

**TRANSPORTATION BOARD MEETING**  
**Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 @ 7:00 PM**  
**Denny Room, Public Health Building**  
**11 Pierce St**

Meeting was called to order. Present was:

Transportation Board  
Joshua Safer, Chairman  
Christopher Dempsey  
Scott Englander  
Ali Tali, PE

**Town Staff:**

Todd M. Kirrane, Transportation Administrator  
Peter M. Ditto, Director of DPW - Engineering & Transportation  
Daniel Martin, Transportation Engineer  
Priscilla Ayati, Administrative Assistant  
DS Myles Murphy, Police Department Traffic Division

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

- An unidentified resident stated that the traffic signal for Beacon Street at Charles Street is not working properly. It is only allowing 4 vehicles through per light cycle on the Charles Street approach.
- An unidentified resident stated that she received several citations on her street during the early hours even though she has a resident daytime permit and the parking enforcement officer told her that it is because the permit does not exempt her from the NO PARKING 8AM TO 10AM restrictions. She wanted to know if it was true.
  - Transportation Administrator Kirrane stated that the resident daytime permits only exempt the vehicle from the 2 hour rule on their residential street within their police sector. It does not exempt you from any other posted parking regulations nor does it exempt you from the overnight rule. If you want to be exempted you need to petition the board to change the posted NO PARKING 8AM TO 10AM to PERMIT PARKING ONLY 8AM TO 10AM which it was done on several streets.

**MEMBER UPDATE**

- Mr. Englander stated that the Complete Streets Study Committee has passed a policy that it will forward to the selectmen for approval. PTAC has been working with the MBTA on winter readiness, the i90 Allston Interchange project, and possibly linking the Beaconsfield MBTA stop to the playground under the Dean Rd bridge.
- Mr. Dempsey stated that the Hubway Advisory Committee is sending a letter to the Selectmen regarding the proposed contract hoping that the

Selectmen will take an open and flexible approach in releasing a joint contract with Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville.

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**DPW UPDATE**

- Peter Ditto, Director of Engineering & Transportation stated that the division is putting together a long range draft roadway reconstruction plan based on the Town's pavement condition index report.

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON REQUEST BY JAMES MIZCEK FOR THE  
INSTALLATION OF DESIGNATED CURBSIDE HANDICAP PARKING SPACE IN  
FRONT OF HIS RESIDENCE AT 195 BABCOCK STREET**

- Transportation Administrator Kirrane stated that James Miczek, a resident of 195 Babcock Street and has requested that the Transportation Board reconsider the September 2015 vote against the creation of a curbside handicap parking space in the vicinity of his residence. According to his submitted application he has limited mobility and requires use of a wheel chair for transportation purposes. This is supported by the completed medical form provided by Dr. Marilyn Clark as well as her handicap placard which has been issued by the Massachusetts Department of Motor Vehicles. Mr. Miczek has a large side and rear driveway which he shares with other tenants of the building. However he has indicated that there are times, particularly during the winter months, that access into and out of the driveway of his chair car van is sometimes blocked. Because the residential location is close to the busy Commonwealth Avenue Commercial District the curb is often occupied during the evenings and weekends. The Board will remember that while these applications are generally routine in nature, the conditions for the creation of these designated curbside spaces have previously required that off-street space needed to accommodate the resident is either deficient and the likelihood of access to the curb is generally low because doing so further constrains the limited on-street parking supply that all residents, visitors, tradesmen, etc. must share. As attachment # 2 shows the off-street space available with this unit is more than sufficient for the requirements of the resident and the fact that this request has only been forwarded for consideration following the discussion of the Bicycle Advisory Committee's request to remove parking on Babcock Street and replace it with a cycle track or on-street bicycle lanes. One of the obstacles to that plan was the existence of 2 other existing designated curbside handicap parking spaces on the street. The Transportation Board, at your June meeting, postponed action on that plan and has allowed staff to form a Staff Appointed Working Group to guide us as develop alternatives for you. This working group, consisting of members of the BAC, Town Meeting Members, and residents of Babcock Street are almost completed with their work and this added

HP space, unless truly needed in the eyes of the Board, may add additional complications to collective efforts to find a solution that is acceptable to all parties involved. Therefore, once again, I would request that action on this item be postponed until the Board considers the alternatives for the entire corridor.

