**City of Salem**

**Traffic and Parking Commission**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, December 6, 2019**

A meeting of the Salem Traffic and Parking Commission was held on Thursday, December 6, 2018 at 6:30pm at 98 Washington Street, Salem, MA. Present were Commission Chair Tanya Stepasiuk, Commission Vice-Chair Eric Papetti, Commissioner Robin Seidel, and Commissioner Lt. David Tucker. Assistant Director Downing and new Director David Kucharsky were also present.

**CALL OF MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 6:33pm.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments from the public.

**TRAFFIC AND PARKING DIRECTOR UPDATE**

* New Traffic & Parking Director

Assistant Director Downing introduced the new Director, David Kucharsky who proceeded to provide the Commission with a brief background of his career to date. Director Kucharsky is originally from New York City (NYC) where he worked in the private sector for several years as a transportation planner as well as for the NYC Department of City Planning. He relocated to Massachusetts in 2010 with his family and did some volunteer work for the City of Salem before working part-time for MassCommute as their Executive Director and the Town of Lexington as a part-time transportation planner. In 2014 he was offered a full-time position in Lexington focusing on transportation planning issues. Shortly after that he was promoted to Assistant Planning Director and then Planning Director before accepting the position in Salem.

Following that each of the Commissioners introduced themselves and provided their background and experience. There is currently a vacancy on the Commission with the Mayor’s Office looking at possible candidates. Assistant Director Downing noted that he would be going on extended leave and in the interim, the former Director, Matt Smith has been hired as a consultant to provide on-call assistant to Director Kucharsky as he transitions into the role. He also indicated that two new parking enforcement personnel have been hired recently and are working out well.

Chair Stepasiuk asked when budget discussions begin and whether additional enforcement personnel should be requested. Assistant Director Downing noted that the revenue being generated by parking operations should justify a request for additional enforcement. Vice-Chair Papetti requested that consideration also be given to developing a transportation budget noting that currently there are multiple departments responsible for specific transportation tasks but would like to see something more holistic in nature.

* Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP)

Assistant Director Downing began discussing the LTIP noting it has been helpful to understand the full scope of transportation projects the City is working on. He noted that there is still more work to be done with regard to communicating more effectively with other departments who are overseeing this work in order to ensure the Commission’s and staff input are considered as part of the process. Chair Stepasiuk also voiced frustration with the fact that the proposed regulation and ordinance changes submitted by the Commission to the City Council have not moved forward to date.

Assistant Director Downing indicated he had not heard back yet on whether the city was awarded the grant to update the ADA Transition Plan. Vice-chair Papetti requested that staff look to identify what has been done to date that could be incorporated into this plan as well as determine how much staff time would be required to develop the plan as part of the drafting of the scope of work. Assistant Director Downing stated there are certain components that have already been drafted by other departments and efforts that would be consolidated into this report.

Vice-chair Papetti noted that the Bicycle Master Plan has been finalized and would like to see efforts continue to develop the infrastructure recommendations cited in the report. Director Kucharsky stated he was meeting with senior planner Tom Devine next week to discuss a scope of work that would look at developing design plans for a select number of recommendations.

**NEW / OLD BUSINESS**

* Request for Traffic Ordinance Recommendations

Commission discussed the opening of the recreational marijuana dispensary operated by Alternative Group Therapies (ATG). Commissioner Tucker indicated they are close to opening with a target date of December 14th. Salem Police have been working closely with ATG on the various logistics involved with the opening including discussing the idea of having a reservation only system in place, instead of a walk-in service, which is what they appear to be moving forward with.

Commissioner Tucker noted he would be going before the City Council tonight with temporary resident sticker parking in the area, which can be rescinded by the Chief of Police when she feels is appropriate. Sticker parking will be allowed on Beaver Street from Silver to Goodhue, Mason from Flint to Grove, and some small off-street lots around Flint and Mason.

Chair Stepasiuk asked for more details about the overall traffic and parking plan for the dispensaries opening. Commissioner Tucker indicated that the eastbound side of Harmony Grove would be used for on street parking by customers. No parking would be allowed along the westbound side of the street. Customers would be encouraged to also park at the nearby Universal Steel lot on Bridge Street. Director Kucharsky noted that ATG would be providing a shuttle service which would make stops at the MBTA commuter station and Universal Steel lot.

In addition, a 15-minute parking restriction has been requested to provide customer parking for existing businesses and short-term visitor parking at the existing mixed-use building at 28 Goodhue. The request did not specify the number of spaces requested. Commission discussed how many spaces should be signed.

Assistant Director Downing recommended that since specific ordinance language is not currently drafted, Commissioner Tucker or Officer Levesque provide ordinance language to the Director which reflects the discussion had by the Commission this evening.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Commission discussed meeting schedule. There was agreement to cancel the meeting on December 20th and meet again on January 6th, 2019.

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL**

No minutes were reviewed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Seidel and seconded by Vice-Chair Papetti, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:18pm.