**City of Salem**

**Traffic and Parking Commission**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, July 25, 2019**

A meeting of the Salem Traffic and Parking Commission was held on Thursday, July 25, 2019 at 6:30pm at 98 Washington Street, Salem. **Present:** Commission Chair Tanya Stepasiuk, Commission Vice-Chair Eric Papetti, Commissioner Robin Seidel, Commissioner Todd Waller, Assistant Director Nick Downing, and Mobility Coordinator Russell Findley.

**CALL OF MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 6:36pm.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*Hala O’Keefe* is here to represent the League of Women Voters to write a report of the meeting.

*Arthur Sargent Councillor at Large*, expressed a resident’s complaint that the cost of residential parking was too much at $10. Councillor Sargent also expressed that cars are cutting close to the barriers on Broad and Winthrop, moving cars closer to the middle of the road.

*Robert Kennedy*, said that the Spin app was not allowing people to end their rides at

the Spin parking locations. He held comments for discussion later in the agenda.

**TRAFFIC AND PARKING DIRECTOR UPDATE**

* Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP)

Assistant Director Downing gave the Commission an update on various roadway efforts found on the LTIP.

**ADA Transition:** Assistant Director Downing summarized that Director David Kucharsky met with the Commission on Disabilities to discuss the plan.

**Bates Safe Routes to School:** David Kucharsky and a member of the tree commission were meeting on June 26th with an abutter to discuss plans for the sidewalk and intersection at Appleton St and Liberty Hill Ave.

**Bike Master Plan:** The city is working with Toole Design to start to implement the findings of the Bike Mater plan. Commission Vice-Chair Papetti expressed that the Bike Committee saw the initial design work and made comments. He asked that assistance is given to the Planner working with the Bike Committee to allow more timely response. He also asked what the time constraints are on Toole.

**Canal Street Bike Trail:** Phase I is complete, Engineering is moving on to Phase 2. Building the connection between the bike path on Canal and the rail trail path has taken time because of the removal of an old rail spur. Vice-Chair Papetti asked if the project will be finished 18 months after the initial planned starting time of early spring, or will it be extended 18 months after construction starts.

**Downtown Bike Upgrades:** Striping has been delayed to incorporate the roundabout at Summer, Chestnut and Norman. The striping is planned for mid-August. Vice-Chair Papetti asked if there will be any spot paving prior to the striping.

**Boston Street Design:** No further update on Boston Street. Some paving will happen from Nichols to Bridge.

**Bridge Street Reconstruction**: The City Engineer, David Knowlton, worked with MassDOT for updates. The construction is held up because the work would occur in a coastal flood plain. The Department of Environmental Protection passed an order to allow the construction to go forward.

**Essex Street Reconstruction:** There will be a rebid this fall, hopefully construction will begin in spring 2020.

**Lafayette/Loring Complete Streets Upgrade:** Construction is complete, striping to be done later this summer. Vice-Chair Papetti questioned what was the hold up, and if the lack of paint would cause the city to lose future complete streets funding.

**Museum Place Garage:** Work is complete on the elevators. In order to add new elevators, they would need to be able to fit a gurney. The work was done to improve the function of the elevator; however, there is still work happening to improve the visuals. Assistant Director Downing stated that an assessment was done on the garage offering cost options for maintaining the garage for 10, 20, or 30 years. A group consisting of Traffic and Parking, Engineering, Planning and Building departments are potentially convening to discuss the options and make a recommendation to the Mayor. Commissioner Seidel asked for the assessment to be shared with the committee. Commission Chair Stepasiuk questioned what maintenance is currently being done. Assistant Director Downing said that the spending now is focused on immediate issues, with a focus of drainage.

Vice-Chair Papetti commented on the general cleanliness of the garage, including pigeon poop and crumbled wheel stops. He asked if there is any plan for the parking department to spend some time cleaning the garage.

**New. Liberty St./Garage Access Improvements:** Jay Carroll, the Roadway Project Manager, is working on implementing some crosswalks to improve pedestrian access at the corner of New Liberty and Brown Street adjacent to the garage.

*Arthur Sargent Councillor at Large*, mentioned that he has seen fake owls used to scare off pigeons at other locations. Councillor Sargent asked that striping is updated at the corner of Bridge Street and Ayube Memorial Drive.

* General Departmental Updates

**Parklets:** Materials have been ordered but not delivered. Melt, Boston Hot Dog and the Cheese Shop have been confirmed as locations for the parklets.

**Pop Up Bike Lanes:** The first pop up would start Friday July 26th. The lanes would go up Friday night and come down Sunday night, every weekend in August. The routes include North St and Loring to Lafayette to Canal. Toole Design will work with the city to look at the impact on parking.

**Scooters:** The scooters were deployed the weekend before the meeting. They were pulled on Sunday July 21 to fix some issues with the geofencing.

