



CITY OF CHELSEA, MA
Traffic and Parking Commission

City Hall, 500 Broadway, Room 209 · Chelsea, MA 02150
 Phone: 617.466-4054 · Fax: 617.466-4059 · Email: equesada@chelseama.gov

- Police Chief Keith E. Houghton
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- Sergeant John Nofle
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- Elsa Quesada
Secretary
- Leonard Albanese
Fire Chief
- Cate Fox-Lent
Commissioner of Public Works
- Alex Train
Director of Housing & Community Development
- Aaron Kraemer
Resident Member
- Carolyn P. Boumila-Vega
Resident Member
- Maura Garrity
Resident Member

Traffic & Parking Commission
Minutes of the September 5, 2023 meeting.

The meeting of the Chelsea Traffic and Parking Commission was held in the City Council Chambers, 500 Broadway, Chelsea, Massachusetts. The meeting opened at 6:01 p.m. by Acting Chairperson Sergeant John Nofle. Director of Housing and Community Development Alex Train, Deputy Chief Stephen Purcell, Public Works Field Operations Manager James Caron, and resident members: Maura Garrity, Aaron Kraemer were present. Resident member Carolyn Boumila-Vega was absent.

Agenda Item #2 - Public Hearing regarding the review and approval of the removal of sixteen (16) parking spaces on the north side of Summit Avenue towards Webster Avenue.

Councilor Leo Robinson spoke against the removal of sixteen (16) parking spaces on Summit Avenue. He stated that he did not see a need to remove the parking spaces. Albert Nash, of 14 Summit Avenue, stated that he is not in favor of the removal of spaces. He also stated that vehicles are flying up the hill. Mal Bruce, of 51 Summit Avenue, stated that there are no such thing as speeding limits, as drivers are flying on Summit Avenue. Alex Train stated that he appreciated the feedback provided. Alex Train shared some background information on the request. He noted that Summit Avenue has always had parking on both sides, along with two-way traffic. He continued to explain that when you have parking on both sides of the street there are not enough spaces for cars to drive-by. He stated that vehicles have to maneuver their way when vehicles are coming down. He added that the road was restriped and the yellow line was shifted closer to the center. He stated that the issue was on one side but moved to the opposite side. He added that after his department evaluated the roadway safety and the circulation issues, they found that keeping the sixteen (16) parking spaces as is can help vehicles slow down and the residents can keep the sixteen (16) parking spaces. Alex Train made a motion to deny the request. Stephen Purcell seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #3 - Public hearing regarding the review and approval of making Clark Avenue a one-way street from Cabot Street to Stockton Street or Webster Avenue.

Linda Levy, of 260 Clark Avenue, stated that the benefit of approving the request would alleviate traffic going up to Broadway trying to avoid the light at Webster Avenue and Stockton Street. Alex Floyd-Vargas, of 260 Clark Avenue, stated that it is very difficult to get around. Councilor Norieliz Dejesus stated that she is in full support of this change. James Fields, of 89A Webster Avenue, stated that he is in favor to change Cabot from Stockton Street and not in favor of Stockton Street to Webster Avenue as this will push all the traffic to Gillooly Road. He continued stating that this will create tons of traffic down the hill and their speeding concerns will increase. Councilor Leo Robinson stated that he is in support of this change. He recommended a speed bump as an alternative. Janice Fields, of 89 Webster Avenue, is in favor of making Clark Avenue a one-way from Cabot to Stockton but she is opposed to the change from Stockton Street to Webster Avenue. She stated that vehicles are flying down Gillooly Road. She stated that by making no changes to it the cars coming down the hill would have to slow down for the vehicles going up. Alex Train thanked all the residents who provided public comments and the councilors Leo Robinson and Norieliz Dejesus for their active involvement. Alex Train stated that the city has retained a



transportation engineer to evaluate converting Clark Avenue to one-way, as well as other options for traffic calming. He stated that there is a study underway collecting traffic counts, looking at surrounding roads, to avoid any unintended consequences. He added that by October they should have a draft that will be presented at the November meeting once they have met with neighbors throughout the month to review the draft plan. Alex Train made a motion to table the request pending the community meeting and the production of the plan. Steven Purcell seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #4 - Approval of the minutes from the June 6, 2023 meeting.

The members reviewed the current list of active signs. Alex Train made a motion to approve the item. James Caron seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #5 - Communication of March 22, 2023 from City Council, requesting more clarification regarding adding a restrictive lane on Everett Avenue, southbound between Arlington Street and Route 1 on-ramp, between 5:00 AM – 10:00 AM, Monday through Friday.

