



## CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

April 25, 2022

### REPORT OF THE TRAFFIC AND PARKING COMMITTEE

| Attendee Name        | Title                     | Status  | Arrived |
|----------------------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Beatriz GomezMouakad | Ward Five City Councilor  | Present |         |
| Jake Wilson          | City Councilor At Large   | Present |         |
| Ben Ewen-Campen      | Ward Three City Councilor | Present |         |

Others present: Suzanne Rinfret-Traffic & Parking, Brad Rawson-OSPCD, Brian Postlewaite-Engineering and Jessica Bellow-Engineering

The meeting was held virtually and was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Chairperson Gomez Mouakad and adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

#### Approval of the February 28, 2022 Minutes

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>ACCEPTED</b> |
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#### Studies

##### **212958: That the Director of Parking provide regular updates on the status of the Parking Utilization Study.**

Director Rawson offered quick framing that March was going to be a busy month for the city and his team. He reported a very productive task force meeting for March. Director Rinfret stated they are still collecting data and utilization studies on parking. Parking on streetscape is an ever-changing target. There is a plan to have another task force meeting that will include the city councilors after budget season. The task force meeting will come up within the next few months. Director Rawson stated the task force has representatives from City Council, Advisory Board and Commission and the senior community.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b> |
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##### **212957: That the Director of Mobility provide regular updates on the work towards a comprehensive bicycle, pedestrian, and MBTA plan.**

Director Rawson made progress on the constituent bike program and public workshops that were described in the February meeting. He stated that the meetings are meant to be small grounds

such as: youths and parents. Staff are processing everything they learn from the public meetings and the community. Chair Gomez Mouakad asked when a full report will be available for the bike plan. Director Rawson stated he will have a draft of the future bike map in the summer. He also stated that bike facilities come in many shapes and forms focusing on areas with high speeds. They will be working on a design manual and will work with the city councilors on this item.

Councilor Ewen-Campen talked about other neighborhoods focusing on efforts to reduce traffic to make the streets safer for all. Chair Gomez Mouakad talked about the health factor with people being more mobile using their bikes and walking. Councilor Wilson talked about the importance and would like to see more bikes around the city. He asked about the infrastructure for bike parking which will be part of the city's plan. Chair Gomez Mouakad stated that Assembly Square could do a better job of integrating the biking community.

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| <b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b> |
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### Ongoing Projects - New Business

**213261: That the Director of Mobility provide an update on work done or projected projects around all school zones.**

Chair Gomez Mouakad would like the school zones studied more carefully. Director Rawson shared his screen with the updated VisionZero website. He showed a variety of resources. He stated the map is a work in progress. The website shows the projects for various years and the user can toggle on and off looking at the updates.

Chair Gomez Mouakad asked about improvements at Capuano. Mr. Rawson stated there is a fully funded contract for new neighborhood curb extensions. He also stated there will be one for the Argenziano community including sidewalk and pavement project. There is also a plan this year for Winter Hill for speed control measures on Sycamore Street and Evergreen Street areas. Director Rawson stated that construction will be completed this year around the Brown School and College Ave construction. Councilor Ewen-Campen asked about the Spring Hill streetscape which is work in progress, according to Director Rawson. There are major upgrades coming for Bow Street and other areas.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> |
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| <b>WORK COMPLETED</b> |
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**213117: That the Director of Mobility urgently prioritize the re-paving of the dangerously damaged stretch of Bow Street, from Summer Street to Somerville Avenue, and respond to the Ward 3 Councilor with a timeline for completion.**

Director Postlewaite stated that Eversource is doing work on Bow Street and have an utility trench patching to expand pavement zone reconstruction to include a bike lane. The extension reaches from Summer Street to Somerville Avenue capturing the full length of the street. The latest paving will be completed in October. Councilor Ewen-Campen stated that Bow Street is highly used and in much need of paving. Chair Gomez Mouakad asked about the new building on Bow Street and the need to get all the utility connections done.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**213287: That the Director of Mobility update this Council on partnerships with third-party software companies providing reports on traffic and road hazards.**

Items 213287 and 213371 were discussed together.

