

**City of Salem**  
**Traffic and Parking Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, December 4, 2017**

A meeting of the Salem Traffic and Parking Commission was held on Monday, December 4, 2017 at 6:30pm at 120 Washington Street, Salem, MA. Present were Commission Chair Tanya Stepasiuk, Commission Vice-Chair Eric Papetti, and Commissioner Lt. Robert Preczewski. Commissioner Jamie Metsch was absent. Traffic and Parking Director Matt Smith was not able to attend. Assistant Director Nicholas Downing was present.

**CALL OF MEETING**

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

William Legault of 2 Warren Street spoke regarding the project at Webb Street and Collins Street. Mr. Legault encouraged the Commission to weigh opposition from neighbors against the benefits of a project, and to understand that sometimes when a resident indicates that they are speaking for the entire neighborhood, they may not be doing so accurately. Mr. Legault would have preferred the proposed loading zone remain a part of the project as he believes the status quo is dangerous. He understands why it was removed, but he hopes the Commission will be willing to make sometimes unpopular decisions in the future.

**TRAFFIC AND PARKING DIRECTOR MONTHLY UPDATE**

Director Smith was absent, so Assistant Director Downing provided the Monthly Update. A public meeting was held on November 20 to address concerns with the project at Webb Street and Collins Street. The original plan entailed T-ing off the intersection of East Collins at Webb Street, removing the right turn slip lane, realigning the Peter Tracy Walkway (multi-use path) to better connect with the entrance on the water side of East Collins, improving/formalize parking conditions, and adding a delivery zone on Webb Street. Based on public comment received previous to and at the meeting on November 20, the delivery zone on Webb Street was taken out of the project and the curbing that had been removed was replaced. The remainder of the project will move forward, and staff will monitor issues in the area related to deliveries through the spring to determine if a different solution is needed.

Commission Vice-Chair Papetti noted that tonight's meeting was the first time the Commission had a formal chance to weigh-in on and discuss this project. He indicated he had some concerns with the project, beyond the lack of notice provided to the neighborhood. First, he asked if the City owns the property and building

Amazing Pizza operates out of. Assistant Director Downing believed this to be the case, but will confirm. Second, Vice-Chair Papetti asked about the parking at Amazing Pizza, and if one of the spaces will be handicap accessible. Assistant Director Downing answered that he believed the plan was to include one handicap space and two other spaces, but needs to confirm with Engineering that his had been done. Next, Vice-Chair Papetti inquired as to the size of the delivery trucks. The truck sizes vary from company to company, and the Vice-Chair suggested that it may be worthwhile to consider some limitations on truck sizes on certain city streets.

Chair Stepasiuk asked how the Commission and staff can work to prevent these types of mistakes regarding the lack of public outreach going forward? Given that the Traffic and Parking Department is not the department responsible for project implementation, what role should the department play? Chair Stepasiuk indicated that perhaps the LTIP on could be part of that process, but wondered if it is the Commission's role to be the clearing house for public comment on projects even if they are managed by other departments or boards. Vice Chair Papetti agreed that a clearer process must be created for providing public comment, and perhaps bundling projects with other like projects to streamline that public comment process.

Vice-Chair Papetti raised a final concern with the project. He noted that the contractor has not maintained an accessible path through the site. He previously emailed staff in Traffic and Parking and Engineering about this issue, and was told it would be resolved, but upon his last visit, signs had been put up at the end of sidewalks directing individuals through the shite but no accessible path was created. Vice-Chair Papetti also expressed confusion over who has ownership, as he has been told various City departments are responsible, but none seem to be doing the work. He noticed the same issue at the intersection of Lafayette and Loring where people had to walk in the street during construction. Chair Stepasiuk agreed, and suggested that future correspondence should also be copied to the City Solicitor's office due to potential liability issues.

Assistant Director Downing provided an update on the Museum Place Garage updates. The stairwell project has been completed, the Council has approved funding to upgrade the public safety systems, payment kiosks were added to handle larger capacity, and the garage maintenance assessment is expected soon. Vice-Chair Papetti asked if staff had the data regarding maintenance costs of the garage over the last few years vs. revenue. Assistant Director Downing indicated he did not have that data on hand, but would work with Director Smith to compile it and present at the next meeting.

Assistant Director Downing provided an update on the Smart Signals and Concurrent Pedestrian Phasing project. Smart signal equipment installation has been completed on 9 of the 10 intersections, and the 10<sup>th</sup> will be done as part of the Canal Street project. Modest adjustments to timing have been incorporated as the equipment was installed, but it will be a few weeks at least before we have enough

data to do further fine tuning. The concurrent pedestrian signals will require more time, as there are some infrastructure requirements associated with the new system in terms of additional pedestrian activation controls. The Commission was generally curious as to why additional controls were needed if the pedestrian phases were automatic. Assistant Director Downing said he would clarify with the contractors.

Assistant Director Downing introduced the Commission to the proposed Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP). The goal of the LTIP is to consolidate information about all transportation projects in one place. The LTIP will be a living document that gets updated regularly and will be an on-going agenda item for the Commission. The document will indicate if there is a significant update to a project to be discussed with the Commission, and will be posted with the agenda to allow for public comment. The hope is that by consolidating this information, the Commission and Staff can have more time to adequately provide input and recommendations.

Chair Stepasiuk asked if Traffic and Parking Staff would own the document going forward and maintain it. Assistant Director Downing said yes, it would be maintained and updated by Traffic and Parking. In the near term this will require proactively reaching out for information, but hopefully down the road, a system could be in place that allowed for a less staff-intensive way to update the list.

Vice-Chair Papetti indicated that he supported the idea, but wanted to clarify its purpose. This is a project list, as opposed to a planning document, but we should also look into other costs related to transportation projects such as time spent by the electrical department maintaining signals, plowing in the winter, etc. We should also consider the operational impacts of projects and make smart operations decisions based on labor and staff time. Chair Stepasiuk agreed in theory, but pointed out that such a sophisticated system doesn't even exist in major metropolitan cities, much less cities the size of Salem. It is a good goal to work toward, but we need to be realistic about what we can do with the systems we have today as well.

Assistant Director Downing provided an update on the ADA Transition Plan. Traffic and Parking staff, in conjunction with Engineering and the City's ADA Coordinator, submitted a grant request to the Massachusetts Office of Disabilities for \$75,000 to fund an update to the City's ADA Transition Plan. The "current" plan is from 1998 and requires substantial updates. The process was important as it did shed light on much of the work the City is already undertaking in this area, but also highlighted the work left to be done. Staff expects it to be a very competitive grant round, as only \$1 million is available for both planning and project grants. Vice-Chair Papetti said he is glad the City applied for the funds, but hopes if we do not receive them that other resources are identified to complete this work. To emphasize the importance of updating our plan and doing so quickly, he asked the following to be read into the record from when ADA transition plans first became federal law (1991):

“(d) Transition plan. (1) In the event that structural changes to facilities will be undertaken to achieve program accessibility, a public entity that employs 50 or more persons shall develop, within six months of January 26, 1992, a transition plan setting forth the steps necessary to complete such changes. A public entity shall provide an opportunity to interested persons, including individuals with disabilities or organizations representing individuals with disabilities, to participate in the development of the transition plan by submitting comments. A copy of the transition plan shall be made available for public inspection. (2) If a public entity has responsibility or authority over streets, roads, or walkways, its transition plan shall include a schedule for providing curb ramps or other sloped areas where pedestrian walks cross curbs, giving priority to walkways serving entities covered by the Act, including State and local government offices and facilities, transportation, places of public accommodation, and employers, followed by walkways serving other areas. (3) The plan shall, at a minimum— (i) Identify physical obstacles in the public entity’s facilities that limit the accessibility of its programs or activities to individuals with disabilities; (ii) Describe in detail the methods that will be used to make the facilities accessible; (iii) Specify the schedule for taking the steps necessary to achieve compliance with this section and, if the time period of the transition plan is longer than one year, identify steps that will be taken during each year of the transition period; and (iv) Indicate the official responsible for implementation of the plan. (4) If a public entity has already complied with the transition plan requirement of a Federal agency regulation implementing section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, then the requirements of this paragraph (d) shall apply only to those policies and practices that were not included in the previous transition plan.” <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-1991-07-26/pdf/FR-1991-07-26.pdf>

Assistant Director Downing provided an update on the resident/visitor background research. He has compiled the information from Salem as needed and is actively trying to find information from other municipalities that could provide insights and ideas for any changes to the City’s current system of resident and visitor parking. Lt. Preczewski asked where the push for an overhaul was coming from, as the Commission has not received an abundance of resident parking requests. There was a general discussion about how the issue is one that was featured prominently in this fall’s election season, in the Mayoral race and in the council races. Chair Stepasiuk encouraged staff to look beyond Massachusetts for ideas and best practices. This memo will be shared early next year and that will begin a lengthy public outreach process.

## **NEW / OLD BUSINESS**

- Handicap Parking – 2 Forrester Street

Ward 2 Councilor Heather Famico has requested a handicap parking space at 2 Forrester Street for the residents of 2 Forrester Street. Lt. Preczewski visited the site. The home is a 2 car household, and both cars cannot be parked in the driveway at the same time. Parking at this end of the street is tight, and often the homeowner has to park a substantial distance from their home. Chair Stepasiuk and Vice-Chair Papetti both voiced support for the creation of the space, but requested staff work on some type of check-list or process to follow in such instances where residents already have off-street parking available.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Papetti and seconded by Lt. Preczewski, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend the creation a handicap parking space in front of 2 Forrester Street for a distance of 20 feet.

