

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, MAY 24, 2007

Present: Candace Havens (Chair), Ald. Samuelson, Clint Schuckel (Traffic Engineer), David Koses (Transportation Planner), Sgt. James Norcross (Police)

Also: Ald. Baker, Harney, Gentile, Sangiolo

#277-06 JANE MULLOWNEY, 10 Monadnock Road, Chestnut Hill requesting one hour restricted parking apply to all on MONADNOCK ROAD between Wachusett Road and Hobart Road (Ward 7)

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 5-0**

NOTE: Traffic Engineer, Clint Schuckel, reported to the Council that Monadnock Road has been discussed at length primarily because restrictions were recently installed in the middle block between Wachusett Road and Hammondswood. Road. For a number of years there has been a one hour limit on the block between Hammondswood and Tudor. The question that the Council had back in the fall was would the new restrictions cause people to start parking on the third block of Monadnock. This did not appear to be happening in the fall but there was a sentiment among the residents that they wanted to wait a little longer and take another look in the spring. Mr. Schuckel explained they were not able to get there for more than one site visit because Boston College ended classes on May 9 and it did not seem appropriate to do observations after May 9. The one time a site visit was made, approximately six cars were noted on that entire block. Similar numbers had been noted back in the fall in that section of Monadnock. Based on the admittedly limited data, Mr. Schuckel did not believe that there has been an impact on that section of Monadnock to warrant installing additional restrictions. Mr. Schuckel's recommendation to the Council would be no action on implementing further restrictions on this block of Monadnock Road.

A letter received from Barbara Shildkraut of 45 Mondanock Road and the comments of Monadnock Street residents in attendance also agreed with the Traffic Engineer's findings.

Ald. Samuelson moved No Action Necessary and Council voted 5-0.

#7-07 MICHELLE ROBINSON, 39 Irving Street, Newton Centre requesting that the existing 1-hour parking restriction on west side of the street to be lifted to accommodate the residents' on street parking. (Ward 7)[12-19-06@9:06AM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0**

NOTE: Mr. Schuckel explained that Irving Street is located off of Commonwealth Avenue, east of Centre Street. There is a small commercial area on the carriage way. The other entity that might attract some long term parking might be the temple on Ward Street. A number of the homes on Irving Street are two families. The restrictions currently in place include No Parking on the east side, entire length from Commonwealth Avenue to Ward Street and a one hour limit for Gardner Street and no restriction further to the north. A fair number of cars were observed parked on Irving Street. During observations, it did not appear to be the temple or businesses that were parking. Mr. Schuckel said his recommendation would be to either do a trial or implement permanently lifting the restriction.

Ald. Samuelson moved approval of removing the one hour parking spaces and the Council approved the item 5-0.

#59-07 ALD. HARNEY & SANGIOLO requesting parking restrictions on Woodland Road between Hancock and Grove Street in Auburndale (side opposite church) from 7-9AM and 2-4 PM on school days. (Ward 4) [02-13-07@7:30 PM]

ACTION: **30 DAY TRIAL APPROVED 5-0 FOR NO PARKING 8 a.m. – 9 a.m. AND 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m SCHOOL DAYS ONLY.**

NOTE: Mr. Schuckel noted that observations show this street carries quite a bit of traffic; is 23 ft. wide making it tight for two way traffic when cars are parked. This seems to only be a problem during school start and school end times.

John Rudick, Crossing Guard, noted that there is a good deal of commuting traffic using Woodland Road.

Ald. Gentile asked if this was included in the Woodland Road study. The response by David Koses was that it was as well as in the Williams School study and it was suggested that this area be examined. Mr. Koses felt a 30-day trial should be implemented.

Ald. Samuelson moved that a 30-day trial be put into effect. The motion was to have a 30-day trial of no parking on the south side with restrictions in place from 8 to 9 am and 2:30 to 3:30 pm school days.

#35-07 ALD. SANGIOLO requesting consideration of weekday parking restrictions on Hagar Street due to overflow parking from St. Mary's Church (Ward 4)

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0**

NOTE: Brendan Feeny, resident of 17 Hagar Street for 43 years felt the street itself should have no parking anytime. He further explained this was originally a park that has grown to a street. His biggest concern centers around the inability of a fire truck traversing the street if cars were parked. He was in strong favor of No Parking at Any time.

A number of site visits were made that did not see any cars parked there. Mr. Schuckel does feel that the traffic volume in the area is high enough, coupled with the street width and proximity to Concord Street to justify a restriction.

The Council approved no parking on both sides between Concord and Grove.

#60-07 ALD. HARNEY & SANGIOLO on behalf of Michael Kravett requesting possible installation of stop sign at "carriage lane" adjoining Commonwealth Ave. at its intersection with Commonwealth Ave. and Woodbine Road, Auburndale. (Ward 4)
[02-13-07 @11:24 AM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0**

NOTE: Ald. Harney said Mrs. Kravett was either hit or almost hit numerous times at that location. Michael Kravett made a good case to Ald. Harney explaining why this spot was so dangerous because of the speed that cars come through Commonwealth Avenue and the way it merges at that particular location is a safety issue.

