

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2007

Present: David Koses (Transportation Planner, Acting Chair), Ald. Samuelson (Chair, PS&T), Clint Schuckel (Traffic Engineer), Sgt. James Norcross (Traffic Division, Police Dept.)

Absent: Candace Havens (Chair)

Also Present: Ald. Baker, Ald. Vance, Ald. Mansfield, Ald. Johnson, Ald. Linsky, Ald. Lennon

HP-15            ALD. SAMUELSON & TRAFFIC COUNCIL CHAIR requesting removal of HP parking space on Beethoven Ave in front of Zervas Elementary School. (Ward 5)

**ACTION:**        **APPROVED 3-1 (Koses opposed)**

**NOTE:**            David Koses, Transportation Planner, reported that the Mayor's Committee discussed this item and made a recommendation to relocate the parking space but not to remove it. Clint Schuckel, Traffic Engineer, noted that when the site was visited, the space was not in use. There is not a curb cut at this spot and the accessible entrance is located at the side of the school. Mr. Schuckel disagreed with the Mayor's Committee and felt the space should just be eliminated. A letter had been received from the principal requesting the blue zone be extended. This was not the recommendation of the Traffic Engineer because he felt it was outside the scope of this item. Live parking has been tried at this location and that was not found to be effective. The recommendation of Mr. Schuckel was not to make any changes to this location other than remove the handicapped space.

Lauren Merz said that at the entrance to the staff parking lot there is a sign posted that says staff parking only, school buses only. Her concern is that parents picking up children after school that are handicapped are looking at signage that tells them they cannot go in there and there is no way to know that they could if they were handicapped.

Ald. Samuelson concurs with Clint Schuckel that the spot should not be moved from one spot to another.

David Koses agreed with the Mayor's Committee's recommendation to relocate this space. The parking lot entrance to the school is not handicapped accessible at the present

time. When the modulars are constructed, a ramp could be built and at that point it would make sense to have the official handicapped spaces in the parking lot.

Mr. Schuckel read into the record the following from an email written by Lowell Haynes, Planning Department:

“Once there is an acceptable route from the parking lot to the polling place, the curb cut will also be superfluous:”

Mr. Schuckel also noted that he has heard from Mike Cronin of the School Department that the modulars will be there for the first day of school in the fall.

Ald. Samuelson moved approval of removal of this space and the Council vote was 3-1 (Koses against)

#112-06      ALD. JOHNSON, ALBRIGHT, AND LINSKY requesting discussion in order to determine the best ways to address parking, vehicular and pedestrian traffic issues in the Morseland Street area (Ward 2).

**ACTION:**      **HELD 4-0**

**NOTE:**      Mr. Schuckel told the Council as a point of clarification that Ward Street, by city ordinance, is a one-way street from Elmore to Commonwealth Avenue. A number of observations have been done with random visits and it was noted that there are parking issues related to special events at the temple but there does not seem to be any regularly scheduled events that could be predicted by day of week or time of week. No significant parking was noted on Channing Road or Elmore Street. The few cars that have been seen probably belong to residents. Mr. Schuckel posed the following questions: What changes are planned in the area? How can they alleviate the issues? How frequent are there special events? He further questioned if a one side restriction for Ward Street would be justified.

Mr. Koses said that Temple Shari Tikva will be moving ahead with the request for a significant expansion of their facility. It is not clear how they plan to proceed. Temple Beth El is moving forward with their plans for expansion. A calendar was passed out showing planned activities for Temple Beth El. He noted there really is no pattern with activities.

Ald. Johnson hoped that deliveries could be limited to certain times and hoped a Liaison Committee could be formed of temple and neighborhood representatives.

Bonnie Polin Pomper, a member of Temple Beth El noted that after renovations the refrigerated trucks will not have to park over night.

Ald. Johnson questioned the possibility of having resident sticker parking. Mr. Schuckel explained that the street has to be 100% residential.

Mr. Schuckel felt a no parking zone in front of the temple could be used for pick up and drop off. In his opinion the item should be held. The neighborhood was not notified as this was to be a working session and would be more appropriate to come back when there is more information on the Liaison Committee and what the temples are willing to do.

Ald. Samuelson sees the following issues of importance – talking with the institutions (establishing a Liaison Committee) instituting a truck delivery schedule, looking at live parking on Ward (in front of Beth El) and the possibility of raised sidewalks.

