



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMISSION ON HANDICAPPED PERSONS
McCusker Center
57 Inman Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Tel. T.D.D. 498-9000, Ext. 9509

July 29, 1985

David Sullivan, City Councilor
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Councilor Sullivan,

Enclosed is a review of handicapped parking problems and proposed solutions. The Commission on Handicapped Persons has long been aware of the pressing need for adequate, well-enforced HP/V parking in Cambridge. We hope that you will support our effort to initiate the changes that are needed if Cambridge is to be accessible to handicapped persons.

Feel free to call me with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Gail M. Enman
Gail M. Enman, Director

Commission on Handicapped Persons



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMISSION ON HANDICAPPED PERSONS
McCusker Center
57 Inman Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Tel. T.D.D. 498-9000, Ext. 9509

HP/V PARKING IN CAMBRIDGE:

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

I. Overview of the Problem

Given the overall shortage of on-street parking in Cambridge, it is not surprising that for handicapped persons, parking in Cambridge is particularly difficult. While the city has made a commitment to improving access city-wide, and steady progress in removing architectural barriers continues to be made, the parking needs of handicapped persons remain largely unmet.

Cambridge is not unique in either its scarcity of parking or in the parking problems experienced by handicapped persons. Other urban areas such as Boston and Worcester report similar parking phenomena. Both cities have, however, instituted comprehensive policy and program initiatives intended to provide, to the extent possible, sufficient reserved handicapped parking to meet current and anticipated demand. Furthermore, they have established rigorous enforcement procedures in order to ensure the availability of HP/V designated parking for those vehicles displaying the required license plates and/or markings.

At the state level, the need for adequate, enforceable handicapped parking has also been recognized. State legislation passed two years ago provides guidelines for designating and monitoring HP/V parking. The adoption of these guidelines, in part or as a whole, is a local option for all cities and towns in the Commonwealth. To date, the only provision that Cambridge has adopted is a fine increase from \$15.00 to \$25.00 for HP parking violations. While this increase

is a significant one, it does not begin to alleviate the multiple and complex parking needs of handicapped persons in Cambridge.

Meeting those needs in a crowded urban setting such as Cambridge requires the full understanding and acceptance of several premises:

- 1) Equivalent access is a basic right of handicapped persons;
- 2) The designation of special parking areas for disabled veterans and persons who have a functional mobility impairment is not a privilege, but a necessity to afford such individuals access to and use of public and private facilities; and
- 3) Society stands to benefit from the full integration of handicapped persons into all aspects of society.

The time has come for Cambridge to take the necessary action in order to accommodate the special parking needs of handicapped persons.

II. Proposed Initiatives

The Commission on Handicapped Persons has reviewed HP parking needs for the past few years. Discussions about parking and enforcement problems have been held with large numbers of handicapped persons: persons who are both permanently and temporarily disabled, with drivers and non-drivers, residents, students, employees, employers, and visitors to the area. Meetings have been held not only with consumers, but with representatives of the Police Department, the Department of Traffic and Parking, and the Cambridge City Council, and from Handicapped Affairs offices at the state level and in cities and towns across the state.

Several conclusions have emerged from this lengthy and comprehensive review of handicapped parking needs and strategies that have been developed to meet those needs. Initiatives that are proposed are listed below, grouped under broad topic headings. Some can be implemented by altering existing Traffic and Parking Regulations; others will require a City Ordinance. And still others will require the adoption of new policies in the licensing and operation of off-street parking lots.

1. Designation of HP/V Parking

- HP/V parking spaces should be designated in all municipal parking lots in accordance with the formula established in Ch. 644 of M.G.L.
 - The formula established in Ch. 644 of M.G.L. should also apply to any person or body that has lawful control of a public or private way or enclosed property used as off-street parking areas for businesses, shopping malls, theatres, auditoriums, sporting or recreational facilities, cultural centers, residential dwellings, or for any other place where the public has a right of access as invitees or licensees.
 - Licenses should not be granted to or renewed for parking lots that fail to comply with the provisions of Ch. 644.
 - On-street HP/V parking spaces should be designated throughout the city.*
- Special attention should be given to the following factors in designating on-street parking:

* A list of proposed locations for designated HP/V parking is attached. This list was prepared for and shared with the Department of Traffic and Parking.

- a. Sidewalks should be a minimum of 6 feet wide in order to accommodate a wheelchair lift.
- b. Curb ramps should be located adjacent to the designated HP parking in order to provide access to the sidewalk from the driver's side of the car. Intersections closest to the designated parking should have curb ramps wherever possible.
- c. Designated HP/V parking spaces should be clustered, with a minimum of two spaces in any given location.
- d. HP/V parking should be designated in all major squares; near accessible shopping, recreational and cultural sites; close to major service providers, accessible housing and educational institutions; and wherever accessible transportation is located.

- A policy should be adopted in order to accommodate the parking needs of handicapped persons in areas where development has resulted in the elimination of on-street parking.

2. Enforcement of HP/V Parking

- Cambridge Police should monitor violations of HP/V parking in private off-street parking lots, in accordance with the provisions of Ch. 644 of M.G.L.

- Vehicles displaying HP/V plates should not be ticketed when parked in residential parking areas, regardless of the presence or absence of Visitor permits or Resident stickers.

