

**TRANSPORTATION BOARD MEETING**  
**Thursday, January 21, 2016 @ 7:00 PM**  
**MLK Room, Main Entrance, Brookline High School**  
**100 Greenough Street**  
**RECORD OF VOTES**

Meeting was called to order. Present was:

Transportation Board  
Joshua Safer, Chairman  
Pamela Zelnick, Vice Chair  
Christopher Dempsey  
Scott Englander  
Ali Tali, PE

**Town Staff:**

Peter M. Ditto, Director - Engineering & Transportation  
Todd M. Kirrane, Transportation Administrator  
Daniel Martin, Transportation Engineer  
Priscilla Ayati, Administrative Assistant  
Myles Murphy, Deputy Superintendent - Brookline Police Department  
Ruthann Dobek, Director - Council on Aging  
Andy Martineau, Planning & Economic Development

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Frank Caro stated that he was happy to hear that the WALK YOUR BIKE signs were starting to be installed on the sidewalks to remind cyclists to not ride on the sidewalk.

Mark Stanley, a resident of Commonwealth Avenue stated that he from TransitX which is designing a non-stop, 24 hour, on-demand public transit system which will be piloted on the MIT campus and he would like the Board to look into his product and potentially offer a letter of support/interest similar to those of neighboring communities. Information is available at <http://mass.innovationnights.com/products/transit-x>

**MEMBER UPDATE**

Scott Englander stated that the Complete Streets Study Committee has released a draft report for comment and a public hearing will be held on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Mr. Englander stated that the Public Transportation Advisory Committee has been busy investigating the i90 West Station project.

Christopher Dempsey stated that he is on the River Road Study Committee and expects some transportation related issues that the Board will want to weigh in on before Town Meeting.

### DPW UPDATE

Director Ditto stated that staff is developing the list for FY2017 streets which will be resurfaced as part of the budget. Plus opening bids for the Emerald Necklace Bicycle & Pedestrian Crossing project with the goal of constructing it this calendar year.

### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON REQUEST BY THE BROOKLINE SENIOR CENTER AND BROOKLINE COMMUNITY AGING NETWORK TO CREATE A PERMIT PROGRAM ALLOWING UPTO 6 PERMITS IN THE FULLER STREET LOT AND 4 PERMITS IN THE CENTRE STREET EAST LOT FOR VOLUNTEERS TO PARK WHILE THE CENTER IS OPEN

Transportation Administrator stated that

- Ruthann Dobek, Director of the Brookline Council on Aging and Frank Caro, Chair of the Brookline Community Aging Network have requested that the Transportation Board create a Senior Center volunteer permit parking program allowing volunteers to park for free while providing services to Brookline seniors at the Senior Center located at 93 Winchester Street.
- This request was initially submitted to the Transportation Board in early 2015 and Chairman Safer assigned Vice Chair Pam Zelnick and staff to work with the Senior Center to develop a program that would meet their needs but not place an undue burden on the public parking supply in the area.
- The Brookline Senior Center operates Monday through Friday 8:30am to 5pm offering a wide array of services and activities to Brookline seniors.
- The goal of the Center is "to help seniors maintain their independence and continue to be active members of their community. We believe wholeheartedly in enhancing growth, dignity, and a sense of belonging while encouraging individual contributions and the sharing of life experiences." It is a vital part of the Board of Selectmen's commitment to being an Age Friendly Community.
- The Center offers many services including fitness programs, tax preparation, social and medical services, music performances, support groups, movie nights, and other opportunities for socializing almost all provided by industry professionals who donate their time and services.
- The Senior Center was constructed with no on-site parking and with minimal off-site parking for employees only. The only allowance made at the time was the designation of 6 designated parking spaces in the nearby Fuller Street Lot for Senior Center use; however the parking meter rate must be paid. Therefore the volunteers, many of who are there for longer than 2 hours, are faced with either paying for parking on top of their