- John Harris, a Town Meeting Member stated requested that the Board vote against this to allow the Babcock Street Staff Appointed Working Group to conduct their work.

Chairman Safer made a motion to create a curbside RESERVED PARKING - HANDICAP SPACE in front of 195 Babcock Street. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dempsey and failed by a vote of 0 to 4 (Safer, Dempsey, Englander, Tali opposed).

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE REQUEST OF NICHOLAS JOHNSON OF 162 WALNUT STREET ALLOWING HIM TO OBTAIN A RESIDENT PERMIT FOR IRVING STREET WHILE THE OLD LINCOLN SCHOOL IS OCCUPIED**

- Transportation Administrator Kirrane stated that at the July 2015 meeting of the Transportation Board the School Department was granted 88 on-street permit parking permits for use by teachers and staff of the Upper Devotion School @ Old Lincoln School. These permits are assigned to an identified staff member and issued to specific block along a given street. There are currently 18 legal parking spaces and 8 permits assigned along the southern curb line on Walnut Street between Walnut Place and Irving Street which abuts the petitioner's residence. The remaining 10 spaces are 'set aside' for use by residents, tradesmen, visitors, or any other person parking within the 2 hour rule. Since the school was occupied in September 2015 Mr. Johnson has expressed his concern to the Transportation Division and Police Department that additional enforcement is needed to ensure others are not overstaying the 2 hour rule AND that because of the large amounts of teacher and other permits (i.e. temporary permits issued for construction or in-home health care reasons) he has been unable to find a parking space within a reasonable vicinity of his house and therefore has not been able to take advantage of the resident permit he has purchased allowing him to park in exemption of the 2 hour rule on Walnut Street. Therefore he has often parked on Irving Street, which his property abuts but has been issued citations for staying in excess of the 2 hour rule. With no on-site parking, and his off-site parking that he rents only being available during the overnight hours, this has become a burden for him and his wife who are in their seventies. Therefore he is requesting a special permit allowing him to park on Irving and Walnut Streets in exemption of the 2 hour rule. Although the Transportation Division staff and Board normally oppose any exceptions to the Resident Permit Parking regulations, in two cases we have supported a request for an exemption because the request was made by a resident who's residence bordered both public ways and the

- request to change relocated the residential vehicle to a smaller, local roadway where the parking demand was lower. While this section of Irving Street does have 6 of the 16 legal spaces set aside for teacher permits, the parking supply is in less demand because the single family residences along it have off-street parking to meet a portion of their demand. Therefore if Mr. Johnson would like to receive a permit for Irving Street staff believes that this is in line with the Board's previous exemptions and supports the request. However for enforcement reasons and clarity within our permit system we cannot support the issuance of a resident permit for both streets because this would set a new precedent which could undermine the resident permit system and allow those on larger streets to flood smaller streets with similar requests.
- Nicholas Johnson, the petitioner stated that between the on-going construction and the teacher permits the parking supply in the entire neighborhood is becoming strained and what is compounding the issue is the fact the many times the teachers and others are parking in areas closer to the school while their permits are further away. Enforcement, when it occurs, helps drive them back to their proper locations, however this is temporary. So while this helps alleviate the immediate issues it does not address the longer term issues should the building remain in use beyond this cycle. He would suggest more flexibility in the program as a whole and allow vehicles to park on streets within a neighborhood or zone.
  - Transportation Administrator Kirrane stated that the office did receive a phone call from one Irving Street resident who is opposed to this based on the fact that Irving Street also faces parking supply issues.
  - Chairman Safer stated that because the public parking supply is limited and the program itself already represents an exemption to the 2 hour rule the Board is generally miserly when it comes to expanding exceptions further and he would not support an overall zone or neighborhood permit for fear that smaller residential streets will be overrun by vehicles belonging to large nearby buildings with inadequate onsite parking. The only exception has been that those living on properties which border two streets with resident permits available and the request to the alternate street represent either a larger parking supply or a lower demanded parking supply.
  - Mr. Dempsey clarified that the permit would be for Irving instead of Walnut, and not in addition to Walnut. The Board has never authorized the issuance a multi-street resident permit. This is only the 3<sup>rd</sup> time the Board has issued this, should it pass tonight.

