

2/11/12 (4)

**TOWN OF ACTON  
INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION**

**Date:** December 10, 2012

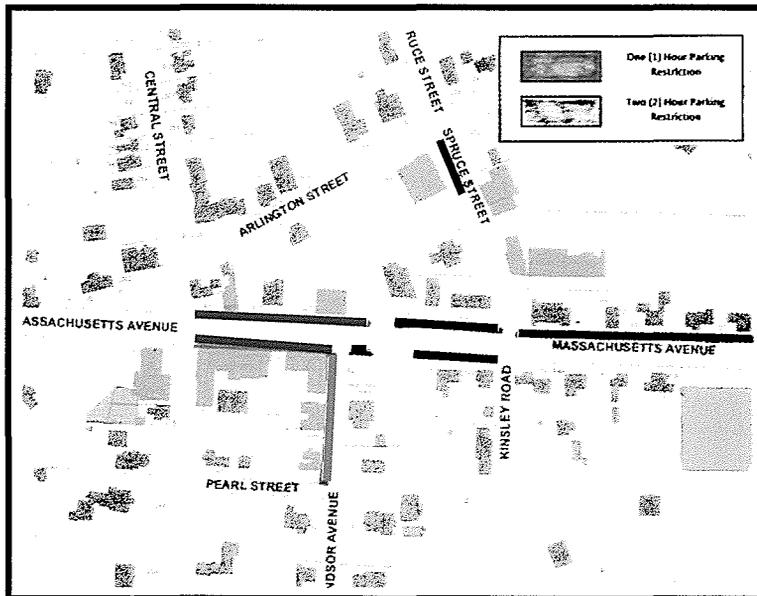
**To:** Steve Ledoux, Town Manager

**From:** Engineering Department

**Subject:** Amendment to the Existing Traffic Rules and Orders

The Engineering Department has been asked to evaluate the parking situation in West Acton Center. We reviewed the existing conditions and determined the following information:

The existing time-restricted on-street parking in West Acton Center is as follows:



The contractor for Spruce Corner has just recently constructed the three (3) new parking spaces on the westerly side of Spruce Street by Arlington Street. I spoke with the project engineer and he will be installing the signs to clearly designate the 2-hour parking restriction for these spaces and the No Parking zone along their frontage on Spruce and Arlington Street.

In addition, there are some other upcoming changes that will be occurring in West Acton Center that will impact the parking in West Acton such as the following:

- The MBTA is tentatively scheduled to reconstruct the Mass Ave railroad crossings during the next construction season to accommodate the new double tracking. As a



We have also received the following requests to be considered for amending the existing Traffic Rules and Orders.

- Changing the existing parking restrictions on Massachusetts Avenue:
  - **Scenario 1**  
Modify the parking restrictions so that east of the railroad tracks is 2-hour parking and west of the railroad tracks remains as 1-hour parking. This scenario was requested to assist the Moodz customers that might not be able to complete their business within a one hour time period.
  - **Scenario 2**  
Modify the parking restriction on Massachusetts Avenue so the entire West Acton Center has a 2-hour parking restriction, including the side streets.

(I don't recommend this scenario. It is my opinion that the 1-hour parking restriction between the railroad tracks and Central Street helps the immediate businesses to keep these spaces open for potential customers that only need to run into the store.

- Add a time restriction to the existing parking on Spruce Street:
  - **Scenario 3**  
Add a 2-hour parking restriction on the easterly side of Spruce Street starting at Massachusetts Ave and extending northerly for about 330 feet. This amendment would create a time restriction for the existing parking spaces along Spruce Street. I have received this request from the safety officer and a business owner on Spruce Street. He has reported that individuals have been parking their vehicles at this location all day and it is negatively impacting his business.
  - **Scenario 4**  
Extend a No Parking Restriction on the easterly side of Spruce Street from Massachusetts Ave heading northerly for a distance of about 70 feet to the existing driveway access. Also, add a 2-hour parking restriction on the easterly side of Spruce Street starting at about 70 feet from Massachusetts Ave and extending northerly for about 260 feet. This amendment would create a time restriction for the existing parking spaces along Spruce Street and eliminate the two parking spaces closest to Massachusetts Ave. This request was raised by the safety officer and a resident on Spruce Street. They both had concerns with these parking spaces and the need to eliminate them to improve the overall safety at the intersection.

I have also been asked to look at the potential of constructing a municipal parking area on the wooded Town-owned parcel (Parcel 14 on Town Map F-2B) between 3 & 7 Kinsley Road and 15 Kinsley Road. Below is an aerial view showing the above-mentioned lot. I believe that the Town could potentially build a parking lot with about a dozen parking spaces on this parcel.



I sent letters to the businesses on Mass Ave in West Acton Center and the Kinsley Road neighborhood to ask for their input on the parking situation in West Acton. I've attached a copy of these letters to my memo. I received about a dozen responses from the residents. The vast majority of the residents are opposed to the potential parking area on Kinsley Road for the following reasons:

- Narrow road width of Kinsley Road at Mass Ave
- Limited sight distance at Mass Ave looking westerly
- No sidewalks on Kinsley Road
- Existing off-street parking is under-utilized

I received one response from the businesses. He stated that he owns the property next to the railroad tracks at the intersection of Windsor Ave and Mass Ave. He talked about the parking in the area and was willing to work with the adjacent business owner to allow some of their employees to park in his lot during the week when there are available spaces. He also mentioned the Christian Science parking lot on Central Street is open for public use and is rarely used during the week.

### **Roadway**

The width of Kinsley Road at Mass Ave is about 20 feet. This road width is the standard for a new low-intensity local street as per the Town Subdivision Rules and Regulations. A low-intensity local street is defined in the regulations as having an average daily traffic volume of 250 vehicles or less. Using the ITE Trip Generation, I have calculated the average daily traffic on Kinsley Road to be around 400 vehicles per day. The intersection roundings are small and cause larger vehicles to utilize both lanes on Kinsley Road to enter the neighborhood.

### **Sidewalk**

There is no sidewalk on Kinsley Road at Mass Ave. A section of sidewalk was constructed in front of 3-7 Kinsley Road as part of their site plan site permit. Both residential properties on either side of Kinsley Road at Mass Ave have a fence that is about 5-6 feet from the edge of the road pavement. A sidewalk could possibly be constructed, but a small retaining wall will be

needed to deal with the existing grades along the road shoulder. In addition, a tree would also have to be removed to accommodate the new sidewalk.

### **Intersection Sight Distance**

The neighborhood was concerned about the sight distance looking westerly toward Central Street. The posted speed limit on Mass Ave in West Acton Center is 30 miles per hour. The existing sight distance looking westerly is insufficient for that vehicle speed due to the on-street parking. There is also a crosswalk at this location and a parked vehicle limits the visibility for pedestrians, as well. A resident on Baxter Road recalls 3 pedestrians being struck by vehicles at this intersection. The Police Department compiled a 3-year accident history and determined there were 4 accidents in 2011, 5 accidents in 2010 and 1 accident in 2009.

### **Existing Parking Facilities**

Some of the residents and the businessman commented the off-street parking is not being fully utilized during the day and that the on-street parking is most preferred by drivers and limited in quantity. Residents mentioned the parking behind the Red, White and Brew typically has spaces available and the Christian Science lot always has available spaces during the week. The owner of the property at the intersection of Windsor and Mass Ave indicated that he routinely has vacant parking spaces during the week at his lot. There was one comment made about the possibility of parking employees of the salon being allowed to park behind the West Acton Fire Station. Currently, 22 spaces are reserved for the shuttle during the weekday hours and 12 spaces are open to the public. I typically see the majority of the 12 public spaces being used by the Fire Department, nearby residents, etc... Depending on the availability of some of the reserved shuttle parking, the Town might be able to coordinate a temporary allowance for salon employees to park in reserved shuttle spaces until such time as the Shuttle Service needs them for customers. There were also some comments about re-evaluating Gardner Field to convert an area to provide additional parking. I would defer this alternative until the WAVE project completes their commitment for on-street parking. I am assuming that the Town will adopt a 2-hour parking restriction on these spaces, as well, to ensure the availability for shoppers and playground users.

### **Accessible Parking Spaces**

The Commission on Disabilities has requested the Town to consider providing accessible on-street parking spaces on the southerly side of Massachusetts Avenue between Central Street and the railroad tracks. The commission would like to have 2 existing on-street spaces converted to accessible spaces. I did a preliminary study of the parking areas in the immediate vicinity of this area. I've attached a table showing the results of my research. I've provided a copy to the Commission to further evaluate whether or not these parking facilities are in compliance with the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board's regulations. My initial recommendation is to ensure the existing parking facilities are in compliance with the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. Based on my preliminary assessment, there are a few accessible spaces that might be gained as per the AAB requirements. However, this would need to be verified and enforced before I can be certain of the addition of these accessible parking spaces.

### **Recommendations**

**Improve Sight Distance** - I recommend removing the last parking space on Mass Ave in front of house #552. The elimination of this parking space will improve the sight distance for drivers and pedestrians at Kinsley Road.

**Pedestrian Improvements** – I would recommend adding a neck-down at the crosswalk by Kinsley Road. The purpose of the neck-down is to provide a safe area for pedestrians to approach the travel lane to view oncoming traffic without being obstructed by parked vehicles along Mass Ave. The creation of the new curb bump-out will also ensure no one can park at this location and will help to preserve the improved sight distance for the Kinsley Road neighborhood. This could also be considered for the crosswalk at Windsor Ave. It is possible that the crosswalk on Mass Ave at Windsor Ave might need to be relocated in order to provide pedestrian a more suitable location for viewing oncoming traffic. I would defer the proposal for a neck-down by Windsor Ave until the MBTA completes their work and the Town can fully assess the Mass Ave road configuration.



Examples of Neck-downs and Chokers

**Parking** – The WAVE project is currently in the process of adding additional on- and off-street parking. As a result, this project will provide an overall increase in the available parking in the general vicinity of West Acton Center. The owner of the parking lot at the intersection of Windsor Ave and Mass Ave has also offered to work with the salon to possibly provide a few spaces for them during the week to alleviate the issue with all-day parking affecting the other businesses in the area. In addition, the Town could evaluate the potential for additional parking spaces along Mass Ave between Gardner Field and Kinsley Road. We could further evaluate the possibility of narrowing the pavement width at this location to keep a similar cross-section similar to the WAVE project. However, I would only recommend adding parking in this area if it did not adversely impact the sight distance for Kinsley Road and the other residential driveways. I recommend exploring these other alternatives and assessing the impacts when the new spaces are completed before proceeding with a municipal parking lot on Kinsley Road.

**Accessible Parking Spaces** - My initial recommendation is to ensure the existing off-street parking facilities are in compliance with the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board. If there are no new accessible spaces gained in these locations, the Town can then investigate the potential to convert an on-street parking space on Mass Ave. If deemed compliant with the applicable regulatory agencies, I would consider converting the parking space closest to Windsor Ave. I believe this location would minimize the potential points of conflict for someone exiting on the driver's side of the vehicle. In addition, it would be adjacent to the accessible crosswalk ramp on Mass Ave allowing this individual the short distance to access the sidewalk.

**Traffic Rules and Order Amendments** – I recommend the following amendments:

- **Massachusetts Ave**  
Modify the existing parking restriction so that east of the railroad tracks is 2-hour parking and west of the railroad tracks remains 1-hour parking. This amendment was requested to assist the salon customers that are not able to complete their

business within a one hour time period.

- **Spruce Street**

Extend a No Parking Restriction on the easterly side of Spruce Street from Massachusetts Ave heading northerly for a distance of about 70 feet to the existing driveway access. Also, add a 2-hour parking restriction on the easterly side of Spruce Street starting at about 70 feet from Massachusetts Ave and extending northerly for about 260 feet. This amendment would create a time restriction for the existing parking spaces along Spruce Street and eliminate the two parking spaces closest to Massachusetts Ave. At the request of the safety officer and the other interested parties, I have recommended this amendment to address both of their issues on Spruce Street.

**General Traffic Concerns** - The Acton 2020 Comprehensive Plan and prior Master Plans has identified traffic calming as one of the objectives for residential areas and village centers. I've been compiling policies from other communities to see how they prioritize their projects and approaches. The Town could pursue an overall traffic calming plan for West Acton Center and then we can incorporate specific elements in phases based on the needs of the Town. This plan would compile all the proposed modifications to parking, the road cross-section, the MBTA's improvements at the railroad crossing, enhanced crosswalk designs, etc... The design could also incorporate other elements such as a bike lane and coordinate its design with future plans for Kelley's Corner, if deemed applicable.



**TOWN OF ACTON**  
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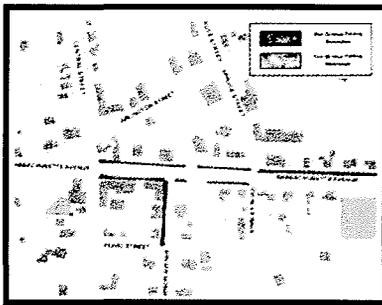
## Engineering Department

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April 21, 2012

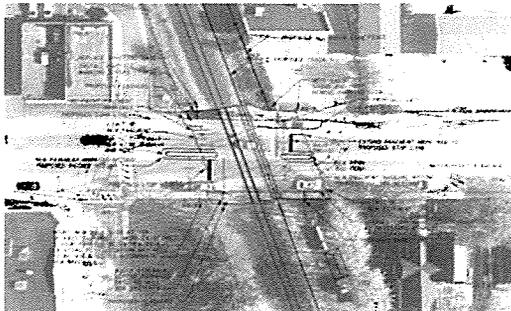
The Town has been asked to look at the parking situation in West Acton Center. The Engineering Department plans to review the existing conditions and submit some possible ideas to the Board of Selectmen for discussion.

The existing time-restricted on-street parking in West Acton Center is as follows:



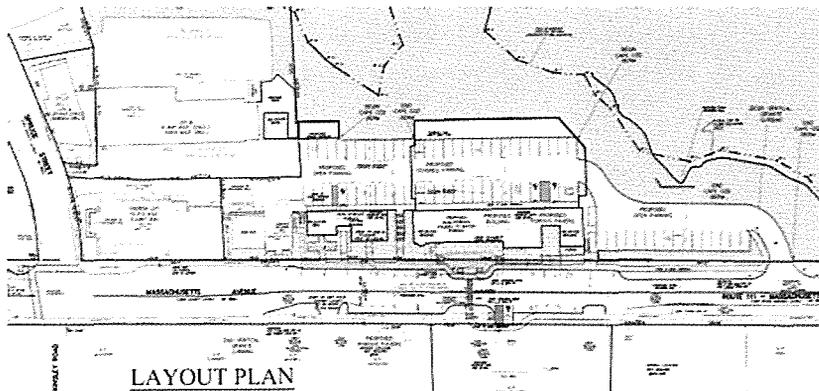
The Commission on Disabilities has also asked the Town to consider providing accessible on-street parking spaces on the southerly side of Massachusetts Avenue between Central Street and the railroad tracks. In addition, there are some other upcoming changes that will be occurring in West Acton Center that will impact the parking in West Acton such as the following:

- The MBTA is working on the reconstructing the Mass Ave railroad crossings to accommodate the new double tracking. As a result, there will be a loss of the existing parking spaces in the immediate vicinity of the railroad tracks.



- There will also be additional parking spaces constructed on both side of Massachusetts Ave in front of the WAVE project at 525-543 Massachusetts Ave. The remainder of the on-

street parking on the northerly side of the road is already approved with a 2-hour parking restriction. When the on-street parking is constructed on the southerly side of Mass Ave at Gardner Field the Town will be proposing to institute a 2-hour parking restriction at this location, as well.



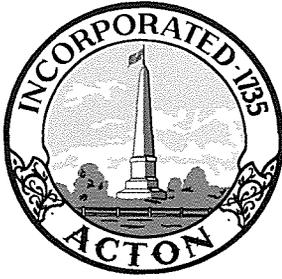
Some possible options that might be considered are as follows:

- Changing the existing parking restrictions on Massachusetts Avenue:
  - **Scenario 1**  
Modify the parking restrictions so that east of the railroad tracks is 2-hour parking and west of the railroad tracks remains as 1-hour parking.
  - **Scenario 2**  
Modify the parking restriction on Massachusetts Avenue so the entire West Acton Center has a 2-hour parking restriction, including the side streets.
- Evaluate publicly-owned locations in the vicinity of West Acton Center to add parking spaces. One locations that has been identified for a potential municipal parking area is the wooded Town-owned parcel between 3 & 7 Kinsley Road and 15 Kinsley Road.

We wanted to inquire your comments, suggestions and concerns since you reside in the immediate area. Your opinions and comments would be greatly appreciated so the Town can gain a better overall understanding of all the potential issues. We have also asked the local businesses for their input as well. Please feel free to also include any thoughts or ideas you might have to improve upon the parking situation. If you would like to submit your comments or suggestions on this subject matter, please feel free to email and send your information to my office ([engineering@acton-ma.gov](mailto:engineering@acton-ma.gov)).

Thank you

Corey York  
Town Engineer / Director of Public Works



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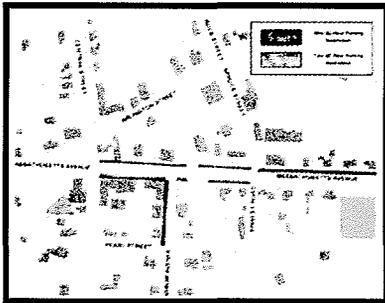
## Engineering Department

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April 21, 2012

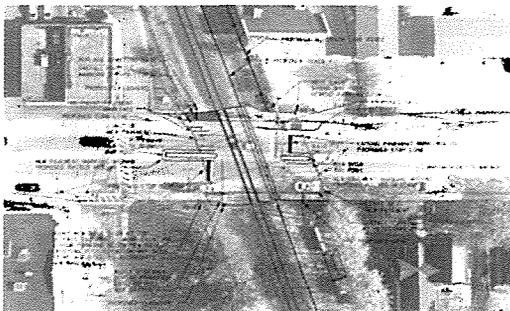
The Town has been asked to look at the parking situation in West Acton Center. The Engineering Department plans to review the existing conditions and submit some possible ideas to the Board of Selectmen for discussion. We wanted to inquire your comments, suggestions and concerns based on your own experiences as the local business owners and property owners that are directly adjacent to these on-street parking spaces. Your opinions would be greatly appreciated so the Town can gain a better overall understanding of all the issues pertaining to parking in West Acton Center. Please feel free to also include any thoughts or ideas you might have to improve upon the parking situation.

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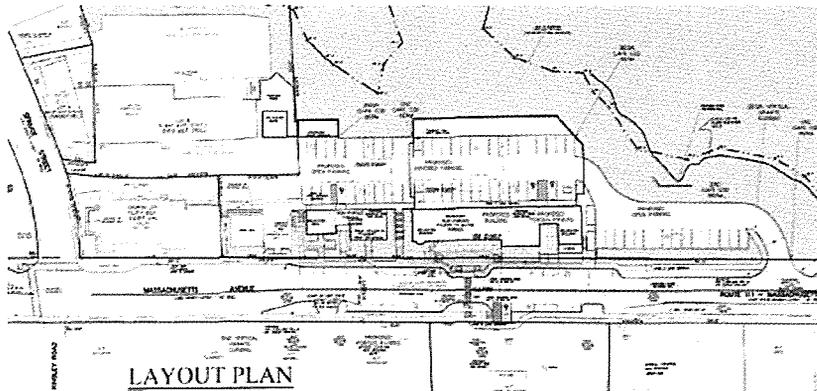


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- Evaluate publicly-owned locations in the vicinity of West Acton Center to add parking spaces.

If you would like to submit your thoughts or suggestions on this subject matter, please feel free to email and send your information to my office ([engineering@acton-ma.gov](mailto:engineering@acton-ma.gov)).

Thank you

Corey York  
Town Engineer / Director of Public Works

West Acton Center Parking

Map	Parcel	St #	Street	Location	On-Street or Off-Street	Parking Spaces provided	Accessible Spaces provided
F-2A	120	267	Central Street	Three Pines Realty Trust	Off-Street	18	0
F-2A	110	578-590	Mass Ave		Off-Street	8	0
F-2A	130	9-15	Windsor Ave	Windsor Ave - St #9-15 (F-2A/130&111)	Off-Street	7	0
F-2A	111	568-576	Mass Ave		Off-Street	5	0
F-2A	129		Pearl Street	Mass Ave - St #578-590 & Central Street - St #271-277 (F-2A/129)	Off-Street	24	0
F-2A	90	563	Mass Ave	West Acton Pharmacy	Off-Street	24	1
F-2A	89	577	Mass Ave	Middlesex Savings Bank	Off-Street	14	1
F-2A	113,114,103,104,105	525-541	Mass Ave	Mass Ave - WAVE Project	Off-Street	67	3
F-2A	112	541-543	Mass Ave	Hurd/Rosenfeld Properties	Off-Street	0	0
F-2A	94	3	Spruce Street	Hurd/Rosenfeld Properties	Off-Street	27	1
F-2A	97	5-9	Spruce Street	Hurd/Rosenfeld Properties	Off-Street	33	1
F-2A	102	553	Mass Ave	Mobil Oil Corp	Off-Street	3	0
F-2A	91	555	Mass Ave	Acton New London Style Pizza	Off-Street	8	2
F-2A	92	10	Spruce Street	former Car Wash	Off-Street	17	0
F-2A	117	560-564	Mass Ave		Off-Street	10	0
F-2A	131	560-564	Mass Ave		Off-Street	11	0
F-2A	135		Windsor Ave	Windsor Building (former Food Pantry)	Off-Street	6	0
F-2A	134	21	Windsor Ave	Citizens Library	Off-Street	0	0
F-2A	87	587	Mass Ave		Off-Street	3	0
F-2A	88	583	Mass Ave		Off-Street	4	0
F-2A	79	250	Central Street		Off-Street	4	0
F-2A	81	240	Arlington Street	Post Road Carpet Center	Off-Street	18	0
F-2A	121	556	Mass Ave	Moods Hair Salon	Off-Street	10	0
				Mass Ave (eastbound) between Central St & Kinsley Road	On-Street	16	0
				Mass Ave (eastbound) - east of Kinsley Road	On-Street	7	1