- Handicap Parking – 19 ½ Laurel Street

The residents of 19 ½ Laurel Street contacted Lt. Preczewski directly after being referred to him by Ward 5 Councilor Josh Turiel to request a handicap parking space at 19 ½ Laurel Street. The residents share a driveway with neighbors, but the neighbors park a commercial van in the driveway, not leaving enough space for the residents to park. Lt. Preczewski visited the site and there is sufficient space for a handicap parking space at the address.

On a motion duly made by Lt. Preczewski and seconded by Commissioner Papetti, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend the creation a handicap parking space in front of 19 ½ Laurel Street for a distance of 20 feet.

- Handicap Parking – 13 ½ Barton Street

At-Large Councilor Arthur Sargent has requested a handicap parking space in front of 13 ½ Barton Street for a resident at that address. The resident does have off street parking, but it is at the far back of the property, requiring a long walk to and from the car. Vice-Chair Papetti again reiterated the need for a process for determining appropriateness for handicap parking where off-street space exists, but stated that in the absence of such a process, the Commission should not deny the request for judge the nature of a resident's disability. Lt. Preczewski visited the site and there is sufficient space for a handicap parking space at the address.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Papetti and seconded by Lt. Preczewski, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend the creation a handicap parking space in front of 13 ½ Barton Street for a distance of 20 feet.

- Handicap Parking – Adjacent to 24 Hazel Street

Ward 5 Councilor Josh Turiel has requested a handicap parking space adjacent to 24 Hazel Street, on the northern side of Laurel Street, the first spot from the corner. The resident at 24 Hazel Street shares her driveway with a neighbor and there is insufficient space to park multiple cars. The street geometry on Hazel Street would not allow for a space to be created in front of the address, but a space could be created adjacent to 24 Hazel Street on Laurel Street. Lt. Preczewski contacted the

resident to confirm if such a space would solve their issue, and they confirmed that it would.

On a motion duly made by Lt. Preczewski and seconded by Commissioner Papetti, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend the creation of a handicap parking space adjacent to 24 Hazel Street, on the northern side of Laurel Street, the first spot from the corner and continuing for a distance of 20 feet.

- Repeal of Handicap Parking – 12 Dearborn Street

Ward 6 Councilor Beth Gerard has requested the handicap parking space at 12 Dearborn Street be repealed as it is no longer needed. This repeal was already approved and sent to the City Council. The Commission discussed if they wanted simple repeals such as this to always come before them, and it was agreed they prefer all changes to come to the Commission. No action was taken as the matter is already before the Council.

- Service Zone – 163 Lafayette Street

The Commission continued its discussion of the request from Ward 1 Councilor Robert McCarthy for the creation of a service zone in front of 163 Lafayette Street, the Levesque Funeral Home. At the last meeting, the Commission agreed to take no action until further information was provided by the owners of the funeral home and staff. Traffic and Parking Staff found no other funeral homes with service zones in the City, as most funeral homes use informal no parking signs or cones when services are in progress. Lt. Preczewski requested additional information from the owners as well, but neither he nor Traffic and Parking staff received any additional information.

On a motion duly made by Commission Papetti and seconded by Lt. Preczewski, the Commission voted unanimously to deny without prejudice the creation of a service zone at 163 Lafayette Street due to a lack of information from the owners.

- Downtown Parking Study

This item was tabled until the next meeting when Director Smith will be able to attend.

- Traffic and Parking Commission Procedures

Assistant Director Downing presented the Commission with a draft of the “Notice to the City Council of Traffic and Parking Commission” form. The form would accompany the form filled out by Lt. Preczewski upon receipt of a request for

handicap parking or resident parking, or would be sent on its own if related to another advisory recommendation from the Commission. The Commissioners supported the creation of the form, and asked that the background and notes section mirror the appropriate section from the meeting minutes, to avoid any confusion. There was some general concern as to whether this might slow down the approval process, but given the schedule of the Commission and the Council (opposite weeks), no such issues should arise.

The Commission also discussed slight changes to the public comment procedures. Beginning in 2018, the Commission will allow general public comment at the beginning of the meeting, limited to 3 minutes, on topics not on that meeting's agenda. Additionally, public comment time will be built into the agenda for comment on specific agenda items. The goal is to avoid the sometimes confusing portions of public comment where Commissioners must follow comments on multiple agenda items but not discuss those items until later in the meeting. This will be a trial period for the new process, and it can be modified as needed going forward.

Assistant Director Downing will send a message to the Commission to schedule the second December meeting, was the previous date no longer works.

Chair Stepasiuk asked the following items be included on that meeting agenda:

- Discussion: Resubmission of the Commission's proposed regulatory authority to the Council in 2018
- Discussion: Downtown Parking Study
- Presentation from Director Smith about 2018 priorities
- Update on garage maintenance costs and revenue generation
- Discussion: Handicap parking policy
- Update on enforcement data
- Minutes from October meeting(s) to be approved

### **MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL**

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Papetti and seconded by Lt. Preczewski, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the November 2, 2017 Traffic and Parking Commission meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion duly made by Lt. Preczewski and seconded by Commission Chair Stepasiuk, the Traffic and Parking Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm.