

**City of Worcester Accessibility Advisory Commission
Tuesday May 17, 2022, 4:30 PM Meeting Minutes**

Virtual meeting with WebEx platform
<http://www.worcesterma.gov/video-on-demand>
ASL interpreters provided

Attendance:

Members Present: Robert Bureau, James Delage, Philip Economou, John Finn, Jr., Darya Karuna, Linda Larrivee, Joseph Prochilo, Stephen Stolberg

Members Absent: Jully Khattar, Elizabeth Myska, Christina Parissi

Staff: Jayna Turcek, Dawn E. Clark

Guests: Mark Kostovsky, Dept. of Public Works
Stephen Rolle & Brian Pigeon, City EOED; Lily Ko, Toole
Design
Patricia Carlson, Thrive

Call to order, instructions for virtual meeting, introductions

Chairperson Bureau called the meeting to order at 4:35pm and requested Director Turcek to provide the technology instructions for public access to the meeting. Commissioners then introduced themselves on roll call.

Approval of April 12, 2022 minutes*

Commissioner Karuna moved to approve the April 12, 2022 minutes as written. Commissioner Prochilo seconded the motion. Unanimously approved by roll call.

Update on HP parking in the city (street meter changes, Park Worcester platform)

For add'l reference: Review Massachusetts HP parking regulations:
[https://www.mass.gov/doc/disability-rights-laws-in-massachusetts/download? ga=2.103083907.2002521313.1648473864-690347220.1634131918](https://www.mass.gov/doc/disability-rights-laws-in-massachusetts/download?ga=2.103083907.2002521313.1648473864-690347220.1634131918)

Mark Kostovsky, Dept. of Public Works Parking Manager has been with the City for about three years. He characterized the parking program at that time as reactive/passive system and needed to improve the system. He gave the following presentation:

The Dept. of Public Works is in the process of rolling out of new metered parking system. The objective is to maximize the balanced use of available on and off-street parking for scheduled special events while protecting residential neighborhoods from parking infiltration and nearby commercial district areas who rely on turnover of on-street parking spaces for customers. The aim being on Street parking would be short term and lots/garage would be long term parking. A media program would also be important.

City of Worcester Parking Program

For On-Street Meters

- Move to a license plate based parking payment system –kiosks, pay-by-phone, permits & validations.
- Update / Improve Residential Parking Permit Program.
- Comprehensive update to time limits and zones.
- Regulatory Signage
- There is no change for HP

For Off Street – Surface Lots/Garages

Surface Lots (7 lots with about 1,000 spaces/30HP spaces)

- Update monthly and transient parking through license plate.
- McGrath Lot –Gated Equipment. (have to pay until new equipment)

Garages (3,000 space/68 HP spaces)

- Restoration of Pearl & Elm Garage. (\$25 Million)
- Upgraded Parking Equipment in Pearl & Elm and Federal Plaza.
- Prepaid Event Parking through Ticket Master
- Capital Improvements. (\$8 million at Union Station with Elevator modernization)

Enforcement

- Increase parking meter / overtime fines.
- Implement License Plate Recognition Enforcement.
- Expand Parking Enforcement Coverage (shifts went from one to three shifts)
- HP space and ramp violation is \$200 each. The last two years there were about 260 violations. Now Monday through Friday about one space per day.

Program Elements

- Pricing Changes
- Meter Hours of Operation
- Time Restricted Parking / Loading Zones
- Handicap Parking
- No Parking Zones
- Bus / Valet / Taxi / Rideshare Zones
- One Way Streets to Maintain / Expand Parking
- Parking Wayfinding, Reservations, Website, Ambassadors & Traffic Control
- Parking Enforcement Technology / Staffing
- Resident Permit Parking Zones (RPP)

General Strategy / Approach

- Establish flat –rate parking pricing on event days.
- Maintain 2-HR metered “turnover” parking on retail streets. Increase parking enforcement efficiency / coverage.
- Separate Event Patrons from their vehicles quickly and efficiently.

