



# CITY OF WATERTOWN

## TRAFFIC COMMISSION



*Mr. Robert Airasian, Chair*  
*Justin Hanrahan, Police Chief*  
*Ryan Nicholson, Fire Chief*  
*Thomas Brady, Director of Public Works*  
*Steven Magoon, Community Development and Planning*  
*Tyler Glode, City Engineer*  
*Ms. Kelly Gallagher*

May 28, 2025 Traffic Commission Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Robert Airasian, Justin Hanrahan, Ryan Nicholson, Thomas Brady, Steven Magoon, Tyler Glode, Kelly Gallagher.

The Traffic Commission addressed the following items:

**Item 1** – Mr. Magoon made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 30, 2025 Commission meeting; Chief Nicholson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Item 2** – The Commission reviewed a request by Mr. Ken Reyes of Palfrey Street to restrict parking on the south side of Palfrey Street from Forest Street to a point easterly to provide increased sight distance for motorists

Mr. Reyes was concerned about the speed of traffic on Palfrey Street, and to turn from Forest to Palfrey, motorists have to be in the intersection to see oncoming traffic. Mr. Reyes felt that the situation is worse on weekends and during off-hours. Mr. Reyes requested a no parking buffer beyond the standard 20' restriction to prevent vehicles from having to travel far into the intersection to see oncoming traffic.

Mr. Magoon assessed the area and noted the steepness of Palfrey Street in this area. Mr. Magoon noted that any cars parked in this area may slightly obscure visibility. Removing an additional parking space may not make a significant difference. Mr. Magoon is supportive of signage where needed, but this may be a case where motorists may have to enter the intersection slowly and carefully.

Mr. Glode reported that standard regulations prohibit parking within 20 feet of an intersection. The area was flattened as much as possible when the crosswalk was installed. The steepness of the roadway makes a difficult turning approach. Palfrey Street redesign is on this list for improvements; this will likely be within the next five years. A possible solution could be to narrow the turning radius, as Forest Street motorists approach Palfrey Street. If the intersection is squared, ADA connections would also have to be studied. Improvements in this area would require a significant amount of work.

District C Councilor Vincent J. Piccirilli noted that this location is in the middle of the Forest Street roadway project planned for 2026. Councilor Piccirilli asked whether the intersection of Forest Street at Palfrey Street can be addressed during the Forest Street design phase

Director of Public Works Mr. Brady reported that this information can be considered as the project advances from 75% to 100% design.

Mr. Magoon made a motion that DPW and Engineering continue to evaluate the intersection for interim steps that may help with sight distance at the intersection in recognition of the complete streets project that may provide more substantive improvements; Ms. Gallagher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Item 3** – The Commission reviewed a request by Fayette Street residents Ms. Kelly Kurlbaum and Ms. Liz Marino for traffic calming on Fayette Street.

Ahmed Ewing is the owner of 181-183 Fayette Street. Mr. Ewing reported that there is a history of excessive speed and accidents on Fayette Street. Mr. Ewing appreciates the implementation of an all-way stop at Forest and Palfrey Streets but believes that additional action may be warranted. School-age children use Fayette to get to school. The street is relatively wide and straight, and lacks formal sidewalks in some locations. Mr. Ewing suggested installing speed bumps every 300 feet for the entire length of Fayette Street.

Mr. Magoon reported that high speeds are occasionally found on both Fayette and Summer Streets. The addition of traffic calming measures may make sense for Fayette Street or perhaps reconstruct the roadway as part of the City's long-term plans. Mr. Magoon was generally supportive of improvements to Fayette Street.

Mr. Glode reported that similar to other streets in the area, utility work is underway on Fayette Street. When the utility work is complete, the City would look at the design of the roadway and place Fayette Street on a project list for improvements. At that time, evaluation of the area streets will be conducted to consider speed controlling measures. In terms of speed humps, they are usually spaced 500-1000 feet apart. There are no hard plans for Fayette Street at this time, but there may be after utility work is completed.

Mr. Brady appreciated Mr. Ewing's points. Sgt. Sampson reported that an electronic speed feedback sign was posted at 139 Fayette Street. Data from the sign revealed that from April 11 – May 26, 2025 the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed was 26.83 mph. Although the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed seems reasonable, many high speeds were recorded during this timeframe.

Fayette Street resident Mr. David Aitcheson reported that Fayette Street has many areas where there are no formal sidewalks and other sidewalks are in poor condition. Mr. Aitcheson hopes Fayette Street can be placed on a list for complete streets improvements.

Fayette Street resident Ms. Marcy Murningham believes traffic calming is needed on Fayette Street. Many children live on Fayette Street, and she believes traffic is out of control on the street. Mr. Ewing added that there are also many older residents on the street and many Fayette Street residents use bicycles.

Ms. Samantha Garwin of Summer Street noted that Fayette Street and Summer Street experience the same issues. Similar to Summer Street, she asked the Commission to consider looking at potential interim traffic calming measures for Fayette Street and placing it on the same track as Summer Street.

Mr. Magoon noted that because both streets run parallel to Main Street, it makes sense to look at traffic calming on both Fayette Street and Summer Street.