Alex Train stated that this is a proposal to add an on-ramp turning lane where parking exists today. He explained that this change would mean there would be no on street parking on weekdays 5:00 AM to 10:00 AM adjacent to Kayem Foods. He explained that one of the major goals of this change would address the chronic traffic on Everett Avenue and the access to the Route 1 on-ramp. He stated that there was a group of engineers who evaluated the proposal and they determined that there would be no negative traffic impacts. He added that at the request of Council, the city has made additional efforts to engage with businesses along the corridor. He concluded that businesses are in favor of the proposal and they recognize the traffic congestion that has to be addressed. Alex Train made a motion to move the request to a final public hearing and returning to Council with the recommendations. Aaron Kraemer seconded the motion. All in Favor.

Agenda Item #6 - Communication of May 25, 2023 from Hugo Rengifo, regarding issues related to parking situations in the neighborhood

Hugo Rengifo was not present. Secretary Elsa Quesada stated that Hugo Rengifo has not responded to emails sent regarding this item. Maura Garrity made a motion to remove this request from the agenda. Alex Train seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #7 - Communication of June 1, 2023 from Alex-Floyd-Vargas, regarding traffic and pedestrian safety concerns for at 260 Clark Avenue.

John Nofle stated that this item was covered with item #3 on the agenda. No vote taken.

Agenda Item #8 - Handicap sign application of June 6, 2023 from Wuiliam De Leon Lapop, of 68 Shawmut Street.

The members reviewed the current list of active signs. Alex Train made a motion to approve the application. James Caron seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #9 - Communication of August 1, 2023 from David Keene, requesting to the Commission to evaluate the intersection of Hysil and Washington Avenue.

David Keene was not present. Alex Train stated that he visited the site and agreed that the visibility coming from Hysil going towards Washington Avenue is bad, and added that there are some shrubs. Alex Train stated that this could be evaluated; however, there are no immediate solutions at this time. He noted that the long-term option would be to bump the sidewalk out on Washington Avenue and to move the 'Stop' bar forward to improve the visibility from Hysil Avenue. James Caron asked if there was an ordinance on fences at a corner lot that blocks your vision. Alex Train made a motion to table the request



to look into the ordinance as well as other short-term solutions. James Caron seconded the motion. All in Favor.

Agenda Item #10 - Communication of August 2, 2023 from Commissioner of Public Works Cate Fox-Lent, requesting the Commission to establish consistent and appropriate speed limit or clear speed zones for Eastern Avenue and Marginal Street.

Alex Train stated that there is a citywide speed limit of 25 MPH. He stated that his department, in conjunction with Department of Public Works, would be contacting the traffic engineer to do a traffic count. Alex Train made a motion to table the request until the October meeting pending investigation. Aaron Kramer seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #11 - Communication of August 10, 2023 from Edward Medros, of the Walnut Street Synagogue, requesting parking relief during the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur holidays.

Alex Train stated that this is a yearly request in which there have been no issues. Alex Train made a motion to approve the request. Stephen Purcell seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #12 - Handicap sign application of August 10, 2023 from Lidia Ruiz, of 137 Shawmut Street.

Stephen Purcell stated that there are two (2) handicap signs on Chester Avenue and one (1) on Shawmut. Alex Train stated if we could reach out to the applicant to see if she can access the current handicap signs on Chester Avenue or Shawmut Street. Alex Train made a motion to table the application pending clarification from the applicant. James Caron seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #13 - Communication of August 11, 2023 from John Nofle on behalf of the Police Department, requesting to reverse the direction of traffic on Chestnut Street, from Fourth to Third Street, on a permanent basis or for a six (6) month trial period.

John Nofle stated that this will eliminate some traffic and will benefit the Fire and Police Department. He added that cars coming from the ramp would be able to take a right-turn on Chestnut. Alex Train stated that about four (4) years ago, there was a study assessed and there had been no major impacts. Alex Train stated that a new traffic count was needed to assess the circulation impacts. Alex Train suggested moving the item to a public hearing to provide neighbors with an opportunity to provide input on this proposal. Stephen Purcell made a motion to move it to a public hearing. Alex Train seconded the motion. All in Favor.

Agenda Item #14 - Handicap sign application of August 14, 2023 from Miguel Cora, of 38 Sixth Street.

Miguel Cora was not present. James Caron stated that currently there is no parking allowed on Sixth Street due to the construction. Alex Train stated that the construction would be complete by the fall of 2024. James Caron made a motion to deny the application and for the applicant to reapply once the building is complete. Stephen Purcell seconded the motion. All in Favor.

Agenda Item #15 - Communication of August 17, 2023 from Jennifer Hassel, regarding the traffic and safety concerns on Eastern Avenue.

