



Transportation Advisory Committee, Arlington Planning Department,  
730 Mass Ave, Arlington MA, c/o Laura Wiener

**To:** Board of Selectmen

**From:** Transportation Advisory Committee

**Subject:** Parking in Arlington Center

**Date:** May 20, 2013

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### **Town Meeting Action**

In spring, 2012, Town Meeting voted for a parking study (Article 54--“for investigation and implementation of paid parking”), with no funding allocation. A TAC Working Group was formed in August to start the process of looking at parking in Arlington Center with little or no funding. The Arlington Center Parking Working Group is made up of the following members:

- Howard Muise (TAC Co-chair)
- Officer Corey Rateau (Police, TAC, and Selectmen’s Parking Committee)
- Scott Smith (TAC and ABAC)
- Paul Kent (TAC and Chamber of Commerce)
- Marie Krepelka (Selectmen’s Parking Committee)
- Laura Wiener (Planning Dept. and TAC).

The goal of the Working Group was to collect data and identify potential measures to improve the efficiency and management of parking in Arlington Center, both on street and in municipal lots. In conducting the study, the working group identified the following information needed to conduct the study:

- Overall adequacy of the Town center parking supply
- Turnover (average length of stay) and utilization of on-street short-term parking
- Utilization of Russell, Railroad and Library parking lots
  - Metered parking
  - Permit parking

TAC allocated \$2000 from its account, and the Planning Department allocated \$2000 to hire a contractor to collect data on parking in Arlington Center. Counts were conducted between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Thursday November 15 and Saturday November 17, 2012.

### **Issues**

The following issues were identified during the course of the study:

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- There is a mix of one- and two-hour spaces on Massachusetts Avenue. Except for a limited number of 15-minute spaces, should there be a uniform time limit for parking on Massachusetts Avenue?
- Should on-street spaces be metered to assure turnover and adequate short-term parking for customers?
- Monthly permits can be purchased for all day parking in the Russell Lot. Should a mechanism be provided to allow all-day parking for infrequent parkers?
- The meters in the Russell and Railroad Lots are unreliable, difficult to use (e.g., difficult to read in bright sun), and place the user in the drive aisles.

## Findings

The following summarizes the results of the parking counts in Arlington Center:

- A total of 565 parking spaces are available in Arlington Center in the following locations (see Figure 1):
  - Massachusetts Avenue between Academy Street/Central Street and Franklin Street
  - Broadway Plaza
  - Broadway between Franklin Street and Alton Street
  - Alton Street south of Benton Street
  - Medford Street south of Compton Street (St. Agnes Church)
  - Pleasant Street between Massachusetts Avenue and Maple Street/Lombard Road
  - Swan Street
  - Library Parking Lot
  - Russell Common Municipal Lot
  - Railroad Lot

The Arlington Center on-street parking supply is shown below:

### **Arlington Center Parking Supply**

Type of Space	On Street	Public Lots	Total
15 Minute	5	0	5
One Hour	103	0	103
Two Hour	63	0	63
Three Hour	0	208	208
Permit	0	123	123
Unrestricted	38	0	38
Handicap	4	15	19
Taxi	4	0	4
Zipcar	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>565</b>

- The following table shows peak weekday utilization of regular spaces (not including handicap, taxi or 15-minute spaces) by type of space for the on-street parking and municipal lots. Peak utilization of regular spaces occurred between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. with 93 percent of the spaces occupied. On-street spaces were nearly fully occupied during that hour. Utilization between 7:00

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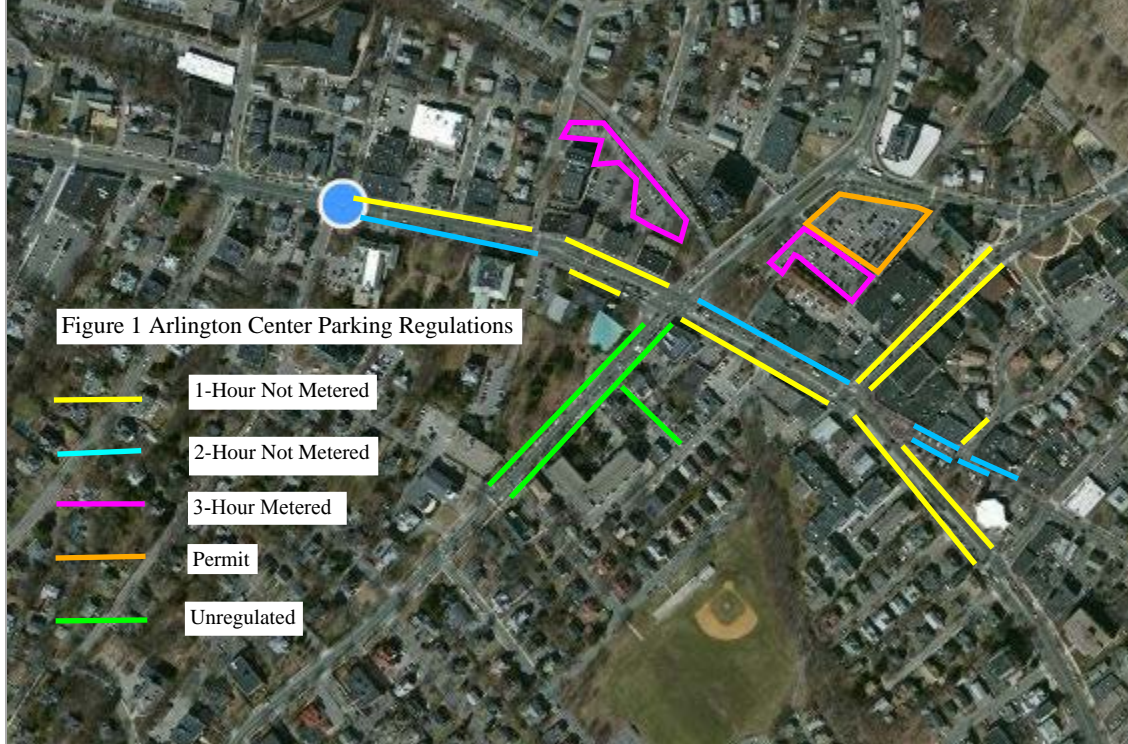







