

TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING

June 17, 2020 – Virtual Meeting

IN ATTENDANCE: Chair Elena Proakis Ellis, Councilor Jack Eccles, Jeff Parenti, Dan Krechmer, Thomas Rossi, Elizabeth Peart, Sgt. Jon Goc (in for Commissioner Chief Lyle), Diane Ardizzoni – Clerk

Meeting opened 5:34 pm.

We are holding the Traffic Commission meeting remotely pursuant to the governor's order. We have eight attendees from the public. The protocol is going to be as we normally do - we will discuss the items on the agenda. We will then bring in the person who's the proponent, let them speak, we can ask them questions, and then we will open public participation for each item. If you're an attendee, not a panelist, you should use the raise hand function, and then you will be brought in as a panelist to speak, and we will put you back to an attendee when you're done speaking

Sargent Goc will be voting on behalf of Chief Lyle who is unable to attend tonight's meeting.

I. Continued Business:

1. Approve minutes from December 18, 2019 meeting.

Motion to approve minutes by Tom Rossi, Elizabeth Peart seconds, all in favor (Chair called the role).
Minutes approved.

II. New Business:

2. Resident request to add crosswalk(s) on Franklin Street between Stoneham line and Vinton Street. The resident request also included a request to limit parking in the immediate vicinity of the crosswalks, to allow for visibility.

We have the proponent, Andrew Monat, brought in as a panelist.

Mr. Monat is hoping the city can determine one or more feasible locations for crosswalks on Franklin Street between the city line and the Stoneham city line. He believes this is an appropriate section of roadway for additional crosswalks since there's a long distance between the city line and the first crosswalk, which is roughly a 15 minute round trip walk. The intersections at Woodland and Botolph both have MBTA bus stops and the intersection at Walton Park has a bus stop for the Charter School leading to children crossing there. There is a park with a playground a short distance from the intersection at Warren Street leading to many small children and their caregivers crossing there. The lack of marked crosswalks contributes to speeds above the signed 25 mph limit. He is hoping that the city will put in crosswalks at whichever of those locations are feasible.

He is hoping the City will also consider his additional measures for these location(s), which include a No Parking Zone on the North side of the crosswalk for visibility, flex posts or other means of curb extension, as long as they allow bicycle traffic to continue in the parking lane rather than being forced to merge into traffic on this uphill segment, flashing lights activated by pedestrians pushing a button as were installed recently at the corner of Franklin and Vinton Streets and any other measures which city staff in their professional judgement deem appropriate.

Motion to open public participation by Commissioner Rossi, second by Commissioner Krechmer, (Chair called the role) all in favor.

Elena runs through some of the public comments in the packet.

An email sent from Ryan Williams, supporting the request for crosswalks and he comments on the need for adequate sight lines.

Resident Christine Levigne's letter supports the addition of crosswalks on Franklin Street at the intersection with Walton Park. Lots of families cross Franklin Street with small children and go to the Warren Street Park. There's a charter school bus stop at Walton-Franklin Streets, so anywhere between the mentioned streets will be greatly appreciated.

The next letter is from Tony Fernandez and says she is in support of a crosswalk between the Stoneham line and Vinton Street, ideally at the Botolph/Walton Park intersection. She feels a crosswalk at this location will serve the dual purpose of slowing traffic down as they enter or exit the 25 mph zone.

Letter written by Jean O'Toole of 20 Botolph Street supports a crosswalk. She understands that a crosswalk cannot be a guarantee that pedestrians will be able to cross safely, however at present, the speed and volume of traffic make crossing Franklin Street a dangerous activity, and it is not apparent that the 25 mph speed limit is being enforced. In the interest of public safety, she hopes that the traffic commission will approve the request.

Two participants have their hands raised.

First is Alana Nelson. She adds that the intersection of Warren Street has been a site of several people who've been hit by cars, including a gentleman who was getting off the bus and crossing the street at Woodland and Franklin who was in the hospital for quite a time and that car was determined to be only driving 35 miles an hour. She appreciates anything the commission can do to help making that area a safer place to cross the street.

The next panelist is Paul. Paul states that he is married to Tony Fernandez (she submitted a letter in favor). He is in support of Woodland and Warren Streets also being two intersections that are close to the playground as good locations. He adds that he knows both Andy and Alana and agree with either location.

Majula Karamcheti is brought in as a panelist. She states that this is an issue that she spoke about three or four years ago and she's back again. She says we desperately need a crosswalk somewhere between the area where the shops are and the Stoneham line and that they've been waiting a long time for this, so she's really hoping now is the time.

Kathi Rossi Roh is brought in as a panelist. She says that she's been in this neighborhood for 30 years and there is a lot of foot traffic. She agrees that everybody's made a great point. The other thing she wanted to ask was are there two separate issues which is the parking near the streets as well because even when you're trying to get out of the street with your car if people are parking too close to Woodland it's hard to see so she was just trying to clarify if these were two separate issues or just one issue.

In terms of restricting parking that would probably be a separate vote.

Motion to close public participation by Commissioner Parenti, second by Commissioner Krechmer, (chair called role) all in favor.

Chair Proakis Ellis states the following: In the packet is a diagram of potential locations on Franklin Street. The figure that I have showing the sight distances printed out portrait instead of landscape so I don't know if it came through in your electronic versions. So I can tell you what that should have said sight distance is 333 feet and it also says we could reuse existing ramps for now at that location. I spent a long time driving and walking back and forth on Franklin Street and I also crossed the street at the locations that I thought were the best locations for the crosswalks after I measured with the wheel up and down the street. The location that I have shown, just to the East of Warren would require new ramps, but it has the best sight distance from both directions and it's the most sensitive to the neighbors. The proposed location might require a slight shift to the bus stop but that wouldn't be a big deal. If the

bus couldn't fit between Warren Street and the crosswalk you might have to shift the bus stop to just after. Then the other location has 333 feet of sight distance which still meets the criteria that we normally look at for safe stopping distance for various speeds, and more than 500 feet in the other direction. I crossed back and forth multiple times with no crosswalk and I felt that the cars could definitely see me. I even stepped out into the street at one point, to see if people would just stop, who hadn't been slowing down because I was standing there. I was wearing a safety vest so I was pretty visible but people did and they didn't have any trouble stopping well in advance of where I was. I'm inclined to support both. Obviously it's all pending funding, but the one at Botolph Street we could put in using the existing ramps for the time being, the one near Warren would require us to wait until we had funding to put in ADA compliant ramps.

