



## **Public Safety & Transportation Committee Report**

### **City of Newton** **In City Council**

**Wednesday, January 8, 2020**

Present: Councilors Auchincloss (Chair), Ciccone, Malakie, Downs, Bowman, Lipof, Grossman and Markiewicz

City Staff: David Koses, Transportation Coordinator and Jayne Colino, Director, Department of Senior Services

**#53-20**

**Requesting an amendment to Senior citizen sticker parking ordinance**

JAYNE COLINO, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF SENIOR SERVICES, AND DAVID KOSSES, TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR requesting an amendment to **Chapter 19, Section 198 - Senior citizen sticker parking** to allow the possibility for vehicles displaying a valid senior citizen's parking sticker to continue to park on Highland Avenue, between Lowell Avenue and Bram Way, thereby freeing up parking spaces within the Austin Street parking lot for other vehicles.

**ACTION:**

**Public Safety & Transportation Approved 8-0**

**NOTE:** Jayne Colino, Director, Department of Senior Services and David Koses, Transportation Coordinator joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Mr. Koses stated that last year, this Committee approved a change to the senior citizen's parking sticker program to allow vehicles displaying a valid senior citizen's parking sticker to continue to park on Highland Avenue, between Lowell Avenue & Bram Way, thereby freeing up parking spaces within the Austin Street parking lot for other vehicles. That item was also referred to the Finance Committee for a change to the sticker program fee which did not come to fruition.

Mr. Koses stated that there is no fee change proposed in this docket language. Staff now suggests revising the ordinance to include an additional sentence to read *"Parking on Highland Avenue between Lowell Avenue and Bram Way and parking at metered parking spaces located within municipal parking lots with a one, two or three-hour parking limit..."* Mr. Koses then said that seniors would also be allowed to park at metered spaces in municipal lots with a one, two or three-hour parking limit. The Austin Street parking lot has two or twelve-hour meter spaces.

If this item is approved, Traffic Council would discuss changes to the parking regulations in order for same to be incorporated into the Traffic and Parking Regulations (TPR).

Committee members questions:

Questions:

- What are the parking restrictions on Highland Avenue? Mr. Koses answered that Highland Avenue has a one or two-hour parking restriction, Saturdays included, except where meters are located. Highland Avenue is conveniently located to the Senior Center than the Austin Street parking lot.
- Prior to the Austin Street construction project, how many parking spaces were available? Mr. Koses answered that Austin Street parking lot had two-hour meters and non-metered parking spaces. Ms. Colino added that there were approximately forty parking spaces.

Ms. Colino stated that if a senior has a sticker, they are allowed to park on Highland Avenue up to three-hours. If they do not have a sticker, seniors must obey the one or two-hour parking restriction.

Without further discussion, Councilor Ciccone made a motion to approve this request. Committee members agreed 8-0.

**#54-20      Annual Report of the work of the Traffic Council 2019**

DAVID KOSES, TRAFFIC COUNCIL CHAIR providing the Annual Report of the work of the Traffic Council for 2019.

**ACTION:      Public Safety & Transportation No Action Necessary 8-0**

**NOTE:**      David Koses, Transportation Coordinator joined the Committee for discussion on this item.

Mr. Koses reviewed with Committee members the work of Traffic Council in 2019, this material was attached to the agenda. Mr. Koses said that during 2019, Traffic Council held eleven evening meetings and heard 100 items and took final action on 93 items. Traffic Council approved 75% of all items heard, took no action on 14%, and denied four items. Zero appeals were submitted to the City Council.

Two new parking districts were created and approved by Traffic Council in 2019. Phase 1 of the Newton Highlands Parking District included Lincoln Street and portions of Bowdoin and Columbus Streets. Phase 2 expanded to include all or part of eight streets in the Newton Highlands. Phase 1 of the Newton Corner Parking District included Playstead Road, Ricker Road and Ricker Terrace. In addition updates were made to the Newtonville, Auburndale and Horace Mann Neighborhood Parking Districts.

Mr. Koses asked Committee members if they would like to continue to receive the type of information he provided? Committee members answered yes, it is helpful.

Committee members questions:

Questions:

- Please explain the maximum backlog time when items will be discussed in Traffic Council? Mr. Koses answered that the backlog time differs. He aims to combine ward items together. Currently there are thirty-four items awaiting discussion with an approximate wait time of three-months. If an item is pressing, Mr. Koses attempts to add the item to the next agenda.

- It appears that Traffic Council is working well with zero appeals filed this year, has the process changed? Mr. Koses answered that the Traffic Council procedures have not changed. Perhaps last year, having the nine appeals filed was an exception.
- Is it appropriate to file a Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) request with Traffic Council? Mr. Koses answered yes, although Traffic Council does not have a budget. A goal is to docket RRFB requests once funded. RRFB's are docketed through Traffic Council because they are added into the Traffic and Parking Regulations (TPR).
- It was asked if Mr. Koses has the necessary 'tools' to properly handle Traffic Council requests? Mr. Koses answered that in his opinion, Traffic Council works fine, and Traffic Council only makes changes to the Traffic and Parking Regulations (TPR). In the past, Traffic Council used to handle traffic calming requests these requests are now handled through a different process. Mr. Koses then stated that a goal is to implement a commuter permit parking program on residential streets.

Without further discussion, Councilor Lipof made a motion for no action necessary. Committee members agreed 8-0.

***The Committee will discuss the scheduling and priorities for the 2020-2021 term.***

**NOTE:** The Committee briefly discussed topics and scheduling of future docket items which will be prepared and docketed for discussion.

Chair Auchincloss opened the discussion to members of the public who were present. Members of the Newton Highlands Area Council provided the following suggestions.

**Suggestions:**

- When discussing accessible parking, please invite Jini Fairley, ADA Coordinator to Committee meetings.
- It is necessary to assess the large number of private shuttle bus companies traveling within the City.
- Please communicate with the residents on upcoming agendas and include if Public Comment will be accepted.
- Please use area neighborhood councils to focus on neighborhood issues.
- Please incorporate traffic calming measures throughout Newton Corner and other villages to enhance safety.
- Regarding enforcement, please discuss with the Newton Police Department what is and what isn't being enforced, reasons of this and what improvements can be made.

At approximately 8:30 p.m., Councilor Downs made a motion to adjourn. Committee members agreed 8-0.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Jacob D. Auchincloss, Chair**