**City of Salem**

**Traffic and Parking Commission**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, November 7, 2019**

A meeting of the Salem Traffic and Parking Commission was held on Thursday, November 7, 2019 at 6:30pm at 98 Washington Street, Salem. **Present:** Commission Vice-Chair Eric Papetti, Commissioner Todd Waller, Commission Lt. David Tucker, Director of Traffic and Parking David Kucharsky, and Assistant Director Nick Downing. **Absent:**  Commissioner Robin Seidel and Commission Chair Tanya Stepasiuk

**CALL OF MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 6:35pm by Vice-Chair Papetti.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*Jeff Cohen of 12 Hancock Street:*

Mr. Cohen commented on the Salem shuttle proposal, and explained that he is on the Leadership Council for All Ages, which initiated the associated feasibility study

Mr. Cohen was part of group that created the free shuttle at UMASS in the 1970’s and travels around campus. Mr. Cohen notes he has a similar concept for a free shuttle for Salem residents that non-residents would pay a fee to use. He states it would help with low income residents to reduce their financial burden while allowing them to stay and work in the city of Salem.

**TRAFFIC AND PARKING DIRECTOR UPDATE**

**Downtown Bike Upgrades**

Mr. Kucharsky explains that through the Highway Safety Improvement Plan (“HSIP”), which is a federal grant, the city added bike lanes and pedestrian striping in the downtown area. The work began in September, and has essentially been completed, but for a punch list of minor items to be done, such as:

* MASSDOT was asked to put number route icons for Route 107 and Route 114
* 1 or 2 bus stops to be designated with signage

Vice Chair Papetti indicates the number route icons have been completed.

Mr. Papetti asks what kind of operational changes the city needs to consider regarding sweeping, snow removal in winter, and enforcement downtown with respect to bike lanes, and specifically asks if there is a written plan for operational changes with timelines. Mr. Kucharsky indicates he is not aware of one but can check with the DPS director.

**E-Scooters Pilot**

Mr. Kucharsky discusses relevant operational changes in October, such as no operational scooters in the downtown area during weekends and maximum speed limit of 5mph in downtown during weekdays. He also notes that following the operational changes Zagster removed the scooters because a new model was being deployed, which just got deployed this past Tuesday or Wednesday.

Mr. Kucharsky explains there have been discussions of rolling out a winter plan, which would comprise 50 scooters and 35 bikes available, located at seven designated dock stations. Three of the dock stations would serve Salem State University at the central, north, and south campuses. There would also be some in the downtown area at Washington St. and Federal St., Washington St. and Front St., Congress St. and Ward St., as well as one at the end of the bike trail near the Dominos. Mr. Kucharsky represents that the details are being worked out with Zagster, including how to deal with snow removal and ensuring paths are clear. He notes that if there is snow or the temperature falls below 30 degrees, Zagster would not deploy the scooters because the batteries are impacted by such conditions.

Mr. Papetti makes reference to two crashes that had occurred and inquires to the details and nature of the accidents. Commission Lt. David Tucker indicates one was a scooter hitting a parked car, but cannot recall the second. He notes, however, that both were minor in nature with no serious injuries.

**October Parking Enforcement**

Mr. Kucharsky explains the city expanded number of streets that receive the orange signs for temporary October resident passes this year. Throughout the month they received feedback throughout October from residents, employees, and others, which will be used to develop and submit recommendations working with Commission to create an ordinance rather than an order every year as to what streets will be incorporated, hours of enforcement, etc., with the hopes that it creates expectations for staff and general public.

Mr. Kucharsky notes that 530 tickets were issued in the month of October specific to vehicles parked in resident permit areas. He hopes to have something that will eventually go in front of city council.

Commissioner Todd Waller asks about ticket numbers from last year, and Mr. Kucharsky says they can be obtained.

Vice Chair Papetti suggests digging down into street specific details over the next couple months. Assistant Director of Traffic and Parking, Nick Downing, notes that staff has street by street breakdown we can look at to see the concentration of violations. Mr. Downing explains that violations occurred mostly on streets that were expected to have a high number, but that other streets were affected too.