Director Rawson met with the chair and others on this matter. He stated that there is citywide bike planning to link our residents and workers to important corridors in Somerville. They intend to move forward with this effort and are in collaboration with neighbors in the City of Cambridge.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**213371: That the Director of Mobility update this Council on plans to install a contraflow bike lane on White Street.**

Items 213287 and 213371 were discussed together.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**Ongoing Projects - Old Business**

**212867: That the Director of Mobility update this Council on efforts to establish a 20 MPH speed limit for all neighborhood residential streets.**

Director Rawson talked about completing the process of drilling holes to place new signs. He said to reach out to 311 if there are locations that may be missed to get a new post installed in an area. Director Rinfret stated a sign was added to Jacques Street. The chair suggested Councilor Wilson follow up with 311 or with Director Rinfret off-line on locations of signs for 20 mph. Director Rawson will get another mailer going out to the community. He showed the No Traffic Deaths in Somerville mailer with information about VisionZero on the streets of Somerville. Chair Gomez Mouakad asked when the 20 mph signs will be completed city-wide. Director Rawson expects the last signs will be completed by the end of the school year. The chair also asked for a map showing the remaining streets with 25 mph and would like an update in time for the next Traffic and Parking meeting.

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**212973: That the Director of Parking update this Council on the suitability of existing parking for seniors and explore additional options for selected street parking in central business districts.**

Director Rinfret talked about more accessible parking for those who have mobility issues which will be addressed in the parking study. The city offers free stickers for senior citizens. Some seniors do not like having a special sticker on their cars which could lead to profiling.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED**

**212966: That the Administration provide a report for all departments using city vehicles for non-emergency services, detailing the measures taken to ensure that staff follow traffic regulations, including the hands free while driving law, and maintain maximum traffic safety while driving.**

Director Rawson stated from directors from HR and Mayor's office would like more time to discuss with project team.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

### **Traffic Calming - New Business**

**213251: That the Director of Mobility take immediate action to increase pedestrian safety measures on crosswalks at Day Street, Dover Street, Elm Street and College Avenue intersections.**

Director Rawson stated there is a lot of complexity in this location. They have been working with MBTA on possible solutions. Director Postlewaite stated the signaling improvements requires some changes to curbing. The contractor on Holland street will implement and coordinate with the MBTA to make sure improvements occur. Chair Gomez Mouakad asked if the developer in Davis Square will contribute to the improvements. Director Rawson stated it's a little early but accessibility and standard upgrades are required.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**213288: That the Director of Mobility update this Council on any plans to change the direction of neighborhood residential streets to thwart cut-through traffic.**

Councilor Wilson asked what has been done to this point and what are the future plans on the cut-through traffic. Director Rawson stated the staff needs additional technical support to evaluate the relationships and scenarios. They have not received any new data from Morris or Lowell Streets. Councilor Wilson has received a lot of feedback from residents in East Somerville on cut-through traffic.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

### **Traffic Calming - Old Business**

**212982: That the Director of Mobility install traffic calming in the crosswalk in front of 1370 Broadway.**

Director Rawson stated the city will start the pilot, daylighting solutions and will follow up with additional measures, as needed.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**213042: That the Director of Mobility install a speed hump at the base of Somerville Avenue Extension where it intersects with Linwood and Fitchburg Streets.**

Director Rawson stated they are going through a neighborhood review and flushing out ideas. The planning/preservations group has been coordinated with Councilor Scott.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>WORK COMPLETED</b> |
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**213046: That the Director of Mobility implement traffic calming measures on Cedar Street.**

The chair stated that she has witnessed a pedestrian traffic accident. She has asked for speed humps in the area towards Murdock Street. Director Rawson stated they do not have any construction work in the area for 2022. He will go back and look at opportunities for traffic calming in the area. Additionally, he will put this on their list to be reviewed and reprioritized.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>WORK COMPLETED</b> |
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**212800: That the Director of Mobility and the Commissioner of Public Works install permanent speed bumps on Sycamore Street between Medford Street and Evergreen Avenue.**

