

Portsmouth
Parking & Traffic Safety Committee
8:00 AM – August 13, 2015
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley City Council Chambers

ON SITE COMMITTEE: Please note there will be no on-site visits this month.

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT

No financial report this month. A summary of fiscal year 2015 will be provided in August.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Blind intersection at Prospect Street and Maplewood Avenue
- B. City Council referral of Councilor Thorsen's parking programs memo
- C. Jaywalking in the downtown area
- D. Burkitt Street connection to Route 1 Bypass

VI. OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS:

- A. Request for crosswalk, parking spaces, bike corral on Islington Street at White Heron
- B. Request for crosswalk on Hanover Street at Fleet Street

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

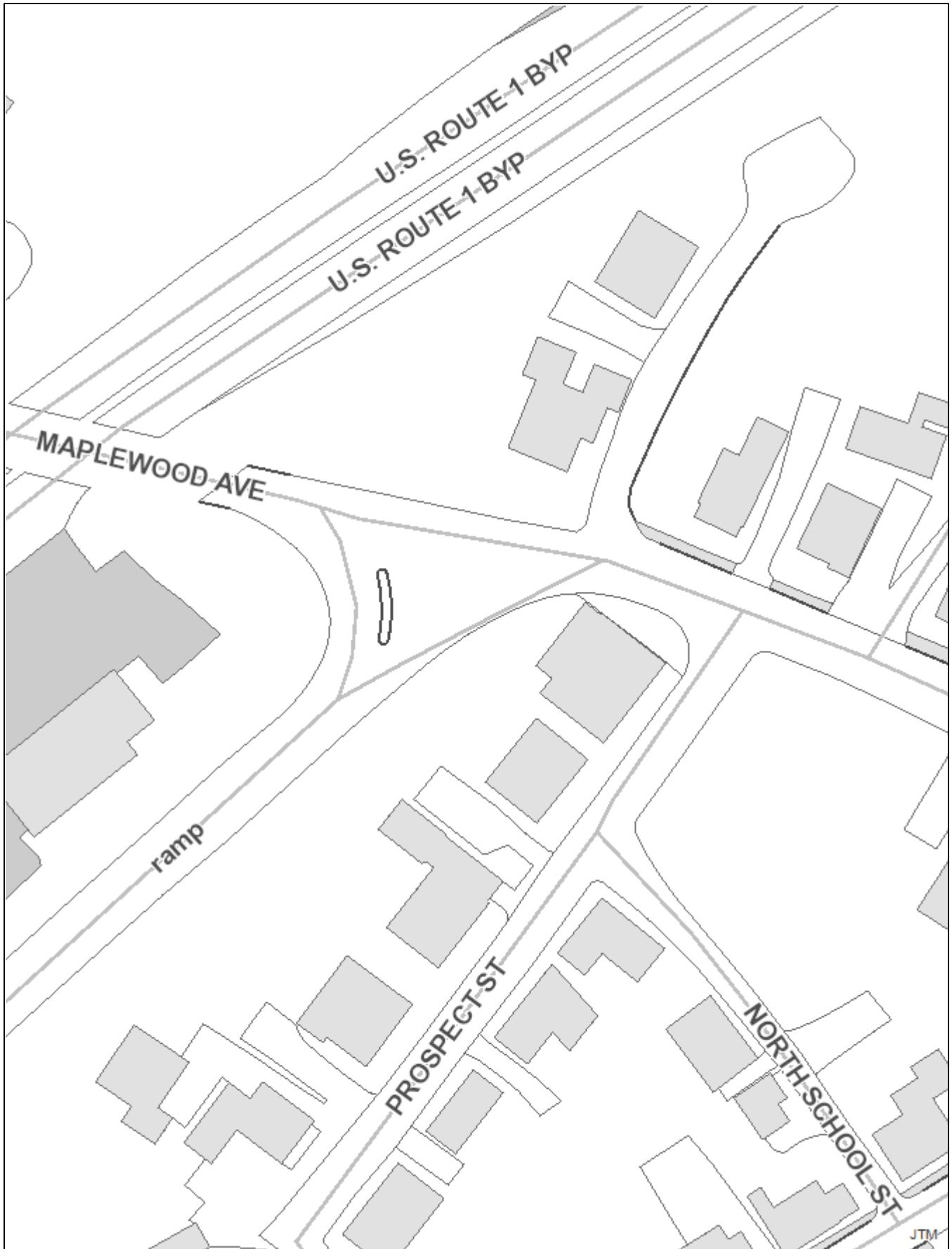
VIII. INFORMATIONAL

ADJOURNMENT

V.A. Blind intersection at Prospect Street and Maplewood Avenue



V.A. Blind intersection at Prospect Street and Maplewood Avenue



From: [My Friend Dan](#)
To: [Eric B. Eby](#)
Cc: nicolek.pollack@gmail.com; preynolds21@comcast.net; Jenna.Cooke@wellsfargo.com
Subject: Traffic Issue at Maplewood & Prospect
Date: Friday, July 24, 2015 11:57:24 AM

Hi Eric,

Thanks for your time this morning to discuss the blind intersection at Maplewood Ave and Prospect St. As I mentioned, my neighbors and I have all puzzled over the past several years about the issue so I am Cc'ing some of them on this message to let them know about our conversation.

As I mentioned, I can be available for the Traffic/Safety meeting scheduled for August 13th at 8am. I am also available to join the committee for the onsite review on August 11th at 8am. That's actually a perfect time to observe the issue first-hand as morning traffic tends to be particularly prone to ignoring the stop sign.

If necessary, I may be contact at this email address or on my mobile at 603-817-0161.

Kind regards,

Dan

--

Dan Freund

Professional Brand Storyteller

.....

Portsmouth, NH

Mobile: 603.817.0161

.....

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MEMO

TO: Honorable Mayor Robert Lister
Members of the City Council
Councilor Brad Lown, Chair, Parking and Traffic Safety Committee
Cristy Cardoso, Chair, Citywide Neighborhood Committee

FROM: Jack Thorsen, City Councilor

DATE: July 6th, 2015

SUBJECT: Parking Programs

This memo recommends that the City Council initiate discussion to devise a set of parking programs to address parking concerns mentioned below. I add as an addendum to this memo, a list of suggested elements that might be included in such programs.

The Concerns

1. Fee Structure Changes:

