG on behalf of Bowen School, requesting No U-Turn signs on Cypress Street (northbound) at Bow Road and Cypress Street in both directions in the vicinity of #289 and #290. (Ward 6) [09/27/11 @ 10:42 PM]

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0 (Grafe not voting).
This item may be appealed through the close of business January 4, 2012.

NOTE: The one email received on this item is attached to this report.

Mr. Danila said that Cypress Street is 26' wide. Current restrictions are no parking 8-4 on School Days with a Blue Zone. Parents are using the blue zone as a drop-off area. They are making 3- point turns causing traffic problems. He supports the request of these No U-Turn signs.

Sgt. Norcross suggested installing two No U-Turn signs on each side of Street and made the motion to approve this item. Council members agreed 4-0, Grafe not voting. Mr. Koses said that this item may be appealed through January 4, 2012.

TC40-11 ALD. FREEDMAN, FISCHMAN AND LAPPIN, requesting a review of traffic council conditions on automobiles, parking and pedestrian safety in the area of the intersection of Dedham Street and Rachel Road with particular attention to changes that may occur with the opening of the new Beth Menachem Chabad. (Ward 8) [07/18/11 @ 9:32 AM]

ACTION: HELD 3-1 (Danila opposed, Grafe not voting). Enact 60-day trial, no parking, south/east (even numbered) side of Rachel Road between Mosley Road and Dedham Street.

NOTE: Mr. Danila provided Council members with the no parking restrictions on Rachel Road and Dedham Street. He said that Rachel Road is 28' wide, which can accommodate parking on both sides.

Sgt. Norcross said that parking restriction signs cannot be installed because the dates for events vary. The City's Law Department has informed him that each event date would have to be included in the sign. Sgt. Norcross said that he spoke with Rabbi Prus who agreed they would contact Capt. Mintz to arrange temporary parking restrictions for large events. The Police Department has implemented several temporary parking restrictions as requested by Rabbi Prus on Rachel Road and Dedham Street. Sgt. Norcross said that he asked Mr. Schuckel to post no parking signs 50' from corners at the intersection of Rachel Road and Dedham Street to make the corners safe. He feels the temporary parking restrictions have worked well.

Ald. Fischman said that this item was docketed because of the large number of parked cars, on-going problems and safety issues in the neighborhood. He said that Rachel Road is used as a cut-through street. He provided Council members with background information on this item. He referenced board order #106-07, that Beth Menachem Chabad agreed to as follows:

- The congregation will not oppose any traffic or parking ordinances or regulations proposed for the surrounding neighborhood streets.
- The congregation consists of individuals that follow the tenets of Orthodox Judaism, which prohibit driving on religious holidays or the Sabbath (weekly-from Friday sundown until Saturday sundown) and on religious holidays.
- The site is located approximately ½ mile from Countryside School that has a parking lot of more than 40 parking spaces. Beth Menachem Chabad currently has a license to use up to 15 spaces at the Countryside School parking lot. During times when congregants may drive, they have agreed

to implement a parking management plan utilizing the Countryside School parking lot whenever it schedules an event at the site that is reasonably expected to draw more than 20 cars to the site.

- Based on the applicable physical characteristics and use of the site, calculations made pursuant to the Newton Zoning Ordinance would normally require 70 on-site parking spaces.
- In order to minimize the need for on-street parking, Beth Menachem Chabad has agreed to license up to 45 parking spaces from Newton Public Schools at the Countryside School and to implement a parking management plan that includes the use of a shuttle van or bus.
- Based upon the anticipated uses at the site, the Board finds that the provision of 9 on-site parking spaces coupled with the conditions in this Board Order, including implementation of a parking management plan, supports the Board's waiver of 61 parking spaces.

Mr. Koses asked if Beth Menachem Chabad has implemented the use of a shuttle bus. Ald. Fischman did not know.