The chair stated this is a high priority and has seen emails from constituencies who are very concerned. Director Rawson stated there will be speed humps this year and will build traffic calming measures near Medford Street area.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>WORK COMPLETED</b> |
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**212802: That the Director of Mobility and the Commissioner of Public Works install speed bumps on Jacques Street, between Temple Street and Edgar Avenue.**

Director Rawson stated they have tested ideas and there is a fully funded contract in place for this request. He hopes to have more information for the committee in the next couple of months.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>WORK COMPLETED</b> |
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**212803: That the Director of Mobility daylight the intersections noted within.**

Items 212803 and 212868 were discussed together.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>WORK COMPLETED</b> |
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**212868: That the Director of Mobility employ quick-build daylighting and traffic calming measures to improve visibility and compliance with the STOP sign on Jacques Street at its intersection with Edgar Avenue.**

Items 212803 and 212868 were discussed together.

Councilor Wilson stated it's an issue of safety especially for school kids. There is limited visibility and cars ride through without stopping. Director Postlewaite talked about daylighting intersection to restrict the parking at intersection to improve visibility. The city is looking to do more on the ground and have done in the past with bump-outs.

Jessica Bellow, traffic engineering has been with the city for just over a year. She stated a big piece of planning for the city is where to roll out pavement markings this year. They were going to start focusing efforts along Broadway this year and considered the roadway conditions. Additionally, they want to focus on locations that will not get paved in the future but are primary for crashes. She stated they are starting right now on West Broadway from Alewife Brook Parkway to Packard through to East Somerville.

Councilor Ewen-Campen asked to describe what the paint would look like in a typical daylighting situation. Ms. Bellow stated they are focusing on keeping parked cars away from intersections. There will be a border with slashes to denote there is no parking zone, which would be to insure good visibility in all directions.

Councilor Ewen-Campen asked about prioritization for the city. Director Postlewaite stated the goal is to focus on the high crash corridor. He shared the high crash network and communities of concern map. He also stated that Broadway is the best corridor to start this project. Ms. Bellow stated the city is also focused on VisionZero to target locations, especially schools and senior communities. Councilor Ewen-Campen asked about daylighting and if the city can put planters out. Director Rawson stated the city has used removable planters with some success. Both flex posts and planters have many challenges and the staff is working to improve the use of these methods. They do not have a robust 2022 planters' program just yet.

Councilor Wilson asked about the intersection and what is a reasonable timeline to see movement. Director Rawson has been working with Councilor Clingan on the Healy school area. Councilor Wilson asked about getting aggressive around ticketing. He also asked about enforcing the parking regulations. Director Rinfret stated they do enforce the 20 ft from the curb especially around schools and crosswalks.

Chair Gomez Mouakad asked what's the timeline for the streets listed in the agenda for daylighting. Director Postlewaite stated there is a fair amount of internal design process and the collaboration with the parking department that may need review by the traffic commission. They have on their list to move from Alewife to Packard Street. Director Postlewaite feels to deliver on the list is a little unreasonable. Chair Gomez Mouakad asked if the city can track which streets are on track for daylighting to report back to the community. Director Rinfret asked for the streets that Chair Gomez Mouakad is concerned such as: Howe and School Streets, Maple Avenue & School Street, Evergreen Avenue and School Street, Broadway and Sargent Avenue and Sewall and Grant Streets. Director Postlewaite stated the best way to keep track is to reach out to 311. Chair Gomez Mouakad asked Director Rinfret if she needs more staff as the demands increase. Director Rinfret stated that she has had to pull from enforcement to maintain and put up signage. She has asked for more staff in the upcoming budget. Ms. Bellow stated that 20 ft is standard on all intersections and any signalized intersections is 30 ft back. Chair Gomez Mouakad also asked about the new Green Lines areas and have concerns about Broadway station which needs to be put in as a priority.

Councilor Wilson asked about citywide drainage concerns. What is the collaboration or holistic work being done on the drainage. Director Postlewaite stated the "co-benefits" is how they have been discussing these matters. The benefits of curb extension can be used for multiple things such as daylighting for intersections. It also provides benefits for extended sidewalks or increasing the tree canopy.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>WORK COMPLETED</b> |
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**Reference Material:**

- vision-zero-action-plan\_High Crash Map\_Daylighting