

CITY OF NEWTON

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2008

Present: David Koses (Chairman), Nina Wang (Assistant Traffic Engineer) Captain Mintz (Police) Sgt. Norcross (Police) Ald. Vicky Danberg, Rosalie Myers (Clerk)

Also Present: Ald. Fischman, Ald. Mansfield, Ald. Salvucci

TC58-08 SGT. NORCROSS requesting creation of a “No Parking Zone” 7-9 am and 4-6 pm from 808 Dedham Street to Brookline Street. Area is a travel lane; when vehicles park there, road is narrowed down to one lane. (Ward 8)

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0**

NOTE: Sgt. Norcross noted that on occasion a car is parked on in front of 808 Dedham Street, located near the intersection of Brookline Street. There is a very heavy volume of traffic during peak hours at this intersection, and if a car is parked at this location, traffic queues up for approximately three-fourths of a mile. It was the opinion of Sgt. Norcross that it would be wise to use the least restrictive method of parking prohibition at this location.

Nina Wang concurred with Sgt. Norcross. This section of Dedham Street has two lanes, a right turn/straight lane, and a left turn/straight lane. Any cars parked in this location will reduce the two lane approach to one lane, thereby causing the intersection of Dedham Street/Brookline Street to backup during peak traffic hours. The Committee approved this request 5-0.

TC59-08 ALD. LAPPIN requesting discussion of potential improvements to Wells Avenue due to increased pedestrian traffic between 1 and 2 Wells Avenue. (Ward 8)

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0 the concept of curb cuts and crosswalk, funded using a combination of city/private funds. Approve concept of pedestrian activated signal, funded without use of City funds. Recommend docket item for further discussion and design of proposed pedestrian-activated signal.**

NOTE: Nina Wang explained that Wells Avenue is heavily used by motorists, and in recent months, a cafeteria has opened which has resulted in more pedestrian traffic. There was a recent pedestrian accident at this location. (Four pedestrian crossing signs were placed at the crossing point after this accident.) A traffic count verified that 182 people crossed at the peak midday hour between #1 and #2

Wells Avenue. Ms. Wang recommended the construction of a crosswalk and the addition of pedestrian crossing warning signage on Wells Avenue.

Michael Fitzgerald, representing a company located at #1 and #2 Wells Avenue, noted that the observations made by Ms. Wang were excellent. He proposed that his company participate in financing a pedestrian safety improvement. He suggested a raised crosswalk or speed bump to regulate the speed on that road. David Koses explained that speed bumps are not a possibility because city ordinance prohibits any additional speed bumps in the city. Mr. Koses explained that the Traffic Council does not approve crosswalks, which are approved by the Commissioner of Public Works. If a raised crosswalk is considered, then the Council would make a recommendation before the item moves on to other Aldermanic Committees for design and funding.

Sgt. Norcross said that the street is a 30 mph zone. After spending time at this location and reviewing speed information, he indicated that the average speed was about 32 mph. A pedestrian actuated light would probably be more likely to be supported by the Fire Department as opposed to a speed bump.

Bruce Proia, Chief of Operations of the Fire Department was present and explained all the negative impacts of speed bumps. There are impacts on response time for emergency vehicles as well as injuries to firefighters. These speed bumps also put strain on the frame of the apparatus shortening the life expectancy of the vehicle.

Mr. Koses said there are only a few raised crosswalks in Newton; two on Woodland Road (one of which is a raised intersection), one on Middlesex Road, and one on Auburn Street. In terms of pedestrian actuated signals, five were recently funded and are planned for installation, and a sixth is proposed for Centre Street in Newton Corner.

The Committee voted 5-0 to recommend a pedestrian activated signal, without the use of city funds. A new item should be docketed for further discussion and to allow the City to accept funding to construct the proposed pedestrian activated signal.