Mr. Koses opened the discussion for public comment. Five residents were present for this discussion. Residents stressed their concerns regarding the difficulty entering and exiting driveways, cars blocking driveways, congestion, limited street parking, illegal parking in the no parking zone and speeding. Suggestions were made to implement a residential parking permit program or to restrict parking on Rachel Road to Malubar Lane to relieve congestion and disburse parking. They agreed the Police detail worked as a temporary solution. Traffic calming and enforcement remain necessary. They said that cars park on both sides of Rachel Road and winter months exasperate the problem and felt people would not want to walk to the congregation from the Countryside School, especially during the winter months.

Ald. Lappin expressed her concerns regarding the conditions of the special permit and the Chabad not providing the shuttle service. She feels that the special permit appears to be in violation and suggests the City's Law Department review the conditions of the special permit to determine if the Chabad is in violation. Mr. Koses agreed and suggested the Inspectional Services Department also review the special permit. Mr. Koses asked Ald. Fischman to contact Inspectional Services Department.

Ald. Freedman asked if the implementation of a parking permit program on the even side and prohibiting parking on the odd side of Rachel Road would help. A resident felt that it would not help because of the road becoming narrow with parking on one side.

Council members expressed their concerns. They said that if parking were restricted on Rachel Road then drivers would park on nearby streets, thereby imposing on them. Sgt. Norcross said that Rachel Road is a public safety issue. Emergency vehicles have difficulty accessing the street when cars park on both sides. He would support the least restrictive parking restriction if residents desire and is not in favor of removing all parking. Mr. Koses suggested share-the streets concept and does not support removing all parking because drivers have the tendency to speed when streets are empty. He would support a trial or a one-hour parking restriction. Sgt. Norcross said that a one-hour parking restriction is difficult to enforce and would not support it. Mr. Danila briefly described the requirements for resident parking permits. He then suggested holding this item to determine if the Chabad is violating their special permit.

Ald. Lappin said that she supports a trial. Ald. Fischman suggested no parking on both sides of Rachel Road and feels the Chabad would support this because it would provide a message to the congregants not to park there.

Ald. Ciccone made the motion to hold this item for a 60-day trial. Council members agreed on the above trial. Ald. Fischman requested this item be discussed at the end of winter.

TC30-10(2) ALD. LAPPIN, requesting a pedestrian signal with a crosswalk on Parker Street between Theodore Road and Parker Road. (Ward 8) [11/07/11 @ 12:59 PM]

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0 (Grafe not voting). Approve pedestrian hybrid signal on Parker Street between Theodore Road and Parker Road. Remove the rapid flash beacon at on Parker Street between Truman Road and Theodore Road.

This item may be appealed through the close of business January 4, 2012.

NOTE: Mr. Danila said that this item was first discussed by Traffic Council on 12/16/10. The item was held for additional data collection in warm weather. On 7/28/11, Traffic Council denied the request to approve a beacon. On 9/21/11, Public Safety & Transportation Committee heard the appeal and approved a rapid flash beacon between Truman and Theodore Roads.

Traffic Council is again discussing this item because the device requested is a pedestrian hybrid signal instead of a rapid flash beacon. The item docketed is a different type of device (under TPR-145-Traffic Control Signals) instead of TPR-146- Flashing Warning Light Locations. The signal cannot be located between Truman and Theodore Roads.

Mr. Danila reviewed with Council Members the pedestrian hybrid signal and the operation. He said that a pedestrian hybrid signal has a different set of MUTCD warrants than a traditional traffic signal. The signal cannot be located at an intersection (proposed location between Truman and Parker Roads). This type of signal operates differently than a traditional traffic signal. Mr. Danila estimates the installation costing \$75,000 including the necessary wheel chair ramps.

Ald. Lappin supports and requests this item be approved. Nancy Braudis, 57 Theodore Road, said that she contacted neighbors who support this signal.

