



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
Mr. Daniel Grieneisen

January 28, 2026 Traffic Commission Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Robert Airasian, Justin Hanrahan, Ryan Nicholson, Tyler Glode, Kelly Gallagher

The Traffic Commission addressed the following items:

Item 1 – Chief Nicholson made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2025 Commission meeting; Chief Hanrahan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 2 – The Commission addressed a request by Ms. Julie White of Wheeler Lane to restrict parking on Wheeler Lane at the intersection of Riverside Street.

Ms. White reported that oftentimes vehicles are parked on both sides of Wheeler Lane; this makes it difficult for trucks and large vehicles to turn onto Riverside Street. She has seen trash trucks have to back all the way down Wheeler Lane to Charles River Road. When the area is congested with parked cars, larger vehicles drive onto the curb and cause damage to signs and her property. She believed that some people park on Wheeler Lane and then take the MBTA in Watertown Square.

Ms. Adrianna Omolade of 10 Wheeler Lane agreed with Ms. White and felt that Wheeler Lane is very tight. She felt that cars drive too fast and that many elderly walk in the area.

Senior Transportation Planner Mr. Zeke Mermell reported that Wheeler Lane is a block or two from the Watertown Square reconfiguration area. Mr. Mermell was happy to keep this area in mind for any long-term changes, and how those changes may impact Wheeler Lane.

Mr. Glode reported that the Engineering Department is close to completing traffic counts for this area. Preliminary survey work is also being conducted; this is for work happening in the next five to ten years. In the interim, there is upcoming roadwork slated for the area but will include only approximately 10 feet of Wheeler Lane, and won't impact parking. The project is at the 90% design phase.

Chief Hanrahan felt that restricting parking would make sense if the roadway is too narrow, and residents do not use it the street for parking.

Sgt. Sampson reported that there are no parking restrictions on Wheeler Lane listed in the Traffic Rules and Orders. He and Officer Cobe assessed Wheeler Lane closest to Riverside Street and found roadway widths between 22 and 23 feet; there is not adequate width to accommodate parking on both sides of the street. He and Officer Cobe also observed tire tracks over the grass area and curbing at the intersection.

Sgt. Sampson suggested prohibiting parking on the west side of Wheeler Lane from Riverside Street to a point 42 feet south, and on the east side of Wheeler Lane from Riverside Street to a point 70' south.

Chief Nicholson inquired whether parking on Riverside Street directly across from Wheeler Lane was assessed and whether there were any concerns, Sgt. Sampson noted that there were no restrictions in this area and motorists typically park there.

Ms. Gallagher made a motion to prohibit parking on the west side of Wheeler Lane from Riverside Street to a point 42 feet south, and on the east side of Wheeler Lane from Riverside Street to a point 70' south; Chief Nicholson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 3 – The Commission addressed a request by Ms. Hannah Sevian of Mt. Auburn Street for a No Parking restriction on the east side of Auburn Court.

Ms. Sevian reported that oftentimes motorists park on Auburn Court too close to Mt. Auburn Street. She noted that there is a large church on Mt. Auburn Street and some parishioners will park on Auburn Court. At times, trash and recycling could not be collected on Auburn Court because the trucks could not gain access. In recent times, large trucks and utility company vehicles have been parked on the corner. Ms. Sevian requested a No Parking Here to Corner restriction on the east side of Auburn Court. Ms. Sevian's neighbor was also in attendance and agreed with Ms. Sevian. She reported that the roadway is very narrow.

Sgt. Sampson assessed the area and found the roadway width to be between 18 and 19 feet; this is not adequate to accommodate parking on both sides of the street. Sgt. Sampson suggested prohibiting parking on the east side of Auburn Ct from a point 32'south of Mt. Auburn Street to Mt. Auburn Street. He also suggested posting No Parking This Side signage on the West side of the street. Posting of signage could be an issue due to property lines.

Chief Hanrahan felt that it made sense to post signage on both sides of the street if it is feasible to do so..

