

The Board of Selectmen met on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 in the Main Meeting Room of the Town Hall. Mrs. Mackenzie was absent. The following members were Present.

Eric Kraus, Chairman
Mark Gallivan, Vice Chairman
David Salvatore
Ann Ragosta

Also present:
Thomas Gregory, Asst. Town Administrator
Cindy Berube, Executive Assistant

Mr. Kraus called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Discussion on Downtown and Commuter Parking

Mr. Kraus explained they have two issues that we want input on. Commuter parking for MBTA and an issue that we have never been able to crack is to have sufficient parking for business. We are working to come up with a solution, but a note, the solution we want is a stopgap issue. The town does not own the closed commuter lots. There are not a significant number of parcels available. We do not control the lots. We do want a robust downtown.

Chief Carmichael, Recommendations for changes to Parking Regulations

Chief Carmichael the parking in the center has an impact on everyone, we are trying to address the center of town, Main Street and adjoining are for Downtown parking and are restricted to 2 hour parking. Some of the issues that were raised the main municipal lot and one thing that we need to recognize there are merchants, customers, on duty public safety personnel, residents that live in the center, a lot of different people that need and use those lots. Complaints we receive, commuter parking we are losing spaces at the MBTA. Jim has designated the town pool as a temporary parking. We need to try to accommodate everything. Sometimes people call and want to enforce the parking. There are no restrictions on the municipal lot. Someone can leave their vehicle there 24 hours a day. If the town decides to limit the lot we would have to change the traffic rules and regulations. We would have to post if it passes, that is what we would need. I will tell you on the enforcement side it is difficult. We have banks, jewelry stores and the merchants are worried about their employees that may have to leave late at night. If it is bad weather and someone has to get to the vehicle we do not want them to have to park far away. If we do not want to restrict it, we can wait until the police and fire have finished. We might be able to carve up the lot and restrict some areas. Since Columbus Day at any given day we count about 15-20 spots, and we try to focus on busy times. This would not include a parade, or event going on. That is what I have

to offer the Board. Not able to offer a complete recommendation yet, but there is some options there.

Lisa Tierney, Elm Road asked if the town considered purchasing the closed parking lot on RT27? Do you release the amount of traffic going across the street to park Mr. Kraus we have not entertained the purchase of any land. Mr. Salvatore that lot may be coming back on line soon.

Veerdhawal Pande from Cypress lane have been commuting for about a year and a half suggested it would be worthwhile to understand how big the problem is. It would great if you could share and what are the short and long-term options. I figured it has added 20 more minutes to commute in the morning and evening. Understand the overall gravity of this situation. A vision on how we want to solve this and compare us with other towns. Sharon, they charge quarterly. If Walpole wants to maintain its status for family friendly Town. It is an investment.

Mr. Kraus the town understands the issue. The issue relates to the fact that we do not own that land, and there is not an abundance of land available. We are open to solutions. I would love to have the tax base to put up a garage. It is not going to happen.

Mr. Salvatore, how I understand the situation, there was a lot on West Street that is no longer available containing 150 spots. The lot on Elm Street that is dirt that is not currently available but they are due to come back on line. They are privately owned but had a lease agreement with the MBTA and we had no decision on the closing of the lots. We had no way to fix things. One of the things that saved us, on the Elm St lot, paved lots there were over 130 spots that were not used on a daily basis but are now being used. There were no cars; it is about 130 spots that got absorbed. Another 39 space in the triangle. They are having some trouble with the construction but those are coming back. What has happened, people adjusted, some went to Norwood instead. We are trying to find some solutions. I did a survey. How much do we invest and how many people will use it. If we spend \$500,000 for the teachers will people use it.

Mr. Salvatore asked which lot did you park in? Spring Street is where he parked. The other lot that you are talking about. When you are trying to go and you want a spot where you usually go. When I looked at the lots recently, every spot in every lot was full.

Mr. Gallivan we heard a lot about this when it happened and we did open the pool for free parking and the dirt lot across the street is free as well. We did do that right away and only a handful park there.

Resident we have been parking at the Spring St lot and have to go under the underpass. That can be flooded. Mr. Kraus, the other point, we have approached the

MBTA on a number of occasions and they have refused to engage with us and we are putting pressure on our delegation. No response.

Mr. Gallivan noted it is the whole Kraft Train issue, once that pilot starts that may help you. Also we have a lot of handicap accessibility issues. There are a lot of moving parts when you deal with the MBTA.

Sharon Eagles, Medfield-some notes and I do spend money in Walpole, I go to Gilmores and Conrad's. I think that you should have seen this problem coming and is upset with the fact that you did not notify anyone. I think you owe it to us commuters from Walpole and Medfield to come up with a solution. This is people trying to make a living and support their families. Sometimes I make the 7:40pm. Could you explain about the KRAFT train? Mr. Kraus explained they are extending service to Gillette stadium as a PILOT program. We are concerned about a number of fronts but the safety being the biggest. He stated he appreciates her comments but I disagree about us throwing up your arms. If we are left in the short term I am going to make sure Walpole residents get them first. We take care of our own. Mr. Salvatore, if we have spots for Walpole residents only then it may open more for non-residents. We would love the MBTA step up for the entire region. Maybe your delegation should help us as well reaching out the MBTA.

