



Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: August 10, 2022

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

Minutes.

1. Administration.

Members in Attendance: John Aslanian, Wayne Chouinard (DPW), Lenard Diggins, Ray Jones, Melissa Laube, Tycho Nightingale, Corey Rateau (APD), James Stubbe, Laura Swan (Chair), Scott Smith, and Shoji Takahashi.

Members Absent: Dan Amstutz (DPCD), Beth Benedikt, and Jeff Maxtutis.

Members of Public in Attendance: Paul Schlichtman and Joe Solomon.

The Chair provided notice regarding Remotely Conducted Meetings, referring the members to the agenda attachment entitled “Governor Charles Baker’s 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law”. The Chair reviewed the meeting ground rules and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

B. Approval of July 13, 2022 Meeting Notes (postponed until September).

C. Correspondence sent/received between June 4 and July 8, 2022.

1. July 14, 2022 memo from TAC to the office of the Select Board, “Endorsement of the Dallin School Safe Arrival/Dismissal “School Street Program”.
2. July 14, 2022 memo from TAC to the office of the Select Board, “Turning Improvement Request - Everett Street at Massachusetts Avenue”.
3. July 14, 2022 memo from TAC to the office of the Select Board, “Traffic Concerns – Bates Road at Massachusetts Avenue”.

4. August 8, 2022 memo from HMFH Architects titled "Response to TAC's Review of the Supplemental Traffic Impact Analysis...".

D. Town Day table on September 17.

TAC and ABAC will have a joint table at Town Day. Scott Smith suggested possible information to include at the table including summary of Connect Arlington, crash data maps, Route 16 (Somerville) redesign, Mass Ave and Appleton St Corridor Redesign, SRTS Dallin Arrival/Dismissal project, Chestnut St Safety Project. As the table is shared with ABAC, summaries of the Mystic River Path to Minuteman Bikeway Feasibility Study and Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project might be appropriate.

2. Public Comments (for information only, not for action).

There were no public comments.

3. Town Issues/Activities (not already on the agenda).

A. Wayne Chouinard provided an update from the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Construction in progress. Road paving near Peirce School and Stratton School with pavement markings to-be completed after their design is approved. Pavement markings for Medford St, River St, and Bates Rd have been approved; DPW is awaiting plans for University Rd before markings can be placed.

The next area for road rehabilitation will be near Thompson School: University Rd, Everett St, N Union St, Amsden St, Windsor St, and Waldo Rd. DPW is developing a draft process for prioritizing road work and design, which he will provide at the next TAC Meeting.

Laura Swan, in reference to a letter from the East Arlington Livable Streets Coalition (EALS), asked about the Mass Ave crosswalk at Lafayette St. Wayne Chouinard responded that lighting was updated, and DPW measured light readings. The crossing at Lafayette St is one of the brighter areas on Mass Ave in East Arlington. Pedestrian crossing signs were installed on both sides of the roadway in both directions to signal the crosswalk to drivers. DPW is seeking to establish standards for crosswalk signs and lighting.

Overnight Parking Pilot: Len Diggins informed TAC that the Select Board is considering a town-wide pilot program for on-street overnight parking by permit. A reason to consider this is that some residents, particularly renters, are negatively affected by the overnight parking ban. This might disproportionately affect certain demographic groups, raising an issue of equity.

Increase in parking supply might be important with the Redevelopment Board permitting accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and the possible increase in density of residents. He asked TAC about possible metrics to consider for success or failure of the pilot program.

Jim Stubbe asked about the reasoning for the overnight parking ban in the first place, and said this would be a starting point to generate metrics. He suggested careful consideration of the framing as a “staged deployment” instead of pilot.

Scott Smith offered parking occupancy as a metric, noting likely differences among the neighborhoods. He noted possible unintended consequences such as making owning vehicles easier; sharing lanes with bicycles more difficult (due to roadways narrowed by parked vehicles); and the challenge of reinstating a parking ban. For these reasons, he urged moving slowly and with caution.

Laura Swan informed TAC of the book *Parking Management Best Practices* by Todd Litman (2005). One point is the “more auto cycle” leading to an increase in automobile ownership due to parking availability at below market rates. Relatedly, communities can consider unbundling parking as an amenity for housing, and use economic models to generate parking prices.

Wayne Chouinard brought up considerations related to water management. In particular, he noted that street sweeping operations are crucial in removing sediment, contaminants, and tree droppings from the roadway. The result is large phosphorus removal and an increase in water quality, for which the Town is legally responsible. Sweeping effectiveness depends on no parking during the operation, and this might be impacted by lifting the overnight parking ban.

He also noted that rather than accommodating space for parking, the Town can narrow the roadway thereby reducing impervious area and enhancing flood resilience. Larger space for trees results in healthier trees that assist in flood mitigation and are more resistant to storm damage.

A broad strategy needs to be developed with metrics to account for these different needs.