- volunteer time, shifting their cars around every 2 hours, or receiving parking violations for overstaying the 2 hour rule.
- Given Brookline's commitment to aging in place and the importance of the Senior Center and its volunteers to this cause staff developed a proposal to create a hang tag system for up to 10 volunteers to park legally in the Fuller Street and Centre Street East lots on a daily basis.
    - Existing: Fuller Street Lot  
6 parking spaces  
Monday through Friday  
8:30am to 5pm  
Requires payment of parking meter fee
  
    - Proposed: Fuller Street Lot  
6 designated parking spaces  
Monday through Friday  
8:30am to 5pm  
Parking Meter fee waived  
Hang tag permits issued by the Senior Center to volunteers for their vehicles on a daily basis
  
    - Centre Street East Lot  
4 Parking Spaces  
Monday through Friday  
8:30am to 5pm  
Parking Meter fee waived  
Hang tag permits issued by the Senior Center to volunteers for their vehicles on a daily basis

- The program will operate with the volunteers stopping into the Senior Center before their volunteer shift and picking up 1 of 10 hang tags and then proceeding to park their vehicles. This hang tag will allow them to park in one of the designated 6 spaces in the Fuller Street Lot or the any available space in the Centre Street East Lot during the daytime. At the end of the day they will return the hang tag to the front desk.
- This program was discussed at a public meeting with Town Meeting Members, neighborhood residents, Senior Center staff, Senior Center users, as well as Town staff from other departments and all were supportive of the program. The Coolidge Corner Merchants Association was notified of the proposal by Kara Brewton and they voiced no objection.

Ruthann Dobek, Director of the Council on Aging agreed with the summary provided by Transportation Administrator Kirrane and voiced her support for the program as presented.

Andy Martineau, staff member of the Economic Development Office stated that this was a great collaborative solution put together by staff and advocates from the Senior Center, Transportation Division staff, Coolidge Corner Merchants, and the staff from the Economic Development Office and that they are supportive of this program moving forward at this time.

Mr. Englander stated that he was generally supportive of the request and wanted to make sure that the motion of the language restrict use to volunteers and he would like to request that the Senior Center place information on their website on how to arrive via public transportation options.

*Vice Chair Zelnick made a motion to create the Senior Center Volunteer Parking Program allowing Senior Center staff to issue up to 10 hang tags allowing volunteers to park in the Fuller Street Parking Lot or the Centre Street East Parking Lot in exemption of the meter fee Monday through Friday 8:30am to 5pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Englander and passed by a vote of 5 to 0.*

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON REQUEST BY THE BROOKLINE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER FOR THE ISSUANCE OF 35 FREE OR SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED COMMERCIAL PARKING PERMITS ON THE FOLLOWING STREETS:**

- BEACONSFIELD: 7
- CLAFLIN: 3
- EVANS: 10
- WILLISTON: 5
- DOWNING: 10

Transportation Administrator Kirrane stated that

- Cynthia Price, Executive Director and Laura Kanter, Managing Director of the Brookline Community Mental Health Center have submitted a request to the Transportation Board for the issuance of 35 commercial on-street permits for free or at a significantly reduced price.
- The requested locations for these permits are Beaconsfield Road (7), Claflin Road (3), Evans Road (10), Williston Road (5), and Downing Street (10) based on the fact that these streets do not currently have any Washington Street Commercial On-Street Parking Permits assigned to them.
- They are requesting the free or reduced rate based on the services that they provide to the Town, their non-profit status, and the pay scale of the employees.
- Their request is supported by letters from Alan Balsam, Director of the Brookline Department of Public Health, Matthew Cooney, Executive Director of the Brookline Teen Center, William Riley, Sergeant with the Brookline Police Department, Patrick Dober, Executive Director of Brookline Housing Authority, and Ruthann Dobek, Director of the Council on Aging.

