



TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7 Twin Circle Drive, Arlington, MA 02474

To: Board of Selectmen, Arlington, Mass

From: Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

Subject: Request for Crosswalk at Summer St. and Brookdale Road

Date: 14 December 2009

The TAC was requested in April 2009 to review the request for a crosswalk across Summer Street at Brookdale Road. The primary use of the requested crosswalk would be to service visitors to Cusack Elderly Housing and access to Dunkin' Donuts. Edward Starr led the study. A report of the investigation is attached.

The TAC voted the following recommendation unanimously on 7/8/09.

1. A crosswalk across Summer Street at Brookdale Road is not warranted.

It is also suggested that the Housing Authority conduct a trial to accommodate visitor parking as outlined in the attached report.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Starr - Chair

Transportation Advisory Committee Members:

Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Jean Clark, Steve Kurland, Officer Corey Rateau, Jeff Maxtutis, Howard Muise,
Michael Rademacher, Scott Smith, Edward Starr, and Laura Wiener

Web site; www.tac.arlington.ma.us/

Report on Request for Crosswalk at Summer and Brookdale

There are two major motivations for crossing at this location. One is for visiting Cusack Terrace elderly housing where Brookdale Rd offers the closest parking. There is capacity for thirteen autos in the Cusack parking lot, and residents are required to have a permit for parking. There is a waiting list for permits. Observations over a few months indicate that the parking lot usually has free spaces during the day when residents are out.

The second motivation is for those from Cusack Terrace and the Public Safety Building to cross to and from Dunkin' Donuts.

Below are the factors considered for the crosswalk request.

a. Proximity to Existing Traffic Signal

If a proposed crosswalk is less than 200 - 300 feet from a signal, TAC has generally recommended that people be encouraged to cross at the signal and that a marked crosswalk not be installed. Federal Highway Administration crosswalk guidelines¹ indicate that an uncontrolled crosswalk should not be installed in close proximity to a traffic signal. The Cusack main entrance is approximately 150 feet from the signal at Summer and Mystic Streets.

b. Pedestrian Volume

The Federal Highway Administration's Pedestrian Facility Users Guide indicates that in the peak hour at least 15 - 20 pedestrians should be crossing to justify installing a marked crosswalk. Observations at random times including the AM peak hour showed only 5 or less pedestrians crossing Summer Street between the Mystic Street and Brookdale Road.

c. Roadway and Traffic Conditions

In this location, Summer Street is a two-lane urban minor arterial roadway with an average daily traffic of over 10,000 vehicles and a speed limit of 30 miles per hour. The road width is approximately 35 feet curb to curb.

d. Visibility and Sight Distance

The roadway grade and curvature in this location are such that visibility and sight lines of pedestrians are adequate. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines, stopping sight distance is 200 feet at 30 mph. The street lighting in this location is also adequate.

¹ http://www.walkinginfo.org/pedsafe/moreinfo_crosswalk.cfm, accessed on 7/10/2009

e. Parking Impacts

No parking is currently allowed on either side of Summer Street at this location, so there would be no parking impact in installing a crosswalk.

f. Special Considerations

A crosswalk may be considered which doesn't meet the pedestrian volume threshold if the crossing is on an established walking route to school or serves another vulnerable population. In this location, the elderly population is a consideration. However, we believe that the risks would far outweigh the benefits. By observation, motorists departing from the Mystic/Summer signal traveling to the west move out smartly and follow closely together. A pedestrian in a crosswalk would be at higher risk than average at this location, and the motorist that stops for the pedestrian would also be at a higher than average risk of being rear-ended.

Based upon the above considerations, the TAC does not recommend that a crosswalk be installed at this location.

Visitor Parking at Cusack

Consideration was given to the visitor parking issues for Cusack Terrace. Currently the Housing Authority does not allow visitors to use the lot. This is because historically the privilege has been abused by visitors and there occasionally was not parking available for residents. We discussed with the Housing Authority the possibility of a trial of posting two of the thirteen parking spaces in the lot with something like the following:

Visitor Parking/ 9AM to 4PM/ 2 hour max

The thought is that this would be of benefit to the residents by allowing better access for family members without disrupting the resident's ability to park. It might be somewhat self-policing by peer pressure if residents found that someone was abusing the rules. It might be worth an experiment. If successful, it would be an improvement for visitors and residents.