**Shuttle Study Next Steps**

Mr. Kucharsky explains that Traffic and Parking recently applied for a MassDOT workforce grant to fund part of the service being proposed. He notes they are looking at options to explore a “turn key service” that provides on demand ride sharing. A Request for Proposals (RFP) is being developed seeking vendors who can provide this service. Nelson Nygaard had been hired to conduct an analysis to see what type of service would best serve the community, and this was the option that seemed to make the most sense. Mr. Kucharsky is working with the Council on Aging to make sure anything they roll out is in line with any services they are providing. Mr. Kucharsky mentions the community of Newton launched a similar service, and he is working with them to get feedback and lessons learned since their rollout this past April.

Vice Chair Papetti notes that Newton replaced their Council on Aging service with a shuttle service, which was different than our council on aging service to begin with. Mr. Papetti asks what would be different in Salem, or if there were any useful lessons. Mr. Kucharsky indicates differences include agreements regarding service hours they are able to provide, and that we will be looking into how many vehicles would be needed for this to be available. Mr. Kucharsky notes that if the service is popular, perhaps it can be expanded. Mr. Papetti asks about the number of vehicles required, and Mr. Kucharsky states the preliminary estimate is four to five vehicles, noting that the RFP is still being developed.

Mr. Papetti asks about estimated staff time requirements to manage the program, and Mr. Kucharsky explains further discussions regarding the effects on existing staff are needed. Mr. Papetti expresses his concern that staff currently have full plates and this will be a lot of work to get off the ground. Mr. Kucharsky expresses hope that the vendor can deal with a lot of the required work, including customer service, marketing, etc. Mr. Papetti reiterates concerns about staff capacity, and explains that we can outsource the work but not the responsibility, and reminds everyone that this is people’s transportation we are discussing, and that even if a vendor does not work out the responsibility is on the city. Mr. Papetti indicates he is willing to advocate for more staff if needed.

Mr. Waller asks about MASSDOT funding, and Mr. Kucharsky states that $250,000 is the maximum amount, which was requested. Mr. Papetti says $250,000 does not sound adequate to cover 4 shuttles, and Mr. Kucharsky notes that 1% of gross sales at marijuana dispensaries are to be used for transportation enhancements, including projects like this. There is a brief discussion of how much 1% of gross sales might be. Lt. Tucker confirms the 1% of gross sales figures, and indicates it could be a significant amount.

Vice Chair Papetti opens the floor to public comment.

*Rob Liani of 96 Bridge Street:*

Mr. Liani says he understands how buses can alleviate congestion, but asks how an on-demand shuttle service would work.Mr. Kucharsky explains the service would be similar to Uber/Lyft, but could seat 7 to 8 people. He further explains that the software would have an algorithm that acts like a dispatcher, and that the service can be node based or door to door. Mr. Kucharsky states the intent is to give people an additional option where they do not need a car.

*Councilor Christine Madore*

Referring to the October parking discussion Councilor Madore notes it was clear that Warren St did not need to be posted as resident only. Per resident feedback, and her own observations there was plenty of parking on that street and it was underutilized. Ms. Madore explains the original fear was expanding side streets might affect Warren, but most residents have driveways so the designation was not needed. Councilor Madore also mentions Chestnut Street as being similar, but further complicated by two-hour enforcement in the area. She hopes next year we can consider the various layers of ordinances, and have a broad discussion concerning the complexities of that area. Councilor Madore also notes the area in front of the library created a bit of panic.

*Drew Nelson 102 Bridge St*

Ms. Nelson indicates she lives behind the library and had difficulty knowing where to park, and had access issues to certain areas downtown.

