



Parking Advisory Committee

Date: September 29, 2020

Time: 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation

Minutes

Members in Attendance: Ali Carter, Daniel Amstutz, Adam Chapdelaine, Leland Stein, Phyllis Marshall, Mike Rademacher, John Hurd, Howard Muise.

Guests: Darcy Devney.

1. Greetings and introductions, ground rules for online meetings.

Daniel Amstutz read a set of prepared remarks explaining the procedures that the Committee would follow to hold a virtual meeting. Governor Baker signed an Executive Order in response to the COVID-19 pandemic allowing virtual meetings, which suspended the usual Open Meeting Law requirement that a quorum of committee members be physically present in order to hold an official committee meeting. Amstutz confirmed the committee members in attendance for the meeting.

2. Approval of the minutes for the meetings of October and November 2019.

Minutes were approved.

3. Status of parking meter collections.

Adam Chapdelaine explained that parking meter collections had been suspended since around the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March. There was an initial conversation with staff at the end of August to propose reinstating meter collections by October 1, to align with the completion of the Arlington Center Sidewalk Project, the installation of meters on Broadway, and the rollout of PayByPhone (mobile parking payment). However, the Broadway meters have not been installed just yet and the Parking Control Officers have been reassigned to assist the Clerk's Office with processing mail-in ballots for the September Primary and the November General Election. As a result, it is more likely that parking meter collections will be able to be reinstated by November 1

instead.

4. PaybyPhone/mobile parking payment rollout.

Amstutz explained that Town staff have been working with PayByPhone since about April to get the mobile parking payment application ready for launch in Arlington. They were very understanding of the unusual conditions we are in and that parking collections and enforcement has been suspended due to the pandemic. This provided some additional time to work through pieces of the launch, including: designating zones for the PayByPhone app; working with the Treasurer's Office on the merchant account; integrating PayByPhone with Cardinal, the enforcement software; and installing PayByPhone signage around Arlington Center. The contract with PayByPhone has also been amended to have a later effective start date because of these delays caused by the pandemic. Generally speaking, PayByPhone has indicated that they will be able to be ready by November 1 if we give that date to them as the go-live date. Amstutz asked if there were questions about PayByPhone or the previous agenda item.

Darcy Devney asked if the Town would consider making parking free in the Center on weekends during the Christmas season like previous years. Chapdelaine noted they usually make parking free on Saturdays (Sundays it is already free) starting Thanksgiving weekend until Christmas and it is something the business community appreciates. He expects they will do that again this year.

Ali Carter asked if there was an update about the Broadway parking meter installation. Phyllis Marshall said the contractor doing the installation had told her a few weeks ago that they planned to do it on October 5. However, she is still waiting on final confirmation from them. Carter asked if Marshall could notify her when she has confirmation so the business owners in the area can be alerted. Marshall said she will let her know.

5. Update on status of Arlington Center Sidewalk project and Broadway Plaza.

Mike Rademacher said the sidewalk contractor has some more work to do around Franklin Street but the project is almost complete. He expects most of the substantial work remaining will be done within the next two weeks. Tree planting and additional stamped red concrete borders will be added soon as well. Renovations to Broadway Plaza have been delayed by a Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) project to replace a large pipe underneath the Plaza. The MWRA had intended to begin that project this fall but it has been delayed until next year (2021) due to contracting issues stemming from COVID-19. The Town has an agreement with the MWRA where they will replace the surface of

the Plaza based on our plans and pay for 70% of the cost. The project will take place mostly in winter when water demand is lowest.

Chapdelaine commented that the quality of the work and the brick trim looks good and he thanked Rademacher for his work on the project. Devney agreed that it was great to not worry about tripping over loose bricks. Chapdelaine said that was one of the most visible and important aspects of the project and was glad the Town was able to make it happen. Leland Stein added that the sidewalk looks great in front of the Regent Theater and appreciated the work.

6. 15-minute parking zones.

Carter noted she had put out a survey to business owners earlier in the year to gather interest in having some 15-minute parking locations to facilitate curbside purchases. From that, four locations had 15-minute parking spots created. She has kept in touch with the businesses and it sounds like it is working well. However she expects to do some additional outreach since it's been a while since that survey was conducted.

John Hurd said he had seen people parking in the two spaces between the two parklets on Broadway at Broadway plaza, the ones that are supposed to be a handicap parking spot but aren't marked yet. He has also seen people stopping next to the parklets in the street, probably for curbside pickup. He suggested putting 15-minute parking in those spots until it is marked, or across the street in the open parking spaces. Carter said the two parking spaces between the parklets will be a handicap spot soon, and putting 15-minute parking across the street would make sense. Hurd clarified that people pulling up on the street alongside the parklets was the bigger problem.

Amstutz asked how the 15-minute parking locations were being enforced. Carter noted it's something of an honor system right now since parking enforcement officers aren't working. She will follow up with Officer Rateau to clarify how that will work once they return to work and the meters are turned on again.

7. Parklets around Arlington.

Carter explained that the Town has received a MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces grant to create parklets in Arlington. This grant will create three parklet spaces in Arlington Center and one in Arlington Heights. The first one isn't exactly a parklet but will install bicycle parking on Old Mystic Street (the pedestrian walkway between Whittemore Park and the building with the Wood & Strings Music Center) and string lights overhead to illuminate the walkway. The second location in the Center will be on the west side of Medford St across from the Regent and

closing off Park Terrace to through traffic. Picnic tables will be set up to allow for outdoor public dining. The third parklet in the Center will be on the west side of Alton Street just north of Broadway and will include a platform for ADA access. The parklet in the Heights will be in front of the empty storefront at 1306-1310 Mass Ave and will also feature a platform for accessibility. The parklets will be put out as soon as possible, but depend on when materials and equipment can be acquired. They will stay out as long as possible, hopefully until the end of November. There will be agreements with nearby businesses to help maintain and sanitize the parklet areas. If the parklets are well utilized and supported by surveys and feedback they may be put back in spring after the winter season is done.

Devney asked if these parklets are in addition to ones already in place. Carter said yes, the other ones are licensed to specific businesses but these are for anyone to use. Amstutz asked about how many parklets are in Arlington now. Carter said there are parklets in public parking spaces at Trattoria Nina, the Roasted Granola, and at Broadway Plaza. Other outdoor dining is taking place in traditional sidewalk cafes and in private parking lots dedicated to specific restaurants. Amstutz also asked about how many bicycle parking spaces will be provided on Old Mystic Street. Carter said about 15 bike racks total will be placed there.

8. Other Business.

Devney asked if new members would be added to the committee with the new charter. Amstutz explained they had intended to add new members earlier this year before COVID-19, along with exploring parking issues in more areas of town like East Arlington. Now that things have improved since spring, it may be possible to make more headway on these projects that were put on hold while responding to the pandemic. That could trigger a need for new members.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:47 PM.