A map of city parking spaces was provided with the plan to have it in a public place so people will know the parking spaces in the city.

HP Spaces -Canal District & Polar Park

City Owned	Street	Handicap Spaces
Green St Lot	Green St	2
Water St Lot	Water St	2
McGrath (Library) Lot	Salem St	7
Lamartine St Lot	Lamartine St	5
Canal District On-Street		8
Green Island Blvd	Green Island Blvd	16
Canal St	Canal St	5

Privately Owned	Street	Handicap Spaces
YWCA Lot	YWCA Way	2
St John's Church Lot	Temple St	6
Fiddlers Green Pub Lot	Temple St	2
Compass Tavern Lot	Winter St	2
Worcester Ice Center Lots	Winter St	7
Worcester Market Lot	Harding St	4
Harding St Lot	Harding St	2
Madison Place Lot	Madison St	14
Green Island Blvd Garage	Green Island Blvd	8
Goddard St Lot	Winter St	2

Total HP near Polar Park 94

Off Street Parking – How to pay

Multi Space Pay Stations

- Pay by plate
- Solar Powered
- Coin Credit Card Only
- No Change

Pay by Phone App – City Wide

- Validations offered
- More convenient than signal space meter
- Ability to add more time
- Integration with pay-by-license plate

Next Steps

Implementation of Program:

- Develop Parking Ordinances
- Install new kiosks and Pay-by-Phone Parking
- Install Parking Regulatory Signs
- Implement Parking Wayfinding
- Parking Enforcement

Transition and Outreach

On-street Parking Management Company to oversee: Accounting,
PCI Compliance, Internal Controls

Ambassador Program

Manage signage, best practices for multi-space

Public outreach: Marketing, Commercials, Presentations

Other Parking Notes:

- Winter Parking Ban
- Park Worcester Website

There were slides showing examples of signage.

Commission and public comments and questions.

- Could you us a track phone or the type of phone the government gives people. This I being looked into, meanwhile a credit card or coins can be used.
- Violation105 is one vehicle in two stalls. This is being ticketed.
- Meade and Grosvenor Streets should be a one way streets. During games it is hard for cars to get through and there seems to be no parking enforcement.

The city is looking to protect the Green Island area. The enforcement would use a plate system.

He will keep in touch with the Commission as the process of implementation continues.

City of Worcester Complete Streets Prioritization Plan*

Go to: www.worcesterma.gov/planning-regulatory/planning-initiatives/complete-streets

Stephen Rolle & Brian Pigeon, City Executive Office of Community Development were with the Commission late last year talking about transportation. Mr. Rolle noted that on a wider view, there is a proposal in the FY'23 budget to create a Department of Transportation and Mobility focusing on safety first, equity, and sustainability. This would be a first for Worcester.

The Complete Streets Prioritization Project is quite detailed with specific projects and specific improvements addressing accessibility and mobility for all users. A plan will be created with these items. This plan then allows Worcester to participate in the MassDOT funding program.

He introduced Lily Ko and Jeff Rosenbloom of Toole Design, a national leader in heling municipalities develop plans like this. Ms. Ko presented a power point.

3 step project overview

1. Create Policy – Worcester did this in 2017.
2. Develop Prioritization Plan – Worcester in the process of doing this.
3. Apply for Project Construction Funding

Ongoing process - Update Prioritization Plan

Eligible types of projects

- Projects in Prioritization Plan may be any Complete Streets project
- At least 15 projects must meet MassDOT's eligibility criteria

These projects include:

- Intersection Design
- Street reconfiguration and traffic calming
- Pedestrian crossing modifications
- Pedestrian and bike Network Connections
- Transit investments
- Environment ad street scape investments

Complete Street projects are accessible

Main goal of a project can be to improve accessibility or project may include accessible components

The following are common examples of projects:

Sidewalks

- Continuous accessible path with at least minimum required width
- Level surface that is smooth, stable, slip-resistant