Clint Schuckel made a motion and the Council voted 4-0 in favor of hold.

#387-06      ALD. LINSKY, JOHNSON & ALBRIGHT requesting implementation of parking restrictions on Highland Avenue between Forest Avenue and Grey Birch Terrace and on Allston Street between Highland Avenue and Austin Street to discourage Newton North student parking.(Ward 2) (60 DAY TRIAL APPROVED 1/18/07)

**ACTION:**      **APPROVED AS AMENDED 4-0 - No parking 9-11am both sides school days Highland Avenue between Allston and Gray Birch**

**NOTE:**      Clint Schuckel noted the trial restricted the first section up to Allston with no restrictions on Highland west of Allston or on Allston Street itself. The trial seemed to be effective with no extension of the parking further to the west. Mr. Schuckel felt the trial should be permanent. The restriction would be no parking 9 am to 11 am on school days, both sides from Grey Birch to Allston Street.

Mr. Koses told the Council that a letter received from Mr. and Mrs. Morse who live at 151 Vernon Street expressed their feeling there was no need for this parking restriction beyond Allston Street. They requested the parking ban not be put in place. Another letter from Nancy Brown at 161 Highland Avenue who wanted to report the traffic restriction on Highland Avenue above Grey Birch Terrace appears to be working well and she hoped it would be permanent.

Neighbors asked about resident sticker parking and Mr. Schuckel explained that there has to be another form of restriction in place for a year and that the street be 100% residential.

Mr. Schuckel moved approval of no parking 9am to 11am on school days, both sides (Highland Avenue) from Allston Street to Birch Hill Road. The Traffic Council voted 4-0 in favor.

#390-06      SGT. NORCROSS, ALD. ALBRIGHT, ALD. JOHNSON, ALD.LINSKY requesting restricted parking (2 hr) on the west (odd) side of Walnut Street from Linwood Avenue to Crafts Street, the east (odd) side of Crafts Street

from Linwood Avenue to Walnut Street, and the south (even) side of Linwood Avenue from Walnut Street to Crafts Street. (Ward 2) (60 DAY TRIAL APPROVED 1/18/07)

**ACTION:** **APPROVED AS AMENDED 4-0 – No Parking Sundays 1pm-4pm on island side**

**NOTE:** Mr. Schuckel said, in general, the trial of no parking Sundays 1-4 on the island side has worked effectively. The area was checked last Sunday and the posted restrictions appear to have been adhered to.

Sgt. Norcross made a motion to make the trial permanent. Mr. Schuckel had been concerned that this would push the parking to the other side of Craft Street and limiting site but this has not been the observation that this problem had occurred. Mr. Schuckel originally opposed the trial but now feels the trial results changed his views.

The Council voted 4-0 to make the trial permanent.

#348-06 **REBECCA & ROBERT KAPLAN**, 4 Janet Road, Newton Centre, requesting parking restriction on Janet Road to maintain access for emergency vehicles. (Ward 2) (60 DAY TRIAL APPROVED 3/8/07)

**ACTION:** **APPROVED AS AMENDED 4-0 - One hour parking 7am-7pm both sides, entire street**

**NOTE:** Clint Schuckel observed that there was a reduction in parking when the one hour limit was instituted. The trial did effectively remove much of the long term parking. Some of the parking appeared to be related to people having work done on their homes.

Rebecca Kaplan of 4 Janet Road reported that she would like to see the restriction become permanent,

A resident of 20 Janet Road also had sent a letter in favor of the trial becoming permanent.

The Council approved this item 4-0.

#359-06 **ALD. VANCE & BAKER** requesting that the existing no parking restrictions on both sides of Old Orchard Road, from Hammond Street 600 feet westerly, be extended down the hill and curve to the easterly property line of house #40 or thereabouts. (Ward 7) (60 DAY TRIAL APPROVED 2/15/07)

**ACTION:** **APPROVED AS AMENDED 4-0 - No parking both sides to house #40; no parking 9am-11am to end**

**NOTE:** Ald. Vance said he did receive one letter from someone who had difficulty getting out of their driveway and they would like to see the no parking restriction moved about 10 ft. further down.

Ald. Baker said there is a continuing problem along Houghton Gardens that bears watching.

