



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

February 19, 2019
REPORT OF THE TRAFFIC AND PARKING COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mark Niedergang	Chair	Present	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Vice Chair	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six City Councilor	Present	

Others present: Councilor Katjana Ballantyne, Councilor Mary Jo Rossetti, Suzanne Rinfret - T&P, Brad Rawson - OSPCD, Viola Augustin - OSPCD, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Rositha Durham - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Niedergang and adjourned at 8:30 PM.

The chair invited Councilors Ballantyne and Rossetti to participate, even though they are not members of this particular committee.

Next T&P meeting will be April 3rd, unless President Ballantyne needs that date for the public hearing on the traffic-calming petition signed by 350 people.

Approval of the December 5, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	TABLED
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207250: That the Director of SPCD and the Chief of Police implement immediate safety and traffic dampening measures along Powderhouse Blvd from North St. to the West Somerville Neighborhood School, and assign a Police Officer to the School during drop-offs and pick-ups.

The meeting started with a moment of silence for Allison Donovan a pedestrian who was killed recently in Somerville and for Paula Sharaga, a bicyclist with ties to Somerville who was killed in an accident in Boston. Mr. Rawson started the discussion by saying that the Administration has moved forward with the traffic calming program and has been working with neighbors, DPW and contract construction companies who do street and sidewalk work. . There were discussions in the meeting about healing for the community after the death of a resident. There were also discussions about traffic calming measures. Mr. Rawson reported that they were able to get a pavement marking crew to come on a Sunday last November to install some traffic calming around the West Somerville Neighborhood School on Powderhouse Blvd. There were fire lanes painted and the City also collected data as part of the program. Councilor Ballantyne stated there will be a community meeting on March 5 at the West Somerville Neighborhood

School. The meeting is meant to hear about best recommendations for Powderhouse Boulevard. There were discussions about a 4-way stop at the WSNS, a raised traffic bed and narrower streets as ways to dampen traffic.

Councilor Rossetti stated how frustrating it has been for the community. There were previous meetings on March 2, 2018 with the City Engineer and another meeting October 24, 2018 when the Engineer was not there. The community and WSNS parents have been asking for help with this intersection for three plus years. The Councilor asked how to make this a priority without losing sight of what else is going on in the City.

Councilor Ballantyne provided a little bit of history stating that Powderhouse Boulevard has been a problem for a long time. She's had discussions with the principal at WSNS about cars going by really fast. She also talked about a petition for parents to gather signatures and submit regarding the traffic. There was a discussion about the need to repave, infrastructure work in Powderhouse Square and traffic calming suggestions such as: repainted stripes, bollards, 2 flashing signs -- as interim steps. It was also stated that 80% of the students walk to West Somerville School. Mr. Rawson said that DPW put a bunch of sand filled barrels in the area to create awareness and to slow down traffic.

The Chair stated that the Administration's traffic calming program needs a lot more resources to solve the many serious safety problem area on our streets. Councilor Ewen-Campen suggested putting light weight plastic bollards in place like those he tested out on Vinyl Avenue that cost approximately \$15 each. These can go into key locations near bump-outs, fire lanes, and on double-yellow center lines.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204323: That the Director of SPCD, the Director of Traffic and Parking, and the Commissioner of Public Works suggest additional measures to slow the speeding traffic at the crosswalk in front of the West Somerville Neighborhood School.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200844: Lucy and Jason van Beever submitting comments re: #200639, a raised crosswalk at the West Somerville Neighborhood School.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200845: Barry Rafkind submitting comments re: #200639, a raised crosswalk at the West Somerville Neighborhood School.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201989: That the Chief of Police and the Director of Traffic and Parking determine if the substantial increase in truck traffic on Powderhouse Boulevard is violating any ordinances restricting such traffic, and that the Traffic Engineer and Director of Capital Projects discuss with this Board's Committee on Traffic and Parking the reconstruction of the street and the installation of traffic calming measures.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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206390: That the Director of SPCD and the Director of Traffic and Parking report to this Board on plans to improve traffic signalization and flow at problem intersections such as Powderhouse Circle, Magoun Square, and others.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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201479: That the Commissioner of Public Works repair the malfunctioning pedestrian traffic signal at Alewife Brook Parkway near Powderhouse Boulevard at the Clarendon Hill housing complex.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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206691: That the Director of SPCD prioritize for this Board the traffic calming projects in the City, and the process to determine those priorities.