John Aslanian offered three metrics: 1. Theft from vehicles. 2. Home burglary rate. 3. New vehicle registrations/excise tax (showing change in number of vehicles). He questioned the rationale of equity as a reason to permit overnight parking. Further, regarding the permitting of ADUs, the idea is to add more housing for people, but not to necessarily to add more automobiles. Mobility can be achieved through other means of transit.

Shoji Takahashi noted that different neighborhoods of the Town have different needs, and a Town-wide change might not be appropriate. He added that public roads are limited public space with important uses. Storage of personal automobiles on public space might not be the highest priority given the needs for,

for example, trees, bioswales, sidewalks, and bike lanes. In the coming years, there will be more pressure for EV charging spaces.

Melissa Laube agreed with other points, urging caution and deliberation. She emphasized that this is a far-reaching policy change with longer-term consequences that might not be apparent.

B. There was no update from the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).

C. There was no update from the Police Department (APD).

4. Discussion: Overlook Rd Traffic Calming

Shoji Takahashi will draft a Memo to the Select Board for TAC review.

5. Update: Mt Gilboa Traffic Calming

Ray Jones will be conducting stop-compliance observations. Waiting for the repainting of stop bars at Westminster Ave and Westmoreland Ave.

The speed feedback sign on Lowell St near the Reservoir is functioning sporadically. Wayne Chouinard observed that the tree canopy could be shielding the solar panels, causing power problems for the electronics. The battery and/or solar panels might need to-be upgraded.

6. Update: Newland Rd/Summer St Crosswalk.

Shoji Takahashi will draft a Memo to the Select Board for TAC review.

7. Update: Thompson Area Traffic Calming

Scott Smith made a request to DPW to install signage on Everett Street for the existing school zone on Everett St. Laura Swan added that a sign and striping inventory will be submitted. Consider a fog line on N Union St to keep people from parking and unloading.

8. Update: Chestnut St

Laura Swan updated that Stantec completed its ground survey. Unfortunately, the options recommend by TAC and approved by the Select Board will not fit the street geometry. Stantec designers are working on possible solutions.

Paul Schlichtman asked about the timeline for improvements as the pedestrian death occurred in 2019. Town action is necessary.

9. Update: Eastern Ave

Laura Swan said that speed data was obtained by Accurate Counts during a 4-day window on Eastern Ave at Fayette St. The 85th percentile was measured as 29 mph, but there was speeding during arrival and dismissal. We can consider enforcement, traffic calming, and speed feedback sign. The Working Group will review the signage.

10. Update: Crosswalks

A. Parking space on Mass Ave at Town Hall Crosswalk.

Shoji Takahashi will draft a Memo to the Select Board for TAC review on removing the single parking spot immediately east of the crosswalk (northside of Mass Ave).

B. Academy St and Maple St.

TAC Review for a crosswalk at Academy St and Maple St by the Senior Center was delayed due to construction and COVID-19. The Senior Center is now open and hosting events in person, and TAC will revisit the need for a marked crosswalk.

Ray Jones is the Council on Aging Representative for TAC and will conduct pedestrian counts at the intersection. He observed that cut-through traffic occurs during the evening commute around 6pm, and he will inquire with the Council on Aging on the peak time of use.

11. Discussion: Wachusett Ave and Appleton St

Jim Stubbe conducted a short site visit of the intersection, noting a large expanse of roadway with good visibility and light traffic. There is no stop for traffic heading eastbound on Appleton St. He observed automobiles that did not stop at the intersection when it was clear of traffic. However, if other automobiles were at the intersection, then they stopped.

Given the large area of the intersection and multiple roadways from different angles, Scott Smith suggested looking at the N Hancock St, Hancock St roundabout in Lexington.

Wayne Chouinard will arrange a meeting of the Working Group.

12. Discussion: Arlington High School

Scott Smith will lead the Working Group on assessing a traffic signal at Mill Brook Dr and Mill St. Laura Swan passed along questions from Jeff Maxtutis: 1. Is funding for the signal tied to construction? 2. What is "Option B" instead of installing or not installing a signal? 3. What were the assumptions of original traffic impact assessment (TIA)?

Paul Schlichtman informed TAC that the design idea for the new building is to encourage drop off on Mill Brook Dr.

Melissa Laube recalled that the concern is traffic backup to Mass Ave/Mill St signal and more analysis is needed on how to make this work. She added that there might not be a solution other than traffic light or no traffic light.

13. Discussion: Victoria Rd and Summer St

Jim Stubbe provided an overview of the 2019 Memo to the Select Board. He noted the observations of parked automobiles reducing visibility, and the recommendation to install bollards to prevent illegal parking at the crosswalk.

Long term, the Mystic River Path to Minuteman Bikeway Feasibility Study provides a design to move the crosswalk to the west side of Victoria Rd.

14. Discussion: Pedestrian flags

Laura Swan asked TAC Members to check on the status of pedestrian flags. If any location is running low, please let TAC know to refill them.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.