Michael Kerwin, of 80 Eastern Avenue, stated that he has witnessed brutal accidents. He added that one of the employees from 80 Eastern Avenue had his vehicle flipped by a another vehicle going 40 MPH. Michael Kerwin also added two of the issues are when the bridge is up and not being able to see cars taking a left onto Cottage Street. He suggested adding either a light beyond Bellingham Street, a speed bump, or a speedometer to encourage drivers to reduce their speed. Van Thurmill, of 80 Eastern Avenue,



stated that the bridge is the main issue. He stated that we should make it safer by slowing traffic and that there is no visibility. He suggested adding a crosswalk with yield signs or marking a big square in the intersection. Richard Sue, of 80 Eastern Avenue, shared some images of serious accidents that are happening on a daily basis. He stated that there is excessive speeding. He added that there is a challenge when the bridge goes up and the left lane is at a standstill with a right lane where drivers are traveling at 40 MPH. He noted that this makes it impossible to safely turn onto Bellingham or Cottage Street. He noted that it is his responsibility to fulfill any request for footage when incidents occur to the State Police and insurance companies. He suggested that the Commission to provide signage on Eastern Avenue. Jennifer Hassell, of the Chambers of Commerce, shared that Harbor House reached out to their office for assistance on this issue. She stated that Harbor House employs eighty (80) staff, of which are mostly Chelsea residents who potentially walk to work. She stated that this area has become more pedestrian active. Alex Train thanked the attendees for sharing video footage and images with the Commission. Alex Train stated that the Commission would look into short and long-term solutions for this area. Alex shared that presently there is a planned intersection upgrade at Griffin Way and Eastern Avenue, about one block up. Alex Train continued to share that this will result in a new traffic signal to be installed this fall. Alex Train stated that there are chronic safety issues on Cottage Street and Eastern Avenue. Alex Train explained that given the complicity of this area; this will not be a small short-term fix, and added that this will result in a longer capital project. Alex Train stated this area will be evaluated by the contracted traffic engineer, where then the plan will be presented to the Commission and the City Council. He added this would most likely require funding from the City Council or through outside grants. Alex Train made a motion to table the request pending further assessment by the transportation team. James Caron seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #16 - Communication of August 18, 2023 from Chelsea business owners (petition lists names), requesting to allocate more "15 Minute" parking spaces in the downtown area to allow business owners to always have parking available for uploading products, delivery drivers and customers and the relocation of handicap parking spaces on Broadway.

Luis and Mayra Romero, owners of Las Delicias Salvadorenas located at 238 Broadway, stated that the handicap signs that were recently added are not being used properly. Luis Romero stated that the Uber Eats and the Door Dash drivers are utilizing the spaces to wait for deliveries as well as the Bank of America customers for the use of the ATM. Luis Romero suggested having these handicap spaces relocated. He added that there are spaces being utilized as outdoor seating, but would be willing to give up those spaces for fifteen (15) minute spaces. Efrain Molina, from Curly's Restaurant, stated that the handicap spaces are creating problems, which include double parking, and requested that they be relocated. Jennifer Hassell, of the Chamber of Commerce, offered her assistance to help evaluate these spaces. Alex Train thanked everyone for providing public comment. He stated that the city could look into seeing if it is appropriate to relocate the handicap spaces, either across the street or to a different location. He added that the city wants to ensure that we are balancing the needs of the residents and businesses. Alex Train added that the handicap spaces are posted near corners and crosswalks to make it accessible to wheelchair ramps. He stated that if these spaces were relocated, it would not resolve their issue, rather only be relocated to another corner. He also stated that if businesses are interested in '15 Minute' spaces or loading zones near their business; they may apply through the Clerk's office and explained the process. James Caron stated there was a motion made to add accessible handicap spaces because there were no handicap spaces. He noted that the Commission looked into making the spaces accessible to the crosswalk when exiting their vehicle. He also added that it could be difficult for handicap users to parallel park their vehicles. He stated that the spaces were separated by blocks in order to create more access for users. He explained that the relocating of spaces would become an issue for the



next business or would result in no spaces being made available. Alex Train made a motion to table the request until the next meeting. James Caron seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #17 – Communication of August 22, 2023 from residents of Pine, Beacon and Williams Street (petition lists names), requesting the installation of speed bumps to enhance road safety on Pine Street.