The Chair suggested that perhaps the Administration should focus intensely on the 6-12 most dangerous areas in the city and he asked what the City's plans are to prioritize areas going forward. Mr. Rawson has a map documenting street crashes and Powderhouse Circle has the most crashes. Councilor Niedergang asked for dates on when the improvements will take place and who will do the work. Mr. Rawson stated he is sitting down with the City of Cambridge to figure out the roles for both cities for the areas where parts of streets are in both cities. Mr. Rawson is also down two people on his team but he's starting interviews this week to fill two positions.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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203446: That the Director of Traffic and Parking install additional pedestrian safety measures at the intersection of Holland Street and Cameron Avenue.

Councilor Ballantyne suggested that flex posts would be a good use for this area and could the Administration address this in the early spring. Holland Street is scheduled to be repaved this year. Chair Niedergang asked Mr. Rawson if it would be helpful for each individual Councilor to submit their top 10 dangerous areas to him. Mr. Rawson replied that such feedback is always helpful and taken seriously. Mr. Rawson will meet with Cambridge to talk about Clarendon Avenue being a one-way that then turns into a two-way to Mass Ave. The one-way is on the Somerville line and two-way on Cambridge line.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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199244: That the Commissioner of Public Works or the Director of Traffic and Parking install traffic calming measures on Cameron Avenue and Clarendon Avenue.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204247: That the Director of Traffic and Parking and the Chief of Police petition the City of Cambridge to change Clarendon Avenue to a one way street, so it continues in the same direction from Somerville to Massachusetts Avenue.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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204891: That the Chief of Police cite motorists traveling in the wrong direction on Clarendon Avenue and Victoria Street from Woodstock Street.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

204965: That the Director of Traffic and Parking install a crosswalk at Woods Avenue and Route 16.

Councilor Mbah asked the Chair for an update on what DCR is doing to make this location safer. Mr. Rawson said that he has reached out to DCR and has not heard back and will keep trying to reach them. The goal would be to have a traffic signal, not a crosswalk in this dangerous location.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

204572: That the Chief of Police, the Director of Traffic and Parking and the Director of SPCD monitor traffic speeds on North Street, High Street, Fairfax Street, Sterling Street, Gordon Street and Woods Avenue and suggest traffic dampening measures.

Mr. Rawson said that they are looking into a new idea for Somerville, putting large concrete planters in the roadway, if it is wide enough, to force drivers to slow down.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

207361: That the Director of Traffic and Parking enhance the STOP signs on Summer Street at Cherry Street with solar-powered blinking lights, similar to those at Summer and Lowell Streets.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

206687: That the Director of Engineering build a crosswalk to allow pedestrians to safely cross Washington Street at the Public Safety Building.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

206189: That the Director of SPCD provide recommendations to improve pedestrian safety at the dangerous intersection of Walnut Street, Summit Avenue and Boston Street.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

202274: That the Director of Traffic and Parking place a blinking crosswalk sign in front of the East Somerville library. (2nd request).

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

202792: That the Director of Traffic and Parking install a flashing cross walk sign on Broadway at the East Branch Library.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200054: That the Director of Traffic and Parking report to this Board on the feasibility of a flashing pedestrian walkway on Broadway near the East Branch library.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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206946: Requesting the formation of a Resident Transit Advisory Committee as first proposed on February 8, 2018 (see #205100).

Mr. Rawson said that four or five members of the Pedestrian/Transit Advocacy Committee are members of the City's Vision Zero Committee. There are two vacant positions in the Transportation and Infrastructure Dept of OSPCD, and once filled, he will be able to focus more on this matter. That would probably not be until the fall. The Chair requested that a Pedestrian/Transit Committee be formed before the summer and he believes it will have huge benefits. Councilor Ewen-Campen asked if it was true that the City will soon have an on-demand contractor to make curb cuts. Mr. Rawson he is not sure, this is a goal; he will discuss this with the City Engineer who oversees curb cuts. The Chair would like the City Engineer, Mr. Raiche, to attend the next meeting of this Committee and asked that he be invited.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205936: That the Administration work with this Board on a fund for traffic calming and pedestrian/transit infrastructure pilot projects through such sources as demand pricing for meters in business districts and the creation of incentives for residents to forgo residential permits so as to create more business permits.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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206407: That the Director of SPCD, the City Engineer, and the Commissioner of Public Works establish a written policy for deploying temporary safety and visibility materials for the period between street re-paving and re-painting.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205691: That the Director of Traffic and Parking report to this Board on the possibility of re-striping faded crosswalks whenever necessary, instead of once a year.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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202105: That the Administration develop a process for interim crosswalk painting and/or other measures to protect pedestrians when road work or other conditions prevent the immediate re-striping of road markings.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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202104: That the Director of Traffic and Parking and the Director of Engineering report to this Board on the timeframe for re-striping crosswalks that are erased due to repaving or

construction.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

206850: That the Mayor's Office report to this Board in writing with plans for the police presence around the detour route from the Broadway/Ball Square Bridge closure to protect the Ball Square neighborhood from cut-through traffic, especially at key intersections on Cedar Street, Highland Avenue, College Avenue, and Broadway.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

