

**City of Salem
Traffic and Parking Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 6, 2020**

A meeting of the Salem Traffic and Parking Commission was held on Thursday, February 6, 2020 at 6:30pm at 98 Washington Street, Salem. **Present:** Commission Chair Tanya Shallop, Commission Vice-Chair Eric Papetti, Commissioner Todd Waller, Commission Lt. David Tucker, Director of Traffic and Parking David Kucharsky, and Assistant Director Nick Downing. **Absent:** Commissioner Robin Seidel.

CALL OF MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 6:33pm by Chair Shallop.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Commission Chair Shallop opens the floor to public comment. There is none, but Chair Shallop notes there will be an opportunity after discussion of each agenda item. Chair Shallop also notes that the agenda items will be taken out of order, with the Village Tavern Shuttle Proposal going first.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

Village Tavern Shuttle Proposal

Mr. Kucharsky explains Mr. Ingemi submitted a request to the city council to see if they could operate a shuttle vehicle from the Village Tavern (adjacent to pedestrian mall) that would traverse the downtown area and visit hotels and historic sites in Salem. The matter was referred to the OLLA committee, and Councilor Madore proceeded to introduce Mr. Ingemi to the Traffic and Parking Department, suggesting he come before the Commission to get feedback and to discuss his thoughts on how the service would run. Mr. Kucharsky notes that he and Mr. Downing met with Lt. Tucker to discuss existing ordinances that would be relevant.

Arthur Ingemi of 19 Hull Street in Wenham introduces himself as the owner of the Village Tavern. Mr. Ingemi explains the concept behind the shuttle proposal, stating it would give his business marketing exposure. He adds that he recently saw similar operations during a trip to Florida, noting that in large tourist areas there are free shuttles that are sponsored by local businesses. Mr. Ingemi states it would be a simple, no planned route, just a shuttle that goes around town to local venues. Mr. Ingemi indicates it would be at no cost to patrons or the city of Salem, and that there would be the option of tipping. The hours of operation would be 11:00 AM to dusk. Mr. Ingemi states his business has a large patio that would have enough space for a shuttle to back into and park overnight while charging, as the shuttle would be all electric. Mr. Ingemi adds that it would be insured and registered like any other vehicle, and subject to authorization of the Salem Police Department. He

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maintains it would be vital to operate on the pedestrian mall, noting that the Village Tavern is set back and not easily visible. Mr. Ingemi contends this is a creative approach to getting his business' name out. He notes this is not meant to compete with the existing Salem Trolley and reiterates that it will not have a set or direct route, but that hotels will be able to call and make requests, and that it would be a seasonal service.

Chair Shallop asks about the service radius, and Mr. Ingemi states he would prefer not to go farther than the House of Seven Gables, and that the intent would be to stay in the immediate downtown area. Chair Shallop next asks about the logistics of parking and the frequency of trips down the pedestrian area of Essex Street, noting that one concern relates to disrupting pedestrians walking. Mr. Ingemi responds by noting there will be no set routes or times, but that he would like to be able to use the area as needed. Chair Shallop asks for clarification as to whether the whole length of the pedestrian mall would be used, or just the portion leading to the Village Tavern. Mr. Ingemi indicates his proposal would be to drive down the entire length.

Chair Shallop asks if the driver would be an employee of the Village Tavern, and Mr. Ingemi affirms, noting that the Village Tavern would be responsible for operation and insuring.

Commissioner Waller asks if there will be a need for a taxi license or medallion. Mr. Ingemi says the service is unique because it will be free so it may not be required, but that he will have to look into the issue more. Mr. Waller next asks if the area around the patio legally allows for driving, and Mr. Ingemi explains it is set up to be a fire lane. Mr. Kucharsky adds that police and maintenance vehicles drive in the area in question periodically. Commissioner Waller asks about the seasonal availability, and Mr. Ingemi suggests starting around May with weekend service to start, with daily service starting in Summer and continuing through October (with the exception of the last two weekends as they tend to be extra busy with tourists).

Chair Shallop asks about capacity, and it is noted that there would be room for five passengers and a driver.

Commissioner Waller asks if there will be signage on the outside indicating the service is free. Mr. Ingemi says he envisioned signage on top advertising the Village Tavern and the shuttle service as being free.