Ricardo, Jalapenos Grill- Does every town have to provide parking for the MBTA? This is where the problem started. They are supposed to supply parking for the commuters. We should not pay for parking for the commuters. I have a proposition; the land across from the JMS should be used for par. I am being hurt by the parking. We need to find a solution, what we can do and go from here.

Ms. Ragosta we should not only talk about Commuter and business, shared interest, the real solution is to create more parking, where and how and who pays for it. I think it is safe to say the MBTA will not pay for any parking for their lots. I think we should try to approach them one more time, approach our representatives. We are going to meet with them, as part of that to look for grants to build a parking garage or space. We need more spaces that is nothing new. Parking garage on the municipal lots. How we get there, I think this is what we should do, people do not want side street parking. The Robbins Rd site there were concerns of parents. We do need more parking.

Mr. Salvatore spoke of the survey he did on line. If we were to use the JMS we have to build parking for the teachers and only 53% would park for free and if we charged only 33% would park there. Some concern before the town does things before we expand things. We opened the pool and only a few parks there. Also surprised that out of the 85 people, the Kraft Pilot may be helpful to you. Some people adjusted. I do understand your frustration. I hope we can find a solution.

Margaret Ransom from All About Quilts. We would like to see if the police would leave the spots near the blue building. I think we adjusted to that. We have not seen a commuter problem. If the commuters did use the lots if they could be restricted to the further edges. They are there longer than our customers. We would like to see it sectioned off. Mr. Kraus explained the issue that we have seen is the distance people have to walk to get to the train. We are looking at stickers. Parking near the football field was helpful. He would like to open up parking in front of Blackburn after the Fire station is complete.

Mr. Salvatore there are 25 spots for Police right now. The chief will look into it. If we could take 25 spots and make them two-hour spots so the employees of the places can park further away and the customers can park closer. If there is still plenty off room for the business users. Some of the loses are temporary. There will be some readjustments. She is aware that Dedham has small lots for residents only. Mr. Gallivan stated that the new police station would be opening in April. Once the new station opens the vehicles will be moving to South Street. More spots will open up. Mr. Salvatore that is one concern about spending a lot of money for a short term solution

Richard a Walpole resident, the lot down on Elm Street is going to reopen and those 90 spaces. We are talking about spending \$500,000 on a lot that people will not use. Makes no sense. Maybe get that lot back on a.s.a.p. MBTA do not want to park downtown. The police will be moving to their new Station it will help. Mr. Salvatore noted that even when there were plenty of spots still people parked in the Municipal lots. He recommends a few spots be 2 hour only. There are some all day parkers around the common at times. We are checking on things we are trying to do things without spending a lot of money. Richard the lots near the businesses should be for the businesses.

Beth Wiseman, resident commuter perspective. Can there be more communication to us. That is the first time I was made aware of this. I am new to the town and I am new to getting involved. I had no idea that that lot was going to re-open. You are doing things in short term. Suggested that there be more communication. Mr. Salvatore a lot of these notices we put through Recreation. She asked they consider Posters on the Parking Lots to let us know.

Pat is a 38 year resident and my husband has been taking the train for 38 years. She did see the parking at the pool and her husband parks there, as he is a walker. So that parking area West Street. There is no information to the commuters. Suggested the Board work with the developer to see if they can develop a parking garage. There may be some additional parking. Suggested that the developer build a garage. Mr. Kraus as a Board we were not thrilled with the swimming pool parking area option. We do not see that as a viable option. We can look into the owner of that lot and build up. Mr. Salvatore

Mr. Salvatore noted that one of the issues with that lot it is surrounded by wetlands. That is probably why it is dirt. There is nowhere to go there. If there was someone who is going to pay for it, maybe Walpole residents would. The MBTA did a study for the viability and did a license plate survey and 30% from Medfield and 30% of Walpole. I think the residents of Medfield will assist. I think more people would be willing to pay than you think.

He noted that commuters know and adjust to things quickly. I can go to Norwood, zoned cheaper and the parking the same price for some people between downtown and Norwood. There are adjustments going on We need to figure out how much you would need. She suggested if they go forward with Johnson Middle School maybe they can create a path or a bridge. It was noted the kids have already created a path.

Ms. Philips resident-Can this parking issue be part of the Foxboro Pilot? Can the MBTA work on their responsibility. Mr. Kraus explained we have approached them three times. With that as a continued solution. We will continue to push. We have a whole host of issues. The safety of our residents is of the utmost importance and we are working hard to get solutions.

Ms. Ragosta noted the MBTA is opposed to sinking any money what so ever into safety never mind Parking. They answer to no one. It is unfortunate.

Mr. Kraus informed the audience they had a Selectmen meeting at Boyden that was very well participated regarding the Foxboro Pilot.