*Hala O’Keefe* stated that she supported the parklets, pop up lanes and scooters. She brought up the potential of more adaptive bikes. She thinks they would be a great addition, but questioned if they would be safe to ride in Salem without protected bike lanes. Hala also wanted to know if a person could feed the meter and create their own parklet.

**NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

**WalkBoston Walk Audit**: Russell Findley spoke about doing a walk audit using Mass in Motion funding before the end of September. The recommendation was to do either the Common area, Bridge Street Neck or North Salem. After a discussion the committee decided that North Salem would be the best option. Commissioner Waller asked if this is something we can do in the future without WalkBoston.

**Salem Trolley Parking:** A request was made from the owner of Good Night Fatty to see if there was availability for a space behind the trolley stop on Essex Street. After investigating, the police decided that it would not be safe to add another space. The discussion continued to formalizing the hours of trolley parking. Commission Chair Stepasiuk questioned what the initial contract with the city said. The discussion was tabled to a future meeting once there is a better understanding of the contract between the Salem Trolley and the City.

*Jim Hurrell* – from the Salem Trolley, questioned if adding a parking spot would solve a problem. He said that people walk past the various businesses to get to the trolley. He also said that they are very serious about the safety of the trolley. He questioned if adding an additional parking spot would interrupt the quality and safety of the trolley. He did not remember what the contract stated and asked if there was a contract to send it to him.

**Resident Permit Parking:** Assistant Director Downing notified the Commission that staff have met with the Mayor and some of the City Councillors to discuss the short and long- term recommendations that have been developed. Staff intend to bring the refined short- term recommendations before the Commission in September. The Commission’s recommendations will then be submitted to the City Council.

*Robert Kennedy –* said that as a test he has let his resident parking pass expire to see if there is any enforcement. He states that people are taking visitor passes and handing them out to non-residents. He feels that he is not being listened to by the city.

**Enforcement of Non-Metered Violations:** Vice-Chair Papetti questioned how we address non-metered violations. He stated that parking on sidewalks and crosswalks are a cultural norm. He stated that it is an ADA affirmative legal obligation to protect sidewalks. Also, the cars destroy the sidewalks. He asked that in areas where enforcement occurs more focus can be placed on ticketing non-metered violators.

Commissioner Seidel offered that perhaps the first step should be an education campaign and maybe enforcement is not the best solution.

Commission Chair Stepasiuk said we need to create a policy for enforcement officers and look for a warning period. It would be a two pronged plan of educating both the public and the enforcement officers.

Commissioner Waller mentioned that there is not enough room for delivery vehicles. Maybe more loading zones are needed. The discussion was tabled until a proposed policy was developed.

*Hala O’Keefe* – In South Salem she has seen a lot of trades people working for the day, parked in driveways and blocking sidewalks.

*Robert Kennedy* – He said a lot of people park on sidewalks out of desperation and because people block driveways. He asked that data analysis be done on the Derby Street neighborhood to see how many passes have been given out. Assistant Director Downing said that there has been research on the Derby Street neighborhood on the number of permits issued per space. The numbers show that the city has given out 300-500% above the occupation. Mr. Kennedy also said that there needs to be more emphasis placed on making east/west public transportation options available to reduce the amount of cars needed.

**Valet Parking at Stella’s Restaurant and Wine Bar:** Stella’s is looking for two valet parking spots in front of their restaurant from 4-11pm on Saturdays and Sundays. They would use the back two rows of Reilly plaza for parking. Stella would hire a vendor. Commission Chair Stepasiuk questioned if a private business should making money off city spots. She stated that we are giving spaces for a company to make a profit, with no talk of revenue costs for the parking. Commissioner Seidel asked if other spaces in the area would need the spaces. Commissioner Waller thought it would open a big door for other businesses and there is a potential precedent being sent. The vote was tabled for a future meeting.

**East Regiment Brewing Food Truck:** East Regiment proposed to use a space in the lot at Church St to put a food truck. Nothing had been formalized and would need to go through various other city departments with parking being the final say. The staff recommendation is not to take any action until a more formalized system exists.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Assistant Director Downing announced that the garage supervisor, Mary Millet is retiring and they are looking to hire a replacement as well as two additional part time traffic enforcement personnel.

Commissioner Seidel spoke about the filming of the Adam Sandler movie around the Common. Specifically, she focused on the morning commute around the Witch Museum and expressed concern in general about pedestrian safety and securing designated paths of travel around both filming productions and construction areas.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS SCHEDULE**

Thursday August 8th is primarily focused on October order changes.

Thursday August 22nd is set aside to go over engineering projects with David Knowlton and Jay Carroll.

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL**

June 6th minutes were approved by Vice Chair Papetti and seconded by Commissioner Waller.

June 20th minutes were approved by Commissioner Waller and seconded by Vice Chair Papetti.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion duly made by Commission Chair Stepasiuk and seconded by Vice Chair Papetti, the Traffic and Parking Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:36PM.

The following documents were used at the meeting and can be viewed by making a request to the Traffic & Parking Department

* Local Transportation Improvement Plan Spreadsheet