TC62-08 HAROLD CHOOLJIAN, 18 Cheney street, Newton Upper Falls requesting parking restriction on the south side of Cheney Street. (Ward 5)

ACTION: **DENIED 5-0 (No parking 5-feet from driveway sign can be installed administratively, upon request.)**

NOTE: Harold Chooljian was present for this discussion and said that for over 20 years he has had to deal with people turning around in his driveways and parking on the south side of the street. During the winter, motorists have difficulty turning into Cheney Court and if there were no cars parked on the south side, it would be easier to make the turn.

Ms. Wang's observations noted the street is short and carries little cut-through traffic. There have been no reported accidents in the past three years. The street width is 23.5 ft. She noted that there are enough on street parking spaces available in the area. Her recommendation was not to add any parking restrictions.

Mr. Koses read two letters into the record that were against the proposed restriction.

Mr. Anthony Colasacco of Mechanic Street was present and explained that he felt that any parking restriction is unwarranted in this location.

TC63-08 YAKOV REGELMAN, 79 Wheeler Road, Newton requesting parking restrictions on Wheeler Road between Voss Terrace and Sharpe Road. (Ward 6)

ACTION: **DENIED 5-0 (No parking 5-feet from driveway sign can be installed administratively, upon request.)**

NOTE: Mr. Regelman was present and told the Committee that this area has become dangerous due people going to the playing field. Almost every weekend in the summer, motorists park on Wheeler Road to access the field, and Mr. Regelman finds it dangerous as he cannot see cars in both directions when leaving his driveway.

Sgt. Norcross was not sure that creating a no parking zone would be an appropriate remedy. He also said that parked cars help to slow cars, without parked cars pedestrians crossing there may come into contact with a vehicle traveling at a faster speed. He felt that a better solution would be to install signs that would not allow parking close to the driveway. Jerome Grafe agreed with Sgt. Norcross on this point.

Ms. Wang said that her studies show no accidents in the past year. At 37 feet wide, Wheeler Street is one of the widest residential streets in the City. During field observations, no cars were parked on the street. House #79 is the only house that has a curb cut on the south side of the street. Her recommendation is not to add any parking restrictions. She did recommend a "no parking within five ft. of driveway" sign at this location.

TC68-08 ALD. DANBERG requesting a stop sign or a raised intersection at the intersection of Jackson Street and Cypress Street, Newton Centre.(Ward 6)

ACTION **NAN 5-0**

NOTE: The Traffic Engineer's observations showed that the site lines are adequate. A crossing guard manages the traffic on Jackson Street during school pick-up and drop-off periods. The traffic volume is very light during off-peak hours, and the stop sign compliance rate on Cypress Street is very good. Her recommendation is

not to add more stop signs, and not to add a raised intersection on Jackson Street at Cypress Street. Other members of Traffic Council were in agreement.

TC6-09

ALD. SALVUCCI on behalf of GOLDEN LIVING CENTER requesting “No Parking” on Armory street, West Newton, so that emergency vehicles will have access to Nursing Home. (Ward 3)

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0**

NOTE: Due to the heavy volume of traffic entering the Trade Joe's parking lot, and entering and exiting Armory Street, the Committee approved a "No Parking" restriction on the west side of Armory Street from entrance to Golden Living Center parking lot south to Washington Street. There is already a "No Parking" restriction on the east side. It was recommended that a new item be docketed for Traffic Council to consider adding official handicapped parking spaces on a section of the west side of Armory Street. The handicapped parking signs that are currently in place on Armory Street are unofficial. It was also recommended to consider removing the existing MBTA bus stop located at the corner of Washington Street & Cross Street, a block east of the MBTA bus stop at Washington Street & Armory Street. This would provide an additional parking space on the north side of Washington Street.

TC5-09 DAVID KOSES requesting review of the Ardmore Road parking restrictions to make the TPR consistent with current signage. (Ward 3)

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0**

NOTE Nina Wang said that currently there is a sign posted "No Parking 9 am to 11 am. The surrounding neighborhood has similar signs. The TPR now states no parking 7 am to 9 am. The TPR will be corrected to match with the field sign.

Respectfully submitted,

David Koses, Chairman