A resident of 26 Old Orchard Road who stated things have improved but they see 3 cars parking fairly regularly on the opposite side of both 80 and 81 Old Orchard and they are concerned about the fire hydrant being blocked.

Mr. Schuckel moved approval of the trial as amended to move the odd side no parking zone to the westerly property line of #81. No parking any time on the even side extending down to the easterly property line of #81.

#347-06 TRAFFIC ENGINEER, on behalf of Assistant Chief Proia, Newton Fire Department requesting a no parking restriction on one side of Homer Street, Centre Street to Water Street to facilitate emergency vehicle access. (Ward 6)  
(60 DAY TRIAL APPROVED 1/18/07)

**ACTION:** **APPROVED AS AMENDED 4-0 - Two hour limit 8am-6pm north side, Furber to Grafton; no parking 9am-11am south side, Centre to Bowen**

**NOTE:** Mr. Schuckel stated a two hour limit had been put in on the north side of Homer from Furber to Grafton and on the south side a restriction up to Bowen Street. (no parking 9 am to 11 am). This is a classic situation of people taking advantage of no curbing. Many of the cars are parked on the muddy area. Mr. Schuckel said there has been a reduction in parking as a result of the trial. From Mr. Schuckel's perspective, the trial had reasonable results. If curbing is installed, the site would be revisited.

The Council voted 4-0 to approve.

#429-06 ANDREA ROMAN, 35 Bracebridge Road, Newton Centre requesting prohibiting parking on the even-numbered side of the road (southeast side) during school "blue zone" hours. (Ward 6)

**ACTION:** **HELD 4-0; 60-DAY TRIAL APPROVED 4-0**

**NOTE:** The petitioner, Andrea Roman, was present and explained that this is a private road and the neighbors are trying to maintain it.

Mr. Schuckel said this is a private way and the City cannot put restrictions on a private way unless there is justification from a public safety or trash pickup point of view or

unanimous opinion of the abutters about a certain restriction. In the last year or so the Newton Police have issued a temporary parking restriction on an area of Bracebridge. The police put in a temporary tow zone during snow periods. When Bracebridge was observed there was little parking except during drop off and pick up times. The street is too narrow to support on street parking on both sides and it is an unpaved private way. The parking does happen during pick up and drop off times. Mr. Schuckel's major concern with the petition as proposed is that going with the blue zone hours would end up with a very wordy sign.

Residents expressed concern for the safety of the children in the area and one suggestion was to put up a sign that states Bracebridge Road is a private way.

Mr. Schuckel said if the residents posted restrictions, the City could not ticket the cars.

Sgt. Norcross said the Police Department would have a very difficult time enforcing a one way sign during certain hours and there would most likely be liability.

David Koses stressed that the complication in this area is that it is a private way.

Mr. Schuckel would like to see a trial in this area.

Ald. Samuelson moved no parking (60-day trial) on the odd side of Bracebridge Road, school days only from 8 am to 9 am and 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm

#389-06      ALD. SCOTT LENNON requesting a review of parking restrictions and safety enhancements to JACKSON RD adjacent to the Lincoln Eliot School. (Ward 1)

**ACTION:**      **APPROVED AS AMENDED 4-0 – No parking 8am-4pm school days east side at the bend**

**NOTE:**      One of the items Ald. Lennon wanted to discuss was a no parking here to corner sign on the corner of Capital and Jackson Road. The teachers park all along Jackson Road on the park side and Ald. Lennon would like to limit parking on the bend. He brought some pictures showing the problem. He suggested no parking just on the bend on the park side.

Mr. Schuckel noted the only restriction for Jackson Road is a one hour limit between Capital and Pearl. There is also a blue zone in front of the school. There is no parking during school hours across from the school. He said that the street is wide enough to support the parking. Jackson Road seems to have teacher parking. Between 10 and 14 cars were observed beyond the driveway to the lot. Along Jackson Road, 4 to 9 cars were observed. (The street is about 5 ft. wider in this section.)

Ald. Samuelson moved approval of no parking (school days 8 am to 4 pm) on Jackson Road, school days at the bend contiguous to the Lincoln-Eliot School field for a distance to be determined by the Traffic Engineer. The Council approved this 4-0.

All other items were held. The Council adjourned at approximately 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosalie Myers, Council Clerk