

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2022, 7 P.M.
IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING**

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Chair James Lewis
- Vice Chair Ann Tucker
- Lavonda Bonnard
- Annie Ebbers
- Casey Kane
- Ashley Mihalik
- Jason Osborne

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Hillary Orr, Deputy Director, T&ES
- Katie North, Division Chief, T&ES
- Christopher Ziemann, Division Chief, T&ES
- Max Devilliers, Urban Planner II, T&ES
- Sean Martin, Urban Planner II, T&ES
- Dan Scolese, Civil Engineer IV, T&ES

1. Announcement of deferrals and withdrawals: no deferrals and withdrawals.
2. Approval of the September 26, 2022, Traffic and Parking Board meeting minutes: No comments from the Board.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Osborne moved to approve the September 26, 2022 minutes. Mr. Kane seconded the motion, and the minutes were adopted unanimously.

3. **WRITTEN STAFF UPDATES:** The Board received written staff updates on the Duke Street and West Taylor Run Capital Project, Duke Street Transitway Engagement, and North Early Street Residential Permit Parking Request. Chair Lewis asked whether the North Early Street petition was currently being circulated. Ms. North stated the petition was paused until the school opens. Ms. Tucker asked whether there had been communication with local associations for the Duke Street Transitway Engagement. Ms. Orr stated there will be a public meeting on Nov 15.
4. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD:**

Oliver O’Conner (virtual) spoke about concerns with Duke Street and West Taylor Run and lack of public engagement.

Jill Hoffman (virtual) spoke about concerns with worsening traffic from the Duke Street and West Taylor Run pilot project and the Metro closure effect on the pilot.

Corey Thomas (virtual) spoke about continued cut through traffic between King Street and Duke Street and requested speed bumps be installed on Moncure Drive and Hilton Street.

CONSENT ITEMS

Mr. Kane requested to move Item Numbers 5 and 6 to the Public Hearing. Ms. Bonnard seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

There were no remaining items for the consent agenda.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

5. ISSUE: Curbside Pick-up and Loading Zone – 800 block of King Street

DISCUSSION: Mr. Kane asked if the scooter corral on King Street can be preserved to keep vehicles from blocking the crosswalk. Ms. North stated that vehicle maneuverability of trucks into the loading space was a concern, but that it can be looked at. No parking signage will still be there.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: No speakers.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Kane moved to recommend the Director of T&ES move the loading zone on the 100 block of N. Alfred Street to the 800 block of King Street once Sweetgreen obtains a Right of Way – Parklet Permit in 2023. Ms. Mihalik seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

6. ISSUE: Parking Restrictions – 600 block of S. Pickett Street (Pickett Street Plaza)

DISCUSSION: Mr. Kane asked about whether a stop bar or crosswalk be added as part of the project. Mr. Devilliers stated it wasn't part of this request but staff can look into it. Ms. Orr stated that a stop bar and crosswalk isn't typically added when only removing parking and that the curb ramp is at an odd angle. A new curb ramp may be needed to add a crosswalk. Mr. Kane asked if it would qualify for them if the road was new. Mr. Scolese stated that most likely it would. Mr. Osborne asked if parking enforcement is notified when new restrictions are put in place and step up enforcement practices. Ms. North confirmed that a coordination meeting is held with other departments to let them know about changes to parking restrictions.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Paul Beck (virtual), property manager for Pickett Street Plaza, spoke that box trucks have been taking space away from customer parking, present a safety hazard due to narrow service lane, and detracts from visibility from Van Dorn Street.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Osborne moved to recommend the Director of T&ES restrict parking along the public service lane west of the Pickett Street Plaza shopping center (628-684 S. Pickett Street) to 2 hours, 8:00 AM to 9:00 PM, daily. Ms. Tucker seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

7. **ISSUE:** Street Closure – Unit Block of King Street

DISCUSSION: Mr. Ziemann provide an overview of the proposal. Mr. Kane asked about bike parking on King Street. Mr. Ziemann stated it had previously been removed and replaced. Mr. Kane suggested adding the permanent bike parking removal to the recommendation and asked about adding permanent bike parking spaces because the approximately 20 replacement spaces appear to be temporary. Mr. Ziemann said approximately 20 permanent spaces will be added, but specifics are to be determined. Mr. Kane then asked about lowering the curb on the east side of the Strand. Mr. Ziemann said that there is a long-term plan to eventually raise the street to the curb level. Mr. Osborne asked if something can be done regarding delivery vehicles on Union Street. Mr. Ziemann responded that potential solutions include making Union Street one way, closing a portion of it, or limiting traffic during certain parts of day. Mr. Lewis suggested that more street seating and activation be included in the project. Ms. Tucker asked if the unit block of King Street would still be under the Traffic and Parking Board for future changes. Mr. Ziemann stated it would for any changes relevant to the Board.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: No speakers.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Kane moved to recommend permanent closure (pedestrianization) of the Unit Block of King Street and the Northern Portion of the Strand with a modification to note this closure included removal of the bike parking previously installed on this block, Ms. Tucker seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

8. **ISSUE:** Traffic Change – Duke Street Traffic Mitigation Pilot Program

DISCUSSION: Ms. Orr and Mr. Scolese provided an overview of the current state of the program. Mr. Osborne asked whether other roads are being looked at for stop signs, parking, or other concerns. Mr. Scolese stated that data from the pilot will help inform other projects and that the metro shutdown is causing irregular traffic volumes and backups. Ms. Orr added that some roads are seeing less traffic volume but extending the pilot can help find data trends. Mr. Kane asked if there were any crashes reported by the ramp. Mr. Scolese says he hasn't heard of any crash reports. Mr. Kane asked what can be done about motorcycles cutting between bollards. Mr. Scolese said there's limited options to prevent it, but they can work with Fire on suitable options. Mr. Kane asked if the City has had to replace any flexposts and Mr. Scolese responded that he had not heard of any instances where flexposts have needed replacing yet. Ms. Mihalik asked if staff

considered creating a pedestrian refuge on Duke Street. Mr. Scolese responded that it was discussed but the existing signal and six-foot minimum requirement make it a long-term option only.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Thomas Singer spoke about concerns with traffic light timing changes and backup on West Taylor Run.

Anysia Oswald spoke about speeding on West Taylor Run and concerns with tour buses and large trucks that use the road.

Lisa Porter (virtual) spoke on behalf of the Clover College Park Civic Association and supports the pilot extension to gather data after the metro reopens.

Leslie Catherwood (virtual) spoke in support of the pilot extension and says that it has vastly improved quality of life on West Taylor Run by reducing traffic flow significantly.

Oliver O’Conner (virtual) spoke in support of the pilot extension and noted heavy traffic on Duke Street.

BOARD ACTION: Ms. Tucker moved to recommend the City Council approve the pilot extension, Mr. Osborne seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

9. **ISSUE:** Stop Signs – Administrative Approval Process

DISCUSSION: Mr. Scolese provided an overview of the proposed process recommendations. Chair Lewis suggested it was worth considering near misses that may not result in crashes. Mr. Kane asked if the police definition of crashes and severity was being used and noted that data is not perfect. Mr. Scolese responded that crash data is one part of what is looked at. Mr. Kane inquired about using less stop signs and more traffic circles, including mini traffic circles. Mr. Scolese said it was an option and agreed that cost is a concern. Mr. Kane and Ms. Tucker asked about previously rejected stop sign requests. Mr. Scolese said staff can look into them and they would require petition signatures. Ms. Tucker questioned if the Board should cede the decision to staff and not provide a public space to discuss requests that may not be approved under this process. Ms. Orr stated that the public can speak in any hearing and the board can docket an item. Ms. Ebbers suggested an appeal process that offers language to come speak at a public hearing or to gather a set number of signatures. Mr. Kane asked why a 60:40 ratio is being used. Mr. Scolese responded that there is better compliance at stop signs. Ms. Mihalik suggested that making this process more administrative would be better for residents, but that less technical language be used so residents better understand the process.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: No speakers.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Kane moved to recommend the Board approve the administrative stop sign process with suggested changes, Ms. Ebbers seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

10. STAFF UPDATES

- FY 2024 Budget Priorities – Ms. North provided an overview of the City Manager request for feedback on the FY 2024 Budget priorities. Mr. Kane suggested prioritizing a comprehensive study of the trail network and new transit initiative funding. Ms. Tucker would like to hear an update on enforcement initiatives and technology. Ms. North will reach out to the Alexandria Police Department to get an update during the January Board meeting.
- Curb Cut Process – Ms. North provided an update to the existing curb cut process and the Board’s role in appeals. Chair Lewis suggested care should be taken to ensure too many curb cuts are not approved administratively.
- 2023 Board Schedule – Ms. North provided an overview of the 2023 Board schedule including a change to the September meeting date. Mr. Osborne suggested that any meetings involving public comment for the Duke Street in Motion project be held as separate meetings. Mr. Kane added that this would be challenging, and the Board may not have the authority to have separate meetings. Ms. Orr suggested trying to work with the Board to schedule smaller docket items away from more controversial items. Ms. Tucker asked about whether a meeting in December will be necessary. Ms. North responded that staff will be looking at the November docket to see if a December meeting would be necessary and reminded the Board that the November meeting will be two weeks early.

11. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Mr. Kane provided an update on the Transportation Commission and a discussion about Duke Street in Motion and noted an upcoming open house for more information.

Mr. Kane also provided an update on the Complete Streets Comprehensive Update and Safe Routes to School and noted the pace of progress on some recommended changes.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Tucker moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Osborne seconded. The motion was adopted unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:35 PM.