During the debates over the new parking garage, it became clear to me, and other councilors, that the City of Portsmouth would need new parking fee structures to support the losses that would be realized by that project until its bond was paid. Rate changes were subsequently proposed by the City Manager as a means to mitigate this cost.

We also listened to parking experts brought in by PS21, who suggested several ways the city could improve the parking situation by way of rate increases and structural changes such as longer operating hours for on-street parking and elimination of parking time limits. The key message was that parking fees should be set so that there is always no more than 85% of the parking spaces filled at any given time. They called this "utilization."

2. Impact on Residents:

Raising rates to cover the cost of the new garage would negatively impact residents who depend on downtown parking, so a solution to remove that burden is needed.

3. Neighborhood Parking:

Also, for some time now, we have heard from residents of neighborhoods that about the downtown area that the parking issues of the downtown are spilling over into their neighborhoods, making it difficult for them to find parking where they live.

4. Workforce Parking:

Many employees of downtown businesses need ample and affordable parking. Raising parking fees will impact this group. Also, employees who do not live in the city would be affected if restrictions were placed on parking in neighborhoods.

City Councilor Stefany Shaheen and I met with the City Manager, to discuss how to address the impact and interplay regarding the cost of the new garage, raising rates, the impact on residents and downtown employees, and the need for a set of neighborhood parking solutions. We felt we had the beginnings of a good plan, which we announced, and which was reported by the Portsmouth Herald. We discussed rate hikes and other fee structure changes, discount programs, and ideas for neighborhood parking solutions.

This memo extends that original discussion.

Plan Recommendations

Attached to this memo, please find a list of potential elements that might be included in a plan or set of plans to address the above concerns. These are just my thoughts at present, and I propose them only as a starting point for discussion.

Request for action by the City Council, the Safety and Traffic Commission, the Fee Study Committee, and the Citywide Neighborhood Committee:

I foresee that this effort will be a combined effort of the City Council (Council), the Traffic and Safety Commission (TSC), the Fee Study Committee (FSC), and the Citywide Neighborhood Committee (CNC), involving as well the individual neighborhood groups that the CNC represents, and residents directly.

I request that the Council set up a joint discussion or discussions with the TSC and CNC to put together an action plan. The TSC and CNC should be heavily involved in the impact of resident parking programs, and changes to the operation of on-street parking.