Mr. Schuckel said Woodbine has been talked about before. Currently it is posted No Left Turn coming out of Woodbine and also posted No Left Turn into Woodbine. He does agree on the existence of an uncontrolled merge into Woodbine and does support this item.

Ald. Samuelson moved approval and the motion carried 5-0.

#90-07 MAYOR COHEN, ALD. GENTILE, ALD. HARNEY & ALD. SANGIOLO requesting the installation of stop signs at the end of each of the following streets where they intersect with Woodland Road:

- (A) Windermere Road at Woodland Road (southbound)
- (B) Cheswick Road at Woodland Road (southbound)
- (C) Vista Avenue at Woodland Road (northbound)
- (D) Hawthorne Avenue at Woodland Road (northbound)

- (E) Maple Street at Woodland Road (southbound)
 - (F) Lake Avenue at Woodland Road (northbound)
 - (G) Seminary Avenue at Woodland Road (northbound)
- [03-13-07 @ 7:06 PM]

ACTION: **APPROVED 4-1 (Ald. Samuelson opposed)**

NOTE: Ald. Gentile noted there had been a study of Woodland Road that came about as a result of the tragic accident where a Lasell student was killed. Recommendations included stop signs at these locations.

A resident of 24 Hawthorne Avenue wrote a letter that was read into the record. This resident stated that stop signs would merely provide an eyesore and would like to see speed bumps and other traffic calming.

Mr. Schuckel said a study done recommended raised intersections on Woodland Road at two locations. Those are planned for construction this summer. He noted that there is a stop sign at Maple Street at Woodland Road. In his opinion, the safety benefit is marginal but the exception is the pedestrian volume. Mr. Koses had counted 250 pedestrians in one hour.

Ald. Samuelson could not agree with these stop signs but was in favor of the raised intersection.

Ald. Gentile noted that Woodland Road is a main street in the middle of a college campus. He is very much in favor of raised crosswalks. He continued to say that this street warrants them. The cost will be about \$40,000 with Lasell contributing about \$20,000. This would be a good example of public/private relationship.

Ald. Harney reiterated that he would like to see this item move forward.

Sgt. Norcross commented that the Police Department looks for consistency in stop signs. Since this is a unique case, he would support this but would not want to see this become a precedent.

In the opinion of David Koses, there should be a stop sign at this intersection.

Candace Havens feel that while this is not the caveat for every intersection, but in this instance she was in favor.

It was noted that there currently is a provision in the ordinances for a stop sign at Maple Street/Woodland Avenue. Therefore, the Council voted 4-1 (Ald. Samuelson opposed) to approve this item as amended (with the exclusion of item (E)).

#121-07 ALD. HARNEY, on behalf of area residents, requesting a Stop Sign on the Carriage Lane of Commonwealth Avenue, westbound, at the intersection of Robinhood Street and further recommendations to improve traffic and pedestrian safety at the intersection. (Ward 4) [03-20-07 @7:41PM]

ACTION: **DENIED 3-2 (Havens, Koses opposed)**

NOTE: Ald. Harney noted that this location, is dangerous in many ways and needs a stop sign. He feels the carriage lane is like a freeway and had many comments from residents who were in agreement.

It was reported that Cathy Mazzola of 79 Crescent Street had an issue when you come up Commonwealth Avenue and either taking a right or a left up to Robinhood, often you have to jam on your brakes as there is no clear passageway when you come off of Commonwealth Avenue because of the cars that are speeding on the carriage lane. The only people who stop are the residents.

In conclusion Ald. Harney said he docketed this item because many people felt it was very unsafe and hopefully this will slow people down.

Mr. Schuckel reported that a traffic count was done which showed one car every other minute or so on the carriage way and Robinhood Street during rush hour times; about 30 to 40 cars per hour. He said he would not favor a stop sign because he felt this would effectively be making a four way stop out of a low volume location with only one car about every two minutes. He does not feel the area is unsafe. In the past, there was an intent to remedy this by the proposal to put in a no right on red during certain hours but that Traffic Council item was recommitted to PS&T and has not been voted out. He would consider the idea of relocating a stop sign. In his opinion the addition of a stop sign is not preferred.

Elaine Arruda of 921 Commonwealth Avenue told the Council that she felt this area is very dangerous.

Mr. Koses felt the objective was to define the right of way. The current conditions are that the carriage way has the right of way and that should not be the case. If a stop sign is added, it would show that they don't have the right of way.

Ald. Samuelson did not agree with David Koses and feels the carriage lane does have the right of way. She does not think the stops should be on the carriage way.

Ald. Samuelson made a motion to deny and the Council voted 3-2 (Koses, Havens opposed)

#152-07 ALD. SAMUELSON & LINSKY requesting creation of an ordinance to provide permit parking on designated streets in the vicinity of Newton North High School effective for duration of the construction of the new high school (Ward 2). [04/24/07 @ 12:41 PM]

ACTION: **HELD 5-0**

NOTE: The Council discussed the ongoing meetings of the Newton North Liaison Committee (three or more members of the Council have attended each of the 3 meetings to date held on Tuesdays in the month of May) and the developing concepts that are emerging from those discussions. The next Traffic Council meeting on June 14 will be dedicated to this item and the Council discussed logistics of public notification and the meeting itself.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie Myers, Clerk