- This proposal was first submitted to the Transportation Board in June 2014 and requested parking permits in the Aspinwall Hill neighborhood including the streets directly surrounding the Center, which is located on Garrison Road. It was placed on the agenda of the September 2014 and October 2014 meetings. Both times the request was removed from the agenda, by the petitioner, following an outcry of opposition from the neighborhood. BCMHC staff informed Town staff that they planned to outreach and discuss the issue with the neighborhood before coming before the Transportation Board.
- Town staff is aware of several letters and emails of correspondence between the neighborhood and the Center as well as the neighborhoods continued opposition to the plan. In fact this was discussed during the October 2015 meeting of the Board relative to the commercial permits assigned to Garrison Road and the desire to limit the number of them by the neighbors.
- Following that meeting the BCMHC submitted the updated proposal which shifted the 32 of the permit locations to different neighborhoods, maintaining 3 permits on Claflin Road as the only street in the immediate area of the program.
- As expressed in their letter the new locations are based on the fact that they are not in the immediate area of the program, which sees an increase in curbside use by center patients, as well as the fact that none of the streets currently have any Washington Street Commercial Permits assigned to them.
- However based on feedback provided to Town staff via phone calls and emails it appears that while the BCMHC outreached their direct neighbors about their parking plan little or no outreach has been provided to the abutters of the actual streets provided and all have voiced opposition to the plan which is shared by Town staff.
- While Town staff supports the use of the commercial permit parking programs to mitigate the parking needs of the employees of the BCMHC and notes that they are within their rights to receive all 35 for the \$500 fee under current regulations, we cannot support the issuance of the permits for free for several reasons:
  - This will set a precedent for the issuance of reduced or free on-street parking permits for similar business models. While they provide a service for the community and have contracts with the Town, for which they are compensated, they are still a private institution and there are many in the Town who could make a similar case. Within the Town there are many group homes, shelters, clinics, etc. that are non or not for profits, have employees who make less than a Brookline school teacher, and provide vital services to Town residents and the community as a whole. The Transportation Board would be hard pressed not to respect the decision in this matter when deliberating on other similar requests

which will result in additional free or subsidized permits for those employees as well.

- It goes against the policy of the Board to attempt to shift commuters toward a more multi-modal mode shift. The location of the BCMHC on Garrison Road places it one block from the MBTA C-Line and a 5 minute walk to the MBTA D-Line branch. However according to the BCMHC only 7 of the 100 employees take public transportation to work. An additional 5 employees walk to work. This is far below the current 43% bike/walk/transit mode share for employees of other area businesses in this part of town. Before receiving free or reduced permits the BCMHC should be attempting to encourage alternative modes through MBTA pass discounts and other incentives.
- Other options exist for those who must drive to work. Earlier Transportation Boards created long term 11 hour parking meters along the Beacon Street median for employees of area Brookline businesses who must drive as well as those who wish to commute in via car for a portion of their commute and then take the MBTA for final leg. These meters are within walking distance of the BCMHC and have a discounted meter rate of .50 per hour, or \$4.00 per 8 hour work day. For those employees who are only onsite for small amounts of time between offsite visits they can utilize free curbside parking via the 2 hour rule in the neighborhood.
- The \$500 fee is already subsidized. As the Transportation Board is aware not only is the \$500 fee far below the going market rate for all day parking in the Greater Boston area, it is also below the actual rate for the Town to administer and enforce the program. All day (8 hour) parking at the private garage in the Courtyard Marriot is \$30 per day, the garage at One Brookline Place is \$25 per day, and the Town owned long term meters is \$4.00. The \$500 fee amounts to \$2.50 per day assuming only 200 work days. In 2008 the actual fee amount for the Town to break even on the program was \$650. The Override Study Committee recommended that the Town consider increasing the current rate to \$750 or \$1000 per permit.

Peter Norstrand, Chairman of the Board for the Brookline Community Mental Health Center stated that

- The \$500 a year represents a large burden for professionals who work part-time in a not-for-profit agency as opposed to those in private practice.
- The organization depends on philanthropy for 25% of their resources and right now philanthropy fluctuates and is not stable.
- They may not be part of the Town but the services are directed toward the Town and they work with the Town and are paid by the School Department to provide necessary services to Brookline school aged children.

- Only requesting a permit for 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of their employees and are requesting that they be spread around so they do not represent a burden on any one area.
- Many employees do take public transportation, walk to work, or car pool but those who must travel throughout the community do not have that option and must use their vehicles.