 **NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

**Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program**

**Bridge Street**

Mr. Kucharskyacknowledges receiving a petition a month ago from Councilor Madore requesting the commission look at calming measures for Bridge Street, particularly at the intersections of Bridge Street and Winter Street, as well as Bridge Street at Northey Street. Mr. Kucharsky explains that the protocol is to bring petitioners and residents in to hear from them, and then to have police use devices to capture traffic volume and speed that are inconspicuous to better capture actual behavior and traffic data. He notes that it was not done in October because of the potential for skewed volumes and data. He explains that tonight is an opportunity to hear from residents to see what we can implement in the interim and long term.

Councilor Madore clarifies she submitted the petition more than a month ago, and explains it included notes from neighborhood meetings, where concerns have come up repeatedly. She notes the geometry and slight curve of the road at the intersection of Winter and Bridge encourages speeding, and identifies the landscaped area with cross walks, poor lighting in the evening, confusing crossings, and traffic volume as issues for pedestrians. Councilor Madore states that pedestrian signs have been repeatedly hit, as well as an actual pedestrian, and that the intersection is dangerous. Councilor Madore urges something be done to improve pedestrian safety, and believes this is the most urgent aspect of the application.

Mr. Cohen agrees with Councilor Madore, and also mentions the intersection at Boston St as problematic, and that cars coming from Beverly do not always realize it is a single lane going into the intersection. Mr. Cohen notes that when cars turn left onto Winter Street, often if a car behind wants to continue onto Bridge Street they will accelerate through the intersection and make it difficult for others to turn onto Northey Street, and pedestrians attempting to cross. Mr. Cohen says he is not sure what the answer is, but suggests a sign that says this is a single lane with no passing on the right. He reiterates that the intersection is very precarious and difficult to tell who has the right of way because it is not a square intersection. Mr. Cohen also notes someone was hit while driving in the intersection.

*Flora Tonthat of 30 Northey Street:*

Ms. Tonthat states she normally takes a left onto Northey Street and that cars are often blocking the entrance making her unable to turn. She asks if there is a way to have a “Do Not Block Intersection” sign or painting installed. Ms. Tonthat notes that last year there was a fatality on Bridge Street near the 99 Restaurant, and notes that expresses that the whole of Bridge Street is dangerous to cross. She also indicates the Carlton School is nearby, making it dangerous for kids that are crossing.

Ms. Nelson asks if there can be more monitoring for excessive speeding on Bridge Street, comments on the congestion, and asks if Route 1A should be on the bypass, as large trucks go by fast and cause buildings to shake, including her home. Ms. Nelson also notes it is difficult for cars trying to get out of side streets due to speeding and congestion. A bus stop nearby adds to congestion as well, and she asks if it can be moved farther down where the street is wider.

Mr. Liani says he agrees the intersection needs some modifications and acknowledges it can be difficult to cross as well as drive through. He states he is in favor of making it safer for everyone, but thinks it is important for it to remain Route 1A as it is important to the businesses that depend on a certain amount of traffic, but believes it can be made safer and accommodate everyone. Mr. Liani notes that trucks have many deliveries on Bridge Street so changing the route would not eliminate trucks, as businesses need deliveries regularly. Nonetheless, he agrees that something can and should be done to make it safer.

*Amy McKean 6 Cromwell St.:*

Ms. McKean indicates she believes conditions are better since the bypass opened up. She notes there used to be a small island with a blinking light in this intersection before the street was improved, and that it made people slow down. It was an obstacle that made people stay alert and slow down, so she suggests that maybe something like that could work as a solution.

*Councilor Robert McCarthy:*

Councilor McCarthy makes the observation that as a whole when streets got redone the new flashing yellow lights for pedestrian crossings are not effective, because in his experience no one pays attention to them. He indicates that previously if you pushed a button the light would go red, and maintains that blinking yellow lights are more confusing for drivers than a red light, which would cause people to stop for pedestrians. Councilor McCarthy asks that the Commission relook at the flashing lights because the pedestrian cross lights are not safe. He also indicates that is one of the reasons there is still a crossing guard at the Carlton School.