Commissioner Peart mentions she didn't go out there with as much detail as Elena did to look at the sight distances, but was driving and trying to pay attention to the sight distances. Certainly Walton Park jumped out to her as what seems to be a safe location, because you can see it clearly in both directions and her sense from folks' comments on where they want to cross. Seems to her that if we were going to go with two it seems as though Walton Park would be the preferable one or would be the one we want to tackle first. The intersection at Warren Street, because of the curve of Franklin Street, just didn't feel quite as wide open, but she can see from Elena's sight distances it still is very good. She thinks it was just a perception when you're coming down the hill and a bit of a curve it might not be as safe. The one at Warren Street is getting awfully close to Vinton Street where there already is a crosswalk. So she is in support for two, if we can construct them properly, but if we were going to go with one, her preference would be Walton Park, the one further west on Franklin Street.

Commissioner Parenti stated the following: I'm supportive of the Walton Street location. I like crosswalks to be at cross streets I don't like them to be to be mid-block, mostly because when people walk in the neighborhood they are on an existing sidewalk on their path of travel, and they want to cross the street that takes them directly across the street. Pedestrians don't like to go left or right to go to a mid-block crossing, and then come back to the direction they were going and so I think it works much better at a cross street so coming out of the neighborhood, on Walton Park that's where the crosswalk belongs. I'm in support of one crosswalk at Walton Park and by the way, the sight distances look fine. I found the minimum speed of 40 miles an hour which seems reasonable, even though I know that the speed limit is 25, the stopping sight distance for 40 mph is 300 feet. I'm uncomfortable with the crosswalk at the other location.

Commissioner Rossi stated the following: I'm certainly in favor of the one at Walton Park and Botolph Street which is the same intersection. Clearly there's a demand for it and it looks like it can be done safely. As far as the one down near Warren Street, it might make sense to do one first and then see how it does. If we need to revisit the other one, we can do that. I think we could just vote on the one without having to reject the other one for a year or whatever so obviously demand is all off now because people are traveling a lot differently. It'll be interesting to see, depending on how school opens in September, how the demand is and we could perhaps revisit it at a the later meeting this year. The one thing that I wonder about and I couldn't tell this because I didn't go at the right time of day, is whether there are any solar glare issues in either direction, and if so, should we do something about signage or something to just make sure it's more visible.

Sgt. Goc was asked if he had any sense of whether there are solar glare issues there just from accidents or other issues.

Sgt. Goc responds stating not at that particular location in that area that I'm aware of. I know there are some extreme solar glare issues on Franklin Street. My experience is more so in the Franklin Square/Highlands area. As you are going toward Stoneham in the afternoon, we've had very minimal accidents up there in regards to pedestrians, if any, that I'm really aware of. We have had some motor vehicle accidents Walton at Franklin in the past, again minimal for data. I'm not aware of solar glare being a factor. I would support the Botolph one. As Jeff said, people tend to use that. Also if there's a second on at Warren Street, I would support that also.

Commission Eccles is in support of both. Just thinking anyone who lives in lower Botolph or Woodland or Summit, it would be kind of weird for them to walk back towards Stoneham to cross. He does kind of like the idea of having one at Woodland or near Woodland further downstream from there.

Commissioner Krechmer is in agreement with Commissioner Eccles. Warren Street does have a playground and Woodland is a pretty big feeder into that area; people want to cross and get to the other side so I think there is demand there. To Tom's point, if there's no chance of funding it for the next year, then maybe we vote on one and see how it goes, but I would support both of them if they came to a vote.

Commissioner Peart had a comment on the solar glare. Because she lives in the Highlands area, and maybe it's just a result of her driving, she certainly knows that traveling West on Franklin you can get some solar glare there at the right time of the year. She also has a question for Sgt Goc. Does the flashing speed sign record what the actual travel speeds are, and is there a way of understanding what the actual travel speeds are through there?

Sgt. Goc's answer is yes, the sign does pick up speed data, but unfortunately, it's extremely time consuming to get it. It spits out each car, and the volume, it doesn't give hourly data or anything else. If he were to download, he has to download from whenever that sign started to now. So, when he did a download with that sign once with Tom Smulligan from the IT department, he had to download about four months of data at one time, and he was into the hundreds of thousands if not a million data points and all it did was give me average speed, travel speed, and the amount of cars, but couldn't break it down by day or by hour.

Chair Proakis Ellis: Would suggest that we vote on them separately. So, to answer the question about funding. I do think we could find funding within the next year. We've actually had a lot of luck getting either free cash or other similar money as it becomes available for these types of things. We did add the crosswalks you might recall we voted crosswalks on Sylvan Street, Washington Street, Lebanon Street, Howard Street and Upham St at Dell, and we ended up being able to fund 100% of those. They've all been installed. All the compliant ramps have been installed, so it's not something that we should put off because of the funding aspect. If there are other reasons why people don't support it, that's entirely fine and different.

Motion was made by Commissioner Perenti at the intersection of Franklin Street and Botolph Street, seconded Commissioner Rossi.

It was asked if the crosswalk would include the rectangular rapid flashing beacon?

Chair Proakis Ellis answers no, not necessarily, and that's something that we've decided before the commission doesn't need to vote on that because it's not a regulatory item, but it's something we can certainly consider again as funding becomes available. She maintains a list of everywhere they've been requested and then as the City gets funding, we pick what we think is the highest priority working with the Police Department and with the ward Councilors. Elena said she will add anything approved tonight to the list for consideration.

Chair Proakis Ellis calls the roll. All are in favor and it is approved unanimously.

Commissioner Krechmer makes motion to install a crosswalk in the vicinity of Warren Street across Franklin Street, seconded by Commissioner Eccles.

Chair Proakis Ellis calls the roll. Commissioner Krechmer, yes. Commissioner Peart, yes. Commissioner Eccles, yes. Commissioner Parenti, no. Sargent Goc wants to ask a question.

Sgt. Goc asks if you're turning off of Warren, and taking a right, is that going to be an issue with the location of the crosswalk.

Chair Proakis Ellis states she does not believe so. She crossed there, back and forth several times, and didn't feel like that would be an issue since the suggested location was 73 feet down.