Vice Chair Papetti says he appreciates the proposal, and thinks it is great for local businesses to offer these types of services that would be available to the community. Mr. Papetti asks if there is a purchase date for the vehicle. Mr. Ingemi explains there is a two month lead time to buy the vehicle, and notes that if approved he would put the order in for the upcoming Spring/Summer season. He adds that the cost would be around \$23,000. Mr. Ingemi also notes there is some support from the Ward 2 Councilor, and that the city of Salem has been thinking about exploring this kind of project.

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Chair Shallop asks if Mr. Ingemi has any concerns himself about the project. He indicates he does not have major concerns, and that he is not looking to make money off of the proposal, but rather it will be a part of the Village Tavern's marketing.

Vice Chair Papetti says he would like to hear from Mr. Downing and Mr. Kucharsky, as they are in the middle of an RFP process investigating a city-wide shuttle, to see if there are any ways to work together. Mr. Kucharsky indicates they are in the process of reviewing bids that have come in, and they are looking at vendors who would provide an on-demand ride share service. He notes it would be similar to Uber/Lyft, but that passengers would be sharing their ride. Mr. Ingemi states his proposal would offer a similar service. Mr. Kucharsky states there will be a meeting in the coming weeks to select a vendor and develop operating details. Mr. Kucharsky contends that Mr. Ingemi's timeline might be slightly ahead of the timeline for the city ride-share service.

Chair Shallop encourages ways to develop partnerships, perhaps collecting data to see where passengers are coming from and going and sharing the data with the city and Destination Salem. Mr. Ingemi states he is open to the idea. Chair Shallop notes that for the city shuttle/ride-share, she envisions it would not be limited to the downtown area but rather city-wide.

Mr. Kucharsky states that he looked at ordinances to see if there was a particular commission or committee that authorizes access for vehicles to the mall area, and found that under Section 43 of the Traffic Ordinance indicates approval would go through what was once called the Market Area and Management Commission, which no longer exists. The comparable existing authority would be the Salem Redevelopment Authority (SRA). Lt. Tucker adds that they would have the authority, but that Traffic and Parking can control horse-drawn carriages. Chair Shallop states there should be an ordinance change with regards to this. Mr. Downing adds that even if the SRA is the entity that makes the decision, a recommendation from the Traffic and Parking Commission would be useful to help inform their decision.

Chair Shallop states that her only real concern is the potential for impeding the pedestrian walkway, but that otherwise she is in favor of the idea. Lt. Tucker states the police department would want to set expectations with the eventual driver/operator of the shuttle. Vice Chair Papetti adds that if it is a small vehicle he thinks it makes sense to have it operate on the mall area, and also expresses frustration that bikes are not legally allowed in the area.

Chair Shallop opens the floor to public comment.

Brian Milas of 51 Lafayette Street introduces himself and states his main concern is with regards to how much additional traffic this will create on the pedestrian mall. Mr. Milas says he is glad it sounds like it will be a low impact. He asks if the shuttle will be gas or electric, and it is confirmed that it will be an electric vehicle.

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The Commission and Mr. Downing discuss the potential recommendation to the SRA to allow for the proposed shuttle, and whether there should be any restrictions. Vice Chair Papetti suggests a request for Traffic and Parking staff to work with the Village Tavern and other businesses for potential sponsorship opportunities and working together to perhaps develop better intracity transportation in the future.

Andrew Ingemi of 7 Juniper Road, Swampscott introduces himself. Mr. Ingemi asks what would happen if this shuttle proposal is granted, and the city also develops a shuttle service in the future. He asks if the city would absorb the Village Tavern's vehicle and the restaurant would just sponsor it. Chair Shallop indicates there would need to be discussions in the future if that were to be the case to see what would be the best path forward. There is a brief discussion of when the proposal could realistically come to fruition, and the early estimate is Summer 2020.

The Commission and Traffic and Parking staff discuss some of the details of the city-wide shuttle proposal and how it compares to this proposal.

Vice Chair Papetti asks if the vehicle will be wheelchair accessible, and Mr. Ingemi indicates it will not be. Mr. Papetti notes that it likely could not be a city vehicle in that case.

Motion and Vote: *On a motion duly made by Vice Chair Papetti and seconded by Commissioner Waller, the Traffic and Parking Commission votes to recommend the Village Tavern Shuttle Proposal to the Salem Redevelopment Authority. **The vote is four (4) in favor, and none (0) opposed, the motion passes.***

Request for Traffic Ordinance Recommendation

- Washington Street at Lafayette Park:

Mr. Downing explains this is a continuation of a previous discussion regarding parking regulations in and around Lafayette Park, specifically on Washington Street. Mr. Downing notes that the issue was brought to the attention of staff by the owners of Major Magleashes. Mr. Downing refreshes the Commission of the prior discussions, particularly the varied mix of existing ordinances and signage.

