

CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

Standing Committee on Sustainability and Transportation

Chair Councilor Spencer Thibodeau (D2)

Councilor Belinda Ray (D1)

Councilor Jill Dunson (At large)

Minutes October 21, 2020

Members Present: Councilor Thibodeau, Council Ray, Councilor Duseon

Staff Present: Dena Libner, Troy Moon, John Peverada, Gene Pierotti

Meeting called to order.

September Minutes

September meeting minutes approved by Councilor Ray and seconded by Councilor Duseon.

Passed unanimously, 3-0.

Sustainability Update

Sustainability Associate position has opened and needs filling. Hosting One Climate Future workshops. Vote to be held on Nov 9. Helping plan Solar Consortium. Straw ordinance in effect Jan 1. State plastic bag ban in effect Jan 15. Working on outreach campaign for both. Working with CMP to straighten out streetlight wire ownership. Signed contract with ENGIE Impact to manage utility payments and create dashboards for energy accounts. Will update Committee with reports from that. Helping community comply with pesticide ordinance. Will be providing support and recommendations to South Portland for their fertilizer ordinance. More EV chargers installed and will be installed. Continue to use social media to engage community.

As part of the pesticide ordinance, the Riverside Golf Course was asked to reach higher environmental standard. Gene Pierotti reports that after three years work, have officially met all standards and passed all categories to become certified. Even surpassed standards through use of nesting boxes, beehives, etc. Already using mostly organic fertilizers. Certified for 3 years and then recertification with Audubon International.

Councilor Ray asks if anyone from Democratic Socialist party, working on Green New Deal, approached about One Climate Future. They did not.

Councilor Thibodeau asks about the Western Prom lights that are out. There is a wire issue they are aware of.

Linden Street Parking Petition

Linden Street in D3 with 11 residential units, 24 ft width, short length. Petition to prohibit parking on the west side of street due to narrowness. Exceeds threshold of 60% of households signing petition. Staff supports proposal.

Councilor Duson concerned that everyone be made aware of the petition. Dena Libner confirms that all residents of street were made aware of this meeting.

Councilor Ray wants confirmation of current parking rules on street. Dena and John confirm no current limitation.

Public Comment for Linden St Petition

Beth Stickney of 17 Linden St voices support. Says both side parking has been chronic problem. Voices concern for emergency vehicles having to go around the block. Problem got worse with Sierra Club moving into JCA building. Sometimes people can't back up from driveways. Wonders if there could be police enforcement if this passes.

Councilor Thibodeau points to John Peverada as point of contact. John confirms that it would be enforced through notices first week and tickets the following.

Justin Van Soust of the corner of Linden and Longfellow St. Echoes Beth's concerns for safety. Reemphasizes his formal statement.

Councilor Questions for Linden St Petition

Councilor Ray moves to pass the parking petition, and Councilor Duson seconds.

Councilor Ray asks John Peverada what to do if community members see newly prohibited parking. John says to call the office.

The Linden St parking petition passes unanimously, 3-0.

Waverly Street Parking Petition

Waverly is a residential cross street with width of 30 feet, 26 households or businesses. Petition to change Waverly St to 1-hour parking on both side due to short supply of parking spaces. Includes signatures from 60% of households and/or businesses on Waverly. Note, Waverly in established residential parking zone in which those with permit would be exempt from this change.

Public Comment for Waverly St Petition

Stephanie Walsh, Board Treasurer of Children's Center on corner of Stevens and Waverly St, speaks on behalf of executive director and board. Don't believe 1-hour parking will solve the issue. Wish instead for one-way parking. Winter is hard for two side parking with snow banks. Have staff members who use Waverly for parking. Otherwise, must park far away from work. Have failed to improve parking capacity through other measures. Request that if this motion is passed, employees be given similar residential permittance to overcome 1-hour restriction. Request that if passed, the 15-minute parking remain the same for child drop-off.

Amanda of 41 Waverly St says street has become dangerous with UNE students using it as a parking lot. Initiated this petition. Surrounding streets have restrictions, making this street

more vulnerable. Continue to have problems with incorrect parking blocking her in the driveway. Does not want to alienate the Children's Center. Simply wants a discussion started.

