

TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING**June 12, 2024 (In Person)****5:30 PM**

IN ATTENDANCE: Chair Elena Proakis Ellis, Commissioner Tom Rossi, Commissioner Dan Krechmer, Councilor Kim Vandiver, Former Mayor Gail Infurna, Chief Kevin Faller, Sgt. Jon Goc – Technical Advisor, Jennifer Rosa – Clerk

The meeting is called to order at 5:35 PM. Commissioner Peart and Commissioner Parenti are not in attendance. Elena acknowledges that this meeting will be Commissioner Rossi's last meeting. He has been on the Traffic Commission for 23 years and the Commission thanks him for his time and states that he will be missed. Elena then explains the meeting process to all attendees that are present.

I. Continued Business:**1. Approve September 2023 and December 2023 meeting minutes**

Former Mayor Infurna makes a motion to approve both sets of minutes, seconded by Commissioner Rossi. All are in favor, so both meeting minutes are approved. Councilor Vandiver abstains from voting, as she was not on the Commission at the time of the meetings.

2. Provide traffic volume update for both First St and Parker St

Elena asks if anyone at the meeting is here for this item and there are two people. Elena states that this will just be a presentation of information collected; however the residents are welcome to speak if they wish to do so. Elena states that Sgt Goc did speed and volume measurements at two different times. The first week it was done on First St in both directions and then the second week it was done on Parker St. We wanted to see how much of the volume was turning onto First St and then heading on to Parker St, so that we could get a feel of the overall traffic flow. Sgt Goc states that we put the speed box on First St to detect eastbound traffic heading up the road. Eastbound to Parker was recorded from a Friday to a Thursday. The highest peak volume was 46 cars going eastbound in one hour. Different times had peaks on different days. Some were at 3:45 and some were at 5 pm. The traffic study for Parker St was done in May, with good weather, from a Tuesday to a Sunday. The northbound traffic peak was Friday at 2pm and there were 20 cars in an hour. All other days were fewer than 20 cars in those given hours. A resident asks what volume would be considered high on Parker St in an hour. Commission Rossi states that the numbers that were presented are not high. Elena asks the commissioners how they feel about the data presented. The original request was for a potential timed turn restrictions onto First St. Laurie Schmidt is a resident that has lived at 12 Parker St. for 24 years and is concerned about the volume of traffic and is here tonight to hear what the plan is for the street. Former Mayor Infurna suggests placing it on hold until neighbors discuss what they would like to do. The speed was a little high and we can address that and the volume. Joe McGonagle of 11 First St. is the proponent and states that he is not suggesting a one-way street but is concerned about the traffic in the peak hours. Elena mentions that the commissioners that aren't in

attendance felt the numbers were low and really didn't warrant changing anything. She mentions that First St is a large street, so 49 cars aren't really a lot as most people might be going to their own homes. Motion to place on file is made by Former Mayor Infurna, seconded by Commissioner Krechmer. Commissioner Vandiver asks if the proponent agrees, and he states that he does. Elena calls the roll. All are in favor, so it is placed on file.

II. New Business:

3. Resident request to prohibit parking across from driveway of 45 Stevens Rd

Adam Shumate is the resident at 45 Stevens Rd. He has lived in Melrose since 2015 and has always had a challenging time getting out of his driveway. He states that he and his wife just want to ensure that they can safely get out of their driveway without bumping into a car. Commission Rossi asks if he knows who is parking there and the resident states that sometimes it is neighbors and other times its visitors or workers. He states that they are not trying to inconvenience any of their neighbors by this request. They just want to ensure that they can pull out of their driveway safely. Former Mayor Infurna states that she drove down the street all weekend and never saw a car. The width of the street is 25 ft. which is wider than others. If the street was 18 feet it would be more likely to get approved. Former Mayor Infurna suggests taking the wall down and making the driveway wider. She also suggests talking to the neighbors. Elena asks is one way harder to go than the other. The resident states that it varies based on how the vehicle is parked. Elena mentions the resident could get a permit to widen the driveway.

Motion to open public comment is made by Former Mayor Infurna, seconded by Councilor Vandiver. All are in favor, so public comment is opened.

Eric Beacom is a resident at 42 Stevens Rd and states that he has lived here for 20 years and opposes this. He reads his email that he had sent in prior to the meetings (See attached)

The resident of 31 Stevens Rd has lived on Stevens Rd for 32 years. She states that she is always conscious of where people park and mentions that she has a very steep driveway. She is opposed to this because they would have to be placed all over the street.