Motion passes with 6 yes votes and 1 no vote by Commissioner Parenti.

Chair Proakis Ellis thanks everybody from the public who came for that item. She also notes that when we discussed this about four years ago, as public participants noted, that was before we had the formal determination from the city solicitor that this body does have jurisdiction over locations of new crosswalks because they were deemed to be a regulatory item. So that's some of what changed from then until now in terms of why we're specifically entertaining and then voting on these crosswalk items, and I think that has actually been a positive change because I think we've put more crosswalks in since that determination in the last two years than probably went into Melrose for many years leading up to that. And in some great locations where they also have good traffic calming benefit. Lebanon Street looks a lot less open, as does Howard Street now with the crosswalks.

Commissioner Parenti asks if we need to address the parking item on Item #2.

Chair Proakis Ellis mentions the approach to Botolph Street from the Stoneham direction, the traffic code states that parking is prohibited there anyway, so we don't have anything to vote on in that direction. The approach from the Melrose direction does not have any specific regulations. She asks Sargent Goc what is the distance from a crosswalk that you're allowed to park? Is there any particular distance?

Sergeant Goc believes it might be five feet. Elena thinks it may be five feet or it's unspecified it's just you may not park on a crosswalk.

Sgt. Goc states that in the interest of sight lines in an area like that where there's not a lot of cars parked, we should stretch it a little bit further than like Main Street right in the business district.

Chair Proakis Ellis is looking at the aerial here. States she always hates to restrict parking right in front of somebody's house, especially if they're not here. It looks like from the location where the crosswalk would be you're not allowed to park 20 feet from the intersection. So we could just place a sign, No Parking Here to Corner and we wouldn't have to vote on anything, but if we wanted to extend it further, we could still certainly have plenty of room to park in front of the house if we extended it say 40 feet. If we have 10 foot crosswalks and that would be 30 feet from the crosswalk, or we could go 30, making it 20 feet from the edge of the crosswalk.

Sgt. Goc specifies he is no expert but feels like 20 feet would be sufficient. The things he sees are when cars are parked within several feet of the intersection then it becomes a hazard. He feels like 20 feet is enough.

Does anyone want to make a specific motion, this would be for the one at Botolph Street. This would be the north side of the street.

Commissioner Parenti makes a motion to restrict parking on the Melrose side of Franklin Street at Botolph Street 20 feet from the edge of the crosswalk. Seconded by Commissioner Krechmer.

Commissioner Eccels asks, The North side of Franklin, East of Botolph looks like it's a bus stop now.

Chair Proakis Ellis: Oh, that's an interesting question I'm looking on the GIS not on street view, if that's a bus stop right there then we wouldn't have to do anything.

Google is showing the aerial view as a bus stop.

Commissioner Rossi states this is one where it looks like there's only one bus stop sign whereas sometimes there are two, so it actually delineates the limits on both sides. There's only one right at the intersection so it may or may not be clear how far back you can go.

Elena responds with the average length of a bus, we're at 20 feet from the crosswalk, we're still pretty close to that bus stop sign, I would say well beyond where you could interpret that you might be able to park. We could consider asking the MBTA to put up the second sign, but it would be kind of right in front of somebody's house, because they go 100 feet.

Commissioner Parenti asks if we want to install a crosswalk on the west side of the intersection or the east side. The East side is the answer.

Chair Proakis Ellis states that it seems like since there's a bus stop there, there's no need to restrict parking, because it's already restricted.

Commissioner Parenti says he will withdraw his motion. He mentions that we could use the existing ramp which is tiny, but someday when we build an ADA compliant ramp will have to deal with addressing the exact bus stop location.

The Commission discussed whether there was a need to restrict parking in the vicinity of the Warren Street approved crosswalk location but decided that between the driveway curb cut and the bus stops, there was not a need to restrict parking at this time. This could always be revisited if a crosswalk goes in and there are issues with parking. The Commission decided not to make any motions for parking restrictions.

3. Melrose DPW request to change and/or clarify parking restrictions in front of 200 Foster Street to reflect changes to the nearby crosswalk and parking needs in the vicinity.

Chair Proakis Ellis stated the following: If you drove by this location, it's fairly self-explanatory. Part of the problem is that what's in the traffic code doesn't really match what the signs actually say right now, and the other half of the problem is that we moved the crosswalk so now there's the old crosswalk that we've blacked out a couple times, but it keeps showing through, so it's been it's been confusing and the visitors to the congregational home, including where they can or can't park. That was the reason why we took this on the agenda. So this was a city request. Before we go through the trouble of opening closing public comment, I'm going to ask if anyone on the attendee list wishes to speak about this item if they could please raise their hand. No attendees raise their hands.

We have one hour parking from a little before the train tracks across that whole stretch and then in the code we also show parking prohibited from basically the corner of Cottage to about three quarters the way across the building and then parking is prohibited across the street, so the regulations are conflicting. Lots of people park there and the signs say that you can park there up to a certain point, and then the parking is prohibited but they don't at all mention these in the code so we have the freedom right now to change this to what we think is reasonable.

Sgt. Goc states that right now there's a 30 minute sign in front of the building with two little arrows pointing down as if two cars could fit there and then after the 30 minutes signs, if you go back towards Cottage Street, there's no parking because it's close to the corner so it's prohibited. If you go forward towards the train tracks, there's a telephone pole that prohibits parking all the way to the train tracks. He went there today and it looks like maybe two cars could park legally in front of the building, maybe three. The police have had complaints last year, for the first time, that people were obviously parking over time there under the 30 minute rule. He thinks when he talked to the management the explanation was that those were visiting healthcare/nurses, and they were certainly there for longer than 30 minutes. There's some residential parking on Cottage, and there is technically parking on Berwick, but there's no great parking if you're visiting there. He said he doesn't know if those spots out front being so valuable should just stay as limited parking. Visitors are going to pull up and use them for the full extent if we bump it up. He's

not saying that's a bad idea. The person he spoke to at the building, stated to the effect that the nurses have nowhere to park, but he can't say they've had multiple complaints over the years. The first complaints did come in last year about people parked all day there, so the police did issue some tickets. Sgt. Goc stated he just wanted to give a synopsis on that.