Mr. Danila made the motion to approve this item. Council members agreed 4-0, Grafe not voting. He said that the City would educate drivers prior to installing this signal. Mr. Koses said that this item may be appealed through January 4, 2012.

TC49-11 JIM DANILA, on behalf of the Transportation Division, requesting the removal of parking on Centre Street between Church and Ward Streets to accommodate bike lanes. (Wards 1, 2 & 7) [09/02/11 @ 12:03 PM]

ACTION: APPROVED 5-0
This item may be appealed through the close of business January 4, 2012.

NOTE: Mr. Danila said that this item would allow continuous bicycle accommodations between Newton Corner and Newton Centre creating the first north-south bicycle lanes in the City and would provide additional links to the regional bicycle network. He said that bicycle lanes support and encourage bicycling, reduces the chance that motorists will stray into cyclists path of travel, it is less likely that passing motorists swerve toward opposing traffic, remind motorists to look for cyclists when turning, help define road space, promote a more orderly flow of traffic, signal that cyclists have a right to the road, decrease the likelihood of crashes and decreases the stress level of bicyclists riding in traffic.

Mr. Danila described the proposed typical cross-section, study areas of proposed locations and alternative on-street parking options.

Section A- Church to Cotton Streets

These streets are posted as no parking and they are not listed in the Traffic Parking Regulations. The southbound bike lane will likely be buffered in some uphill areas.

Section B- Cotton to Ward Streets

These streets have no existing parking regulations. There are 21 houses with frontage on Centre Street. Sgt. Norcross asked if Centre Street homes had driveways. Mr. Danila answered, yes.

Mr. Koses opened the discussion for public comment. Dan Stepman, 941 Centre Street, said that he is concerned with public safety issues and does not support bike lanes at this proposed location because drivers have the tendency to speed, heavy traffic, a public bus stop and the road is uneven on Centre Street. He suggested installing bike paths. John Bliss, 9 Lewis Street, said that he is concerned with the uneven road and recommends repairs. Sean Roche, 42 Daniels Street, said that a north-south bike lane is important and fully supports the item. Lois Levin, Chestnut Street, also supports the item.

Mr. Danila said that the uneven road would need to be repaired. It is not uncommon to have bike lanes and bus stops on major streets. Ald. Fuller said that she supports this item if it can safely be done. She stressed the importance and encourages DPW evaluate and make necessary repairs to the street at the time the street is striped. Mr. Grafe agreed bike lanes are necessary in north-south directions. He does not have concerns regarding bike lanes and bus stops sharing the same lane.

Ald. Ciccone made the motion to approve this item. Council members agreed 5-0. Mr. Koses said that this item may be appealed through January 4, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,

David Koses, Traffic Council Chair

Traffic Council

City Hall
Room 222
Thursday, December 15, 2011
7:00 p.m.

Agenda

1. TC39-11: parking regulations in the vicinity of Homer St. and Grafton St. (Ward 6)
 2. TC54-11: requesting No U-Turn on Cypress St. in front of Bowen School. (Ward 6)
 3. TC40-11: traffic operations and safety near Dedham St. and Rachel Rd. (Ward 8)
 4. TC30-10 (2): requesting a pedestrian signal on Parker St. between Theodore Rd. and Parker Rd. (Ward 8)
 5. TC24-11: requesting parking restrictions on Centre St. to accommodate bicycle lanes. (Wards 1 & 7)
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TC39-11

Requesting a discussion and action on parking changes within the vicinity of Homer and Grafton Streets to improve pick-up, drop-off and parking during Little League events. (Ward 6)

Aerial Photo



No Parking | No Stopping or Standing, Tow Zone

Input from Neighbors?