Motion to close public comment is made by Commissioner Rossi, seconded by Former Mayor Infurna. All are in favor, so public comment is closed.

Commissioner Rossi tells the commission that he backed into his neighbor's car at his house before. He states that we can't have these signs everywhere but understands that every situation is different.

Elena states we have received a lot of these requests over the years. Our hope is that this spurs conversations amongst the neighbors to mitigate the problem. Elena suspects that widening the driveway should help in this situation.

Motion to deny is made by Former Mayor Infurna, seconded by Commissioner Rossi. All are in favor, so the motion is denied.

Elena asks the public who else is here to speak about the other no parking opposite driveway items and it is decided to take Item 6 out of order and discuss it next.

6. Resident request to prohibit parking across from driveway of 140 Laurel St

The resident of 140 Laurel Street Penny Muschett is the proponent of this item and addresses the commission. She states that opposite her driveway there is a bus stop, so there is no parking there, then there is a driveway. After the driveway there is a small strip that people park in that makes it difficult for cars to navigate. If a bus is stopped, then a car can't get around. There have been accidents due to this. Our neighbor has a mailbox next to his driveway and the height of the curb makes it hard to turn out of the driveway. People come flying around Sixth St onto Laurel St. The people park out from the curb because of the tree roots, so it makes it even more difficult to get out of the driveway. Commissioner Rossi asks if you know who is parking there. She states that she does, and they have asked them not to park there. It is usually when there is a softball game, cars park all over the place. Former Mayor Infurna states that when she looked at the location there was never a car parked there but asks if the neighbor has been asked to move the mailbox. She states that the neighbor is not very open to this. The resident is wondering if it could just be no parking here to corner. Former Mayor Infurna asks if we could put a cone out when games take place at the Common. Elena asks if anyone else is here to speak on this item. No one else is here and no opposition letters were received. Elena comments that she does not feel that this is a legal parking space. Elena states that we could just move the no parking here to corner sign and encompass this space, since it is not large enough for a car to legal park there with other setbacks. The commission would not need to vote on this action.

Motion to place on file by Former Mayor Infurna, second by Commissioner Rossi. Elena calls the role, and all are in favor, so the item is placed on file. A work order will be put in to move the sign accordingly.

7. Resident request to prohibit parking across from driveway of 25 Meridian St

Irina and Alex are the residents of 25 Meridian St and are new to Melrose as of two years. She states that it has been an ongoing challenge to get out of their driveway. She drives a Subaru Outback, and they have the tiniest house with the tiniest driveway. They have a stone wall and utility pole that limits how they can turn out of the driveway, and it is a frequent occurrence. If it isn't approved, she asks if the commission could provide another solution, whether it be calling the police or another number. A lot of times she has had to cancel plans, as she cannot determine whose car it is. Sometimes the cars park overnight on the street, and she asks the police chief if she should report it, and they confirm that she should. Commissioner Krechmer asks who she suspects it is. She believes it's her neighbors and their kids. Former Mayor Infurna asks if she could extend the driveway, as she feels it may help her. Elena states that the width of the street is 22 ft. Chief Faller suggests that maybe backing in is an option and states that she should call the police if a car is parked overnight. The resident states that backing in is not an option due to the neighbor next door's bushes. They are overgrown and does not allow them to open their door. The resident thinks that having the sign there would help. Elena asks if anyone is here to speak on this item and there is no one in attendance.

Elena states that the curb stone is already moved in this driveway, so that wouldn't be an option. Elena mentions that moving the wall would be an option without causing any damage. The resident states that she will call the police if there are no other options. Elena states that with the width of the street it is not an option and Elena encourages the resident to continue to try communicating with the neighbors.

Motion to deny is made by Commissioner Vandiver, seconded by Former Mayor Infurna. Elena calls the role. All are in favor, so the motion is denied.

5. Resident request to reduce the amount of cut-thru traffic and slow down the speed of cars for this residential area of E. Wyoming Ave, Summer St, and Chestnut St, including consideration of one-way restrictions, parking restrictions, and stop signs

Item 5 is taken out of order, as there is no one from Item 4 here to speak. Elena states that we most likely will not vote on this item tonight, as we may require follow-up to collect more data. Eva Cincotta of 43 East Wyoming Ave is the proponent of this item. She has been there since 1995, and she states that East Wyoming Ave is a cut through street. There has been an increase in traffic over the years and she has obtained a petition from residents. She mentions that some people on Summer St are concerned about the volume and speed in the area. Her idea is to cut off traffic from Main St and make it a one way up to Chestnut St. The rest of East Wyoming would remain a two-way street. She doesn't feel that stop signs would help and feels that Grove St is much wider than E. Wyoming and would be a better alternative for traffic. During commuting hours, the street gets jammed, and the idea is to get a handle on the cut through traffic. Lynde St has the speed bumps, although speed bumps wouldn't work on E. Wyoming. She mentions that people are cutting the corner when they turn left onto Summer St from E. Wyoming.