Mr. Gallivan, the Pilot is a huge safety issue, if you know the S. Walpole post office, they are saying the train will slow down to about 40. They say will do something for safety. We have kids playing on the tracks. Mr. Salvatore we pay for the privileged of having the MBTA here. If you have a station in your town they assess you money. Medfield does not pay anything. If we are going to spend money, we are going to spend that on Walpole residents only.

Ms. survey, some people said yes to JMS. When you get off the train you sometimes walk a distance. Try this lot and the Pool while the weather is good.

Dianne Thomason Medfield agreed about the communication. I am not familiar with that survey, can you put it in the Train Station? Mr. Kraus stated yes. Ms. Thomason stated she does not use the pool because she can not get across the downtown. If you have a meeting with MBTA Medfield residents would be glad to come.

Donnell Murphy I am probably not adding much to the conversation. The obvious solution is with the MBTA. We should continue to reach out to the MBTA. Thought maybe they could spend the money on the municipal lot by using some of the field.

Need to find a long-term solution. We have to think 10-15 years from now. The commuters are going to grow.

Mr. Kraus agrees we need to look 10-15 years out. Mr. Murphy with the Kraft line, the police station opening will help. I know you are trying to think of a long-term solution. Mr. Kraus for the town to buy land I do not think Walpole residents would support an override for a parking garage. We are pushing as hard as we can with the MBTA.

Ms. Ragosta noted it is a bigger issue than just the MBTA parking, it is a larger issue, revitalization issue, we are going to have to think bigger and approach the state for grants. We can apply for grants and see what they can do with that. I like the idea of involving Medfield.

Mr. Salvatore explained you can go to our website you can get our email addresses if you wish to contact them.

Mr. Kraus informed the audience they have a meeting next week we will discuss this and update you. Active discussion on the Agenda. We have open forum at every one of our meetings and use that as a vehicle.

Richard I take these new apartments that are being put up. There is sufficient parking for residents. Mr. Kraus, yes and we have asked for additional parking.

Karen Nikolova, Brown Drive is a commuter and she drives to Norwood and parking is becoming difficult there and when she goes there she shops in Norwood. It is difficult to find parking in the downtown. One thing someone brought up is there appears to be a ton of space on the opposite side of the tracks that is owned by MBTA. That could be made into a dirt lot. Seems to be a tremendous amount of space. Mr. Kraus explained the train company CSX owns it. Mr. Kraus, we do not own it. It is believed that property is used by CSX to work on their trains. Mr. Salvatore does not believe there is access for a vehicle there. You would have to cross the tracks. Talked about Spring Street and the speed of vehicles. There is no safe place to cross there. It is a hill, it is very dangerous there. The streetlights are not on up there. They are out. Maybe put in a crosswalk. Mr. Kraus we will look at the lights today. The Chief has several meetings with Eversource. She has talked to a lot of people who were thinking of buying homes learned the town is not commuter friendly.

Adriana, as a temporary solution there are two buildings on Spring Street. Their lots are always empty. Maybe approached by you they would provide some spaces. If you have a way of building you will be doing good business.

Maybe some sort of a map where the parking is available on the website. Measurements of the distance.

Sharon Eagles asked about the lot across the street from Liberty Village. Mr. Kraus stated that is private.

Ted business downtown the 2 hour parking limit behind Betro parking lot is that going to be enforced? Chief there are certain areas that belong to the businesses. If they are beyond 2 hour they will be tagged. Ted it is the only place my employees and customers can park. Chief Carmichael the officers use good discretion. We monitor it more, if we see it is getting abused. TED I thought that we would get stickers that we work there. Chief Carmichael we have not seen the lot being full. Ted once Betro's closed that opened up space but someone else may move in. If the people that own a business and we have no parking than we will have to leave. Ms. Ragosta you need to make sure there is ID for employees and business owners so they are excluded from the 2-3 hour number. There will be something.

Ted, his concern is when someone comes into Peter Betro's place there could be a problem. Chief Carmichael we have been watching it. If we get complaints we will look at it. Being a Business owner you can call us if you see issues.

Owner of Gypsy Boutique, I have the same problem with Parking. This is affecting my business because I can never find parking. I have had this problem since the beginning. People ignore the two-hour parking. Chief Carmichael stated if you notice cars there for more than 2 hours let us know. There are people that own businesses and there are people that live there.

Mark Romeo. The view from the Planning Board when we were discussing the two projects. Parking was a huge discussion and studied in depth. The mistake we made was the fact we only looked at the parking and traffic when the project was finished. They did not talk about the project. I saw some comments that were made. We should have looked at the process. Directed at the chief it would be easier if you knew who was who. Developed a CBD if you are an employee or you live there. We are looking for things to help. Spend some money that we acquired from Main Street live. Help working with your depts... Now your officers can see who can be here. Do you think that might help?

Mr. Kraus thinks it would be awesome to help. I would like stickers to be on all cars that are parking.

Mr. Romeo will put something together.

Do we need to get a sticker to park at the Pool?

Mr. Kraus will post back not at the next meeting but the following one. If you have a good idea we would love to hear it.

MOTION moved by Mr. Gallivan to adjourn the meeting at 8:35pm, seconded by Ms. Ragosta VOTED 4-0-0