Chair Proakis Ellis states we did have a resident who has called stating when she visits her mother there, and with the change to where the crosswalk was, she thought it had eliminated some parking spaces. The people that work in the building thought that you still couldn't park where the old crosswalk was. In terms of the distance, the GIS shows 100 feet from the new crosswalk to the driveway, and if we go just from the new crosswalk to the railroad symbol on the ground it is about 50 feet. She stated that she doesn't really see a reason why you wouldn't be allowed to park all the way up to that driveway unless there's a regulation that we're getting too close to the train tracks at that point.

Sgt. Goc states he noticed that there is a No Parking sign on some type of pole that points towards the train tracks, and that's well before the driveway.

Elena confirms that there's a No Parking sign on the railroad sign, says no parking anytime and it points back. But it is 100% inconsistent with a traffic code which allows 2 hour parking up to the driveway.

Does anybody knows if there's a regulation, and how far back from the train tracks is safe.

Commissioner Parenti believes it is 50 feet.

Elena asks if he would you interpret that as 50 feet from the tracks or 50 feet from the edge of the train right away?

He believes it is from the tracks. So by going to the far side of the driveway, we're already 54 feet and that doesn't count the five feet required from the driveway. So, we'd have at least 60 feet before we actually allowed parking along the area.

Commission Peart would make a comment though that the driveway blind spot and if there were parking to your immediate left it might be difficult to actually see the oncoming traffic which becomes a safe distance issue.

Elena mentions in that case, if we like where the sign is now, which is, about 45 feet from the driveway, and that leaves about 60 feet so you could fit three cars, we could just sign it for whatever duration parking we think is reasonable. She does find the half an hour to be a little bit short for people who are visiting relatives there or for nurses. Maybe one hour or maybe even two hour parking is more appropriate. Two hours is what's in the code for that stretch and 30 minutes is what's signed right now.

Commission Rossi mentions that his mother lives in a senior facility, and he can't imagine ever going there for just half an hour as a visitor, certainly for medical people that seems awfully short. He thinks two hours is reasonable.

Sgt. Goc is also in agreement with 2 hours; he feels 1 hour isn't enough time for a visit with a relative.

Commission Rossi makes a motion to change the 30 minute parking for the appropriate distance from the street intersection for two hour parking. Seconded by Commissioner Eccles. Chair called the role, all in favor, passes unanimously. Chair does mention that we will use the City's new grinder to eliminate the old crosswalk completely.

4. City request to prohibit driving on Central Terrace which is the alley between the YMCA and the adjacent building for safety purposes.

Chair Proakis Ellis states that we have some public comments on this. This was a city request that was initially brought up by the City Solicitor Rob Van Campen and the Planning Director Denise Gaffey. This was always felt to be a dangerous alley. We have always had an interest in potentially blocking this off but it is believed to be a private way, commonly owned by the abutters and the city is in an abutter and wanted to discuss it publicly and thought this was the best forum to discuss it. Given that the entrance would be off of a public way, we thought that the traffic commission would have a vote in this, in restricting the turning movements, on and off of Main Street, into that alley.

Motion to open public participation by Commissioner Kretchmer, seconded by Commissioner Parenti. The Chair called the roll; all in favor.

Elena brings in Joe Turner as attendee. Being in the building he has witnessed many times the building being almost hit and that comment also came from Mike Palmer who was there for close to 20 years. Over the years that has been a source of concern as a building owner there for the safety of pedestrians.

Elena read a couple comments that were received.

First is from Ryan Williams who supports the permanent closure of Central Terrace. My family are all Y members we frequently use that space to walk in the rear parking lot to the front of the building. I'd also like to suggest to city staff that this space be activated with art and attractive overhead lighting as part of Melrose's Wayfinding grant. He referenced Pie Alley in Boston as a good example where the city strung decorative LED Edison bulbs overhead, and an electric eye to provide safety benefits at night along with decorative place making.

Next is a letter from the Branch Executive Director of the Melrose YMCA, that says: To better serve our community and our diverse membership population, the Melrose Family YMCA is undergoing a major construction project to add an elevator to our four-story building. Due to the construction project, we are requesting to periodically close the alleyway located between the Melrose YMCA and Rising Eagle to car traffic. We have spoken to the owner of the home, Clive Coke, located in our back parking lot and he noted that closing this would not be an issue for him and thought it would be more safe than having car traffic travel through that area. This alleyway is a direct access to his home located at 8 Central Terrace however he does not use it. Foot traffic would not be impacted by the alleyway being closed during this project and we will ensure that that alley is safely blocked off on Main Street by YMCA employees when needed in accordance with the safety recommendations of the Police Department.

We did receive another correspondence from the YMCA at 5:10 pm today. The YMCA 100% supports the request to close the alley between the Y and The Rising Eagle, Central Terrace, believing that allowing cars to travel down this alley way is a huge safety issue. Their hope would be to shut down this alley way to vehicles and only use it for pedestrians to walk.

Resident Finn McSweeney's letter reads: I am writing in support of the City request to prohibit driving on Central Terrace. I encourage the Traffic Commission to approve this request.

Motion to close public participation by Commissioner Rossi, seconded Commissioner Parenti. Chair calls the role, all in favor.

Commission Krechmer asks if we close off the driveway, whether we put in curbing at the opening.

Chair states that we could. We would have to either put curb across, or at the very least for now we would install a, DO NOT ENTER sign and maybe put a jersey barrier or something at each end - something that won't restrict pedestrians.

Commission Peart comments "I'm guessing a fire truck, obviously wouldn't get down here and so the Fire Department wouldn't have any say?"

Chair Proakis Ellis states that's whatever we do, we might have to leave it open, not for truck access necessarily but to be able to get their apparatus in the alley. We will work with the fire department to properly close it off and do what is appropriate for their needs.

Commission Rossi makes motion to close Central Terrace to vehicular traffic, seconded by Commissioner Krechmer.

Chair Proakis Ellis calls the role. Six yes votes, zero no votes, so this motion passes.

5. Resident request for No Parking opposite driveway signed to be placed in the vicinity of 32-36 Waverly Place.

City Councilor Shaun MacMaster and Chris Minton, the resident who requested the sign, are both on the meeting so are brought in as panelists.

