



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Traffic and Parking Committee

Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 2, 2024

6:00 PM

This meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order by Chair Sait at 6:03 pm and adjourned at 7:58pm on a roll call vote of 2 in favor (Councilors Wilson and Sait), 0 opposed, and 1 absent. Councilor Pineda Neufeld left the meeting at 6:57 pm.

Others present: Brad Rawson - Director of Mobility, Suzanne Rinfret - Director of Traffic and Parking, Jim Donovan - Deputy Chief, Madalyn Letellier - Legislative Services Manager.

Roll Call

Present: Ward Five City Councilor Naima Sait, Ward Seven City Councilor Judy Pineda Neufeld and City Councilor At Large Jake Wilson

1. Committee Minutes (ID # [24-1613](#)) Approval of the Minutes of the Traffic and Parking Committee Meeting of November 4, 2024.

RESULT: **ACCEPTED**
AYE: Ward Five City Councilor Sait, Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld and City Councilor At Large Wilson

2. Order (ID # [24-1610](#)) By Councilor Ewen-Campen That the Director of Mobility install bicycle traffic lights and appropriate YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS signage at the intersection of Somerville Avenue and Park Street.

Director Rawson shared staff are reviewing existing equipment and signage. Once completed the Mobility department will determine if an update is needed for 2025. Councilor Wilson inquired what the cost for a new signal set is, in response it is specific to each site and context of the upgrade.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**

3. Order (ID # [24-1609](#)) By Councilor Ewen-Campen That the Director of Engineering update this Council on the timeline to straighten the community path crossing of School Street.

Director Rawson shared updates from Director Postlewaite included in the attached memo, *T&P - 2024-12-2 Memo (with items 24-1609, 24-1607, 24-1592, 24-1464)*, that there are no significant updates to the project

timeline, but the city continues to work with the MBTA.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

- 4. Order (ID # [24-1607](#))

By Councilor Ewen-Campen
That the Director of Mobility re-evaluate and strengthen the NO TRUCKS signage at the corner of Warren Avenue and Bow Street in the aftermath of the 18-wheeler that became seriously stuck and blocked traffic on November 10-11, 2024.

Director Rawson shared there is signage that does exist and there is significant leg work to do a legal and enforceable truck ban.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

- 5. Resolution (ID # [24-1597](#))

By Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Clingan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Mbah, Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Sait, Councilor Scott, Councilor Strezo and Councilor Wilson

That the Administration provide an update to this Council on the Citywide Parking and Curb Use report and what recommendations, if any, have been implemented.

Director Rawson shared recommendations that have been implemented include enhanced mobility and access with increased and adjusted signage to indicate its uses. As well as increased ADA spaces, increased automated enforcement, increase blue bike facilities, more staff in the parking department, and more. Total implementations equals to addressing about 50% of the recommendations in the study. Other recommendations not yet put in place like zone parking or adjustment to parking permit prices are due to numerous administrative and planning factors. All goals and what was accomplished and not are shared during budget season.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

- 6. Order (ID # [24-1592](#))

By Councilor Sait and Councilor Mbah
That the Director of Mobility install a raised crosswalk at the intersection of Cedar Street and the Community Path.

Construction has taken place and there is now a raised sidewalk at the intersection of Cedar Street and the Community Path.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

7. Order
(ID # [24-1530](#))
- By Councilor Mbah and Councilor Pineda Neufeld
That the Chief of Police, in collaboration with the Director of Mobility, develop and present a plan to ensure that crossing guards are adequately stationed at critical intersections near schools during high-traffic hours and that, in the absence of crossing guards, police officers are deployed to ensure the safety of students and families.
- Deputy Chief Donovan shared the budget was for 57 crossing guards and the city only has 32, it has been difficult to find people to fill this role. At this time there are not enough crossing guards to cover the city. Where they are placed look at multiple factors including but not limited to age of child, location, traffic measures, and existing signage. There are other factors like cut through streets and on-going construction that determine the placement of crossing guards and when the decision to place an officer at a location happens.
- RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**
8. Order
(ID # [24-1529](#))
- By Councilor Mbah and Councilor Pineda Neufeld
That the Chief of Police provide an explanation regarding why there was no police assistance or crossing guard coverage at the intersection of Curtis Street and Powderhouse Boulevard during school drop-off hours on October 23, 2024.
- Deputy Chief Donovan said he investigated this, and two crossing guards were assigned on this day. A personnel problem and sick day caused the position to be vacant last minute.
- RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**
9. Order
(ID # [24-1484](#))
- By Councilor Clingan and Councilor Wilson
That the Director of Mobility install speed humps on Medford Street between Central and School Streets.
- Director Rawson shared vertical traffic calming measures are raised cross walks not speed humps for streets that have heavy bus traffic, and the department continues review this location. Currently there is no ability to build isolated speed humps on this street and there is no specific timeline or update.
- RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**