Commissioner Rossi asks her how she would get home if this change went into place. She states she would go down Mt Vernon St to Chestnut St. Commissioner Krechmer asks about the neighborhood feedback. She states that only two were opposed. One due to snow and one due to driveway access. She mentioned that she also thought about having parking only on one side but doesn't think that would be good. Former Mayor Infurna states she is familiar with the area and is glad that we are having this discussion. The proponent doesn't feel that a stop sign would work but does not have a solution right now. Commissioner Rossi asks about the plan submitted and states that everyone just seems to be in a hurry.

Motion to open public comment is made by Former Mayor Infurna, seconded by Commissioner Vandiver. All are in favor, so public comment is opened.

Dawn Jones is a resident at 15 Chestnut St and states that the neighborhood is a racetrack, but a one way would be a nightmare. It needs a solution but a one-way and making Chestnut St a cut through wouldn't work. Maybe no trucks or more police presence.

The resident of 16 Summer St has been there for 20 years and states that it has gotten progressively worse. Google maps love to send people down his street and now it has become a racetrack. Maybe a traffic study would help. Summer St has become impossible. Commissioner Rossi asks if he has an opinion on the one way. The resident feels the problem is which way do you address.

The resident of 12 Summer St has been there for 45 years. Feels it would be 500 cars a day if you did a traffic study. One way may not be logical. The speed is a problem, but the trucks are the biggest issue. There is going to be an accident soon if it is not addressed. Traffic jams and fights are bad. Elena asks where the trucks are going. He says Melrose trucks are speeding. Elena states that she will talk to the DPW staff. Former Mayor Infurna mentions that perhaps we have a study from years ago or do one now. Sgt Goc states that all these streets are cut-throughs.

The tenant of 16 Summer St states that he is a cyclist and Summer St is the most dangerous street in Melrose. He supports a broader look at the neighborhood. He thinks we should look at the whole neighborhood however, not just one area. All the Waze apps are sending people through this area. The street was not built for this volume. He shows a photo of a semi truck that was trying to cut down there. He mentions the radar system being there.

Robert is a resident at 4 Summer St and likes the idea of a broader look at the neighborhood. Mt Vernon St is a major entrance point. He lives at top of the hill where the stop sign is and does not allow his kids to play in the front yard. He worries that a car will go through his house. No yellow lines on the road make it challenging. He knows it's not the neighbors speeding. If he can't use his front yard it's disappointing. He doesn't feel that a one-way would work. It would just drive people over to another street. Maybe some enforcement. The resident at 4 Summer St would like to propose no trucks. Elena states that MassDOT has criteria that you have to meet, and it is based on volume and the condition of the street. Elena states that we will look though, as it needs state approval. A resident wonders if local residents only would help. Elena states that we would not consider that idea.

Chris Sullivan of 49 E. Wyoming Ave states that there is no question there is a problem on E. Wyoming and Summer St. He feels that we should consider the one way option. Summer St down to Lynde St should be one-way. He suggests a traffic study. He asks if at the next meeting we could have some data. His driveway goes right into the intersection, and he has seen a lot of accidents. He mentions that painted crosswalks were added, and the speed was lowered to 25 mph, but enforcement is key. When a cruiser was there it was effective. You can slow people by ticketing them. Eight of ten people blow through the stop sign and we need to change the behavior of people. Possibly put a pilot speed bump program. Third option is enforcement because he feels it had an effect last time. Truck traffic limitation would be huge too. Commercial trucks are not designed to go down these streets. They should take Upham St. He also suggests repainting crosswalk lines.

Eva asks about a timed one way sign for commuter hours. Former Mayor Infurna must leave but states that she feels enforcement is key in this area and changing peoples' behavior.