City Councilor MacMaster states this is a request for a no parking opposite driveway sign at 36 Waverly Place or across from 36 Waverly Place. The problem that this sign seeks to rectify is the difficulty that the Minton family has backing out of their driveway. He sent some pictures back when this item was originally on the agenda. Elena shares them with the Commission. Councilor MacMaster points out that the most important one is the first one that shows the vehicle parked directly across from Mr. Minton's driveway.

The curb cut essentially compounds the problem, because it's a peculiar, and underutilized curb cut, you can see from the photo the current cut is there but there's no driveway; it's just grass and unkept. He's been to this residence at least three times and observed the problem directly over the last nine months. He doesn't think addressing the curb cut in and of itself will prevent the problem. It might mitigate things, but the ultimate solution is to place the No Parking Opposite Driveway sign.

The next panelist is Chris Minton and he lives at 33 Waverly Place. When a car is parked on the street behind his driveway, it is very challenging to back out. The car shown in the picture is parked legally, but he ends up having to drive up onto the sidewalk to get out.

Commissioner Rossi asks, Do you know, is it usually the same car there? Do you know whose car it is?

Mr. Minton replies it's often the same car and honesty since COVID we don't know if people aren't going to work as often, but we are very close to the Wyoming train stop and so usually if the car parks there it's there for the whole day. It doesn't seem to be a local resident, or one of the immediate neighbors.

Since there are no other residents wishing to comment, there is no need to open public participation.

Commissioner Rossi comments his main concern would be if it's a hardship. Obviously it's a narrow road and is a densely populated area, so he doesn't know whether any of the residents would be inconvenienced by having less parking available.

Counselor MacMaster states it is his understanding that the neighbor directly across the street from Mr. Minton spends their time out of state most of the year. He said he's been there at least three times and tends to see cars there and it tends not to be the same car.

Mr. Minton expresses the other issue which is sort of related but not specific to this is the curb cut to nowhere. It's usually somebody who doesn't live there; his observation is that it's someone who parked there and then walked somewhere else, which is legal, but he doesn't think the proposed restriction would be inconveniencing neighbors.

The Chair states that the City did provide notice to the neighbors of the meeting.

Commissioner Peart asks Mr. Minton: It looks as though you have a two car garage, correct? So I was wondering about backing into your garage because as we look at the curb, that's got the fire hydrant next to it, and then slightly beyond that there is no parking. So the ability to back in to your driveway seems as though that would be pretty unimpeded. I was just wondering if you've done that in the past.

Mr. Minton responds that they haven't and states that he doesn't want to sound spoiled but we do have a two car garage which is rare in Melrose, but it is it is a very narrow two car garage. I think that in theory reality is I don't think you would do that if you saw my garage.

Chair Proakis Ellis states that she did drive down Waverly, and there were a couple things of note: I did measure on the GIS and the width of the driveway is 19 feet and I know traditionally when we've approved No Parking Opposite Driveway, it's been when somebody has an extremely narrow driveway and can't maneuver within the driveway. This driveway is a little wider than we've typically approved, but I'll also note that I believe we did approve an another No Parking Opposite Driveway on Waverly, maybe a year or two ago, where the resident across the street was actually equally supportive as the resident who was requesting it because similarly, the person who always used to park in the spot that made it difficult was not a resident of the street and was either commuter or someone going to work at a business on Wyoming, so I don't have a strong feeling about this one in either direction.

Commissioner Eccles asks if the parking up and down Waverly and Derby are time restricted. Elena states that down at the end closer to Oak Grove, there are definitely signs that say No Parking, maybe 6 to noon or 8 to noon. Commissioner Rossi was there today and he believes it is 6 to 10 AM.

Elena looks up what the traffic code states. It looks like up to Kingsley there is a parking restriction from 6-10 Monday through Friday, on the Derby section of roadway. Once you pass Kingsley, that restriction goes away. All the way down by Wyoming, parking is prohibited on both sides of Waverly for 216 feet. That brings you to house number 42 and then beyond that, in between those two there are no restrictions.

Commissioner Rossi points out that there's currently a sign in front of number 40, that says No Parking Anytime with arrows pointing both ways and then, just to the south of that there's a hydrant and then you have the driveway to number 36, and then that's the house that's next to the curb cut without a driveway.

The Chair states that's the one that we've approved recently, so it's not in the code yet. Commissioner Rossi states from the hydrant up to Wyoming, you can't park on the west side. Commissioner Peart states it appears you can park beyond, further north of that driveway. Commissioner Rossi states he saw cars parked there but No Parking Anytime sign has arrows both ways, but he didn't see any sign showing where the limit was. He asked if the sign in front of number 40 is consistent with the code. Elena thinks that's the sign that we just approved and that we just haven't updated the code yet. Commissioner Rossi states that goes back to the driveway or the pole right next to the driveway of number 36. Commissioner Peart states that she is seeing 2 spots on street view in front of 44 Waverly which it makes sense that parking is allowed there because there is nothing across the street. Commissioner Rossi states that he is not making a motion but does have a concern about signs where the wording is No Parking Across From Driveway, since it seems it's not specific enough.

Chair Proakis Ellis states that the code hasn't been updated for the one that we approved most recently, but it's the restriction that I'm showing starts in front of number 42, and goes all the way to Wyoming, but it's possible that that spot in front of number 40 is from the previous traffic commission meeting. In which case if that's already signed that

way, we can just say No Parking This Side just beyond the driveway at 36 all the way to Wyoming, if that's already what's restricted.

Commissioner Rossi states that we generally try to restrict people from free parking for commuters in the residential areas. If you can park closer to Wyoming, then maybe people are doing that and if nobody's raised an issue, then we don't need to deal with it as it's not on the agenda, but if the cars that are parked in the spot that the residents were asking us to restrict parking is a commuter, we probably do want to discourage it although they'll probably just move a little further back down Waverly and park for free there.

Chair Proakis Ellis states the traffic code has a little gap in the No Parking regulation but I think the signage on the street does not have that same gap. Street view shows that in front of 46 there's a sign that has a One Way and a No Parking. It appears that in front 42 to 44 there are definitely people parked and no signs are visible in street view. There's a sign in front of 40 and there's a sign in front of 46. The sign in front of 40 just has arrows pointing both ways without identifying the limits and sign in front of 46 says that you can't park from there toward Wyoming.