The FSC is already made up of one City Councilor, the City Manager, and a representative of the city's Finance Department, so no formal discussion is needed there until the final fee structure is reviewed and brought back to the CC.

I also foresee the need to make amendments to city ordinances to add flexibility in handling rate changes, and there may be a need to raise some issues to the state legislative level.

There are a lot of moving parts to this discussion, so I hope that we can put together a strategy that will walk us through the discussion so that we reach good results.

As always, thank you for reading and thoughtfully considering this memo.

Sincerely,

*Jack Thorsen
City Councilor
City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire*

ADDENDUM TO MEMO TO THE MAYOR, ET AL
July 6th, 2015

PARKING PROGRAMS **Suggestions for Discussion**

General Parking Program – Parking Fees and Operational Changes

We learned from experts recently that the optimum utilization of a parking area, which could be as small as one side of a city block, is when there is always no more than 85% of the spaces filled at any given time, even when there is no time limit.

Optimizing utilization, which guarantees that a driver can always find a parking spot, should not be confused with optimizing revenue.

Pricing is the main activator to achieve a proper utilization rate. If the utilization is greater than 85%, then the price should be increased. If the utilization is less than 85%, then the price should decrease.

The measurement of utilization should be made at various days of the week and times of the day, and the price could be different depending on time of day. As an example, the price at 6pm on a Friday night might be higher than the price for that same spot at 6am that very morning.

Pricing policy should be analyzed for 24 hour a day operation. As an example, if utilization is greater than 85% at 3am, then the price should go up. If it is lower, then the price could drop. Free parking can occur, but only when utilization would still be less than 85%.

Removing the time limit would increase on-street demand, resulting in further price increases, but would improve the visitor's experience.

Special high volume events that substantially increase parking demand could trigger parking premiums.

On-street parking rates are governed by city ordinances and based on state enabling statutes. Rather than set pricing in the ordinance, the ordinance should allow for price adjustments based on a formula that takes in the utilization data, or similar language. If state statutes need to change to allow this to happen, then state legislators should be asked to make those changes.

I fully expect that fees could double or triple in the core downtown areas at certain times of the day or week. There would always be, however, spaces available for those that need them.

Areas outside the downtown should be included in the utilization analysis. In all likelihood, however, utilization would be less than 85% in most areas of the city outside the downtown.

Analysis should begin immediately and not wait for the new garage to open. The reason for this is 1) the need to get ahead of the cost of the new garage as much as we can, and 2) the rationale for going to a utilization model exists now. There is no reason to delay.

Recommendations:

1. Raise parking fees until 85% utilization is achieved.
2. The first fee change should be substantial.
3. Remove time limits on parking.
4. 24 hour per day utilization analysis.
5. Time of day utilization analysis that allows for setting different pricing on different days of the week and at different times of day.
6. Utilization analysis should be on small parking areas that share very similar behavior.
7. Change parking fee ordinances (on-street parking) to allow for a flexible pricing formula developed by the Fee Study Committee and based on quarterly utilization data.
8. Make parking fee adjustments on a quarterly basis after analysis of the previous quarter's utilization data. If not too burdensome, the fee adjustment frequency could increase to once per month.
9. Develop the systems to support parking analysis and reporting.
10. Include the whole city in the utilization analysis.
11. Discounts for residents and the local workforce as explained below.
12. Begin price adjustments based on utilization now rather than later.

Resident Discount Parking Program

When the proposal to raise parking fees to mitigate the impact of the cost of the new garage on residents was first discussed, I realized that residents would end up paying for the garage anyway, through those increased rates. This led to the idea that residents should receive parking rate discounts which are at least equal to those increases.

If fees double, then the resident discount should be 50%.

Technology already exists for residents to receive discounts, if they would use the automated "Easy Park" parking devices available from the city for on-street parking. A qualified resident would be able to purchase time at a discount. This technology may or may not be adequate for tracking the right fee when the resident parks

during a transition from one rate to another, as could happen when he or she parks in the afternoon at one rate and leaves in the late evening at a different rate.

For parking garages, simply showing a resident drivers license to the parking attendant should suffice, but this is cumbersome. Instead, residents should be given Recycling Center stickers when they register their cars. Another method would be needed if the resident parks in a garage with no parking attendant. Payment cards could be sold at a discount by the city for this purpose. Parking pass cards could be used for this purpose, but rather than be a pass for a month, it would keep track of charges.