Ms. Gallagher made a motion place Fayette Street on the same track as Summer Street to consider interim traffic calming measures; Mr. Glode seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Item 4** – The Commission reviewed a request by Mr. Christopher Ives and Ms. Mishy Lesser of Oliver Street for the installation of No Parking Here to Corner signage on the south side of Oliver Street at Church Street.

Mr. Ives reported that Church Street is increasingly becoming a cut through street, linking Common Street to Main Street. Oliver Street terminates at Church Street, and oftentimes a vehicle is parked near the Stop sign. In addition, a new fence has been installed on the left side of the street as motorists approach Church Street. Although the fence complies with zoning regulations, Mr. Ives felt that the fence obstructs the view of oncoming cars.

Mr. Clarence Butler resides in the same building as Mr. Ives and agrees with Mr. Ives' concerns. Mr. Butler reported that the narrow angle at Church Street makes it difficult to see oncoming cars.

Sgt. Sampson assessed the area and reported that the geometry of the intersection makes this a unique situation. The standard 20' restriction from an intersection does not provide adequate distance from the crosswalk and entrance into Oliver Street. Sgt. Sampson provided photos and proposed a 35' restriction from Church Street. This would effectively prevent vehicles from parking too closely to the intersection and crosswalk.

Ms. Gallagher reported that if a restriction was placed on the area, the 35' restriction would be the be more effective.

Mr. Magoon noted that the angle of Oliver Street and the very gradual radius on the corner with Church Street makes the crosswalk very wide. The best solution would be to reconfigure the intersection but installing signage as a temporary measure may make sense.

Mr. Brady noted the unique characteristics of New England road layouts. He believed that the Commission was better served installing signage than attempting to reconstruct the intersection at this time.

Chief Nicholson made a motion to restrict parking on the on the south side of Oliver Street, from a point 35' west of Church Street to Church Street; Mr. Glode seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Item 5** – The Commission reviewed a request by Mr. Clarence Butler of Oliver Street for the installation of a speed hump on Church Street at Oliver Street, and enhanced street lighting on Oliver Street at Church Street

Mr. Butler reported that many students cross at the crosswalk on Church Street spanning Oliver Street; it is important for drivers to be able to see pedestrians at this location. Mr. Butler feels that vehicles speed in this area and reported that there have been many "near-misses" at this location. As part of traffic calming, Mr. Butler hoped to also install a speed hump at the intersection of Church Street at Marshall Street.

Due to the approval of the earlier No Parking to Corner restriction on Oliver Street, Mr. Butler retracted his request for enhanced street lighting in the area.

Mr. Glode reported that when all utility work is complete in this area, traffic counts would be conducted to gather data. Engineering is looking at possible improvements for Church Street in general. A process is in place, but it will take some time to get funding to improve the area.

Mr. Glode made a motion to conduct an engineering study when all utility work is complete and collect data to work toward a design; Ms. Gallagher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Item 6** – The Commission reviewed a request by Ms. Jenny Gormley of Myrtle Street for pedestrian improvements at the Pleasant Street, Myrtle Street, and Green Street connections.

Mr. Glode reported that the 2025 Road Program includes Green Street. The concept plans will work to queue up the intersection closer to a 90-degree approach which will help this general concern. Locations to and though will not be modified as part of the design, but these concerns can be reanalyzed.

Mr. Glode made a motion to include a review of Pleasant Street as part of the design in sections 2 and 3 of the Green Street project; Chief Hanrahan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Item 7** – The Commission reviewed a request by Mr. Steve Maggs of Boylston Street to restrict parking on the west side of Boylston Street between #69/71 and #73/75 Boylston Street.

Mr. Maggs reported that cars often try to squeeze in the space between his house and the house at #73/75 Boylston Street. He believed that the space was too small to be a legal parking space and requested the installation of No Parking signage.

Mr. Magoon understands Mr. Maggs' frustration if the space is not long enough to be a parking space. Mr. Magoon thought the Commission could consider two signs noting "No Parking Between Signs".

Sgt. Sampson assessed the area with Mr. Mancini from the Zoning Department. The length of the space is approximately 16'. If reconstruction was performed and formal sidewalks were installed, the distance of the space would be shorter. If the Commission approved the request, one option could be to install one No Parking sign with a single arrow pointing downward.

Mr. Brady reported that a sign may not have the desired effect in the area. The sign may help enforcement, but it may not deter people from parking there.

Ms. Gallagher cautioned that the Commission should not get in the habit of installing a No Parking sign on every 16-foot section of roadway on every street.

Chief Hanrahan made a motion to restrict parking on the west side of Boylston Street between #69/71 and 73/75 Boylston Street; Chief Nicholson seconded the motion. The motion passed by majority, with Mr. Brady dissenting. Mr. Brady was concerned this may set a precedent for all short sections of curbing across the community.

### **New Business**

Mr. David Aitcheson of Fayette Street reported that many people park at the corner of Fayette Street and Spring Street. Mr. Aitcheson would like a sign or some marking to deter people from parking too closely to the intersection.

Mr. Magoon made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Gallagher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.