Mr. Downing states he is bringing forth a recommendation that looks at making sure the ordinances and street signage are aligned. He indicates the proposal is a mix of ordinance change recommendations, recommendations to implement existing ordinances, and recommendations to change existing street signage to reflect the final ordinances.

Mr. Downing presents a map showing the existing conditions, and a map with the proposed changes. Mr. Downing explains the proposed changes to hourly parking, signage, and ordinances. Mr. Downing presents a third map that lists out specific changes in more detail. He acknowledges it is a bit messy and confusing as there are many moving pieces, but he hopes the proposal is reflective of the previous discussions with the Commission and in line with their intent.

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There is a brief discussion of deliberations at the prior meeting regarding this proposal, as Vice Chair Papetti was absent when the initial discussions took place.

Chair Shallop asks if the proposal reflects a loss of a service zone on Lafayette Street. Mr. Downing explains that the existing service zone is signed, but not in the ordinance. Chair Shallop asks about putting the service zone in the ordinance, and Mr. Downing notes that is a possibility if the Commission feels it should be maintained a service zone.

Lt. Tucker asks if the owners of Major Magleashes need the service zones for deliveries, and Mr. Downing indicates that in his discussions with the owners they have not cited a need for a service zone, or expressed concerns about deliveries. Mr. Downing adds that the parking along Lafayette Park opposite Major Magleashes and on Lafayette Street would still remain open and unregulated, and that the metered parking would only be on the westerly side of Washington Street.

Mr. Downing clarifies that if the Commission prefers to keep the service zone, the proposal can be amended and staff can be tasked with drafting appropriate language to include the service zone in the ordinance recommendations.

Chair Shallop asks for more details regarding the service zone, and Lt. Tucker explains the area and surrounding businesses. He states it might make sense to have the service zone. Vice Chair Papetti agrees, and there is a brief discussion between the Commission and Mr. Kucharsky regarding the best way to proceed to include some kind of service zone for nearby businesses. Mr. Kucharsky states the Commission can have staff look at the issue further, and as part of the recommendation include an addendum to include a service or loading zone where appropriate.

Chair Shallop says she thinks the proposal looks good overall, but asks where residents who previously parked in the unregulated spaces will likely park. Mr. Downing lists Pond Street, Canal Street, Harbor Street, Ward Street, Peabody Street, as well as spaces farther down Lafayette Street as options as they are currently unregulated parking.

Mr. Kucharsky states that if the recommendation is approved some changes could be implemented quickly, and the rest would be brought before the council to vote on.

Motion and Vote: *On a motion duly made by Commissioner Waller and seconded by Vice Chair Papetti, the Traffic and Parking Commission votes to follow the recommended changes regarding parking on Washington Street, and to include a service zone where most appropriate. The vote is four (4) in favor, and none (0) opposed, the motion passes.*

- **Motor Coach Parking Ordinance: 48:05**

Mr. Kucharsky explains that he and Mr. Downing recently met with Kate Fox from Destination Salem to compare existing ordinances with existing signage, as well as the official map which have discrepancies, with the ultimate goal of reaching consistency between all three with respect to motor coach parking. As an example, Mr. Kucharsky

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makes note of bus stops that were designated decades ago and have not been rescinded or used. He also notes there are proposals to update signage with respect to hours of operations. Mr. Kucharsky also states there is a proposal to add a bus drop-off zone allowing for ten minute parking on Brown Street. Mr. Downing presents maps that demonstrate the proposed changes and he explains them in more detail. He identifies the following items:

- Essex Street at the Ropes Mansion: there is a bus stop that is signed as well as painted but not in the ordinances, so there is a proposal to add it to the ordinance
- Brown Street and New Liberty Street: adding the additional ten minute drop spot
- Codifying existing conditions of the Fort Avenue bus parking, including recent changes regarding bike lanes and signing for two-hour tour bus parking during October
- Lynn Street, New Liberty Street, Washington Square West, Washington Square South, and Congress Street: adding into ordinances the hour zone enforcement (9AM to 6PM, which is signed but not in the ordinance)

Chair Shallop asks Lt. Tucker about the current use of ten minute drop spots, and Lt. Tucker states there have been some issues but that they are minor, generally relating to people waiting long periods picking someone up.

Lt. Tucker asks about three spots along the Common, which Mr. Downing explains are two hour parking spots, and that with respect to those the change will be adding the enforcement hours to the ordinance.