Discounts would also apply for residents using parking passes.

Car stickers would also work well for areas that are for residents only, or where resident parking is free.

Abuse is possible, such as when a resident gives his card or devise to a non-resident. Appropriate fines or penalties should be laid in cases of abuse.

Recommendations:

1. Give residents a discount on all parking fees equal to the increases instituted.
2. Promote the use of "Easy Park" devices, which are prepaid at a discount.
3. Discount payment cards for use with automated garage egress.
4. Issue Recycling Center stickers to residents when they register their cars.
5. Review all automated payment system programming to allow for the above.
6. Fine or penalty system for program abuse.

Workforce Parking Program

Employees of companies located in the downtown area are also affected by parking fee increases. Resident employees will take advantage of the Resident Discount Parking Program. We may decide that non-resident employees should also receive some similar mechanism for discounted parking.

It is not necessary that the non-resident employee get the same discount that a resident receives. Part of the reason for sharp discounts for residents is that residents are paying for the new garage and other infrastructure. In a sense, non-resident employees already get a discount in that they don't pay city taxes, nor rent from landlords who do.

Non-resident employees would need a means of qualifying for the discount. This might take the form of employer validation, but could be easily abused. So, the initiator should be the business, rather than the employee, with fines for abuse levied to the business.

In addition, the employer of the qualified employee should report the vehicle license number to an online system set up for this purpose. There are other system related questions that should be addressed.

Non-resident employees will be affected by parking restrictions that are implemented in nearby neighborhoods. This will drive the employees back into parking fee areas. For this reason, the city should consider specific employee parking areas, possibly free if remote.

Recommendations:

1. A discount parking mechanism for non-resident employees of downtown businesses, similar to the Resident Discount Parking Program.
2. A mechanism for qualifying a non-resident as eligible for the program, based on employer reporting.
3. Employee designated parking areas or lots, if feasible.
4. Fine or penalty system for program abuse.

Neighborhood Parking Program

Many residents of neighborhoods abutting the downtown have come forward with concerns about people parking in their neighborhoods to avoid having to pay for parking. Many of these residents do not have parking space on their property and rely on street parking for their parking needs. So, when the spaces near their homes are filled, they have nowhere to park. For this reason, we need to consider how to protect the residential street parking areas.

Solutions can take several forms, depending on the needs of the neighborhood. Each neighborhood group, as part of the Citywide Neighborhood Committee, should discuss a set of options provided by the city and decide for themselves which solution or set of solutions best meet their needs. I am confident that residents can design a solution that works for them.

Although most of the concern is over neighborhoods that abut the downtown, there is no reason that any neighborhood group could not consider these options for their own neighborhood. They would know best, I think. So, I would like to see an invitation for discussion opened up to all of Portsmouth and coordinated by the Citywide Neighborhood Committee.

In many neighborhoods, there is no reason for metered parking. But a neighborhood might want to consider it if some portion of the revenue is allowed to be used for neighborhood transportation projects that are not in the Master Plan or the Capital Improvement Plan.

Existing parking lots are covered in the General Parking Program. A neighborhood could, however, ask to treat a lot as neighborhood parking, and design a specific parking program for it. An example might be the Parrott Avenue lot, which is currently free and over-utilized. Under the General Parking Program, metering might be placed there if utilization is over 85%. Under a Neighborhood Parking Program, the neighborhood might design a different approach to meet their needs.

Some lots, like the Parrott Avenue lot, may have a wider use than just supporting the neighborhood. In that case, a combination of neighborhood feedback, as well as feedback from others who use the lot would be appropriate.

Suggested Options (may be combined or mapped out on a space by space basis):

1. Open Parking

Anyone can park with no time limit or extended time limit. This is the default case.

2. Resident Only Parking

Parking would require a sticker such as one used in the Resident Discount Parking Program. Non-residents would be fined and towed.

3. Metered Parking where residents park for free

Parking prices would be adjusted so that utilization is at 85%.

Non-residents would be allowed to park and pay the parking fee. Residents with stickers would park for free.

4. Metered Parking

Parking prices would be adjusted so that utilization is at 85%. Residents would park at a discount according to the Resident Discount Parking Program.

5. Visitor Placards

Residents could be given a placard that their visitors can use in areas that are using options #1-3. Placards should have addresses on them, or a serial number, so that they are only used in the local area nearby the resident.