TC54-11

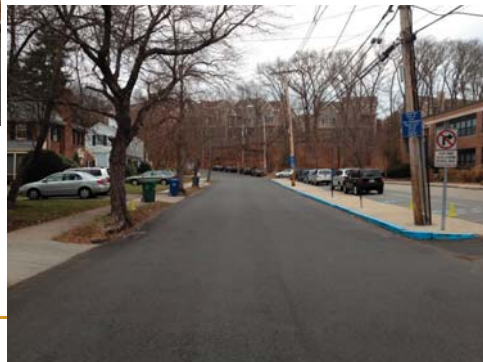
Requesting No U-Turn signs on
Cypress St. (northbound) at Bow Rd.
and Cypress St. in both directions in the
vicinity of #289 and #290. (Ward 6)

Aerial Photo



No Parking 8-4, School Days | Blue Zone

Approach Photos



TC40-11

Requesting a review of conditions on automobiles, parking and pedestrian safety in the area of Dedham St. and Rachel Rd. (Ward 8)

Aerial Photo



Dedham Street



Rachel Road



Input from Neighbors?

TC30-10(2)

Requesting a pedestrian signal with a crosswalk on Parker St. between Theodore Rd. and Parker Rd. (Ward 8)

Timeline

- 12/16/10: Item first heard in Traffic Council.
 - Item held so additional data could be collected in warm weather.
 - 7/28/11: Request to approve beacon denied by Traffic Council.
 - 9/21/11: Appeal heard and approved by Public Safety & Transportation Committee.
 - PS&T approved a rapid flash beacon between Truman Rd. & Theodore Rd.
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Why this returned Traffic Council

- Device requested is a Pedestrian Hybrid Signal instead of a Rapid Flash Beacon.
 - Item docketed is a different type of device.
 - Falls under TPR-145 (Traffic Control Signals) instead of TPR-146 (Flashing Warning Light Locations).
 - Item cannot be located between Truman Rd. and Theodore Rd.
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Aerial Photo

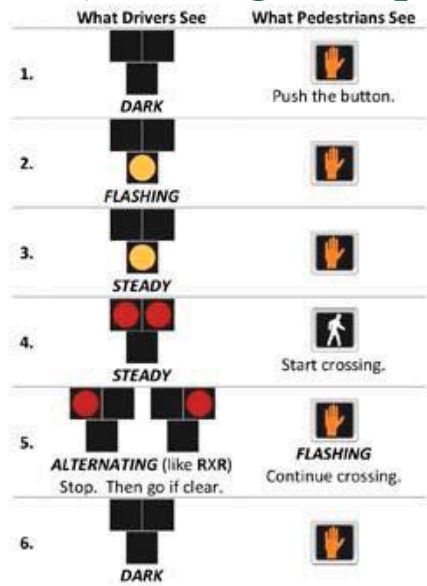


Pedestrian Hybrid Signal



- Has a different set of MUTCD warrants than a traditional traffic signal.
- Cannot be located at an intersection.
 - Proposed location between Truman Rd. & Parker Rd.
- Operates differently than a traditional traffic signal.

