

Economic Development Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

April 13, 2022

EDC Members:	Councilor Melanie Hamblen, Chair; Councilor Cobi Frongillo, Vice Chair via Zoom; Councilors Glenn Jones & Patrick Sheridan
Other Town Staff:	Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Alecia Alleyne, Assistant to the Town Administrator; Chief of Police Thomas Lynch, Lieutenant Jason Reilly

Chair Hamblen called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. and read announcements.

Agenda:

1. Downtown traffic and parking improvements

a. West Street neighborhood follow-up

i. Town Administrator Memo

- TA Hellen discussed parking issues in the West St. neighborhood: After doing substantial research for several years and discussing with staff, we have identified some areas where parking violations occur most frequently. There are two key intersections with “No parking here to corner” signs [pictures attached to agenda] posted where people are still parking. There is ample signage, so adding more does not seem like the right solution; however the DPW can add striping in these spaces to further demonstrate that parking is prohibited. TA Hellen also referenced a draft bylaw amendment to an appendix in town code [attached to agenda] to address parking violation fines, which haven’t changed in 20 years.

ii. Town Bylaw Parking Fines

- TA Hellen discussed proposed increases in town-wide parking violation fines, based on research conducted by Franklin Police Department (FPD).
- Police Chief Lynch elaborated on the types of violations and circumstances surrounding the fines being proposed.
- Lieutenant Reilly explained briefly why some of these proposed fines differ from those of surrounding towns.
- Councilor Jones discussed that there may be pushback from local businesses, but these changes will hopefully result in better parking rotation for customers. Councilor Jones also discussed that the overnight parking restriction will be significant in opening up parking downtown.
- Councilor Frongillo commented that he leans toward the higher fines, doesn’t think \$50 is unreasonable, and isn’t compelled by other communities’ lower fines. We are not able to enforce at the same rate as other communities and higher fines will deter violations. Councilor Frongillo also discussed that he doesn’t think we need more police staff to monitor parking but in the future we could look into hiring someone at a level between police officer and volunteer to enforce parking.
- Councilor Sheridan asked what number people should call for parking issues. Chief Lynch responded that people should call 508-528-1212 then ask for desk officer.
- Councilor Jones asked if there would be a benefit in creating a penalty schedule for 1st, 2nd, 3rd parking offense incrementally. Lt. Reilly responded that it would be hard to track logistically. Chief Lynch added that they don’t have the software to do this.
- Chair Hamblen commented that she leans towards a higher overtime parking fee because this is the major problem that everyone complains about, and raised the question of what the proposed increase should be - either the \$25 suggested by the PD, or higher. There was discussion regarding the frequency with which tickets are handed out for overtime parking. Right now it’s about two or three times a week.

- Questions / Discussion regarding the following topics
 - Overtime parking fines
 - Effective date for fine increases
 - State regulations regarding when repeat parking violators can be towed
 - How ticketing will be enforced
 - Communications / relationship building between FPD and Dean College
 - PD staffing and the possibility of hiring a parking control officer to manage ticketing
 - Why Dean security is not able to issue tickets on Town roads
 - Overnight parking during snow storms - police response, ticketing, towing
 - Potential impact on businesses' private parking lots
- Councilor Jones made a motion to move the (revised) bylaw amendment to the Town Council as is (with the overtime parking fine at \$25). Councilor Sheridan seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Frongillo-No. Jones-Yes. Sheridan-Yes. Hamblen-No. Tie vote, can't move forward.
- Councilor Sheridan made a motion to increase the overtime parking fine from \$25 to \$35. Councilor Jones seconded the motion. Discussion between councilors, business owners, residents and TA Hellen followed regarding the reasoning for setting a fine that is higher than the current amount of \$15 and the FPD recommended amount of \$25, but is lower than \$50. Further discussion included alternative or additional solutions to parking violations as suggested by residents. Roll call vote: Jones-No. Sheridan-Yes. Frongillo-Yes. Hamblen-Yes. Approved 3-1.
- Chair Hamblen stated she would accept a motion to move the parking fine bylaw amendment as amended (with overtime parking fine of \$35) to the full Council. Councilor Jones seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Frongillo-Yes. Sheridan-Yes. Jones-No. Hamblen-Yes. Approved 3-1.

b. Downtown Main Corridor Parking

i. Map Amendment proposal

- TA Hellen spoke about the downtown parking district map [attached to agenda] which has been revised to include a proposed new parking zone that has 2-hr parking from 8am-10pm and no overnight parking Mon -Fri.
- Questions / Discussion regarding the following topics
 - Communication with business owners
 - Reasons for the new parking zone - to prevent long term parking and increase rotation
 - Abundance of free parking options downtown
- Councilor Jones made a motion to move the parking map as is to the full Council for further discussion. Councilor Frongillo seconded the motion. Discussion followed between councilors, Chief Lynch and TA Hellen regarding why these parking zones are not in effect on weekend days. Roll call vote: Jones-Yes. Sheridan-Yes. Frongillo-Yes. Hamblen-Yes. Approved 4-0.