Marty Wisler, the Head Social Worker for the BCMHC stated that

- the employees work 55 minute appointments and use that additional 5 minutes each hour for phone calls, etc. and cannot take away from their day to move their vehicles every 2 hours

Mr. Englander inquired into how they encourage their staff to use alternative transportation modes? Do they use pre-tax incentives, discounted MBTA passes, etc?

- The Center's CFO stated that they are not in the financial position to offer discounted incentives and am not aware of any pre-tax incentives but would be interested in learning more about them.

Chairman Safer stated that there is a limited parking supply and generally the Board attempts to encourage alternative commuting modes. To him the question is not whether or not to offer it at a reduced fee, since the \$500 is already below market rate and therefore subsidized, but instead whether or not the permits should be offered in the first place.

Mr. Dempsey stated that under the current regulations they have the right to apply for these permits at \$500 per permit. The question is whether or not the fee should be waived. This is attempt #2 to change the spaces and ask the same question for free permits which the Board already said no to.

Transportation Administrator Kirrane clarified that the question before the Board is whether or not they would agree to free or reduced permits at these spaces for the BCMHC. If the BCMHC agreed to pay the full price then the current regulations allow them to purchase the permits for where they are available and that these locations or closer to the center on streets like Rawson Rd or Claflin Rd.

Vice Chair Zelnick stated that this is a bad precedent.

Susie Allen of Garrison Road stated that when the center doubled in size they were reassured that the need for parking permits would not be submitted to the Town.

An unidentified resident stated that the neighborhood is already experiencing a large demand on their public parking supply from the nearby synagogues, Torah Academy, Barcelona Restaurant patrons, etc. and he requests that the Board not add any additional permits in this location.

Harry Friedman, a Town Meeting Member from Precinct 12 stated that Claflin Road is a one-block street and that placing all of the permits on this side of Beacon on Claflin Rd is unfair. The center already monopolizes the street throughout the day and he objects to formalizing this and requests enforcement similar to which Garrison Rd is currently receiving. If the pain of the 3 permits were spread out then they may support it.

Cina Docktoroff stated that there is constant usage of the public parking supply on Williston Road and the 5 permits of 10 spaces that they are requesting on this street is disproportional. She agrees with what was stated earlier by her neighbor.

Howard Friedman, a resident of Evans Rd stated that the agenda for the meeting was the first notice that the residents received that the BCMHC was requesting these permits for their neighborhood and would like to voice his frustration that the center did not have any community outreach before coming before the Board with this request.

A resident of Downing Road stated that the streets are narrow and there are cut through traffic issues and as you add additional pressures from these vehicles it will increase the problem.

Mr. Englander stated that

- He is supportive of the BCMHC work and mission and they provide great services to the community
- He understands their concern with the cost of the permits and the shifting of vehicles every two hours
- he shares the concern by staff and other Board members that this is setting a precedent which will undermine our work to date to promote multi-modal alternatives within the Town
- he understands and shares the concerns of the neighbors and the impacts that these permits and other non-residential vehicles place on the neighborhood
- He is disappointed to hear that the center is not implementing a P&TDM place which takes advantage of pre-tax opportunities and we are sending the message that one should drive because it is cheaper to park at the median or pay \$500 for the permits than take the MBTA. That is sending the wrong signal to this and other businesses.
- Currently the Town is offering, in the form of low commercial parking permit costs and low meter rates, close to a half million dollar in subsidies when compared to market rates that eventually cost the taxpayer in higher costs of goods & services, or higher taxes, etc.
- The Town complains about too much traffic and not enough parking, yet the policy decisions made by the Town in reaction to requests by businesses and residents encourages the behaviors that we complain about.
- He does not want to establish another exception to the policies of the Board

*Chairman Safer made a motion to grant 35 free commercial parking permits to the Brookline Community Mental Health Center. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dempsey and failed by a vote of 0 to 5 (Safer, Zelnick, Dempsey, Englander, Tali Opposed).*

