



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Traffic and Parking Committee

Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 5, 2026

6:00 PM

This meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order by Chair Sait at 6:05 pm and adjourned at 7:48 pm on a roll call vote of 3 in favor (Councilors Wheeler, Mbah and Sait), 0 opposed, and 0 absent.

Also present: Brian Postlewaite — Director of Engineering, Brad Rawson — Director of Transportation & Infrastructure and Delaney Fisher-Cassioli — Clerk of Committees

Present: City Councilor At Large Ben Wheeler, City Councilor At Large Wilfred N. Mbah and Ward Five City Councilor Naima Sait

Roll Call

1. Committee Minutes
(ID # [26-1148](#))

Approval of the Minutes of the Traffic and Parking Committee Meeting of June 22, 2026.

RESULT: **ACCEPTED**

AYE: City Councilor At Large Wheeler, City Councilor At Large Mbah and Ward Five City Councilor Sait
2. Resolution
(ID # [26-1019](#))

By Councilor Wheeler, Councilor Hardt and Councilor Sait
That the Director of Parking discuss with this Council the possibility of administering a parking permit type intended for vehicle owners with driveways, at a lower price than standard residential parking permits, which would allow only daytime and evening street parking but not overnight street parking, and which would not be usable during street cleaning or snow emergencies.

RESULT: **KEPT IN COMMITTEE**
3. Officer's Communication
(ID # [26-1090](#))

Director of Parking conveying information regarding item #26-1019.

RESULT: **KEPT IN COMMITTEE**
4. Public Communication
(ID # [26-1183](#))

Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committee submitting comments re: bus network redesign.

Brad Rawson, Director of Transportation & Infrastructure, noted that the MBTA has proposed eliminating Route 80. The proposal would retain service on the west side to Tufts and reroute it to provide a connection to the

Red Line at Davis Square. He noted that residents have expressed concerns about this strategy. The MBTA Board of Directors previously voted to endorse the system redesign, which included changes to Route 80, but the MBTA has more recently been committed to fine-tuning the proposal and being open to feedback. Director Rawson noted that Mayor Wilson has also been in contact with MBTA General Manager Phil Eng and Somerville City staff. The MBTA recently completed a community feedback round, during which hundreds of residents submitted concerns about the proposed changes, and indicated in September that it would consider the feedback and update the public about any changes. Chair Sait noted that she has heard significant concerns from constituents about the potential elimination of Route 80 and asked when the next MBTA update could be expected. Director Rawson said the MBTA has indicated that an update will come in the winter, likely after the new year. He said he does not believe Route 80 is redundant and that, given different accessibility needs and destinations, the Green Line is not a reasonable substitute. Chair Sait also noted that losing the bus would be a major loss for supporting the 115 Sycamore School.

In response to a question from Councilor Mbah, Director Rawson noted that City staff from multiple departments are working to accommodate buses throughout the City as much as possible. He said the Western Pearl Street construction was planned with the assumption that Route 80 would continue and that the City works with the MBTA as much as possible to ensure that Somerville remains busable. The City will continue working with local and state officials and neighboring communities. Director Rawson acknowledged that the MBTA has limited numbers of buses and operators and that he understands the need to make service reductions, but said Somerville will continue to be the best partner possible for the MBTA. Councilor Wheeler reviewed the attachment *PTAC - bus network redesign*, specifically regarding the Route 85 schedule and early last bus, and said the schedule does not promote ad hoc travel and would require people to more closely plan their outings. He emphasized that frequency and consistency matter. Director Rawson noted that Route 80 has not returned to pre-pandemic ridership levels and is currently at approximately 30% of pre-pandemic ridership. Chair Sait asked whether the City will increase its advocacy before a final decision is made, and Director Rawson said there are regular meetings with the MBTA and the City will continue advocating on the issue.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

5. Resolution
(ID # [26-1425](#))

By Councilor Sait and Councilor Link
That the Director of Mobility install a NO TURN ON RED sign at the intersection of Broadway and Cedar Street.

Chair Sait noted that right turns on red are currently allowed at this intersection and that the practice has proven to be particularly unsafe,

especially during baseball season because of the intersection's proximity to Trum Field and the regular pedestrian crossings in the area. She also noted that the Department of Public Works is nearby, resulting in a high volume of trucks traveling through the intersection.

Brad Rawson, Director of Transportation & Infrastructure, noted that Somerville staff have been assessing all signalized intersections in the City, examining each individual approach to each intersection. Staff are continuing to review intersections and install signage where needed, and will review this intersection as part of that process. He noted that the City may need to conduct an assessment of the signal timing before bringing the matter back to the Committee for a vote on whether signage should be installed. This intersection is also part of the upcoming Broadway-Magoun construction project. The City anticipates bidding the construction this winter, with construction beginning next summer. In the meantime, staff will pursue short-term remedies while also considering long-term improvements to make the intersection safer.

Councilor Wheeler suggested making all intersections no-turn-on-red, similar to Cambridge, rather than conducting individual studies, noting that 97% of intersections are already no-turn-on-red. Director Rawson noted that the individual studies are a relatively low lift for staff. He said that if the review turns out to require a lengthy or expensive study, he will inform the Committee and the City may reconsider its approach.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

6. Resolution
(ID # [26-1426](#))

By Councilor Sait

That the Director of Mobility take the steps necessary to make the intersection of Vernon Street and Partridge Avenue safer.

Chair Sait noted that abutters to the intersection brought this issue to her attention. Brad Rawson, Director of Transportation & Infrastructure, noted that potential speed humps had been discussed at a previous meeting and that staff have collected data from the intersection. He explained that there is more demand than available resources for the traffic calming program, so staff use data on vehicle speeds and traffic volumes, as well as the proximity of schools, senior centers, and other locations, to prioritize areas for improvements. He noted that, unfortunately, there are more issues on City streets than can be addressed immediately. Staff have not yet completed their assessment of this area, but they can pursue other safety improvements in the meantime, including through the City's Clear Corners program. Director Rawson noted that staff are currently prioritizing higher-volume streets, though he expects to have an update in the fall.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

-
7. Resolution (ID # [26-1112](#)) By Councilor Link, Councilor Ewen-Campen and Councilor Mbah
Calling for traffic calming measures in the Prospect Hill neighborhood.
- Brad Rawson, Director of Transportation & Infrastructure, noted that there has been significant outreach from neighborhood residents regarding traffic issues in Prospect Hill. Mobility staff have been in contact with the organizers and residents and are considering vehicle speeds, traffic volumes, and vulnerable road users in the area as part of the assessment. He noted that the City's prioritization system is available on the traffic calming homepage. The Prospect Hill streets identified for review will have data collected in October, which will take a few months to process before the results are updated online.
- RESULT:** **RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**
8. Resolution (ID # [26-0138](#)) By Councilor Sait
That the Director of Mobility add additional signage helping users of the Community Path get through Maxwell's Green to the Community Path and add clear signage directing users to the ramp and stairs on Lowell Street.
- This item was discussed with item #26-0136.
- RESULT:** **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**
- AYE:** City Councilor At Large Wheeler and Ward Five City Councilor Sait
- ABSENT:** City Councilor At Large Mbah
9. Order (ID # [26-0137](#)) By Councilor Sait
That the Director of Engineering provide an update on the construction of the Lowell Street and School Street crosswalks facing the Green Line stations.
- Brian Postlewaite, Director of the Engineering Division, discussed the originally proposed Lowell Street crosswalk near Maxwell's Green and he noted that due to the size of the building there, a crosswalk that was narrow enough to fit the site would make it difficult for the Fire Department to operate. Instead, the City will add a raised crossing at Lowell and Vernon Streets to improve safety while better accommodating the Fire Department. Staff are working on the final design and plan to incorporate the work into the Broadway-Magoun project.
- Regarding the School Street crosswalk near Montrose Street, Director Postlewaite noted that the Community Path is offset in this area, creating a challenging right or left turn for people trying to remain on the path and cross the street. Part of the path is on the bridge and part is off the bridge, requiring the crosswalk to cross the edge of the bridge, which makes the design more complicated. Staff are considering several options, including one that MassDOT has agreed to, although that option presents a challenge for the Fire Department. He noted that the Fire Department has been a good
-

partner in working through the issue. There is not yet a final design, but staff are continuing to work on it and will return to MassDOT for approval, hopefully before the end of the year. Staff hope to have final plans by mid-summer or fall and incorporate the work into the FY28 annual streets contract.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: City Councilor At Large Wheeler and Ward Five City Councilor Sait

ABSENT: City Councilor At Large Mbah

10. Resolution
(ID # [26-0136](#))

By Councilor Sait

That the Director of Mobility discuss with this Council strategies for improving the safety of users of the Community Path, including improved signage, enforcement of the motorized vehicle ban on the path, coordination with community partners to encourage cooperative use, and regulation of e-bikes, including the imposition of speed limits.

Brad Rawson, Director of Transportation & Infrastructure, noted that staff have published short-term measures to improve safety for all users. Mobility offers a monthly newsletter that directed residents to a 20-page presentation on the results of a 1,200-person survey, which helped inform safety recommendations intended for implementation in the fall. He highlighted one measure already underway, thermoplastic speed humps designed to slow faster-moving wheeled vehicles. He noted that the path has a high volume of traffic and that one of the biggest challenges is faster-moving users needing to make space for slower-moving users. A few nights ago, staff went out overnight to test new treatments and are open to public feedback. Director Rawson noted that pavement marking work is generally completed overnight, so there should be very limited impacts on people using the path while the markings dry. They plan to expand the treatments to additional locations along the path over the next few weeks, and additional signage changes are also in progress. Chair Sait noted that enforcement will be discussed next month.

RESULT: **KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

Referenced Documents:

- Traffic and Parking - 2026-10-05 - Memo (with 26-1019)
- Traffic and Parking - 2026-10-05 Community Path Crossings Concepts (with 26-0137)