6. Captured Parking Revenue

A neighborhood could put in metered parking under #2 and #3 above with the incentive that a substantial part of the parking revenue, less the cost of enforcement, would be available to the neighborhood. Revenue could be used for transportation infrastructure projects in their neighborhoods, such as for better roads and walkways that might be beyond the standard offered by the city or not in the city plans. Neighborhoods would have increased autonomy to decide what level of infrastructure they want or need if they chose to put metered parking in an area that currently does not have metering. (Metering can take many forms, not just the single meter devices.)

This option does not replace the need to continue to provide basic planned infrastructure maintenance and improvements.

7. Neighborhood Parking Lots

Some neighborhoods have parking lots, either municipal or private. In some cases, it may make sense to involve the neighborhood in decisions regarding whether to meter those lots, or otherwise place restrictions on them.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a set of parking options that neighborhoods can use to design parking solutions.
2. Create revenue sharing incentives.
3. Make a survey of parking lots to determine if neighborhood parking options could apply.
4. Solicit neighborhood engagement to design parking solutions.
5. Open up the discussion to all neighborhoods.

Parking Pass Program

In a sense, the current parking passes used in the garage are no more than a discount card that might be issued under the Resident Discount Parking Program or the Employee Parking Program, except that a parking pass holder has priority over others. So, the parking passes should not cost less than in those other programs. In fact, a premium should be charged for the priority parking privilege.

At the moment, parking passes are issued for the High-Hanover garage, but will soon be available at the new Deer Street garage. The quantity and pricing would be different and an incentive should be created so that people choose the latter garage. But that would mean a pass holder could only park in one garage.

Rather than continue to issue cards on a flat fee per month, a combination of a lower flat fee and a variable fee based on where the vehicle is parked may make sense. But, this starts to look like any discount parking card, so it could be that all cards

become the same system, but with different payment agreements. Priority would be a chargeable element of the agreement, if desired.

Parking passes may have a steep discount already, or not, depending on how many hours are actually used in a month. Analysis might give us an idea on how to set the price.

Demand for parking passes is reflected by the level of backlog. Pricing should be set such that there is no backlog and passes are readily available. But, pricing alone is not enough. We may need to consider if a maximum number of parking passes should be allowed.

Parking Agreement Options:

1. One flat fee per month.
2. A base fee and an hourly charge.
3. A premium charge for parking priority.
4. 24 hour vs. daytime vs. evening passes.
5. Participation in residential and employee discount programs.

Recommendations:

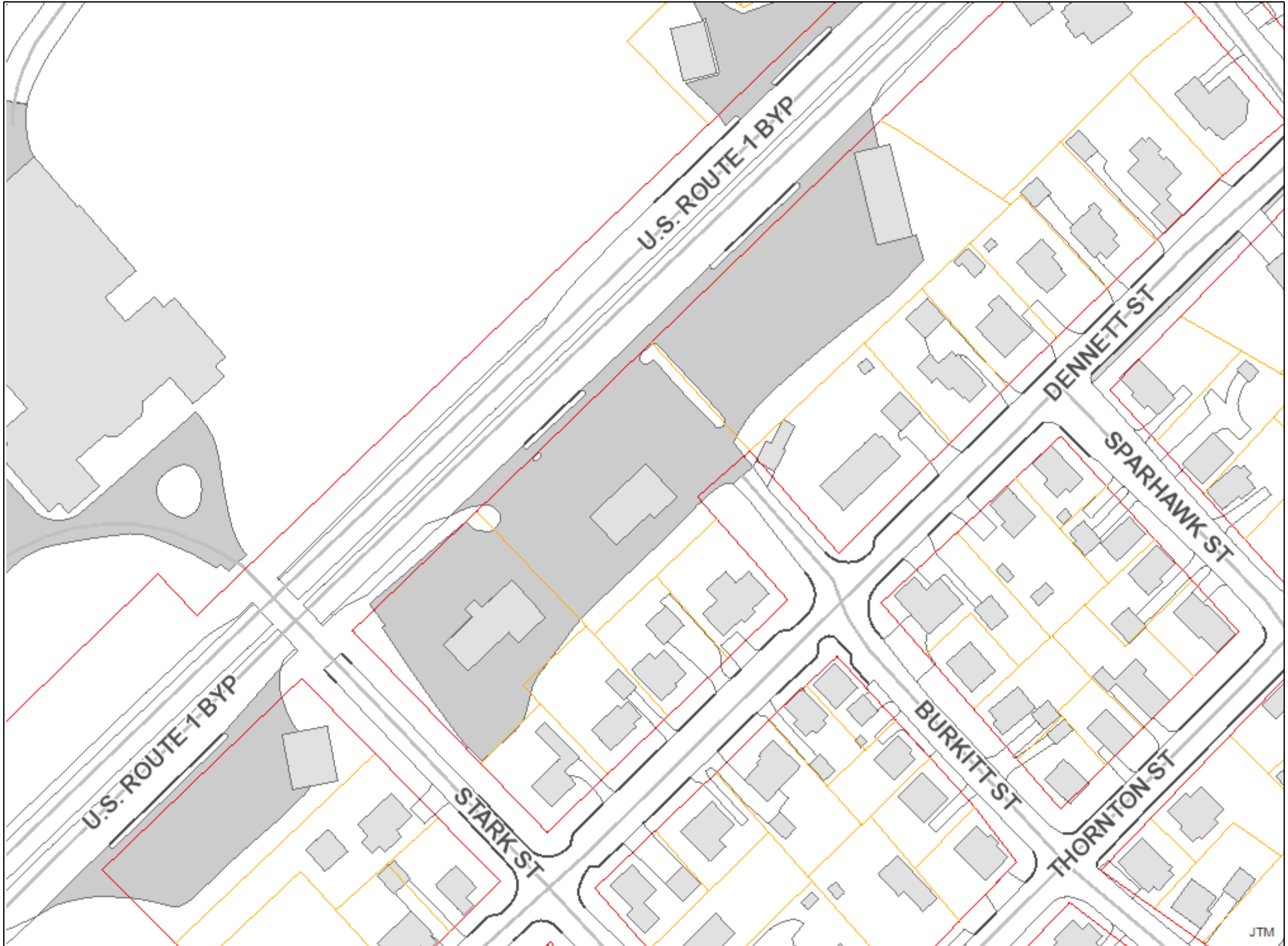
1. Evaluate the actual value of parking passes based on usage.
2. Evaluate the value of priority parking privileges.
3. Combine all discount programs with the Parking Pass Program into a single mechanism for pre-paid parking.
4. Offer several pricing options.
5. Reduce backlog by raising prices.
6. Determine if a maximum number of priority parking passes is needed.

V.C. Jaywalking in the downtown area

Section 7.311: JAY WALKING

Every pedestrian crossing a roadway at any point other than within a marked or unmarked crosswalk shall yield the right of way to vehicles upon the roadway, provided that this provision shall not relieve the driver of a vehicle from the duty to exercise due care for the safety of pedestrians.

V.D. Burkitt Street connection to Route 1 Bypass



V.D. Burkitt Street connection to Route 1 Bypass



Fri 7/24/2015 11:45 AM

David Beadling <dbeadling0@icloud.com>

Burkitt Street at Dennett

To Eric B. Eby

You replied to this message on 7/24/2015 11:57 AM.

Dear Mr. Eby,

Thank you for returning my call this morning. After I spoke with you I had a conversation with Joe, the handyman who is helping to prepare the old Gulf Station to reopen as a business named 'Bypass Gas and More'. The business will be operated by property owner Zaffoli's girlfriend. Joe said that Zaffoli is erecting a fence between his property and the old Momma D's restaurant to prevent traffic from cutting behind the gas station once Bypass Gas is open for business. I believe that Bypass Gas will want to leave the end of Burkitt St. open to allow vehicle access from Dennett St. to their business. Leaving the end of Burkitt Street open and the bypass as a one-way road may be all I can hope for as a start, but a dead end would be much more desirable in terms of safety and quieting Dennett Street for the residences.

In the attached photos a passenger vehicle travels up the incline to enter Route 1 Bypass northbound. The vehicles passing by are typically traveling 45 to 50 miles an hour. Line of sight for the entering vehicle is less than 100 yards which gives the driver about 3 seconds to evaluate oncoming traffic and enter the travel lane, assuming traffic is approaching at 50 mph. Since vehicle access points to the Bypass from other residential streets have been eliminated for safety sake I propose that this one be eliminated as well.

I have further details I would be happy to share and am hoping to do some traffic sampling, the results of which I'd be happy to share as well.