Mr. Minton states that at the duplex at 42 and 44 there are two spots and those are primarily used by the residents of those homes and those are not an issue. Chair Proakis Ellis states that in that case, we don't want to say No Parking all the way from in front of #36 to Wyoming because then those two cars that park in front of 42-44 will no longer be able to park there.

Mr. Minton explains if there was a sign in front of 36 to say no parking pointing north to link up with the next sign, it would basically extend that no parking from the hydrant, south. Elena suggests a No Parking Anytime from maybe 10 feet from the driveway toward the hydrant. It looks from the picture like it's really when someone's parked right up against the driveway that it's a problem. Elena is sharing the street view and states the panels are about five feet, typically, she demonstrates where 10 feet would be. She asks the commission if anyone has a suggestion of what a good distance would be because we're certainly open to hearing more.

Mr. Minton just looked out his window and there's a car opposite and he thinks if we went 2 concrete sections beyond where the driveway is it should be plenty of room. Elena will measure to make sure that 10 feet is the right measurement. She also mentions that we will be eventually closing in that curb cut to nowhere.

Chair Proakis Ellis makes a motion to install a No Parking Anytime or Parking Prohibited sign with an arrow going towards the sign that is in front of #40, from 10 feet south of the driveway at # 36. Seconded by Commissioner Parenti. Chair calls the roll. 6 yes and 1 No, Sgt. Goc. Motion passes.

6. Resident request for No Parking Opposite Driveway across from 62 Summer Street.

This request came from resident Brian Anderson who is now brought in as a panelist. He states that his street is narrow, and then often cars are parked there and in order to get out of the driveway, he has to sometimes go over the curb and it's difficult to back into the driveway. He has young drivers in the house but it's just as difficult for him.

Chair Proakis Ellis mentions that it is an extremely narrow curb cut, she noticed when she drove by. She measures the driveway opening on the GIS and confirms it is unusually narrow.

There are no other residents here to discuss this item, so there is no need to open public comment.

Commissioner Rosssi would like to ask a couple of questions. Do we know who is parking opposite the driveway there? He sees what looks like a multi-family apartment building across the street that does have a parking lot. Is it usually the same vehicles?

Brian states it's not the same car. Sometimes it's the residents of the apartment buildings, sometimes it's people who are working on the house down the street, sometimes it's other neighbors. He has asked people that live at the apartment complex by leaving a note if they could leave a little bit of room.

Commissioner Rossi then asks how wide is Summer Street at that point? Waverly is a particularly narrow road. He asks how that compares to Summer Street.

Commissioner Peart states that she is curious what the parking regulation is along there because in street view those cars on the opposite side of the street are parked halfway off the street. Elena does mention there is no parking regulation and that there is a berm along that side of the street so the people she noticed today when she went by were two cars parked up on the curb. She has measured the street as 27.4 feet wide, in that spot. And the curb cut is tiny, about ten feet at the street and 7.5 feet at the inside corner of the blocks where the radius blocks come together. Waverly Place is 17-18 feet wide by comparison.

Commission Krechmer states that when he went out there, there was somebody parked with a pickup truck halfway on the berm not across from the driveway itself and it seemed to him that if people parked on the grass it leaves a fair amount of room to get out. He asks the resident if people that do park there partially park on the grass or fully on the street. Brian states that occasionally they do park on the grass, but most often they're fully on the street.

Commissioner Parenti points out because there is no curb, or not enough curb, to keep people off, in order for us to post signs we need poles and once you plant poles somewhere behind that asphalt curb now it is not possible for people to park and put their tires on the berm so it may make the problem worse, especially if someone decided to ignore the regulation they would actually be closer to the resident's house, possibly making it even worse. He is not sure where we would put that pole and doesn't know how long it would last if isn't protected by a curb.

Elena states that it appears that the driveway, (which she shared on the GIS) is actually a little bit wider than the curb cut, which is also part of the issue. This curb cut is just too small for the driveway

Sgt. Goc asks if we've ever approved a No Parking Opposite Driveway for a street that wide. Elena mentions probably not and states that the Commission has turned down almost every No Parking Opposite Driveway request we have had in at least in the last 4.5 years since she has been here.

Elena believes the issue rests more with the location of the radius blocks on the curb cut, because you can't make that swing to back out of the driveway, without pulling out completely straight. There's no wiggle room there, and restricting the parking for the neighbors across the street is maybe not the right solution to the problem. She thinks the problem might be more with widening the curb cut.

Commissioner Peart makes a motion to deny the request for a No Parking Opposite Driveway sign at 62 Summer Street, seconded by Commissioner Rossi.

Chair Proakis Ellis mentions we have for the vast majority of these requests denied them even though we just approved similar request moments ago and only approve them in very odd cases.

The Chair called the role and the motion is denied unanimously.

Elena offered resident if they were interested in possibly widening the curb cut he could contact the Engineering Division and we would look into the factors and explain what that process would involve.

7. City request to install utility-pole-mounted Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers as a demonstration project and enact related parking restrictions to limit parking to EVs in one or more of the possible locations listed.

Martha Grover, Melrose Sustainability Manager, is brought in as a panelist, along with Lori Timmerman, Sandra Vickers, and Marianne Ryan.

Martha Grover introduces herself as the Sustainability Manager in the Office of Planning and Community Development. She states that the city is thrilled to be working with National Grid on this initiative and hopes it'll address some of the barriers to electric vehicle adoption and encourage more Melrosians to make their next vehicle a plug-in, so if we can adopt and install some of these pole mounted EV chargers that would be great. Our National Grid Representative is Lori Timmerman, and Elena has given her privileges to share a presentation (see attached).

Lori introduces herself as the energy efficiency representative from National Grid.

Commissioner Rossi asks how long cars typically stay at the stations that exist in other towns now. Lori answers that it varies. The way that the chargers work, the municipality has the control over how long they want to let someone stay at the station. And when you're setting a limit, the stations themselves send the user a text message that says your two hours is up, or your three hours is up, or whatever the municipality has decided they want to have. If you have people staying beyond that time, the municipality can implement a charging structure that will encourage different behaviors. For example, a fee could be charged after four hours. So there are notifications and incentives that can be used. In some cases, Lori has seen municipalities allow a parking garage to have unlimited time, because some people want to get their Tesla charged which takes a little bit longer on a level two charger. Other places want it to be two hours, in which case the driver receives a notification to move the car when those two hours are up.