John Pedolske, of 36 Pine Street, stated that his neighbor requested the speed bumps; however, instead the outcome of the request was two (2) ‘Slow Children’ signs. He noted that they were not effective and the speeding issues continue. Alex Train explained that the Commission could assess methods to slow traffic and improve safety. Alex Train agreed that this is a tough street as it is narrow and often used to cut traffic. He added that this request would have to be consulted with the Fire and Police Department to ensure there are no conflicts with public safety response. Alex Train made a motion to table the request while the city performs an internal review of traffic calming options, in conjunction with Department of Public Works and the Police and Fire Department. Stephen Purcell seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #18 – Handicap sign application of August 28, 2023 from Guillermo Rivera, of 69 Marlboro Street.

The members reviewed the current list of active signs. James Caron made a motion to approve the application. Aaron Kraemer seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #19 – Communication of August 29, 2023 from Max Jacobson of ARCO National Construction, requesting the review and approval of the traffic management plan for Chelsea Point at 250 Marginal Street/22 Willow Street.

Max Jacobson, of ARCO, reviewed the sidewalk closure plan submitted. He noted that before the building demolition, there was a temporary fence placed on the sidewalk in order to provide safety for pedestrian traffic. He explained that the fence was moved towards the street in order to install the new curbs and sidewalks along Congress Avenue and Highland Street. He stated that there is no parking allowed on Congress Avenue and Highland Street. He spoke with Cate Fox-Lent regarding the impact of parking on Highland Street. He stated that the discussion was to move the fence back to the sidewalk curbing in order to allow parking on the street and to keep the fence up for fall protection. Max Jacobson explained that in order to move the fence, he needs to add fall protection along Highland Street, as per the OSHA approved protection system. He stated that the company was going to wait until the retaining wall was built, then back fill it. He noted that they would have to construct a temporary fence, so the workers can get behind the fence. James Caron asked if there was space for workers and for street parking if the fence was pushed back. Max Jacobson replied that there would be parking; however, the sidewalk is being reconstructed in the spring. James Caron clarified his question as to whether there would be parking. He noted that during snowstorms, there is an influx of cars that move to Highland, Willow, Marginal, and Congress Street due to the parking restriction on Central Avenue as a main artery. Max Jacobson stated that he presented the traffic control plan for the precast direction. He stated that the company would like to close the street down for a day for safety concerns. He noted that he has detour signs available for placement. Alex Train stated that the request has to be moved to a public hearing in order to give residents an opportunity to comment as well as the approval of the City Council is required. Alex Train added that he might not have the formal approval until mid-October, possibly late October. Max Jacobson stated that this would delay the work. Greg Barbariam, of ARCO, stated that they plan to finish the work in three (3) weeks but the four (4) weeks for precast is a maximum window. He also added that they are working on renting a parking lot to stage material and trucks, as the goal is to ensure the least amount of upset to the area. He added that they are asking for four spaces. James Caron responded that he did not see a problem. Stephen Purcell asked if they would be closing Congress Avenue for ten (10)



days. Alex Train asked if this would be open to local traffic. Max Jacobson stated that they are willing to work with the residents in the area. James Caron stated that as long as residents have access to get in and out, there should be no problem. Max Jacobson stated that one street would be done at a time. Cate Fox-Lent, the Director of Public Works, shared with the Commission that this plan was submitted to her office in June during the summer recess. She stated that she provided approval for some initial work to get started. She explained that there have been comments shared through the Councilor who represents the area and he expressed his main concerns with parking on Highland Street. Maura Garrity informed her that the Commission could have held a special meeting during the summer. James Caron stated that because the Council does not meet until the 16th, this would put them after their deadline. Alex Train stated that they can look into having a special meeting and that the Commission will refer to the Clerk's office and the City Council to see if that is doable. Alex Train stated that worst-case scenario this would be moved to a public hearing at the next meeting. Alex Train stated that Elsa Quesada would reach out on the proposed date whether it is at a special meeting or at the regular meeting, which occurs the first week of October. Stephen Purcell asked if there would be overnight parking allowed. Max Jacobson stated that there would be overnight parking available. Alex Train made a motion to move the request to a public hearing. James Caron seconded the motion. All in favor.

Agenda Item #20 – Communication of August 29, 2023 from Anna Bury Carmer of the Department of Housing and Community Development, requesting the approval of an operations and management plan for the Chelsea Neighborhood Market.

Anna Bury Carmer, of the Housing and Community Development Department, shared some context for the request. She stated the plan is hold the vendor market twice a month outdoors when the weather permits. She made a two-part request; first, to close Second Street, between Broadway and Park Street, to ensure safety for pedestrians, and secondly, to waive parking fees. She noted that the planning team would direct traffic to the municipal parking lots.

Maura Garrity expressed concerns with offering free parking, and she is opposed to the second request. John Nofle stated that there would be no problem with closing the street. James Caron made a motion to approve the street closure on Second Street and to revisit the request for free parking. Alex Train seconded the motion. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.