*Councilor Elect Conrad Prosniewski:*

Councilor Elect Prosniewski states that in his 40 years of experience with the police department he investigated many accidents at this particular intersection, and submits that the bypass road did help traffic a lot on Bridge Street. He also mentions that there are no markings telling people what to do, and suggests the state paint indicators for where cars are supposed to go using high quality paint. Mr. Prosniewski suggests painted island in the middle of the intersection to help slow down cars as well.

*Liz [inaudible at 37:14] of 12 Rice Street:*

Resident indicates she walks bridge street all the time, close to Clipper Ship Inn. She has lived there two years and always avoids the intersection and plans in advance. She notes there is never a break in the traffic, and agrees that blinking yellow lights are mostly useless. She notes that you have to step out and stick your head out to make sure safe and wait to cross.

Councilor Madore states she saw a study two years ago about changing the orientation of the intersection with some paint and markings, and suggests we not reinvent the wheel, but instead look back at those findings when implementing a solution. She informs the Commission that she gets the most emails about this intersection, and asks that it be a priority.

Mr. Downing explains that this was one of three intersections the city had an engineering firm look at. He notes one of the options discussed was making a rotary (full geometric change) but, that traffic coming from Beverly does not have appropriate angle to slow down traffic for an acceptably designed rotary. Mr. Downing notes it is unfortunate the flashing light was removed, because replacing it would not make sense from an engineering perspective. He indicates the study also looked at making the intersection a four way stop, and that this option was the best from safety standpoint, but grinds intersection traffic down substantially. The third option was leaving the intersection as is with some minor geometric changes

Ms. Tonthat asks whether it is possible or not to have a pedestrian crossing light here and on Webb Street that turns red when someone needs to cross rather than a flashing yellow light.

Mr. Kucharsky notes he is not certain when the warrant analysis was done, which accounts for the volume of traffic (both cars and pedestrians) going through an intersection. The data that was collected helped shape whatever decisions were made, and Mr. Kucharsky states the data for these two intersections can be reviewed again.

Mr. Downing explains that sometimes the reality is that things that were done decades ago often cannot be done legally now, and that while some prior decisions seem sensible today, steps that we need to legally take now often make them too expensive or unworkable.

Ms. Nelson suggests that the speed limit be enforced better or lowered as an improvement.

Lt. Tucker adds that data collection can be done a number of ways, and proffers speed and poor driving habits as factors that contribute to the danger of these intersections. He notes the least cost option would be to reduce the options drivers have going through, which might also help address safety for pedestrians.

Mr. Kucharsky notes there was an internal meeting with engineering, and that they will be looking into some additional striping to try to get drivers to better understand where the road is and how to go through the intersection safely. Regarding speed limits, Mr. Kucharsky explains they are an agreement between the municipality and the state and would involve conducting a speed analysis to change it. He notes that if there is no designated speed or speed study done for this road, statutory speeds can be reviewed to determine what would be appropriate, and he indicates this area would likely be classified as a business district, which the city recently assigned a statutory speed of 25 miles per hour. Mr. Kucharsky also suggests the potential for installing orange and black “Thickly Settled” signs, as well as radar feedback signs.

Mr. Waller agrees with formalizing lanes with striping and believes it will make a major impact on safety. He discusses the current ambiguities of the wide open space in the intersection making it difficult for drivers and pedestrians.

Vice Chair Papetti asks about the status of the spreadsheet that lists projects, and asks if the second tab can be used to track and report on completed neighborhood traffic calming programs. Mr. Kucharsky indicates the spreadsheet is currently being populated and that it can be presented at the next meeting. Mr. Papetti indicates he would like an overall presentation of what is in the queue, that includes prioritization given our finite resources. Mr. Kucharsky and Mr. Papetti confirm this will occur at the December meeting.

Mr. Papetti reiterates the concerns of the public regarding flashing lights and states he understands it might be easier for engineers to throw up a flashing light rather than make extensive changes to road geometry, but encourages anyone with influence to push back and say that the flashing signs should be the icing on cake after figuring out how to make intersection safe geometrically.

Councilor Madore indicates she would like a sense of next steps and wonders if there is a viable solution or recommendation as she recognizes we could talk about this all year. She acknowledges there was an internal meeting about striping, but asks if there is opportunity for the neighborhood or some type of forum to provide feedback and see what would be a good solution and fit for the area. Mr. Kucharsky says he can work with Lt. Tucker to get additional traffic data and follow up with engineers, as well as meet with neighborhood separate from traffic and parking commission to receive feedback.

\**Commissioner Seidel joins at 7:27PM due to delayed train from Boston.*

Mr. Liani states congestion is a major traffic issue in Salem and suggests the long term approach should be determining how to best use and design the whole intersection, and recognizes that likely needs some type of full signalization to let people cross safely and allow traffic to flow.

**Request for Traffic Ordinance Recommendation:**

**Hawthorne Boulevard**

Mr. Kucharsky indicates he conducted a street diagnostic on Hawthorne Blvd. which he brought before commission months ago, where he compared traffic ordinances with existing signage. Mr. Kucharsky notes there are many discrepancies, issues with signage, as well as layers of ordinances with some not being properly rescinded, resulting in confusion and difficulty for enforcement. Mr. Kucharsky states the city was developing amendments to the overall residential parking permit program, and that Councilor McCarthy and local residents asked if f this location could be examined. Mr. Kucharsky notes that he and Mr. Downing have worked on proposed changes that will clean it up and make it easier for everyone. A map of the proposed recommendations is shared with the Commission, along with a packet including ordinance language changes. Some existing ordinances will need to be repealed, some will need updated appropriate signage, and others will need some modification.

Mr. Downing explains that there are three categories of parking in the proposal: (1) 15 minute parking on the one-way section of Hawthorne Boulevard in front of the dry cleaners and antique shop (currently overlapping ordinances for 15 minute parking and a service zone); (2) resident permit parking with two-hour nonresidential parking allowance Monday through Saturday 8AM to 6PM continuing on the remainder of Hawthorne Boulevard up to the intersection with Charter Street; and (3) four-hour metered parking (currently exists now, but conflicting ordinances and issues with signage). Mr Downing also notes that some of the issues with the ordinances result from the fact that Hawthorne Boulevard is a bit strange, consisting of a two way section, a grassy median, and then a one way section going south and a one way section going north, all of which is considered Hawthorne Boulevard. Mr. Downing explains that the cleaning up of ordinances will also use consistent language to determine what portion of the road is being discussed.

Mr. Downing also discusses two sections on Charter Street (three parking spaces total) that were previously unrestricted but will be will mirror what is across Hawthorne Boulevard with the residential/two-hour nonresidential split.

Vice Chair Papetti asks how the proposal compares to how the spaces are actually currently being used, and Mr. Kucharsky explains that the two-way section on southbound Hawthorne Blvd is currently two-hour parking according in ordinance, but there is no signage so people often park there all day. Mr. Kucharsky adds that it becomes temporary residential parking during Halloween. He also explains that metered spaces are clear and used accordingly. Mr. Kucharsky indicates the overall intent is to give residents on Hawthorne Blvd access to parking, but to also allow visitors during the day.

Mr. Waller asks if the meters would stay where they are, and Mr. Kucharsky says they will. Mr. Papetti confirms with Mr. Kucharsky that there are only meters on the northbound section. There is a brief discussion about referencing the street sections as Hawthorne Boulevard and Little Hawthorne Boulevard.

Vice Chair Papetti asks if there are anticipated enforcement issues regarding the parking switching from non-residential to residential, and Mr. Kucharsky indicates that efforts would be made to reach out to the abutters to make sure they are getting resident parking stickers so that it can be enforced accordingly.

Mr. Kucharsky also notes that currently they are attempting to amend the resident parking ordinance such that in all cases no guest/visitor parking would be issued until there is a better handle on the situation. He claims the location has plenty of parking for visitors, such as garages. Mr. Downing clarifies that any visitors could park in the spots being discussed for up to two hours without having a pass. Mr. Kucharsky adds that the metered spaces are only enforced until 6PM, so overnight parking is available.

