

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2003

Present: Clint Schuckel (Traffic Engineer) Candace Havens (Chair) Ald. Samuelson (Mayoral Appointee) Sgt. James Norcross (Police) Rosalie Myers (Clerk)

Also Present: Ald. Parker

#402-98(2) TRAFFIC COUNCIL recommending that Ordinance V-210, approved December 7, 1998 to establish one handicapped parking space at 42 West Street, be rescinded.

ACTION: NAN 4-0

NOTE: Mr. Schuckel noted this request was first approved in 1998. The original petition was filed with two names. One of the residents that petitioned passed away and the other resident listed on the petition still uses this space. In view of the fact that the space was still needed, Mr. Schuckel moved no action necessary.

#309-02 ALD. YATES transmitting request of Margit and Robert Reifsnyder, 40 Fenwick Road, Waban requesting "No Parking" on the northern side of FENWICK ROAD from the intersection with Collins Road on the easterly end of 40 Fenwick Road. (Ward 5)

ACTION: DENIED 4-0

NOTE: Chair Candace Havens explained to the Council that one of the proponents of the "No Parking" zone requests this restriction only in front of her property and not in front of her next door neighbor's house, as described in the docketed item.

The petitioner, Margit Reifsnyder, said she requested this restriction because she was disturbed by a local landscaper who parked on a curve in the road in a way that endangered children and traffic, sometimes parked in front of the fire hydrant, and left dangerous tools behind. She also wanted to eliminate parking by young people she saw partying in the woods nearby. She has called the Police Department, which issued tickets to enforce hydrant violations. She expressed concern that her request has created tension in the neighborhood and reiterated that she wished to restrict parking to the area in front of her house only. In researching the possible remedies, she believed this would be the least confrontational means of solving the problems. In response to questions, she indicated

that the landscaper parks at the site one day a week, usually for a couple of hours. Ald. Samuelson noted the problems raised by Ms. Reifsnnyder did not appear to be Traffic Council issues.

Traffic Engineer, Clint Schuckel indicated that he saw only 3 cars on his site visit. The street is approximately 24 feet wide with some sections having granite curbs. The remainder of the street has a gravel border that he noted cars use for parking. The traffic report obtained from the police showed no reported accidents in the last three years for Fenwick Road. There are currently no parking ordinances on the street.

Ms. Rothchild of 45 Fenwick Road read the following statement signed by a group of residents of Fenwick Road to the Council:

"As residents of Fenwick Road, we are signing this petition in opposition to item #309-02 on the Traffic Council's agenda with respect to the installation of no parking signs along the northern side of Fenwick from the intersection with Collins Road to the easterly end of 40 Fenwick Road. Fenwick Road is a quiet and bucolic side street in Waban with almost no on street parking at any time of the day or night. Fenwick Road is not near any commercial center, public transportation or institution, which might create an on-street parking problem for residents. All of the houses on the street have driveways and garages and there was never a problem with the ability of residents or their guests to park on either side of the respective property or immediately in front of their houses. There are no public safety issues at stake and no benefit to the neighborhood would be provided by the installation of no parking signs. Such signs would in fact impose hardship on the neighborhood residents by limiting the ability of certain residents and their guests to park in close proximity to their homes. Not only would the installation of no parking signs be a completely unnecessary waste of taxpayers but also such signs would be a visual blight on an otherwise beautiful street characterized by well-spaced houses, majestic Oaks and Pines and no traffic or parking problems."

Ms. Havens asked the residents in attendance if they would support a "No Parking" zone in front of #40 Fenwick Road only and there was no support.

Alderman Samuelson moved for denial of the petition, noting that whether it was for one or two houses didn't matter. She felt there was insufficient evidence of a threat to public safety or emergency access and wanted to discourage individual requests for signing of this sort. Candace Havens agreed with Ald. Samuelson and noted that in the scope of issues reviewed by the Traffic Council, this appears to be a minor problem and not a

candidate for such restrictions. Given the neighbors' willingness to talk about these things, she encouraged them to discuss and resolve them in a neighborly way, if possible.