Mr. Downing also notes that there exists on the map a ten minute drop spot in front of the Hawthorne Hotel which is not signed or in the ordinance. The Hotel is fine with not having the drop spot. There is a brief discussion regarding how some of the discrepancies came to be.

Chair Shallop asks if the proposed change at Brown Street and New Liberty Street was discussed two years prior, as she recalls there being a reason the change was not done previously. Vice Chair Papetti states he believes the discussion was more recent and in relation to pedestrian renovations. Mr. Downing explains there have been a few conversations in recent years about changes to this intersection generally, and that the goal was getting ADA compliant crossings across both streets. Mr. Downing notes those crossings now exist, but that those discussions were the reason behind delaying the now proposed changes. There is a brief discussion regarding the existing conditions at the intersection. Mr. Kucharsky adds that enforcement is just around the corner.

Chair Shallop opens the floor to public comment.

Jim Hurrell, Owner Salem Trolley, expresses concern that this is a serious change on Brown Street. He acknowledges the issues with parking in the city, but states concern regarding the impact on existing parking use by the trolley during October when access to the pedestrian mall is restricted due to the large crowds.

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Tammy Harrington, General Manager of the Salem Trolley, introduces herself and provides additional information regarding current trolley parking. Chair Shallop and Vice Chair Papetti asks for clarification, and it is explained that there may not be room for both the trolley and a motor coach. Chair Shallop indicates she does not wish to make any parking issues worse, and there is a general discussion about potential alternatives between Ms. Harrington, Mr. Downing, and the Commissioners.

Ms. Harrington also expresses an additional concern, noting that during last year's season Brown Street was shut down due to safety reasons, and she wonders where a motor coach would go in that instance. Lt. Tucker says his hope is that would not happen again, but acknowledges the Police Department's decision to shut down Brown Street, and discusses the circumstances that led to the decision. There is an additional discussion of potential alternatives, but additional information is needed.

Chair Shallop asks about the urgency of the proposal, and Mr. Kucharsky responds that approvals can take time, so the idea was to bring the proposal before the Commission sooner so it could then go to City Council. Vice Chair Papetti suggests recommending all changes except the one at Brown Street, pending further investigation.

Vice Chair Papetti asks about the number of motor coaches in Salem during peak times, and Ms. Harrington states the highest number she has observed on Fort Avenue alone is thirty.

Motion and Vote: *On a motion duly made by Vice Chair Papetti and seconded by Commissioner Waller, the Traffic and Parking Commission votes to recommend the proposed ordinance changes, with the exception of the changes to Brown Street. **The vote is four (4) in favor, and none (0) opposed, the motion passes.***

OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY LEGALLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Chair Shallop asks about the status of the resident permit parking request on Fort Avenue that was discussed at prior meetings, and Mr. Downing explains that residents were displeased with the inability to allow for visitor parking, and that the issue has been tabled for now. Mr. Kucharsky adds that he has not since heard from Councilor McCarthy or the residents of Fort Avenue.

Lt. Tucker notes he received a request for a permanent handicap parking sign by O'Neils on Washington Street, as one of the nearby business owners uses a wheelchair and has expressed a desire to see a handicap accessible space somewhere in the area. Lt. Tucker opines that the request seems reasonable given the limited number of handicap accessible parking nearby. Vice Chair Papetti asks if there are any policy guidelines regarding how much on-street handicap parking is required in business areas, or if there is a standard practice. Mr. Kucharsky explains ADA does not require a certain number of spaces, but that he could investigate what other communities have done. Chair Shallop says that it would be great to determine if we have an appropriate number, and to also determine current usage of existing spots. There is a brief discussion of the existing conditions at the location in question, as well as ordinance regulations. Chair Shallop suggests adding the ordinance

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regulations to the March meeting agenda. There is an additional discussion regarding whether the terminology has been changed to “accessible spaces”.

Motion and Vote: *On a motion duly made by Vice Chair Papetti and seconded by Commissioner Waller, the Traffic and Parking Commission votes to recommend the proposed handicap accessible parking spot at 128 Washington Street. **The vote is four (4) in favor, and none (0) opposed, the motion passes.***

UPCOMING MEETINGS SCHEDULE

The next meeting is scheduled for February 20th, 2020, which will be a multi committee meeting. The subsequent meeting will be March 19th, 2020.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

None.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made by Vice Chair Papetti and seconded by Commissioner Waller, the Traffic and Parking Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:08PM.