**Chairman Safer made a motion to provide an exemption to Article V(b) of the Traffic Rules & Regulations allowing residents of 162 Walnut Street to receive a Resident Permit for Irving Street while the Old Lincoln School is occupied provided that all other requirements are met by the applicant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tali and passed by a vote of 4 to 0.**

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE REQUEST FOR A NO RIGHT TURN  
7AM TO 9AM RESTRICTION ON BOYLSTON STREET AT MILTON ROAD**

- Transportation Administrator Kirrane stated that the residents of Milton Road and Cushing Road have requested that the Transportation Board address the large volume of cut-through traffic on their street. Based on the request staff did a study of the traffic on the two roadways to determine whether the volume was excessive for the neighborhood, was traveling at excessive speeds, and attributed to cut-through traffic or residents/residential usage.

Milton Road is classified by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) as a local road under town jurisdiction. Local roads primarily provide access to adjacent properties and are designed to carry low volumes of traffic and have low speed. Milton Road has a paved width of approximately 26.6' with sidewalks on both sides. Milton Road runs in a North-South direction for half its length and has parking on the west side of the street only. The other half of Milton Road runs an East-West direction and has parking permitted on the South side of the street only. Milton Road provides a connection for local residents to Boylston Street (Route 9) and Cypress Street. Land use along Milton Road is exclusively residential.

Cushing Road is classified by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) as a local road under town jurisdiction. Local roads primarily provide access to adjacent properties and are designed to carry low volumes of traffic and have low speed limits. Cushing Road has a paved width of approximately 34' with sidewalks on both sides. Cushing Road runs in a North-South direction and has parking allowed on both sides of the street. Milton Road provides a connection for local residents to Milton Road and Walnut Street. Land use along Cushing Road is exclusively residential.

Because access to the Walnut Street corridor is blocked from Boylston Street by a NO RIGHT TURN 7AM TO 9AM restriction on both Warren Street and Kennard Road the first opportunity for motor vehicles commuting east to bypass the congestion on Boylston Street between Cypress Street and Brookline Avenue is by making a right turn onto Milton Road and then proceeding to Cushing Road and Walnut Street to continue east or follow Milton Road to Cypress Street to travel north/south. As the attached traffic study demonstrates the speed of the traffic is low with the 85th percentile speed being 22/23 mph based on direction, but the peak and daily traffic volumes are much higher than would be expected on this local roadway network. Since 21% of the daily traffic is attributed to the peak am we believe that this restriction will force commuting traffic to remain on the arterial, Boylston Street, to the Cypress Street intersection and reduce the volume to expected levels for these small residential local roadways.

- Susan Nally, a resident of 17 Cushing Rd stated she is supportive if the recommendation but that the perception on the street is that motor vehicles are traveling in excess of 35 mph and she is surprised it is not higher than what the speed study showed.

Chairman Safer made a motion to alter the Traffic Rules & Regulations by creating a NO RIGHT TURN 7AM TO 9AM restriction on Boylston Street at Milton Road. The motion was seconded by Mr. Englander and passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE REQUEST FOR A STOP SIGN ON LITTEL ROAD AT STEARNS ROAD**

- Transportation Administrator Kirrane stated that Howie Rosenblatt, a resident of 17 Stearns Road submitted a request for a STOP sign on Littell Road @ its intersection with Stearns Road via the BrookONline app. As the Board is aware the installation of a STOP sign must comply with state law based on the guidance set forth in the Massachusetts Amended Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The MUTCD suggests the following factors be considered for the installation of intersection controls; vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic volumes on all approaches, approach speeds, vehicle delay, available sight distance and reported crash experience. In addition for minor street stop controlled applications the MUTCD suggests the following;
  - The vehicular traffic volumes on the through street exceeds 6,000 vehicles per day.
  - A restricted view exists that requires road users to stop in order to adequately observe conflicting traffic on the through street.
  - Crash records indicate that three or more crashes have been reported within a 12-month period, or five or more such crashes have been reported within a 2 years period. Reported crashes should be susceptible to correction by the installation of a Stop sign.

Based on the attached report staff is recommending the installation of a STOP sign on Littel Road at Stearns Road based on restricted sightlines.