Sgt. Norcross urged them to call the police if teenage drinking in the woods was observed.

The Committee voted to deny the petition.

325-02 JAN GOLDSTEIN, 18 Meredith Avenue, Newton requesting two hour parking restriction along Canterbury Road beginning at the corner of Meredith Avenue and continuing along Canterbury Road from #17 to #49. (Ward 5)

ACTION: HELD 4-0

NOTE: The petitioner, Jan Goldstein, was present and explained her house was very close to the Elliot Street T Stop and all of the streets that abut the T stop are marked either no parking or two hour parking except for this section of road. Ms. Goldstein said there was concern about parking where neighborhood children play. She continued on to say she was sensitive to that issue and would like the parking to go back as it had been in the past - two hour parking except Saturday and Sunday and Holidays.

Mr. Schuckel explained signs are up in the area without ordinances to support those regulations and this is an opportunity to rectify the problem.

Ald. Samueson said she would work with Mr. Schuckel to develop a petition that would create the appropriate parking limitations on these streets to eliminate the commuters and protect two hour resident parking.

The Committee voted 4-0 to hold the item.

#357-02 ALD. SANGIOLO on behalf of SUSAN SWEENEY, 19 Chandler Place, Newton Upper Falls, requesting reduction of speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph on CHANDLER PLACE. (Both Chandler Place and Eliot Terrace are dead-end streets.) (Ward 5)

ACTION: NAN 4-0

NOTE: There was no one present for discussion of this petition. Mr. Schuckel had made a site visit and found these to be very short streets and was in favor of no action necessary. The Committee voted 4-0 to deny.

#358-02 ALD. JOHNSON, LINSKY on behalf of neighbors requesting one hour parking restriction on LEONARD AVENUE from 7 am to 4 pm on school days. (Ward 2)

ACTION: NAN 4-0

NOTE: This item was inadvertently placed on the agenda as a docket item (#224-02) limiting parking time on Leonard Avenue was approved in February, 2003. The Committee voted NAN 4-0

#359-02 ALD. SALVUCCI on behalf of ELLEN RYAN, 29 Davis Avenue, West Newton, requesting truck/bus exclusion on DAVIS AVE. (Ward 3)

ACTION: HELD 4-0

NOTE: Ellen Ryan was present for discussion of this item. She said large vehicles trying to avoid West Newton Square are coming into the neighborhood and experiencing difficulty turning corners. Ms. Ryan would like to prevent these heavy vehicles if they don't have a destination in the immediate area.

Sgt. Norcross questioned if there was an alternate route available. Mr. Schuckel noted that the state has the ultimate say over truck exclusions and the Council could only approve the fact that we would send this to the state. A traffic count must be done, street widths measured and what the alternative route is. Ald. Samuelson made a recommendation that Mr. Schuckel apply to the state for a truck exclusion. She also suggested Ms. Ryan contact Mr. Ken Temkin of the School Department to be sure the buses are following the right route.

Peter Harrington, a member of the Board of Directors of the Newton Community Service Center expressed concern over a bus restriction impacting the children being picked up for camp during July and August.

Mr. Schuckel explained that the traffic count can't be accomplished until the MWRA is finished working. The Council voted 4-0 to hold this item.

#360-02 SUZANNE BENDER/RANDY KING, 16 Bowen Street, Newton Centre, requesting two-hour parking restriction on one side of BOWEN STREET. (Ward 6)

ACTION: APPROVED as amended 4-0 (See Board Order)

NOTE: The petitioner, Suzanne Bender, was present for discussion of this item. She explained that currently there is bumper to bumper parking. The street is used by motorists who park on the street and use the "T" as well as residents who use the playground. Her suggestion was to divide the street into thirds and develop a creative solution.

Mr. Schuckel stated that if there were parking on both sides of the street, it would be impossible to get through and a serious danger for emergency

vehicles. He felt that part of the street should have no parking at any time. Ald. Samuelson suggested meters on one portion of the street.

The Committee voted to delete existing ordinance and add some further restrictions. (See draft ordinance)

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie Myers, Clerk