

To: Jane Santosuosso, Chief Zoning Code Official, City of Newton

From: Louis Mercuri, Planning Horizons

Re: 858 Walnut Street
Newton Centre Minyan
Parking Management Plan

Date: September 9, 2020

On behalf of the Newton Centre Minyan, I am submitting this parking management plan for their proposed use of the site at 858 Walnut Street in Newton Centre. The Minyan intends to rent the first floor and a small portion of the basement for its religious services. Planning Horizons was asked to review the onsite parking capability and help establish a parking management plan to meet the needs of its 150-person expected regular capacity for its Saturday morning services.

Overview

Based on previous calculations, it is our understanding that at this time the applicant requires a parking waiver of 32 parking stalls using the A-B + C formula per Section 5.1. Based on the proposed occupancy, 53 parking stalls are required under the proposed use. At present, the Minyan has access to 14 exclusive on-site parking spaces, and this number is used in the technical parking calculation. This includes 13 striped spaces at the rear of the lot and one handicap space in the front of the lot. In addition, there are 4 non-exclusive on-site parking spaces being made available at the site for an on-site total of usable 18 spaces. Additionally, 20 off-site parking spaces are envisioned; this includes 15 spaces being made available by a lease agreement with the nearby owners of 1087 Beacon Street, and 5 spaces being provided through non-exclusive use at 860-862 Walnut Street.

There are adjoining residential streets in the area that allow parking on Saturdays and more limited parking during the week. Brentwood Avenue and Judith Road at their closest point are no more than a 3-minute walk to 858 Walnut Street. As will be discussed, although parking on the residential streets is available, the Minyan plans to encourage and promote access to the site by walking and more distant parking alternatives away from neighboring residential streets.

Methodology

Planning Horizons surveyed the site and surrounding parking areas on three separate Saturdays in July and August 2020. The surveys were conducted between 11:00 AM and 11:30 AM when services would be at their peak. The individual surveys determined the number of parked vehicles and the number of available spaces. Here is a listing of the parking areas surveyed:

1. 858 Walnut Street – 17 lined spaces at the rear of the lot plus one handicap space for a total of 18 onsite spaces
2. 860–862 Walnut Street – 5 lined spaces for non-exclusive use on an adjoining parcel
3. 1087 Beacon Street – 15 lined spaces made available to the applicant through a lease agreement; spaces are a 2-minute walk to the site
4. Brentwood Avenue – approximately 15 open spaces on both sides of the street within a 2- to 3-minute walk of the site. There are no Saturday parking restrictions on Brentwood.
5. Judith Road – approximately 8 open spaces on the northbound side of the street, within a 3-minute walk of the site; there are no Saturday parking restrictions on Judith Road.
6. Walnut Street Southbound – 22 unrestricted lined spaces between Commonwealth Avenue and Homer Street, these spaces are .4 miles from the subject site or approximately an 8- to 10-minute walk

Altogether, the available parking inventory from these 6 areas totals 83 spaces.

Survey Findings

Planning Horizons conducted parking availability surveys for these 6 parking areas on mornings in July and August and found the following results:

Location	Saturday July 25 11: 30 AM		Saturday August 1 11:00 AM		Saturday August 8 11:15 AM	
	# Parked	# Vacant	# Parked	# Vacant	# Parked	# Vacant
1. 858 Walnut Street (site)	2	16	2	16	0	18
2. 860-862 Walnut Street	0	5	0	5	0	5
3. 1087 Beacon Street	0	15	0	15	0	15
4. Brentwood Avenue	0	15	0	15	1	14
5. Judith Road Northbound	1	7	1	7	1	7
6. Walnut Street Southbound, b/w Commonwealth Avenue and Homer Street	0	22	0	22	0	22
Totals	3	80	2	81	2	81

The surveys reveal that 80 spaces in the area are readily available on Saturday mornings.

Parking Management Plan

Although a parking waiver of 32 parking stalls is required, Newton Centre Minyan is committed to allocating available parking with the goal of encouraging walking to services when possible and making closer parking possible for those who need this option. In a practical sense, many attendees live near the proposed site and will not need a car to attend services. Others have shown a willingness and commitment to walk any reasonable distance and will not need drive a car or need parking to attend. That leaves the third group of congregants, who will need to drive and park if they are to attend services. It is this group that reflects the actual demand for parking spaces in the area.

The proposal outlines a 150-seat capacity for Saturday morning services. Approximately 40% of members currently attend services on a typical Saturday. Even if 150 members attend, then 53 parking stalls are required per current zoning. As noted below, there are 33 households in the congregation committed to walking any distance, and these people are approximately 80% likely to attend services. This would result in 13 fewer cars needing to be parked. Finally, another 27 congregants are families that live less than one mile from the site, and 2/3 of those congregants walk to services, thus reducing the total parking need by 9 cars. From this calculation, it can be expected that a peak of 31 cars will need parking in the area during the peak service hours. The calculation is summarized as follows:

Seating capacity for services: 150 seats

Per Section 5.1, one parking stall for every 3 seats results in the need for 50 stalls for the Minyan plus 3 additional stalls allocated to an additional on-site use (RCN) results in a total requirement of 53 off-street parking stalls for the site.

Reducing the number of those driving as a result of households/families who will walk:

- a. 33 households/families who will exclusively walk any reasonable distance and attend 80% of the services, results in 13 fewer cars needing to park
($33 \times .8 = 26$ households attending, $26 \div 2$ persons per household = 13 fewer cars)
- b. 27 households who live within one mile of the site and attend services 2/3 of the time results in 9 fewer cars needing to park
($27 \times .66 = 18$ households attending, $18 \div 2$ persons per household = 9 fewer cars)

Thus, 53 parking stalls being the zoning requirement and expectation if every household attending drove, less 13 who walk any reasonable distance, less 9 living nearby, results in 31 cars (53-13-9) requiring parking in the area at capacity, a number nearly identical to the waiver of 32 parking stalls.

As explained earlier, there are approximately 83 parking spaces that could be assigned by the Minyan depending on the needs and preferences of the congregants where a maximum of 31 cars would need parking.

In terms of parking management, the Minyan would designate parking based on the following hierarchy for the assigned parking areas:

1. 858 Walnut Street site: highest parking priority of 18 spaces to the handicap parking and those needing to be closest to the site for physical or other reasons
2. 860–862 Walnut Street adjacent site: for 5 high-priority parking spaces within a one-minute walk of the site
3. 1087 Beacon Street office space: parking of 15 vehicles for medium-priority parking a 2-minute walk to the site
4. Walnut Street southbound between Commonwealth Avenue and Homer Street: 22 low-priority spaces an 8- to 10-minute walk from the site. These spaces would be allocated to members who volunteer to use them on a regular basis, estimating that half these spaces would be used by members on a typical Saturday
5. Brentwood Avenue and Judith Road: 23 low-priority open parking spaces to be used as needed if other parking areas are unavailable

The Minyan proposes to work closely with neighbors who reside on these and other residential streets to ensure that parking impacts on these residential streets are kept to a minimum.

Conclusion

The 32-parking-stall waiver requires that enough parking be provided in the area to meet the demand. In this case, 83 spaces are being provided and designated for use by the Newton Centre Minyan congregants. There are 18 on-site spaces at 858 Walnut Street, a combined 20 available spaces on nearby lots at 860–862 Walnut Street and 1087 Beacon Street, 22 open spaces along Walnut Street in the area of Newton City Hall, and 23 additional spaces on Brentwood Avenue and Judith Road combined. The proponent will establish a parking hierarchy to designate parking areas according to needs of its congregants.

Finally, as explained above, approximately 60 households are prepared to walk to the site from their residence, which further reduces the demand for parking by an additional 22 vehicles. Under current zoning at a full 150-person capacity, 53 parking stalls are required for this use resulting in the need of a waiver of 32 parking stalls. Using the required 53 parking stalls as the baseline and subtracting 22 fewer cars (walkers) we arrive at an estimated need for an additional 31 off-street parking stalls. At this time 20 spaces, 15 that are being leased off site at 1087 Beacon Street and 5 more for use by the Minyan per agreement at 862 Walnut Street reduce the parking deficit further from 31 stalls to 11 parking stalls. This leaves the low-priority open on-street locations along Walnut Street between Commonwealth Avenue and Homer Street and either Brentwood Avenue or Judith Road to accommodate the remaining parking need of 11 stalls. The surveys conducted in those areas reveal more than enough parking on Saturday mornings meet the remaining need.

Appendix: Maps showing locations of available parking