- Susan Cohen of 23 Littel Rd has lived there for many years and there has never been an accident at this location so she does not understand why this is needed. The intersection of Littel and Alton does not have a STOP sign so why does this need one.
  - Transportation Administrator Kirrane stated that Littel is STOP controlled at its intersection with Alton. This was confirmed by Mr. Englander who previously resided on that street. He noted that while it lacks a history of accidents the sightlines warrant its installation should the Board choose to approve it.

Chairman Safer made a motion to alter the Traffic Rules & Regulations by creating a STOP control on Littel Road at Stearns Road. The motion was seconded by Mr. Englander and passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON REQUEST BY BROOKLINE TOWN TAXI AND BAY STATE TAXI MODIFYING THE TAXICAB REGULATIONS TO ALLOW BROOKLINE LICENSED TAXICABS TO REGISTER AS A LIVERY WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS REGISTRY OF MOTOR VEHICLES**

- Transportation Administrator Kirrane stated that Darya Tafreshi, owner of Brookline Town Taxi has submitted a request to alter the Taxicab Regulations for the Town of Brookline allowing Brookline licensed taxicabs to operate with either a TAXI or LIVERY plate issued by the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles provided they comply with all other aspects of our regulations. His request is based on the fact that the insurance costs for TAXI plates have increased dramatically over the last couple of years draining the available funds that the companies can use to meet our other requirements including motor vehicle upgrades, digital dispatch, etc. As he demonstrates in his request a passenger for hire vehicle that carries a TAXI plate pays \$7,850 Voluntary to \$12,550 Involuntary per vehicle for coverage while the LIVERY plate pays \$2,655 per vehicle for a higher level of coverage.  
Our Taxicab Regulations are in place to protect the safety and welfare of the consumer (our residents) by ensuring an established price for the service, a trained and safe driver, and a safe vehicle that meets their transportation needs. Throughout the discussion on changing the taxi industry, our residents have argued for better service, better insurance coverage, and better vehicles. I believe that by allowing this change we will better level the playing field between our regulated taxi industry and the unregulated/barely regulated transportation network companies by reducing their operating costs and allowing them additional capital to invest in their vehicles and other portions of their business to become competitive again.
- Mr. Dempsey stated that while he is supportive of the doing what we can to support the taxi industry to be competitive in the new marketplace he worries that this proposal will not be allowed under the insurance companies. Therefore he would like to put in language that would allow a company to take this step only after submitting a letter to the Town from the insurance provider verifying that they understand the vehicle is a licensed taxicab and the insurance coverage will carry it.
- John Harris stated that he previously worked as an insurance underwriter and confirmed that rates are different and this should be allowed.
- A representative of Bay State stated that the insurance coverage for Livery vehicles provides additional coverage at a lower cost than those available to taxicabs. The company currently operates livery vehicles under their Bay State Transportation company and the coverage these vehicles have is cheaper and superior to that of their taxicabs under Bay

State Taxi even though both are servicing the same clients via dispatch calls.

- Mr. Tafreshi of Brookline Town Taxi stated that the company continues to want to operate as a taxicab company licensed by the Town and not as a gypsy cab company operating livery vehicles. However the operational costs of doing this is prohibitive and the largest of them is the additional insurance costs for lower coverage amounts. Therefore this change will allow the Brookline licensed taxi companies to make this switch, reduce their operating costs, increase their insurance coverage, and comply with our regulations. It is a win-win for all involved parties. He does not see securing a letter to be an issue.

**Chairman Safer made a motion to alter Article II "Definitions" of the Taxicab Regulations by replacing**

**"Taxicab" refers to a vehicle available for hire that has been equipped with a taximeter and which satisfies all of the vehicle operation and equipment requirements specified in these Taxicab regulations.**

**With**

**"Taxicab" refers to a vehicle available for hire that has been equipped with a taximeter, a LIVERY or TAXI registration plate issued by the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles, and which satisfies all of the vehicle operation and equipment requirements specified in these Taxicab regulations.**

**Provided that the Taxi Business License Holders provide staff with a letter from their insurance company indicating that their will insure taxicabs operating with Livery Plates issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The motion was seconded by Mr. Englander and passed by a vote of 4 to 0.**

**Meeting Adjourned.**