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE REVISED GREEN ROUTES MASTER NETWORK PLAN FOR 2016 BY MEMBERS OF THE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Cynthia Snow, Chair of the Bicycle Advisory Committee stated that

- The Committee would like to thank Transportation Division staff for their continued support for making bicycling a real alternative in the Town
- There are new project items added to the updated plan including Boylston Street west of Gateway East, Goddard Avenue beyond Larz Anderson Playground, extending the contra-flow lane on Ivy Street, etc

Chairman Safer thanked Cynthia and the other members for their hard work on continuing to move bicycle planning forward in the Town as we continue to build a safe green routes network.

*Mr. Dempsey made a motion to accept the revised Green Routes Master Network Plan. The motion was seconded by Mr. Englander and passed by a vote of 5 to 0.*

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON REQUEST BY THE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE AUTHORIZING CHAIRMAN SAFER TO DRAFT A LETTER ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD TO THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REQUESTING**

- A FORMAL PRESENTATION ON THE CURRENT PLANS FOR THE ALLSTON I90 INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
- REQUESTING A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE TOWN OF BROOKLINE, APPOINTED BY THE TRANSPORTATION BOARD, BE APPOINTED BY MassDOT TO THE TASK FORCE OVERSEEING THIS PROJECT

Cynthia Snow stated that

- Abby Swaine, the Chair of the Public Transportation Advisory Committee stated has taken the lead in monitoring this project and developing the letter which is being presented tonight for Chairman Safer's signature.
- The project is on the Town's border with Boston along Commonwealth Avenue and has the potential to be a multi-modal hub providing connections for bicycling, walking, and transit access to and through the area

Abby Swaine stated that PTAC had a presentation and discussion at their board which centered around the evolution of the MassDOT plan and how it still lacks access for transit and bike access to and through the site between Brookline to Allston and the Charles River as well as other options.

Transportation Administrator Kirrane stated that the Commonwealth's consultant has already committed to presenting to the Town in February but encouraged that the Transportation Board take the step to request formal representation on the Task Force.

Mr. Englander stated that he was very supportive of the letter being sent and that it is important for the Town and the region to get beyond the MassDOT thinking of this as a highway project and instead move it toward creating a multi-modal hub or connections to and through the proposed West Station commuter rail with transit access, bike access, pedestrian access, etc.

Robert Sloan of Walk Boston stated that he has been working with the Task Force and it is important for the Town of Brookline to start engaging and forcing their way into the discussions to move many of the multi-modal aspects forward to ensure access for transit, bike, and pedestrians into and through the site. This is an important issue for both North Brookline and the region and without loud voices for supporters like the Board the advocates fear that it will be pushed aside by MassDOT.

Mr. Tali stated that as a resident of Brookline and supporter of multi-modal transportation he agrees with the submission of the letter. However the company which employs him has done work on this issue for MassDOT and because of that he is abstaining to avoid any conflict of interest.

*Vice Chair Zelnick made a motion to authorize Chairman Safer to send a letter to Secretary Pollack requesting a presentation of the status of the i90 project to the Board at a future meeting and the appointment of a Brookline representative, chosen by the Chair of the Transportation Board, to the Task Force overseeing the project. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dempsey and passed by a vote of 4 to 0 to 1 (Tali abstain).*

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE REAPPOINTMENT OF DEBORAH DONG AND SHERRY FLASHMAN TO THE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR A FULL 3 YEAR TERM EXPIRING AUGUST 31, 2018**

*Mr. Englander made a motion to reappoint Deborah Dong and Sherry Flashman to the Public Transportation Advisory Committee for a full three year term ending August 31, 2018. Mr. Dempsey seconded the motion which passed by a vote of 5 to 0.*

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE APPOINTMENT OF JANE GOULD TO THE  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR A TERM EXPIRING  
AUGUST 31, 2017

*Mr. Englander made a motion to appoint Jane Gould to the Public Transportation Advisory Committee for a two year term ending August 31, 2017. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Zelnick and passed by a vote of 5 to 0.*

Meeting Adjourned