-
10. Order
(ID # [24-1483](#))
- By Councilor Clingan
That the Director of Mobility install a flashing STOP sign on Puritan Avenue at its intersection with Temple Street.
- Director Rawson stated staff is happy to work with Councilor Clingan to better understand the issue at hand so they may provide a recommendation.
- RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**
11. Order
(ID # [24-1482](#))
- By Councilor Clingan
That the Director of Mobility install STOP signs making the intersections of Temple Street and the following streets 4-way stops: Bailey Road, Governor Winthrop Road, Puritan Avenue, Putnam Street, and Ten Hills Road.
- This item was taken up with ID# 24-1482.
- RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**
12. Order
(ID # [24-1466](#))
- By Councilor Sait
That the Director of Mobility explore ways to make the intersection of Gilman and Aldrich Streets safer, including adding clear signage and painting.
- Director Rawson stated compliance is the larger issue at hand and staff is reviewing. Improvements may include a cleared corner update with possible additional signage and striping.
- RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**
13. Order
(ID # [24-1464](#))
- By Councilor Mbah and Councilor Sait
That the Director of Parking and the Director of Mobility install ALL-WAY STOP signs and safety measures at the Cedar Street intersection with the Community Path.
- AMENDMENT:** That the Director of Parking and the Director of Mobility install ALL-WAY STOP signs and safety measures at all the Cedar Street intersections with the Community Path.
- Mobility, parking, and engineering are reviewing additional stop control options over the winter and will provide updates following final recommendations.
- RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**
-

-
14. Resolution (ID # [24-1400](#)) By Councilor Wilson and Councilor Burnley Jr.
That the Administration facilitate bike parking for large licensed public events in the city.
- There are no substantial updates pertaining to this item that differs from past conversations.
- RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**
15. Order (ID # [24-1392](#)) By Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Davis, Councilor Wilson, Councilor Sait, Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor McLaughlin and Councilor Clingan
That the Chief of Police resume the practice of issuing tickets rather than warnings for serious moving violations that endanger public safety, including speeding and running red lights.
- Deputy Chief Donovan led the discussion that the standard procedure with officers is to write a money fine to get voluntary compliance. There is a court decision stating Chief cannot dictate officers to give money fines, and it is up to the discretion of the officer handing out the fines, he also highlighted the officers are aware of the strains a money fine can place on the community members. Continued conversation highlighted that policy is to provide education and each circumstance dictates a different decision.
- RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**
16. Resolution (ID # [24-1274](#)) By Councilor Ewen-Campen and Councilor Sait
That the Administration update this Council on the status of implementing the recommendations of the Parking & Curb Use Study, and respond to the July 2024 recommendations of the Somerville Alliance of Safe Streets (SASS).
- This item was taken up with ID #24-1274.
- RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**
17. Order (ID # [24-1673](#)) By Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Strezo, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Sait and Councilor Davis
That the Director of Parking discuss with this Council how to ensure that permit-only parking is available to non-resident parents with shared custody of children enrolled in Somerville Public Schools.
- Direct Rinfret stated relaxed parking is allowed around schools if events are communicated prior and every resident can apply for visitor parking passes. Councilor Pineda Neufeld provided some background information that parents who may not live in Somerville with kids have experienced
-

receiving numerous tickets as they take their children to events outside of school activities. In response Director Rinfret stated that the city is citywide permit parking and that there are numerous permits to account for the various events that do occur throughout the city. A discussion to change the type of parking that exists could happen and following further discussion Director Rinfret said the schools need to be communicating what events are happening and if someone were to call into 311 there is a consideration request process built in for relaxed parking procedures.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

18. Order
(ID # [24-1674](#))

By Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Davis and Councilor Strezo
That the Director of Parking install signage indicating the grace period, during daycare pickup and drop-off hours, during which parking tickets will not be issued in front of 99A Dover Street.

AMENDMENT: That the Director of Parking install signage indicating the grace period, during daycare pickup and drop-off hours, during which parking tickets will not be issued in front of 99A Dover Street, and other daycare locations in the city.

Director Rinfret shared parking officers are not sent into that area and if folks are receiving tickets, they can reach out to the daycare director and have them share with Director Rinfret. If any tickets include a safety violation that would be a different conversation. The conversation also included that signage indicating free parking would not be the answer to the problem and the facility can inform families upon enrollment the parking process. Conversation led to a short discussion over tailored parking to businesses and the director shared a recommendation from the parking study was to add more loading zone spaces and more accessible spaces.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

Referenced Documents:

- T&P -2024-12-2 Memo (with items 24-1609 24-1607 24-1592 24-1464)