Paul of 21 Waverly St signed the petition. Thinks 1-hour parking may help. But believes that single side parking is a better solution. Has had problems with deliveries. Believes it is dangerous, especially in winter. Curious if the petition process would need to be fully repeated in order to pass a single side parking petition.

Rob of 43 Waverly St has encountered UNE students parking and blocking cars from leaving driveway. Has had problems with deliveries. Echoes neighbors' input that they are open to other solutions. Agrees that single side parking may be a good solution.

Councilor Questions for Waverly St Petition

Councilor Thibodeau addresses whether council can move a different solution than what is petitioned. Believes he cannot. Troy Moon voices similar understanding of the process, which would require another petition with new signatures.

Councilor Thibodeau addresses whether the Children Center's 15-minute parking spaces will remain. John Peverada voices that these 15-minute spaces are on Stevens, not Waverly, and so will remain unchanged.

Councilor Ray voices need for consistency and clarity with petitions. Interprets petition as replacing 15-minute spaces with 1-hour parking. Believes Committee does have power to change wording of petition, though might be unwise. Would like a standard petition format to be updated. Voices confusion between petition of public comments.

Councilor Thibodeau and Councilor Ray agree to bring back Amanda, the petitioner, to clear up the purpose of the petition and resolve confusion.

Amanda agrees with Councilor Ray that the issue is that people, UNE students, are parking on both sides of the street all day making it dangerous to drive and back up, not that she or the other residents necessarily lack spaces to park their cars since they have driveways.

Councilor Ray does not believe 1-hour parking is the right solution for the problem. Wants city staff to evaluate whether it is actually dangerous and give recommendation.

John Peverada provides history for Waverly St. Originally opted to not be time-restricted parking. Does get narrow in winter. Recently, does not allow parking between 11 PM and 7 AM in winter so that City Works can narrow the street. Voices that if single side parking is implemented, it may put extra burden on parts of the street that are currently unburdened.

Councilor Thibodeau questions the possibility of single side parking for winter months, only.

Councilor Duson would like to postpone to give the Commissioner time to review, talk to the residents, talk to the petitioners if this is a valid next step.

Dena Libner explains that in survey taken in Fall 2016 or 2017, less than 50% of Waverly St residents marked that they wanted parking restrictions. However, of those who did, the majority wanted single side parking.

Councilor Thibodeau asks two questions:

- 1) Does it make sense to match the surrounding streets with their restrictions?
- 2) In addition, does there need to be other changes to the street?

Councilor Ray asks John Peverada for specific restrictions on streets surrounding Waverly.

Poland St—parking on one side, no parking other, 1-hour for majority of street.
Elmore St—1-hour parking on both sides.

John Peverada says may be more competition with one side parking, so 1-hour restriction may be necessary on top. Both will probably keep road very clear and driving will be easier.

Councilor Ray would like to postpone the petition decision until next meeting and John's update. Let community members know about second meeting.

Councilor Thibodeau does not want to set precedent of postponement.

Councilor Duson says yes to petition in hopes to enact fairness between competing streets and allow for other methods other than strict petitioning to enact further adjustments.

John Peverada agrees with Councilor Duson. One-hour parking will be needed regardless of other additional restrictions. Parking bans on one side or both is really a question for Jeremiah and further analysis.

Dena Libner says there is no crash data that mandates a parking restriction or ban.

Councilor Ray is inclined to say no and come up with the right solution. Ask staff to come back with different/better recommendation.

John Peverada reiterates that the 1-hour parking will probably be part of any solution. Adds that 1-hour parking on both sides may negate any additional restrictions.

Councilor Ray motions to vote on the petition. Councilor Duson seconds.

The Waverly St Parking Petition passes unanimously, with the amendment that any 15-minute parking spaces remain as is, 3-0.

Meeting Conclusion and Next Steps

Committee members to make list of items that were missed during this meeting to table for next, as well as items for next year for the next committee.

On request of Councilor Ray, Troy Moon agrees to send list of this year's items for review.

Troy will send slides on One Climate Future financing, since the item was not covered tonight. Further info will be covered at the workshop.

Councilor Ray motions to adjourn. Councilor Duson seconds. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned.