



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Traffic and Parking
57 Inman Street,
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

George Teso
Director

Robert Healy, City Manager

Administration 349-4700
Parking Violations 349-4705
Resident Parking 349-4701

NOV. 13, 1991

George Teso, Traffic Director

Council Orders #33, 14, 8 dated 3/18/91, 6/3/91, 10/7/91
Ref: Pedestrian Warning Signs

The Traffic and Parking Department has studied the use of stanchions in the middle of a street with signs stating that pedestrians have the right of way when in the crosswalk. We have also researched various ways and means to improve safety at certain pedestrian crossings where both the traffic and pedestrian volumes are high.

It is our opinion, as well as the state and various other communities that we have consulted with, that the placing of these signs in the middle of a street is dangerous. Placement of these devices in the roadway creates new hazards such as vehicles hitting the stanchions or hitting other vehicles when swerving to miss the stanchion. These signs also give pedestrians a false sense of security as they tend to step out into traffic even if it is not safe to cross. In one community which recently decided to use stanchions, the pedestrian accidents have increased and they feel that complacency by the pedestrians may be the reason.

We have consulted with the Law Department regarding the legality of the use of stanchions in the roadway. Nothing in the Commonwealth's laws currently prohibits the use of such stanchions. The Law Department has indicated, however, that based upon our opinion of the dangers involved in the use of stanchions, along with the same opinion held by the state and traffic experts generally, it would place the city in a vulnerable position with regard to liability for any injuries that might result from the use of stanchions.

We will be installing signs that read: "State Law Stop For Pedestrians in Crosswalk" along both sides of the roadway at the crosswalk on standard poles, as other communities are now doing.

The criteria used to determine the need for these signs shall be the guidelines published by the United States Department of Transportation, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the International Institute of Transportation Engineers.

We will issue press releases advising motorists of the laws concerning pedestrians' rights in the crosswalk and to pay attention to these signs as well as all painted crosswalks in the city. We will also meet with the police department to setup an enforcement program for pedestrian safety giving special attention to these crossings.

It is our opinion that with our narrow streets any obstruction would make our existing lane widths even smaller and force vehicles to violate the law by crossing over the center line of the street. This is especially true for streets with trolley routes which require extra lane width.

We will institute this program as soon as the signs are purchased and fabricated which should take one to two months.



City of Cambridge

Dr. Redell

14.

IN CITY COUNCIL

June 3, 1991

COUNCILLOR WALSH

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to provide the Council an interim report on June 10, 1991 regarding the status of implementation of my adopted order of March 18, 1991 (copy attached) regarding the placing of brightly colored stanchions/barrels in the middle of intersections throughout the city where presently there is no automated traffic signal, either pedestrian or non-pedestrian operated, in an effort to increase safety for pedestrians.

In City Council June 3, 1991.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy; *Joseph E. Connarton*

ATTEST:-

Joseph E. Connarton
City Clerk



City of Cambridge

IN CITY COUNCIL

March 18, 1991

Councillor Walsh

ORDERED: That the City Manager request the Director of Traffic & Parking and the Police Chief to take the necessary steps to place stanchions/barrels (painted orange) in the middle of cross-walks at dangerous intersections throughout the city at which no traffic signal is present to assure that pedestrians will be able to exercise their right of way and that motorists will yield to exercise of that right. Further, that affixed to the stanchion/barrel will be the notation, citing appropriately the section of the Massachusetts General Law which mandates this obligation; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager report back to the Council on this matter by April 1, 1991

24.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
TEL. 498-9011

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

November 18, 1991

To The Honorable, The City Council:

With reference to Awaiting Report Item Nos. 7, 12 & 50, regarding the placement of stanchions/barrels in the middle of cross-walks at dangerous intersections, please find attached a response from George Teso, Director of Traffic & Parking, concerning this issue.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy", is written over a horizontal line.

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mev
attachment

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Consent Agenda # 24

5-1204

Awaiting Report Item Numbers 7, 12 &
50 regarding the placement of stanchions/
barrels in the middle of crosswalks at
dangerous intersections.

In City Council,

November 18, 1991

Placed on file