Commissioner Rossi makes a motion to close public comment, seconded by Commissioner Krechmer. All are in favor, so public comment is closed. Elena states that we won't vote on this tonight but asks for thoughts on what has been discussed. Commissioner Rossi states that we would want traffic counts and speeds as well as accident information. If we need a full traffic study, we will outsource. Sgt Goc states that he could put the speed box on Summer St. Sgt Goc asks where he should look for speed and the

consensus is between Chestnut St and Summer St. He will also put it out there for the cops to get people out there. Councilor Vandiver states that redesigning the corner is ideal and enforcement in the area. Motion by Commissioner Rossi, seconded by Councilor Vandiver to place on hold. All are in favor, so the item is placed on hold. We will revisit once we explore the area further. Sgt Goc asks if he should wait as the month of August is when the data would be collected and the residents state that August is fine.

4. Resident request to add timed parking restrictions on the west side of Main St between 976 and 958 Main St

Elena states that when we approved the North/South bike route we found there were so many discrepancies with the traffic code. We changed the signs to match the code, and it was a very time-consuming process. We overrode the traffic code and left the neighborhood with no restrictions. There are about 350 ft on Main St. that have no regulations. The people that are parking in this area are likely employees or residents for Franklin Square. No one showed up tonight to oppose this or maybe they don't care. This is the one area where people can park and not get ticketed. Commissioner Krechmer states that we aren't hearing from anyone so maybe it's not a problem. Motion is made by Commissioner Rossi to deny restrictions on the west side of Main St., seconded by Commissioner Krechmer. All are in favor, so the motion carries to deny.

Motion to adjourn is made by Councilor Vandiver, seconded by Commissioner Rossi. All are in favor, so the meeting is adjourned at 7:57 PM.

From: [Eric Beacom](#)
To: [Rosa, Jennifer](#)
Cc: [Csilla Domotor](#)
Subject: Resident opposition: request to prohibit parking across street from 45 Stevens Road
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 9:46:24 PM

To Ms. J. Rosa, Traffic Commission Clerk, and the members of the Melrose City Traffic Commission,

We are the owners of 42 Stevens Road and live directly across from 45 Stevens Road. We have been Melrose residents for almost 20 years and oppose the request to prohibit parking in front of our home.

Stevens Road is a quiet residential street in a densely populated suburb, well within the Boston metropolitan area. Choosing to live in an older, densely populated city comes with typical inconveniences due to that density. This includes being cautious when driving through narrow residential streets, not parking immediately across the street from another parked vehicle and leaving a space too small for other vehicles to pass, and pulling in and out of tight driveways.

Stevens Road is not close enough to a commuter rail stop, school or retail area to draw non-residents to park for extended periods of time, or for an entire day. The overwhelming majority of vehicles parked on the street are resident-owned vehicles, followed by transient guests and service workers who come and go throughout the day. Because of this, the introduction of a Melrose City enforced no parking zone anywhere on the street is unwarranted, and we feel a gross overreaction to something addressable without city intervention.

We believe the request to prohibit parking in front of 42 Stevens is based on the intermittent inconvenience of having to be cautious when pulling a car in and out of the tight driveway of number 45. We understand the inconvenience and, as we have made clear to the owners of number 45 for years now, we ask all our guests and visitors to avoid parking in front of our house and immediately across from their driveway. If this does happen, we ask our guest to move their car as soon as we are aware. If anyone does park in that location, it is usually guests or visitors to households on other streets, or to Stevens Road households whom the owners of number 45 have not established any communication with regarding their issue.

Before burdening the city of Melrose with costs associated with something that can be resolved within our immediate community, we propose that the owners of 45 Stevens Road clearly discuss their concerns with all Stevens Road homeowners. We would expect them to build community consensus that all residents provide the courtesy to ask all visitors and guests to avoid parking immediately across from their driveway, as well as the additional six (6) driveways on Stevens Road that have the exact same inconvenience. Taking the simple route of establishing a City of Melrose enforced no parking zone across from one driveway has the potential to spill over to the remaining six (6) driveways on Stevens Road, and will

introduce other problems to our short, narrow street with already limited parking.

If the city does choose to get involved with addressing this complaint, we would then expect the city to first provide an expert review thorough a thorough Traffic Study, with an analysis of the situation to determine if the request to prohibit parking is warranted. This study should include taking actual measurements of the varying street widths and driveway curb cuts to model appropriate vehicular turning angles. In addition, the study must also consider existing driveway conditions that are the sole responsibility of the homeowner, including driveway widths, landscape obstacles and retaining wall locations, in order to determine the true source of the problem and a manageable long-term solution. Such a thorough review will be to the ultimate benefit of all Stevens Road homeowners, as opposed to a short term-solution benefiting a single homeowner complaint.

Thank you for your consideration,

Eric Beacom and Agnes Domotor

42 Stevens Road homeowners since April 2005

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