206851: That the Director of SPCD develop a physical traffic calming infrastructure on Morrison Avenue between Cedar Street and Willow Avenue, before the Broadway/Ball Square Bridge closes in January 2019.

Chair Niedergang stated he is deathly afraid that a pedestrian will be killed at the intersection of Morrison Avenue and Highland Road, right next to Lexington Park and the Community Path, because Morrison Avenue has a lot of traffic that goes too fast and many children and adults cross Morrison Avenue to get to the park and the Community Path. He was told previously that there will be a police presence in this area, but he would like more specific information: when and where? The Chair also asked how long the police details will be present along the detour routes to prevent out-of-towners from entering residential neighborhoods searching for a shortcut around the traffic. He is concerned about scheduling police for longer if needed. Councilor Davis raised concerns about the police presence after the bridge closure and will there be enough police presence. He asked questions about the City's plans on side streets during rush hour, along with after school with kids walking in all directions. Mr. Rawson is trying to line up more transit police from the MBTA. He spoke to Chief Fallon who expects a lot of boots on the ground and bodies on the streets during the first couple of weeks. The Chief is working on 24-hour coverage in many key locations. Ms. Connor stated that the Chief is happy to answer any questions and is working on a document to address students and traffic calming. The document will be distributed to the City Council and made available online. Chief Fallon will attend the next City Council meeting to address concerns there before the full Council. Councilor Ballantyne requested an update on bus routes 80 and 89 and how to mitigate traffic from outside of Somerville. There were discussions about MassDot overhead signage on heavily-travelled regional highways such as Route 93 that will be flashing about bridge closures. Mr. Rawson will post updated bus reroutes on the City's website and put shuttle schedules there, as well. There were also discussions about having crossing guards at Kidder, Morrison and Highland Avenue. It was stated that the Police Dept. manages crossing guards and not sure if they can be shifted from one location to another. Ms. Rinfret said that there will be signs put up by GLX for trucks regarding detours.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

207330: That the Director of SPCD and/or the Director of Traffic and Parking review all street direction signage in the Ball Square area, and add additional signage to make the direction of streets super clear.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

207331: That the Director of SPCD report to this Board in writing no later than February 4 about traffic calming measures to be deployed in the Ball Square area to slow down cut-through traffic before the Ball Square Broadway Bridge closes, currently scheduled for

about March 1.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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203371: That the Director of Traffic and Parking replace the missing restricted turn sign at Endicott Avenue and Broadway.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203859: That the Director of Traffic and Parking limit cut through traffic on Hanson Street by installing signage that allows abutters only at 7–9AM and 4–7 PM at identified locations, and ensure that this matter is addressed at the Traffic Commission's next meeting, on July 20, 2017.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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203226: That the Director of Traffic and Parking address the use of parking spaces on Norfolk and Tremont Streets by valet parkers for restaurants along Cambridge Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202101: That the Director of Traffic and Parking assess Sartwell Avenue for immediate traffic calming measures and report to the Ward 5 Alderman by the end of September.

Chairman Niedergang reported that Traffic and Parking installed some traffic calming measures and since the Cedar Street reconstruction was completed there does not appear to have been any issues.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201506: That the Director of Traffic and Parking address traffic issues at the corner of Bonair and Edmands Streets.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200767: That the Director of Traffic and Parking repair the TOW ZONE sign on Broadway, near Rent-A-Center, and hold Rent-A-Center responsible for the cost of the repair.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200594: That the Director of Traffic and Parking take steps to make all of Dana Street permit parking for residents only.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204532: That the City Solicitor determine whether the City may issue a parking citation to

vehicles parked on private property in violation of zoning provisions that prohibit such parking.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

200176: MA DOT Highway Administrator responding to #199846 re: a pedestrian crossing at Chester Avenue and McGrath Highway.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

Handouts:

- Crash Data (with 207250)
- Traffic Data (with 207331)