Mr. Waller asks if there are any restrictions on the 15-minute parking spots or if they are residential or not, and Mr. Downing explains that the only restriction is the 15-minute limit.

Mr. Papetti asks if there is a need for a loading zone along the corridor. Mr. Downing explains that the businesses along the abutting section of Essex Street across from the Hawthorne Hotel have had issues with loading and that it has been a point of contention recently. He notes that including a loading zone was not considered in the initial recommendation. Lt. Tucker adds that it is currently a loading zone as well as 15-minute parking on the books, but the signage is only for 15-minute parking. Mr. Downing and Mr. Waller discuss how to ensure commercial vehicles have access to these businesses, and consider whether the loading zone is close enough to the businesses on Essex Street.

Councilor McCarthy comments that a service zone is one of the only thing that works in that area, as it is utilized by the dry cleaners as well as the Hawthorne Hotel. Mr. McCarthy also states that he spoke with the priest from the nearby church, who mentioned they are reconfiguring the traffic pattern in their lot and that they will be asking for separate curb cut which will affect one of the metered spots. Councilor McCarthy also confirms that the tour bus parking in the area will be eliminated, and asks why the whole area cannot go back to the way it was previously. He discusses the difficulties of the configuration and says he would like a meeting to get feedback from residents in the neighborhood to make sure enforcement goes smoothly.

Councilor Mador opines that “Little Hawthorne Boulevard” throughway serves zero value as a thoroughfare for cars, and essentially acts as a parking lot. She asks if we can we get creative, perhaps make it a square, acknowledging that such a proposal might not get much support. Councilor McCarthy says he would guarantee pushback from residents and the businesses. Mr. Cohen disagrees with Councilor Mador’s suggestion, but indicates support for Councilor McCarthy’s desire to return the street to the way it was previously. Mr. Cohen states that when it was a two-way in the lower section, it diverted traffic, and that making it a one way it has become a safety issue for pedestrians crossing toward Charter Street. He suggests making it a two-way at the bottom so that it could be used as a cut-through to alleviate traffic and make the intersection safer.

Mr. Papetti asks if this is going to city council immediately or if this was more an attempt to receive feedback from the commission. Mr. Kucharsky indicates the hope was to get a recommendation, and then bring it to the city council, however, after hearing Councilor McCarthy’s concerns he would also want to get feedback from abutters. Mr. Papetti agrees and supports the idea of additional neighborhood outreach, as well as businesses to understand what their delivery needs are, so that perhaps a loading zone with flexible hours can be incorporated if necessary.

Councilor McCarthy suggests loading zones on “Little Hawthorne” with signage for a 8AM to 5PM, so it can be used as parking after.

Vice Chair Papetti says he likes that there is limited traffic on the carriage road (“Little Hawthorne”) and states how it is helpful from his perspective as a biker. He also suggests it might be a good spot for contra flow bike lanes. Mr. Papetti also agrees that some signage or something to slow people from whipping into the carriage road could be helpful. Ms. Seidel agrees and notes that in October she often walked on the carriage road as the sidewalks were very crowded. She indicates she likes Councilor Madore’s idea to some extent, but wonders if in the future when repaving a material can be used that encourages multipurpose use. Ms. Seidel also notes there is great green space there that is underutilized, and that it could be a public event space in the future if the road material were conducive.

Mr. Papetti asks if a vote should be taken, and Mr. Downing states some tweaks need to be made based on the discussion and feedback, such as the additional loading zone, and certain language changes, which would then be brought back to a future meeting for a vote. Mr. Kucharsky adds that they would meet with the abutters as well to get feedback on the proposal. Councilor McCarthy reiterates the difficulties of crossing in front of the church after “Little Hawthorne” was partially made into a one way when the traffic light was installed. He suggests looking into the reason the light was installed. Mr. Downing confirms there will be further tweaks to language, outreach, and the proposal will be brought back at a future meeting.

**Highland Avenue at Heritage Drive**

Mr. Kuckarsky introduces a request from Councilor Tim Flynn, to establish resident parking on Heritage Drive, which is perpendicular to Highland Avenue near the North Shore Medical Center (“NSMC”), from the intersection with Highland Avenue to the first set of driveways. Mr. Kucharsky states the request has been reviewed, that he met with Lt. Tucker, and that he determined this would only affect two residences with a total of six units. A representative from 62/64 Highland Avenue clarifies that there are actually four units. Mr. Kucharsky notes that if recommended and approved by council, anyone who abuts Heritage Drive on that segment would be eligible for resident parking. Mr. Kucharsky explains that currently hospital staff are parking in the spots being discussed all day, despite having parking lots and shuttles, and that this has been having an impact on residents. He maintains this is a small area where it makes sense and that it would only impact a small number of dwellings. He also explains that there would be no visitor parking proposed for these spots.

Vice Chair Papetti asks what the relationship to safety is in this instance. Mr. Kuckarsky explains that he ordinance designates resident permit parking on Highland Avenue, which seemed inappropriate, perhaps due to the street looking different when it was passed. Mr. Kucharsky indicates the plan would be to rescind that ordinance. Mr. Downing adds it was passed in 1992, but that no resident stickers are issued for this section currently. Mr. Downing expresses that it currently it does not seem like a location anyone should be parking, and that this would be part of the work to clean up ordinances. The representative from 62/64 Highland Avenue confirms that parking on this stretch is not viable, and that the only option is Heritage Drive. She presents her personal account of having difficulty finding parking due to NSMC employees parking there all day long after. Lt Tucker asks if the circumstances are new due to construction or if this has always been the case, and the resident explains it has been happening for a while.

Mr. Papetti asks about the size of the section being discussed, and Mr. Downing and Mr. Kucharsky indicate t is 100 feet, approximately 20 feet from the intersection up to the first driveway. Mr. Papetti next asks if this is adequate parking for residents. Mr. Kucharsky notes there is a development with parking, and the resident from 62/64 Highland Ave says the issue only exists on weekdays, and that weekends are not an issue. Mr. Papetti acknowledges the proposal makes sense, and Commissioner Seidel agrees.

*On a motion duly made by Commissioner Seidel and seconded by Commissioner Waller, the Traffic and Parking Commission votes to recommend residential parking on Heritage Drive to the city council. The vote is all in favor, and the motion passes.*

**Thanksgiving and Christmas Parking**

Mr. Kucharsky states the intent is to be proactive and get things before the commission and council in a timely fashion. The request is for free parking in certain locations on five specific days (November 28th, 29th, 30th, and December 24th and 25th). Mr. Waller asks about whether people will know when to pay and when not, specifically with respect to the Church Street Lot. Mr. Kucharsky indicates they are developing signs and seeing if messaging can be pushed out to advertise at the parking kiosks. Mr. Downing notes the holiday changes happened unofficially before, and wanted to be able to have an official message put out.

Vice Chair Papetti asks about the foregone cost in parking revenue per day, and Mr. Kuckarsky says he will have to take a look as he does not have the data readily available. Mr. Papetti next asks how multi-nodal elements can be incorporated into this concept, particularly around small business Saturday. He expresses that it is awkward to offer free parking as though Salem has something to apologize for, and opines that the density of the community is a strength. Mr. Papetti further notes that paying for parking is part of what makes the downtown area “work”. Ultimately, he asks if we can add something to this, such as a bike share or bike valet, or perhaps a resolution of support from city councilors to encourage studying this for next year. Mr. Papetti indicates he has friends who work in the MIT transit lab that might have helpful data, and that he had previously asked them about the cost of underwriting free local bus service on the days in question, which was identified as under $1,000 per day. Mr. Papetti suggests this might be less than the lost parking revenue, and also suggests we consider service workers and ways to help them.

Mr. Downing offers that the transit piece would take more time to figure out, but notes his gut feeling is that at least with respect to bike sharing, the addition would be straight forward and suggests he could reach out to Zagster and ask them about it. He states it could be added to the order language easily, and that if communications with Zagster are favorable it could potentially be included this year.