Chief Hanrahan made a motion to restrict parking on the east side of Auburn Court from a point 32'south of Mt. Auburn Street to Mt. Auburn Street and prohibit parking on the west side of the street; Chief Nicholson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 4 – The Commission reviewed a request by Ms. Erin McLaughlin of Palfrey Street for traffic calming measures on Palfrey Street.

Mr. Glode reported that there have been several requests regarding Palfrey Street; the DPW continues to look at this street. Currently the City has roadway projects planned through the Long Street and Connectors Program until 2027. Smaller projects may be possible, but it is dependent on receiving funds to study the area.

Chief Nicholson made a motion to continue to study Palfrey Street; Mr. Glode seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 5 – The Commission addressed a request by Mr. Nick Andriolo of Lowell Avenue for the installation of an in-street Do Not Enter sign on Lowell Avenue at Carroll Street, and to assess roadway width on Lowell Avenue between Carroll Street and York Avenue.

Ms. Lauren Kennedy spoke on the issues on Lowell Avenue. She reported that teachers tend to park on both sides of Lowell Avenue between York Avenue and Carroll Street. Ms. Kennedy finds that the road gets very tight during these times. Ms. Kennedy also reported that it is difficult at times to exit her driveway.

Mr. Glode reported that Engineering assessed the roadway and found that it met the City's 24' minimum width which allows a 10' travel lane in this area. Mr. Glode acknowledged that the roadway does get congested during school drop-off and pick-up times and it is very difficult to regulate and control those situations.

Sgt. Sampson agreed with Ms. Kennedy regarding the difficulty of using an in-street sign due to two-way traffic on the roadway. Traffic officers have been monitoring the Do Not Enter restriction, and Parking Enforcement has been making frequent checks of the No Parking areas.

Ms. Gallagher made a motion to deny the request for an in-street sign and that no action be taken on Lowell Avenue between York Avenue and Carroll Street; Mr. Glode seconded the motion. The motion to deny passed unanimously.

Item 6 – The Commission addressed a request by Ms. Radha Pertaub of Common Street for the installation of speed bumps on Common Street. The issue was originally slated as Item two, but was held open to give Ms. Pertaub an opportunity to attend the meeting; Ms. Pertaub was not present.

Sgt. Sampson explained that Ms. Pertaub was concerned about vehicle speeds on Common Street. In his correspondence with Ms. Pertaub, he explained that the steep grade of Common Street and intent to accommodate a high volume of vehicles as a collector road may make the installation of a speed hump inappropriate. Drainage would likely be a challenge as well. Sgt. Sampson felt that the roundabout at Orchard Street helped reduce speeds on Common Street.

Mr. Glode agreed with Sgt. Sampson and reported that Common Street had a high K value. The hill was smoothed out in the past, and the installation of the roundabout at Orchard Street has helped calm traffic. The current speed and volumes are designated in accordance with the road being a collector. There is no option to regulate the roadway with another intersection and break up the length of the road because there are no viable sections to do so.

Senior Transportation Planner Mr. Zeke Mermell reported that the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian plan includes Common Street evaluation and safety improvements. Even if a speed bump is not appropriate, there may be other options available to make the street less stressful.

Chief Nicholson made a motion to deny the request for a speed hump on Common Street; Ms. Gallagher seconded the motion. The motion to deny passed unanimously

Item 6 – The Commission addressed a request by Sgt. Sampson to remove the Handicap Only parking space in front of 42/44 Copeland Street. Sgt. Sampson reported that the HP Only space was originally approved by the Commission in May, 2019. Sgt. Sampson spoke with the homeowner and confirmed that the parking space was no longer needed. The Department of Public Works removed the sign; Sgt. Sampson requested permission to remove any notation of the parking space from the Traffic Rules and Orders.

Ms. Gallagher made a motion to remove the Handicap Only parking space from the Traffic Rules and Orders; Chief Nicholson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

New Business –

Mr. Glode noted that a significant amount of road work was slated for the City this construction season.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Sgt. David Sampson
Assistant to the Traffic Commission