Figure 1 Arlington Center Parking Regulations

-  1-Hour Not Metered
-  2-Hour Not Metered
-  3-Hour Metered
-  Permit
-  Unregulated

and 8:00 p.m. was almost as high. The busiest time during day time hours was at 1:00 p.m. with 77 percent utilization.

### Weekday Utilization of Regular Spaces

Type of Space	Capacity	Utilization 1:00 p.m.		Utilization 6:00 p.m.	
		No. of Cars	Percent	No. of Cars	Percent
<b>On-Street</b>					
One Hour	97	87	90%	100	103%
Two Hour	63	61	97%	66	105%
Unrestricted	38	31	82%	34	89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>On-Street</b>					
<b>Parking Lots</b>					
Three Hour	143	76	53%	118	83%
Permit	123	96	78%	123	100%
Library	65	57	88%	60	92%
<b>Total Lots</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>88%</b>
<b>Total On-Street and Lots</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>93%</b>

- The following table shows peak Saturday utilization by type of space for the on-street parking and municipal lots for general use spaces (not including handicap, taxi or 15-minute spaces). Peak utilization of the total parking supply occurred between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. with 77 percent of the general use spaces occupied. On-street parking was fully utilized at that time. The busiest hour in the evening was between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m. with 64 percent occupancy. The on-street and non-permit spaces in the Russell and Railroad lots were 84 percent utilized at that time.

### Saturday Utilization of Regular Spaces

Type of Space	Capacity	Utilization 11:00 a.m.		Utilization 7:00 p.m.	
		No. of Cars	Percent	No. of Cars	Percent
<b>On-Street</b>					
One Hour	97	112*	115%	88	91%
Two Hour	63	62	98%	63	100%
Unrestricted	38	37	97%	14	89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>211*</b>	<b>107%</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>83%</b>
<b>On-Street</b>					
<b>Parking Lots</b>					
Three Hour	143	142	99%	121	85%
Permit	123	81	66%	30	24%
Library	65	67	103%	24	37%
<b>Total Lots</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Total On-Street and Lots</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>64%</b>

\* Includes double parking for church service on Medford Street

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- The following table shows that between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. the average length of stay in the one-hour on-street spaces was 1.5 hours. Each space was occupied by an average of 4.7 vehicles over the nine hours.
- Between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. the average length of stay in the two-hour on-street spaces was 1.6 hours. Each space was occupied by an average of 5.0 vehicles over the nine hours.
- About 27 percent of vehicles exceeded the time limit in the one-hour space.
- About 8 percent of vehicles exceeded the time limit in the two-hour spaces.
- About 5.5 percent of all vehicles parked for more than three hours.

### **Turnover and Average Length of Stay in On-Street Spaces**

	<b>One-Hour Spaces</b>	<b>Two-Hour Spaces</b>
Number of Spaces	97	63
Total Number of Vehicles Parked	452	314
Average Turnover*	4.7	5.0
Average Length of Stay (in hours)	1.5	1.6
Number/Percent of Vehicles Parked more than One Hour	120/27%	N/A
Number/Percent of Vehicles Parked more than Two Hours	46/10%	24/8%
Number/Percent of Vehicles Parked more than Three Hours	27/6%	16/5%

\* Average number of vehicles occupying each space over the course of the nine hours between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

### **Recommendation and Scope for Further Study**

The Capital Planning Committee allocated \$30,000 for a parking study in FY 2014. Based on the observations listed above, additional study should be undertaken to address the issues noted earlier. The recommendation of TAC and the Planning staff is to hire a consultant to conduct further study of parking in Arlington Center, using data already collected. The following is the recommended scope for this additional study, which will produce recommendations to the Town for operating and managing the Arlington Center parking supply:

- 1) Goals of the study are to identify:
  - a) Existing usage patterns
  - b) Existing revenues and costs to maintain the town center parking supply
  - c) Potential measures to manage the existing parking supply more efficiently
  - d) User-friendly long-term parking for employees
  - e) Convenient parking for customers
  - f) Alternatives for pricing, including free parking, for various locations to meet the two previous goals
  - g) Revenues and costs associated with various pricing alternatives
  - h) Appropriate time limits for various locations
  - i) Measures to reduce parking demand where possible, with strategies such as “park once”, and promoting alternative modes such as transit, bicycles and walking

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- 2) Identify best management for various pricing alternatives:
  - a) Equipment type and location (Smart Meters, Parkmobile)
  - b) Enforcement
  - c) Signage
  - d) Maintenance of signage and meters
  - e) Revenue collection and allocation
  
- 3) Prior to adoption of a Parking Plan, consider the following:
  - a) Improving directional signage to public parking and internal signage  
identifying types and locations of spaces in lots
  - b) Making all on-street spaces two-hour spaces

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