Ms. Seidel suggests working with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the free parking, and asks if the shuttle will be operational at that point whether fully or as a pilot. Mr. Kucharsky explains it will not be operational at that point in time. Mr. Waller notes he is on the board of the Chamber of Commerce and confirms that the parking is promoted.

Ms. Seidel also suggests implementing shuttles between Beverly and Salem next year, as both towns would benefit, particularly on small business Saturday

Mr. Downing asks if changes should be made to this language, or if a vote should be taken now with a separate vote later about future items to consider. Vice Chair Papetti suggests we separately approve what has been proposed, and perhaps quickly come up with a resolution in support of concurrently developing multi-modal options to accompany the free parking that happens over small business Saturday.

*On a motion duly made by Commissioner Waller and seconded by Commissioner Seidel, the Traffic and Parking Commission votes to approve the proposed free parking dates for Thanksgiving and Christmas. The vote is all in favor, and the motion passes.*

Vice Chair Papetti also asks for a resolution of support from board members requesting that traffic and parking staff present to city council a plan for incorporating multi-modal elements such ass free transit, bike share, and whatever else may be appropriate into next year’s free holiday parking order.

Vice Chair Papetti opens the floor to public comment:

Councilor Madore asks if the free parking was done last year, and Mr. Papetti indicates it was. Mr. Downing adds it was a mayoral declaration.

*On a motion duly made by Commissioner Seidel and seconded by Lt. Tucker, the Traffic and Parking Commission votes to approve the the additional resolution. The vote is all in favor, and the motion passes.*

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Seidel asks for quick recap of the October parking discussion, and Mr. Downing directs her to the packet with data and information on October parking. Ms. Seidel notes she had to call the police multiple times for illegal parking.

Vice Chair Papetti asks if the city voted in the MPO election, as the turnout was only 45 percent of all the cities and towns in the region. There is a brief discussion on the voting, and Mr. Papetti also notes that there was an interesting presentation on central business districts and how people get to them.

Ms. Seidel claims there is a new tool on the state website for grant funding by topic that is for municipalities to apply for funding from state. She states she will send it along if she can find it, as it would be good to look through and see if there is anything relevant for which to apply in the following year.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS SCHEDULE**

Mr. Downing explains that tonight’s meeting was an additional one, so there will still be one two weeks from now on November 21st. He also notes the final meeting of the calendar year will be on December 19th.

Mr. Papetti asks if there is a document that has topics for discussion at various points of throughout the year. Mr. Kucharsky states there is but that he does not have it with him currently. Mr. Papetti asks if we are on track for various discussions and Mr. Downing affirms. Mr. Downing also notes that the following meeting does not have much on the agenda, so it should provide ample time to discuss snow and the CIP.

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL**

Mr. Downing hands out three packets of minutes for approval and asks that the board look closely at who was in attendance as an adequate number of people are required to approve.

Mr. Papetti requests everyone review the August 22nd, September 5th, and September 19th minutes.

Ms. Seidel notes she cannot vote on the September 5th minutes as she was not present.

*On a motion duly made by Commissioner Seidel and seconded by Commissioner Waller, the Traffic and Parking Commission votes to approve the August 22nd and September 19th meeting minutes. The vote is all in favor, the motion passes.*

*On a motion duly made by Commissioner Waller and seconded by Lt. Tucker, the Traffic and Parking Commission votes to approve the September 5th meeting minutes. The vote is all in favor, the motion passes.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

*On a motion duly made by Commissioner Seidel and seconded by Commissioner Waller, the Traffic and Parking Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:30PM.*

The following documents were used at the meeting and can be viewed by making a request to the Traffic & Parking Department:

* Hawthorne Boulevard and Charter Street Proposal (map)
* Proposed Order – Free Holiday Parking
* Proposed Ordinance Change – Hawthorne Boulevard
* Proposed Ordinance Change – Heritage Drive and Highland Avenue