Curb Ramps

- Considers minimum ramp width and maximum slopes
- At corners, aligns with direction of perpendicular crosswalk and provides two directional ramps
- Clear level landing behind ramp
- Detectable warning strips with truncated domes

Raised Crossings

- Crossing is sidewalk-level so there is no need for curb ramps
- Detectable warning strips
- Aligns with direction of perpendicular crosswalk and provides two directional crossings

Accessible Pedestrian Signals and RRFBs with Accessible Pedestrian Features

- Location and height of pushbutton should be accessible
- Vibrotactile arrows point in same direction as crosswalk
- Locator tones let pedestrians know where to push the button
- Speech indicators let pedestrians know when and where to cross

Shared use of Path

- ADA-compliant crossings
- In addition to ADA-compliant curb ramps, this example in Malden has a pedestrian refuge island, which provides a flush, accessible path with detectable warning strips and a wide opening.

Bus Shelters

- Clear floor space under shelters are maintained
- Clear accessible pedestrian path around shelter
- Level landing pads with minimum required dimensions

Prioritization Plan Summary

- Allows Worcester to be eligible for up to \$400,000 in project construction funding in any rolling 4-year fiscal year period
- ***Current and near-term*** Complete Streets needs
- Should be updated as projects are constructed and funding opportunities or priorities shift (may be updated every 3 years to resubmit to MassDOT)

Examples of Previously Funded Projects from Complete Streets Program

- **Example 1** (\$334,614): New sidewalk (0.2 miles), reconstructed sidewalk (0.9 miles), shared use path (1.1 miles), ADA-compliant

- curb ramps (9)
- **Example 2** (\$300,800): RRFBs (2 pairs), ADA-compliant curb ramps(27), curb extensions (3)
- **Example 3** (\$384,000): New sidewalk (0.1 miles), RRFBs (6 pairs), ADA-compliant curb ramps (8), curb extensions (1), regulatory signs(8), bike racks (1), bus shelters (1), new/repainted crosswalks (3)

MassDOT Award Criteria for Project Construction Funding

Projects earn points for:

- Serving multiple modes
- Having more countermeasures for each project type
- Fulfilling a network gap
- Being in a high crash location (as defined by MassDOT or local data)
- Serving an Environmental Justice population
- Improving safety or accessibility to a school, located w/in 1 mile
- Improving safety or accessibility to senior destinations, located w/in ¼-mile
- Improving conditions for people with disabilities
- Including opportunities for public engagement through development of application
- Seeking to make a pilot project permanent

Ms. Ko then ask the Commission:

How should list of potential Complete Streets projects be prioritized for the next 3 years given \$400,000?

Public input can be provided for three top priorities in the following ways by June 10, 2022:

- Online survey and map: bit.ly/Worcester-CS-Plan
- Pop up events (survey and map activity)
- Email suggestions: mobility@worcesterma.gov
- Call with suggestions: (508) 799-1400

Commission and public comments with presenter response:

Sidewalk flush to street? There is a tackle strip, therefore, don't need a curb cut. Could be a bump. There is one raised crosswalk in Worcester going to Kelly Square from Polar Park.

How do the flush sidewalk withstand the winters? In Cambridge they have lasted about 20 years better than the curb cuts do. In doing a new street possibly retrofit not so much.

\$400,000 for four years. Do not need to apply for at one time. These funds will help receive other funds.

Suggest to concentrate on high volume areas when prioritizing. Need for accommodating parking spaces particularly around colleges, but also this issue in a general one. Bifurcated sidewalks are not helpful for passenger side ramp chair roll out.

Presenters asked that Commissioners respond to the survey.

Debrief training on Universal Design for Housing for Inclusive Communities

On April 27, 2022 the city provided a training prepared by the University of Buffalo's Center for Universal Design and Environmental Access.

The Commission will be asked to give recommendations to the city on accessible and affordable housing over the next couple of months. There are a lot of things happening including new construction. This training was brought to the city as an educational tool. Link to training video was sent to those who signed up and were not able to attend. Universal Design principle goes beyond accessibility standards and is easier with new construction than the already built environment.