Chair Hamblen stated that she would accept a motion to adjourn. Councilor Jones seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Frongillo-Yes. Sheridan-Yes. Jones-Yes. Hamblen-Yes. Approved 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:47 pm.

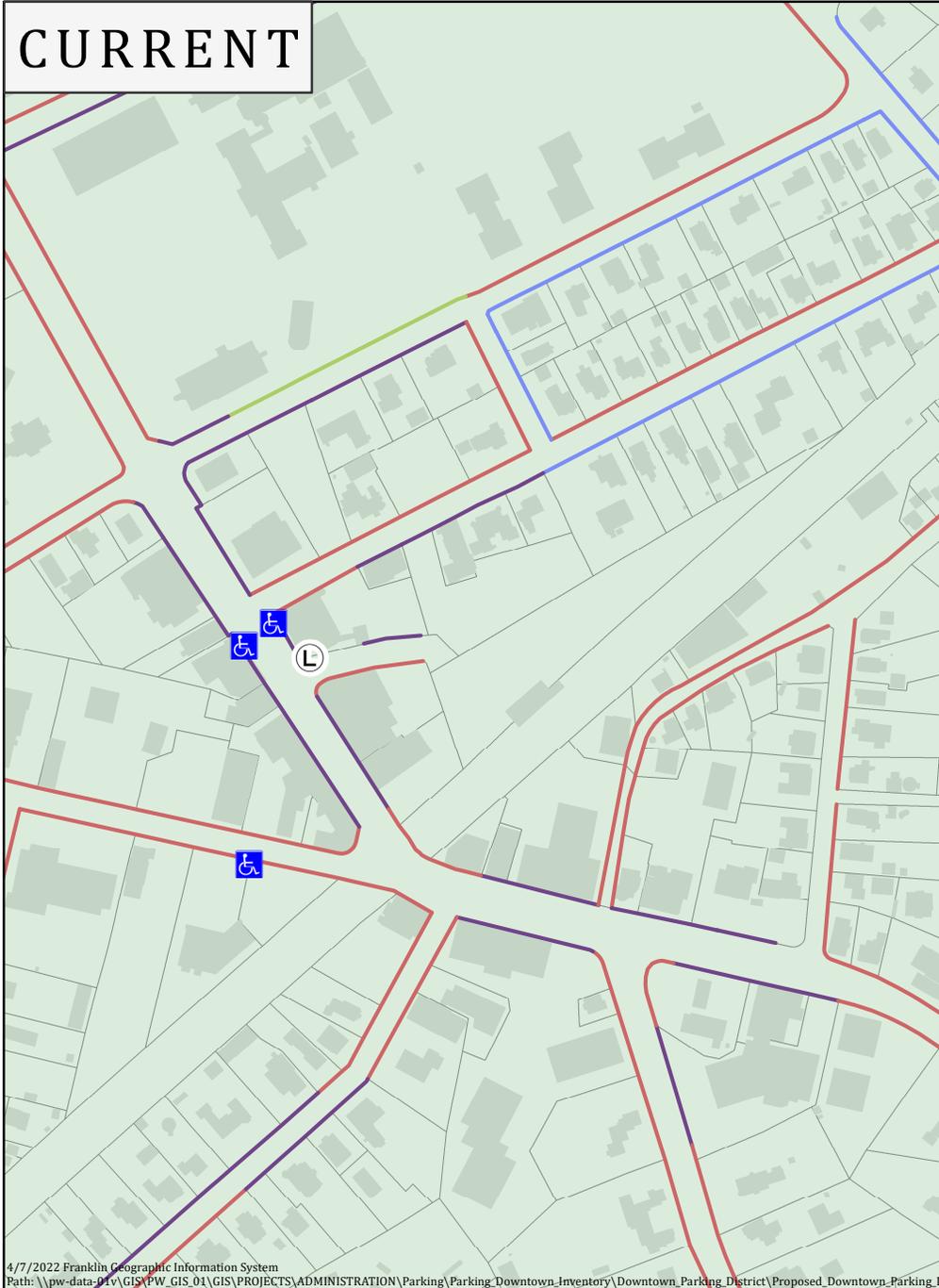
Proposed Downtown Parking District Changes

0 65 130 260 390 520 Feet

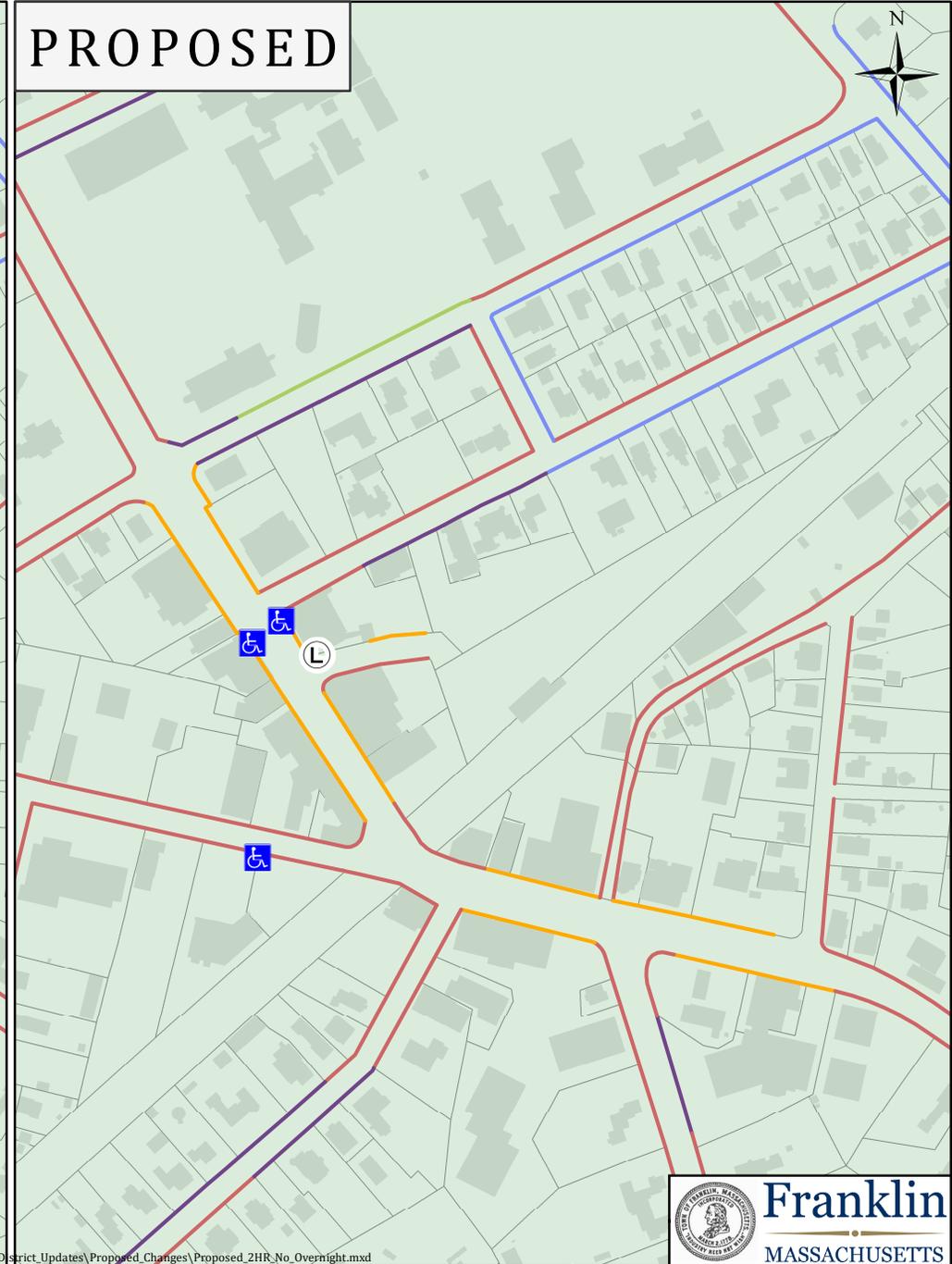
- Merchant Permit 6am-2pm, M-F
- 2 HR 6am-10am, M-F
- 2 HR 8am-2pm, M-F
- 2 HR 8am-10pm, M-F No Overnight
- No Parking

- Downtown Parking District
- Building
- Parcel

CURRENT



PROPOSED



37 West St

Franklin, Massachusetts



Google



Street View - Oct 2019



Google



33 West St

Franklin, Massachusetts



Google



Street View - Oct 2019



Union Street Cemetery



V.B. 19

Google



47 West St

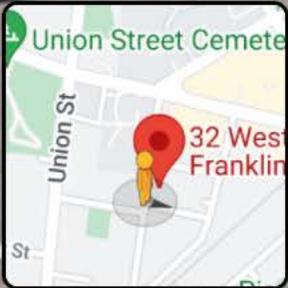
Franklin, Massachusetts



Google



Street View - Oct 2019



Google