Pedestrian Hybrid Signal Operation



Aerial Photo



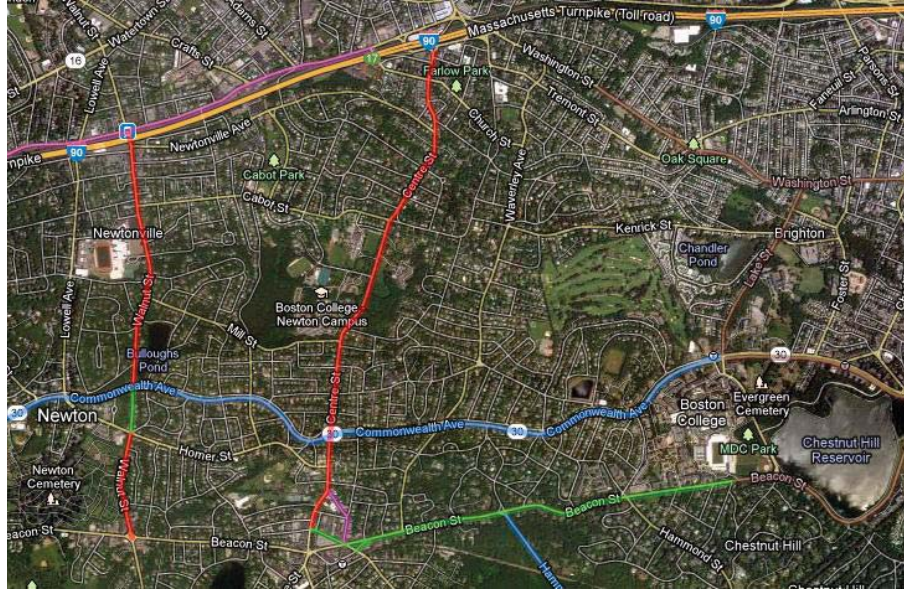
TC49-11

Requesting the removal of parking on Centre St. between Church St. and Ward St. to accommodate bike lanes.
(Wards 1 & 7)

Objectives

- Provide continuous bicycle accommodations between Newton Corner and Newton Centre.
 - Create the first north-south bicycle lanes in the city.
 - Provide additional links to regional bicycle network.
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Regional Bicycle Network



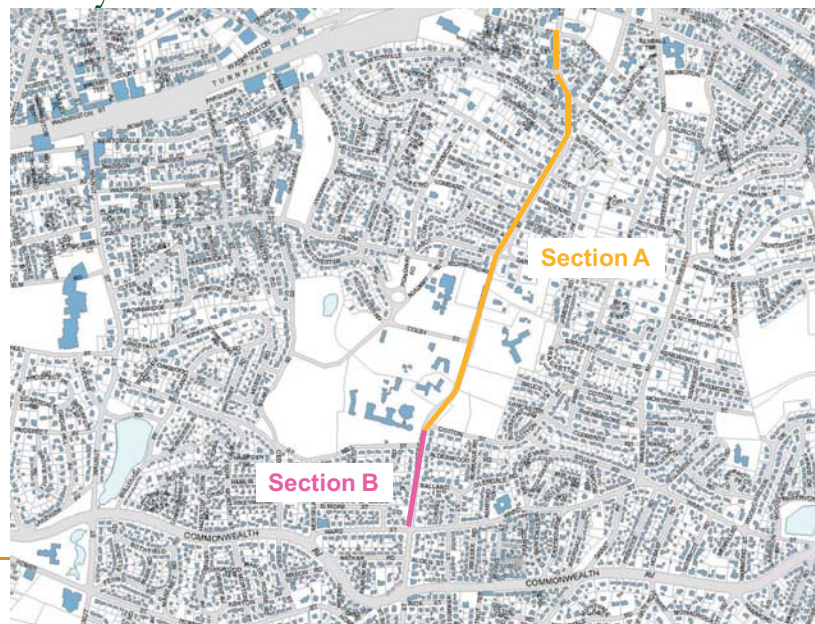
Why Bicycle Lanes?

- **Bike Lanes:**
 - Support and encourage bicycling as a means of transportation.
 - Reduce the chance that motorists will stray into cyclists' path of travel.
 - Make it less likely that passing motorists swerve toward opposing traffic.
 - Remind motorists to look for cyclists when turning.
 - Help define road space.
 - Promote a more orderly flow of traffic.
 - Signal that cyclists have a right to the road.
 - Decrease the likelihood of crashes.
 - Decrease the stress level of bicyclists riding in traffic.

Proposed Typical Cross-Section



Study Area



Section A: Church St. to Cotton St.



- Currently posted as No Parking, but not listed in TPR.
- SB bike lane will likely be buffered in some uphill areas.

Section B: Cotton St. to Ward St.



- No existing parking regulations.
- 21 houses with frontage on Centre St.

Alternative On-Street Parking Options



No Parking | 1-Hr Limit, 7am-7pm, Except Sat., Sun & holidays
No Parking Except Sat., Sun. & holidays | No Parking 7am-7pm