Thanks again for your time and please let me know if there is anything further I can or should do to advance this proposal.

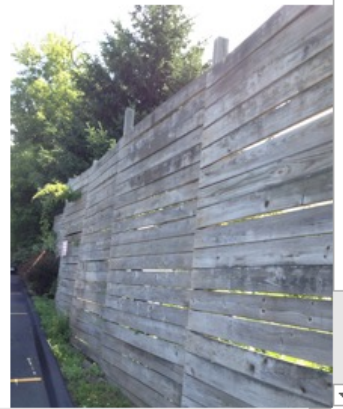
Regards,

Dave Beadling

466 Dennett St

603-380-3036

dbeadling@comcast.net




City of
Portsmouth
Department of Public Works



MEMORANDUM

TO: Parking and Traffic Safety Committee

FROM: Eric Eby, P.E., Parking and Transportation Engineer 

DATE: August 5, 2015

SUBJECT: Recommendation – Pedestrian Crossing on Islington Street at White Heron

Upon further review of the area of Islington Street in the vicinity of the White Heron coffee shop at the intersection of Albany Street, there is not a simple, quick fix that can be implemented to make the pedestrian crossing of Islington Street significantly safer. Islington Street at this location is 40 feet wide and carries over 1,300 vehicles per hour. Due to the width and configuration of Islington Street, together with the volume and speed of traffic, any marked crosswalk in this area would not be safe unless vehicles were made to stop at a red light. Crosswalks are not recommended at spacing of less than 300 feet, or when there are fewer than 20 pedestrians an hour crossing the street. A signalized pedestrian crosswalk is provided at the intersection of Islington Street and Bartlett Street, less than 300 feet from this location.

The queue of vehicles on Islington Street extends beyond Albany Street during the peak hours, and a crosswalk at this location would therefore result in pedestrians stepping out into traffic between stopped cars, directly into oncoming traffic that may not see them. This is a dangerous situation that cannot be made safe simply by painting a crosswalk or installing warning signs.

It is recommended that no action be taken at this time, and that the area be reexamined for long-term solutions as part of the Islington Street corridor improvement project that will likely be entering the design phase shortly.

VI.B. Request for crosswalk on Hanover Street at Fleet Street



Harbour Hill Condominium Association
77 Hanover Street, Portsmouth, NH
July 28, 2015

Parking and Traffic Safety Committee
City of Portsmouth
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Dear Mr. Lown and PTS Committee Members,

The Harbour Hill Condominium Association represents twenty-two unit owners. On July 9th, Judy Miller representing HHCA attended the PTS Committee meeting and requested the reinstatement of the Hanover at Fleet Street crosswalk.

As the Committee is aware, this crosswalk was used for many years to provide a safe pedestrian crossing for our HHCA residents, other residents, and visitors alike across busy Hanover Street. Sometime in June, the Hanover/Fleet crosswalk was paved over while the Portwalk Place/Vaughan Mall crosswalk was upgraded.

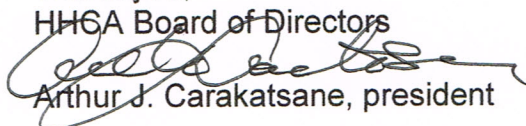
The July 9th agenda stated that this was a request for a crosswalk on Hanover Street at Fleet Street. However, the pre-existing Hanover/Fleet crosswalk was removed as a result of paving a portion of Hanover Street and upgrading the Portwalk/Vaughan Mall crosswalk.

The HHCA appreciates the Committee's approval pending funding to install an ADA compliant crosswalk at the Hanover/Fleet location. However, until funding becomes available for this more extensive project, the HHCA requests that the Hanover/Fleet crosswalk be reinstalled and repainted just as it was for many years. Further, it is noted that the crosswalk on Penhallow Street between the Federal Building and Commercial Alley is an identical situation.

HHCA feels this is a dangerous intersection which is adjacent to the Fleet Street High/Hanover public garage entrance. Currently, a high number of pedestrians continue to cross Hanover Street at this intersection which is less than 50 feet from the entrance and exit to the High/Hanover public garage. The Hanover/Fleet intersection needs this crosswalk reinstalled as soon as possible.

Please apprise us of the status of this reinstatement.

Thank you,
HHCA Board of Directors


Arthur J. Carakatsane, president