Martha Grover clarifies that this would be the first application of this pole mount charger in Massachusetts. These don't exist anywhere yet. Lori states that National Grid intentionally picked Melrose as a great community to work with and she lives in Melrose, so she has a vested interest in it.

Commissioner Rossi is curious how people use these. Do they basically use them in places they're already going or that aren't too far from where they're already going to, since they're going to park anyway, so they may as well charge while they're there, or do they tend to use it more near their residences because they don't have access, or is it just a mix?

Lori states that it's a mix and what they're hoping by positioning some of these in residential areas is that they're allowing people to make a decision that they may not have been able to make previously, because they have access to a charger. An example would be going to a child's soccer game or to Shaw's, or going somewhere where I'm going to be spending a little bit of time, whether it be at the Y, it's nice to know that you can charge your car while there.

Commissioner Eccles asks: Is this the only kind of regulatory hurdle to implementing this program, coming before the traffic commission?

Elena responded that there's really no approval program for the chargers themselves, because they're mounted on utility poles that we don't own. She assumes it would be like any other attachment, which requires permission from the pole owner, National Grid or Verizon, but doesn't require approval from the city. There may be an electrical permit component like there is when small cell antennas go up. For the Traffic Commission, our only purview is if the parking spaces are restricted to EV only, then we would be the ones to vote that.

Commission Eccles also asks if the transaction is the credit card process through an app, do you pay for the electricity through the app and then do those funds end up with the city, and then the city pays for the energy for the charger?

Chair Proakis Ellis asks if these would be compatible with the same apps that we're using right now for the ones in the City Hall parking lot or would it be different.

Martha explains that these are not charge point chargers, these are EVSE but they have an open platform as to which software you use, so she doesn't know what they will pick yet.

Sgt. Goc asked if in Cedar Park and City Hall, the signs state EV only. Elena answers yes. Sgt. Goc states if we're doing EV only with time limits, if anybody wanted the police to enforce them, clearly they would have to be a time limit, it can't just be EV only. Another thing to consider is that Melrose has no overnight parking after 2 am, so that would probably have to be somewhere on the sign as well, as the chief just had a concern because he's not here tonight, that particular locations that may be chosen that could affect business community, who may feel they did not have a say. That said, he does not see a lot of the proposed spots directly affecting businesses.

Martha agrees that those are all good points to consider. Her initial thought was to not restrict these to EV only at the outset, and see how it goes, and then come back to that if we find that they're in use. There's a term that is used as an EV driver when you get iced out, meaning you're locked out by an internal combustion engine vehicle. If people are getting iced out a lot then we might want to look into making at least one spot near the charger EV only. Martha is a little concerned about taking away parking in any area of town, so she suggests we wait and see.

Elena thinks we should open public comment just because we've had a couple people waiting for quite some time to speak and get a feel for what the reaction is because we have notified the vicinity, probably six homes or so, around each one of these locations and would be interested in what type of feedback we're hearing.

Commissioner Parenti makes motion to open public comment, seconded by Commissioner Rossi. All in favor.

Christopher: I live at 59 Derby Road. I think it's a great idea, however Derby Road is not too wide in that area. Basically with having people parking there all the time, we're wondering if the spot can be moved around the corner on Sylvan Street which is probably twice as large and would have a much more comfortable parking area. Thank you for listening to my suggestion, I'm seconded by two neighbors - we talked about this as well, and we all support this idea and wonder if it could go around the corner on Sylvan Street.

Next is Alana Nelson: I'm speaking tonight as co-chair of the Energy Commission, and also as an EV driver. I am very excited about the opportunity for this project, being a demo and a leader on this, especially because as a city working towards carbon neutral 2050. Looking at electrifying, how we get around is a huge piece of this in the city of Melrose. To be able to participate in this as a great opportunity. I think the setup that's being proposed would be great because I think it's neat that we're looking at areas beyond Cedar Park, beyond downtown. I might also add as someone who's been using the city hall, off and on for the last five years is, I used to be able to go downtown and always find a spot available at a charger. In the last two years I have to pick the right times, or I know that I'll just be parking in the city lot with everybody else.

Commissioner Rossi makes a motion to close public comment, seconded by Commissioner Krechmer; all are in favor.

Elena has a couple of questions: If we don't want to restrict any parking anywhere, then that leaves us with nothing to vote on. In that case, would National Grid just take back the public feedback and look into locations like on Derby and Sylvan more thoroughly? I know we've been trying to get that pole by the Elks in the Dill's Court parking lot as an EV space from when we built that area of the parking lot. There was always intended to be any EV space, either the first one or the first two on that row next to that pole. So I'm thrilled to see that on the list, and I would love to see that as EV Parking Only because that as our intention when we built the lot, but then it was not feasible from a cost standpoint at the time to put the charging station there. This new technology changes that. So, I would like to see a restriction potentially voted on at that location. I have some thoughts on the other locations but if we're not voting on anything I can wait, and share those with Martha outside the public realm. The other thing to note is that

Belmont Street, if you wanted a new pole, just to remind you that you would have to go through the city council's grant of location process.

Martha Grover asked Lori if there are any other locations that they might want to have them consider making EV only? Lori states she thinks making the Belmont Street EV only makes sense since they are going to be putting in a new pole. I don't know if you can vote on something that doesn't exist yet.

Elena states we will definitely wait until after the grant of location process, because the grant application process takes a few months, so we could table that until the September meeting. She is curious though, there are a number of MBTA owned poles along the tracks there, are those potential locations or is that too complicated?

Laurie states she looked at those, they were in her original scope, and we lost them along the way. She wanted them but hadn't thought about requesting a new service on a new pole, so that's why when she researched them, further down Belmont Street was an option. The original list was quite comprehensive and it got cut back for various reasons along the way.

Elena indicated that she thinks Tremont Street by Morelli Field would be another good location if we were going to restrict a space to EV only, because there are so many events at the school and the fields that giving some preferential parking to an EV only might be nice. At Gooch Park, Elena said she knows our former city councilor, Frank Wright, preferred if we could look at the poles around the corner on Maple Street, that also abut Gooch Park, but that pole in that particular location is before the road gets wider, and also people would have to drive around the block of Florence Street to get to it. Therefore he thought that the Maple side of the park might be better. Elena stated that on the Pleasant Street one, from a traffic perspective, even though parking is allowed in that stretch of Pleasant Street, you don't get a lot of people parking there because it is kind of a fast moving street. She stated that she doesn't love the idea that we'd be encouraging more people to park there.

Lori likes the idea of limiting one of them at Tremont Street, and Martha agrees as well as she has had a few teachers who have asked for EV chargers, and we can't put them in the parking lot, so they would likely get some use during the day from teachers, potentially, since there's nothing in the area near there.

Elena asks if we want to potentially restrict two spaces, but Martha believes that it's a one space location as she remembers. Lori believes the pole they ended up picking actually can serve two spaces. Slide 13 shows it supports both of those spots.

Commissioner Rossi states if one spot was marked EV only, if somebody was parked in the other spot, say the person who would parked in the EV only spot left and someone was parked in the other spot they could probably reach with the cable, even if it's not EV only, they're still allowed to park there. So it might serve two spots, even if we only say one is reserved. Elena states we could certainly vote to reserve one and see how it goes and we can always add the second one if we wanted to.

Commission Rossi states one concern that he had is that he doesn't want to see us necessarily change any parking regulations that exist for any of these spaces. So if there's a place where there's only one hour parking, then we would know that even if someone was charging there, they would still only be allowed to park there for one hour. They still would have to obey the existing parking regulations. The overnight parking regulations would also have to be enforced, but if we're assuming that all of our regulations remain in place, then we wouldn't have to vote on any of this, only the spaces that we want to reserve for EVs. Elena states she would agree with that, too; she doesn't think we should be changing durations or other restrictions.

Commissioner Rossi expresses that it is interesting though that we had a few nearby residents object. The folks on Derby Road don't want to have it right in front of their house because of the narrowness of the street, which is understandable. We just talked about further up that street even though it's a little wider, it is still not very wide on

Derby Road. Notices went out about these, so maybe if enough notice has already been given, but all of a sudden somebody sees this thing in front of their house and now there's somebody parking there all the time, they might not like that if there's a challenge to park in their residential area which certainly is the case in some parts of the city.

Elena states adequate notice was given to those residents who live in the immediate vicinity of each location. She notes that at 130 Tremont Street at times, we've had trouble getting notice to all residents because obviously it's a large building and sometimes we just deliver a notice to post at the building. We also have some additional comments from the public. We received some opposition to Derby Road. We had one resident from Albion with general support for the program. We have a letter from Frank Wright that I already noted what he had said. We have a resident from Maple Street in support and a resident from Ards Moor Road who is also in support.

Elena asks what the will is of the Commission. Commissioner Parenti states that he is not sure there is action for us tonight. Elena mentions the only action would be if we wanted vote to restrict any of the spaces to be EV only in any particular locations.

Commissioner Parenti states that when he saw the agenda item that we were restricting parking in all these locations and the question was the mechanics of defining what EV is so do we need to go through the process of defining what an electric vehicle is so that we can enforce when there is a violation.

Chair Proakis Ellis states that's an interesting question. The code, I don't think, says anything about electric vehicles. I think it's fairly obvious from a lay person's perspective that if you don't have something that plugs in you shouldn't be parking at a charging station. That would be the case if you're at the mall or even behind City Hall here, but it is accurate that, we should consider whether it's enforceable if we don't ever define it.

Commissioner Parenti states to look at the vehicle and then determine whether it has a plug on it. He can think of maybe a couple dozen vehicle makes and models that are plugins right now and so the Police would have to get to know them. He just wants to make sure we're not creating an unenforceable condition or a condition that is difficult or onerous to enforce.

Sgt. Goc states if we think we're going to vote on EV only, we also would have to restrict time because he can't see a neighbor wanting to see a car out there, just because it's EV, with no time limits. Elena thinks it should default to whatever the time limits are on the street already, consistent with what Commissioner Rossi was suggesting. Also, if there's a street that has no time limit restriction, then maybe we add a time limit if we're going to restrict to EV only.

Commissioner Rossi states it sounded like the city could make it so expensive to keep it plugged in after a certain time that they would move it anyway.

Elena states that we don't want someone using it as their personal charging station, every day; that's not the point. If you end up with one up the street from your house, we don't want your car sitting on it every day. It doesn't provide any community benefit if it's the same car every day.

Commissioner Rossi mentions that the city put in more spaces in Dill's Court because there was a supply and demand issue. Since we're only talking about one space, it's not a huge issue, but there are certainly times when the lot is full and he has certainly had to go outside the lot, either across West Foster or even onto the one of the streets nearby, especially if there's a wake or something. So, that's the only concern he has, but he's not sure it's enough of a concern to worry about making one space for a good cause.

Chair Proakis Ellis mentions that it was certainly the intention when we built that extension of the lot to have that space be EV only, but it just didn't work out at the time.

Commissioner Peart is in support making that one space EV only. She asks what the regulations are for parking there, and the answer 3 hours is given.

Commissioner Eccles comments he is also in support.

Commission Peart makes motion that the space adjacent to pole 3577 be designated as EV-only parking once the equipment is installed. Motion seconded by Commissioner Rossi. Elena calls the role; all are in favor so that passes unanimously.

Elena asks the Commission if we want to take any vote on the Tremont Street location or wait on that one.

Commissioner Krechmer asks how long is it going to take to put these in. We may want to wait on some of the others to see what happens. Lori from National Grid is hoping to target installation later this summer - early August.

Commissioner Krechmer makes a motion to make the space beside utility pole 674 on Tremont Street EV-only from the time that it is installed and working, seconded by Councilor Eccles. Chair Proakis Ellis calls the roll. 6 yes, 1 no (Sgt. Goc), motion passes.

Chair Proakis Ellis states her personal feeling is that we should table all the others; we don't even have to formally table them, we can just not vote on them at this time and consider them continued business in September, if we want to take up any of them again. She states if anyone feels differently, please speak up.

Elena assumes that between Lori and Martha, they'll follow up on the locations where we had some comments about potentially moving locations and look into those alternate spots.

Sgt. Goc wants to comment to the board that he voted no on that last item only because we didn't give any spots to the High School last year when we debated about the desperate need for parking for students, so that was where he was coming from so everybody knows.

A motion to adjourn was made by Jeff Parenti, seconded Commissioner Rossi. All are in favor, and we lost Commissioner Eccles from the call.

The meeting is adjourned at 8:49 pm.