

**City of Salem
Traffic and Parking Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 20, 2020**

A meeting of the Salem Traffic and Parking Commission was held remotely on Thursday, August 20, 2020 at 6:30pm, pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place.

Present: Commission Chair Tanya Shallop, Commission Vice-Chair Eric Papetti, Commissioner Robin Seidel, Director of Traffic and Parking David Kucharsky, and Assistant Director Nick Downing. **Absent:** Commissioner Todd Waller and Commission Lt. David Tucker.

CALL OF MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 6:43pm by Chair Shallop. Chair Shallop explains how members of the public may participate during the remote meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Commission Chair Shallop opens the floor to public comment but there is none.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING DIRECTOR UPDATE

Traffic and Parking Director David Kucharsky provides an update on the following recently completed and ongoing projects in Salem:

Shared Streets Pilot:

Mr. Kucharsky explains the pilot is moving forward, and that the streets selected are Chestnut Street, Buffum Street, Fairfield Street, and Peabody Ward Streets. Tactical designs are being laid out at the corridor gateways, and speed cushions have been purchased which will replace the existing cones and signs.

Mr. Kucharsky notes staff are working with volunteers on painting, and that all four sites should be completed soon. The website for public input is live and some feedback has been received so far, including requests for additional locations. Mr. Kucharsky indicates there have been some concerns about limiting thru-traffic Friday through Sunday, particularly regarding traffic getting pushed to other areas.

Fort Avenue:

Mr. Kucharsky states additional striping and rumble strips were recently installed, and that zebra armadillos have been ordered and should ship soon.

Vice Chair Papetti enquires about the additional striping at the Winter Island Road intersection, and Mr. Kucharsky states they will be adding a hatched area on the south bound side of the road to provide motorists with a visual cue to stay in the travel lane. Mr. Kucharsky notes that additional green paint will also be put down to delineate crossings where the bikes are going, and that delineators will be installed soon.

Community Car Share:

Mr. Kucharsky explains the program is moving forward, with eight of the ten vehicles delivered and parked in the Museum Place garage. The cars are being registered currently. Mr. Kucharsky notes that all but one location has been confirmed, including the Crescent Lot next to the MBTA garage, the Museum Place Garage, Rainbow Terrace, and the Blaney Street lot.

Shuttle Service:

Mr. Kucharsky indicates there are attempts to finalize the contract, and that funding has been identified for the project. Once a contract is finalized, staff can have a sense of when operations can begin.

Vice Chair Papetti asks about the source of funding. Mr. Kucharsky explains that \$250,000 is from a MassDOT workforce grant, and that additional funds are coming from the environmental initiative Footprint community agreement, as well as funds allocated by Mayor Driscoll.

Two Parklets:

Mr. Kucharsky states the parklets are almost done being fabricated, and that the Derby Street parklet should be installed soon, followed by the one on Washington Street. Details are being finalized with DPS and consultants from KZLA.

Vice Chair Papetti thanks Mr. Kucharsky for the work completed to add flex posts and additional striping on Lafayette Street where the bike path crosses. Mr. Papetti also asks about the long term plan, noting that some of the striping in the area has worn away. Mr. Kucharsky explains that Toole Design has been hired to look at implementing tactical striping and posts to create buffered bike lanes in both directions from the city line with Marblehead, while tying into existing bike lanes. There is a brief discussion regarding the fact that someone was struck in the area about a year ago, and Mr. Kucharsky indicates that staff and engineering are working together to look at additional grade changes and safety measures.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

Project Checklist

Vice Chair Papetti explains his proposed project checklist, which was inspired by his work on the Bike Committee. The intent is to make sure staff is properly equipped to answer questions that may arise during a projects review. Mr. Papetti indicates the checklist will hopefully reduce misunderstandings and allow projects to be reviewed in a systemic way. The draft project checklist includes questions related to funding sources, project scope, scheduled milestones, staff input, public engagement, and whether or not there are drawings/visuals.

Mr. Kucharsky says the checklist will be helpful for ensuring all the necessary information is conveyed to the Commission for new projects. Mr. Kucharsky asks if Mr. Papetti envisioned the checklist would be just for transportation corridor projects, or for private development ones as well. Mr. Papetti says it had not crossed his mind, but perhaps an adapted one could be useful for private development projects. Mr. Downing agrees that a standardized list of questions will be helpful for project reviews and interdepartmental communications as well. There is a discussion regarding the criteria for drawings being easy to read for a layperson, noting that staff are not always responsible for them, and that some can be rather technical.

Commissioner Seidel suggests adding a question related to whether the project is equitable or enhances equity in the City, as this has become an important lens through which projects should be examined. Mr. Downing indicates staff can look into how that could relate to the criteria being used with GIS for traffic calming measures. Mr. Kucharsky suggests an additional question related to accessibility, and all parties agree. Chair Shallop indicates the checklist is a great idea.

Chair Shallop opens the floor to public comment but there is none.

October 2020 Parking Order

Mr. Kucharsky explains that an email was sent to Council members a few weeks prior. Work was conducted earlier in the year, and a proposal was made to package various orders and ordinances passed over several years, to come up with a consistent ordinance that would work every year going forward, setting expectations for visitors and staff alike. City Council has not yet taken up the proposal. The proposal would also authorize Mr. Kucharsky to work with the Mayor, Collector's Office, and Police to grant temporary permits. Additionally, fines for parking in these areas during October would be set at \$50.

Mr. Kucharsky presents the order language for review. He notes that due to the pandemic we are not actively promoting folks to visit, but attempting to be ready for it anyway, as well as for future years that are more reflective of prior years in terms of visitor volume.

Mr. Kucharsky says he hopes the Commission can provide a recommendation so that the proposal can be brought forward to OLLA. Mr. Downing explains that the ordinance requires two passing's of City Council.

Chair Shallop opens the floor to public comment but there is none.

Chair Shallop entertains a motion to propose the order as written to the City Council.

Motion and Vote: *On a motion duly made by Commissioner Seidel and seconded by Vice Chair Papetti, the Traffic and Parking Commission moves to recommend the order as proposed to City Council. **The vote three (3) in favor and none (0) opposed. The motion passes.***

Request for Traffic Ordinance Recommendation

Resident Sticker Parking on Looney Ave and Hillside Ave

Mr. Kucharsky explains that the request came in from Councilor Flynn. The request comes pursuant to policy changes at Salem Heights, where the number of visitor passes for residents has been restricted, amongst other restrictions. Some residents and visitors have been parking in nearby residential areas, and the situation has been further exacerbated by the closure of Gallows Park and nearby parking (which is a temporary condition). Therefore, resident permit parking has been requested in the area.

Mr. Kucharsky offers that he is hesitant to move forward with the request, as some of the conditions limiting parking in the area are temporary, but notes it is ultimately up to the Commission. He notes that the work at Gallows Hill is coming to an end soon, and that perhaps that would be a better time to revisit the request. Mr. Kucharsky also notes that he received a traffic calming request for Pope and Proctor by Councilor Morsillo

Chair Shallop asks if Lt. Tucker has weighed in on the issue. Mr. Kucharsky says that while Lt. Tucker is not present this evening, he has also noted that the situation may be temporary. Chair Shallop says she would be more comfortable considering it if Lt. Tucker were present to provide more input.

Vice Chair Papetti asks when construction will be complete in the park, and Mr. Kucharsky says it should be complete by early October. Mr. Papetti asks about the level of support for the request beyond Councilor Flynn, and Mr. Kucharsky says a petition has not been received, but that the councilor indicated there were a few requests.

Chair Shallop opens the floor to public comment.

Damien Jarrett of 5 Hillside introduces himself as one of the petitioners, and notes that his in-laws live on Looney Avenue. Mr. Jarrett contends the issue is not temporary but has been going on for years, and that it has only been exacerbated by the construction. He notes that the biggest issue has been parking changes at Salem Heights as well as additional

restrictions implemented by the City of Salem. Mr. Jarrett argues there is a safety element to the request, as emergency vehicles have a hard time fitting down Looney Avenue, and that it can be difficult to turn out of driveways due to multiple cars parked on the street. Mr. Jarrett notes that some cars are left parked for multiple days by people who do not even live in the area, and that the street is treated like a park and ride. He adds that some people also park on sidewalks, making it difficult for accessibility.

Chair Shallop states that the comments and information thus far confirm for her that she would like Lt. Tucker to be part of the conversation before any recommendation is made.

Mr. Downing says in the meantime staff can explore all available options/solutions that would be available, such as limiting parking to one side, specific hours, etc.

Vice Chair Papetti says he can see there might be some real issues on Looney Avenue that need to be addressed, but that he is not yet convinced resident parking is the proper solution.

All Commissioners agree and consent to table the issue for now until more information and input is available.

OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY LEGALLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Mr. Kucharsky discusses bus stop accessibility and safety improvements, specifically at the intersection of Washington Square N and Winter Street. The MBTA has been reviewing bus stops and addressing safety and accessibility issues, and that some stops are getting signs reset. Mr. Downing indicates he shared information with Councilor Madore, the Salem Common Neighborhood Association, and the Commission on Disabilities.

Mr. Kucharsky says staff are looking for comments and feedback from as many stakeholders as possible, and notes that many people were not aware of the bus stop's existence.

Vice Chair Papetti says the design needs additional work, and also questions whether the stop is necessary. He offers concerns regarding the accessibility, but states he is enthusiastic for bus stop investments in general. Mr. Papetti says this highlights the importance of the ADA Transition Plan.

Mr. Downing suggests looking at ridership in other parts of the city to see if resources could be shifted to address more relevant concerns elsewhere.

Commissioners agree that staff should respond to the MBTA requesting if another location might be considered for improvement.

UPCOMING MEETINGS SCHEDULE

The next meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2020.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

Staff and Commissioners begin to review and discuss the minutes for the July 23, 2020 meeting.

Motion and Vote: *On a motion duly made by Vice Chair Papetti and seconded by Commissioner Seidel, the Traffic and Parking Commission moves to approve the meeting minutes from July 23, 2020 as amended. **The vote is three (3) in favor and none (0) opposed. The motion passes.***

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Seidel and seconded by Vice Chair Papetti, the Traffic and Parking Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:39 PM.