Commission member's thoughts included:

Commission needs to educate others about the principle of universal design that will benefit more people than those with disabilities. The Commission should change its language from accessible housing to promoting universal design.

Universal design would make aging in place possible.

Next steps will be to continue meeting with City officials and collaborators working and promoting these goals.

Michael Kennedy of CLW reminded the Commission that the concept of universal design is not a building code. The concept includes adaptability. The Architectural Access Board (AAB) needs to update the accessibility code to include adaptability which would codify the concept.

Commissioner Prochilo indicated there are states that have codified universal design.

Collaboration opportunity with THRIVE Communities

<https://www.thrivema.org/about>

Patricia Carlson, Family Support Coordinator, shared information about Thrive Communities.

MISSION: THRIVE empowers communities to welcome and support our neighbors transitioning from incarceration.

VISION: THRIVE envisions a world where wholeness and justice replace cycles of incarceration and oppression—a world where communities thrive.

In 2020 Thrive Communities became the regional family support center for the region with a home at 100 Grove Street and an office in Marlborough. They receive referrals from Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) and others who can benefit from their services such as help with access to services they need, assist with applications for services, provide in home supports, provide adult companions and respite, and administer flexibly funding for a loved one. They have a staff that helps people stay in the community rather than a residential setting.

Upcoming events for both offices include:

On May 27th at Polar Park they are having a free prom night. No age requirement

June 1st – going to WooSox

June 9th – Going to New England Aquarium

In July, four camp sessions

There are in person and virtual programs like art, movies and lunch, gaming, etc. They visit library, Ecotarium, and other places in the city.

They are interested in knowing safety protocols such as fire, police emergency practices and have an event sometimes called touch a truck.

Commissioners explained that this type of event was held for the Deaf community at the Grove Street Fire Station in the fall of 2018 and offered assistance as they moved forward with their plans.

Tercentennial Tabling/Exhibit Update – Sign up for tasks

Commissioners Finn, Jr. and Karuna have been preparing display items including written documents, display board, games and other take-a-ways. Associate Commissioner Delage and that he and his family would be available all day to help where needed.

Polar Park update

- April 25, 2022 Tour Debrief

Associate Commissioner Finn, Jr. noted issues such as being told go up the hill for entrance was not helpful for people with disabilities. There also needs to be more lights to cross Madison Street where people park their cars. Director Turchek will assist in helping him make contact with appropriate person at Polar Park.

Commissioner Prochilo said that at the start of the first season the Commission's list of concerns was significant. Much has been done to the commitment of Polar Park leadership. There are still items that needs addressing. This is a work in progress.

Notice: MA COVID-19 vaccine

- **Walk-in Equity Clinics for COVID 19 vaccines Wednesdays & Saturdays at the Worcester Public Library, 3 Salem Sq.** Need an ASL Interpreter? To request interpreter/ accommodation call Michelle at 774-303-6976 or email mortizocasio.socialwork@gmail.com
- **Vaccine clinics and vaccine information:** <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>

Review of AAB notices and applications: (No City owned properties)

Variance Hearing:

- Alta Seven Hills , 22-28 Mulberry Street, Worcester (V21 195)

Decision:

- O'Connor's Restaurant – C20 - 071

Notice of Action:

- 426 Main Street - 5 Story Mixed Use (V22-077)

No action taken.

Suggestions for upcoming agenda items

None at this point

Announcements:

- **Tercentennial Weekend – June 11 – 13, 2022 – Festival**
AAC Exhibit on Accessibility on the Common June 11 – 12 Noon -5:00PM
- **Next Accessibility Advisory Commission virtual meeting:**
June 21, 2022 - 4:30pm
- **WRTA Transportation Advisory Planning Group Wednesday,**
September 21– 1-2:30pm

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 6:44 pm.

*Material can be viewed at the Human Rights & Accessibility Office upon request.