- Parking in front of curb ramps so as to obstruct their use should be distinguished from other parking violations, and designated as a violation in and of itself.

- An ombudsperson should be designated within the Police Department to respond to handicapped parking problems, including, but not limited to, authorizing the removal of vehicles which are parked illegally in a manner which prevents the use of curb ramps, or which are parked illegally in specially

designated HP/V spaces.

3. Temporary Placard Program *

- A placard program should be instituted for disabled persons in the following circumstances: persons who have applied for but not yet received HP/V plates; persons whose cars bearing HP/V plates are out of service and who are using vehicles not bearing HP/V plates; persons whose vehicles have out-of-state HP/V plates; persons who have acquired a temporary disability of a severe nature and who can provide medical documentation; and persons who are non-drivers who rely on other(s) for transportation.

- The temporary placard program should be administered by the Commission on Handicapped Persons in conjunction with the Department of Traffic and Parking, and safeguards should be developed so as to discourage fraudulent use of temporary placards.

4. Fines

- Vehicles illegally parked in front of curb ramps, regardless of the physical presence of a sign, should be fined at the same rate (\$25.00) as vehicles parked illegally within specially designated HP/V spaces.

- A total of 10% of all fines levied for illegal parking in specially designated HP/V spaces on-street, in municipal lots, and in private lots, and for illegal parking in a manner that obstructs use of curb ramps, should be

* If state legislation that is currently pending is passed, this proposed initiative may be unnecessary.

refunded to the Commission on Handicapped Persons on a quarterly basis. This money should be used to administer the temporary placard program, and to pilot test traffic devices and conduct programs that are intended to promote pedestrian safety.

III. Conclusion

Meeting the parking needs of handicapped persons will require the commitment and cooperation of several city departments. Working together we can alleviate problems that have made it impossible for handicapped persons to have equal access to employment, personal, residential and educational opportunities throughout the city. We must acknowledge how profound a need exists and implement initiatives that will alleviate that need. And we must do it soon.

PROPOSED HP PARKING SPACES

Kendall/Lechmere Area

Massachusetts Ave. opposite #77 Mass. Ave. -- Move cab stand 4 places back and put in 4 HP spaces, nearest curb cut.

125 Vassar St. -- 3 spaces by entrance to parking lot.

Wadsworth, at intersection of Main St. -- 3 spaces.

Ames St., at intersection of Main St. -- 4 spaces (in front of National Waterproofing).

Main St. -- between CRA and Cambridge Trust, 2 spaces (depending on parking configuration when construction in the area is complete).

Memorial Drive -- by boathouse, 2 spaces.

Second Street at Thorndike -- 2 spaces in front of Legal Services.

Cambridge St., between Sciarappa and Third -- 2 spaces in front of Post Office.

Cambridge St., between Lambert and Warren, in front of Miller's River Apts. -- 2 spaces.

Cambridge St., between Harding and Hunting, by crosswalk -- 2 spaces.

Inman Square Area

Cambridge St., between Elm and Columbia, in front of Automatic Cone -- 2 spaces.

Cambridge St., between Prospect and Tremont, by #1221 -- 2 spaces.

Cambridge St., between Hampshire and Oak, in front of S and S Deli -- 2 spaces.

Cambridge St., between Line and Camellia, in front of Cahill House and Cambridge City Hospital -- 3 spaces.

At Youville Hospital, HP space needs to be moved in order to clear access to ramp. 1 space should be provided on either side of the ramp, and the HP spot at the stairs should be removed.

Cambridge St. between Hovey and Roberts, in front of Harvard Community Health Center -- 4 spaces.

Hampshire St., behind "T" stop, in front of #217 Hampshire -- 2 spaces.

Hampshire St., in front of Modern Times -- 1 space.

Harvard Square Area

Garden Street, on Common side -- 2 spaces.

Church St., Between Mass. Ave. and Brattle, in front of church --
3 spaces.

Brattle St. -- 3 spaces in front of Sages
2 spaces in front of Reading International
1 space in front of American Repertory Theater.

Mt. Auburn St., between Mifflin and Story, in front of Post Office --
2 spaces.

Eliot St., in front of Goodwins -- 1 space.

JFK St. in front of Galeria -- 4 spaces.

JFK St. between Mt. Auburn and Harvard Sq., in front of Garage --
2 spaces.

Plympton St., in front of Grolier's and Harvard Bookstore -- 2 spaces.

Mass. Ave., between Dana and Ellery -- 2 spaces on each side of
the street.

Mass. Ave., in front of Vie de France -- 2 spaces.

Mass. Ave., in front of Harvard Bookstore -- 2 spaces.

Mt. Auburn St., in front of 2 Mt. Auburn, on the opposite side
of the street (by Vie de France) -- 2 spaces.

Garden St., between Berkeley and Mason, in front of Brandywine
Restaurant -- 2 spaces.

Broadway, between Prescott and Ware, in front of Broadway Super
Market -- 2 spaces.

Central Square Area

Mass. Ave. in front of #896 Mass. Ave. -- 1 space.

Mass. Ave in front of Post Office -- 2 spaces.

Bishop Allen Drive, behind "Y" -- 1 space.

Mass. Ave., between Temple and Inman, in front of Hit or Hiss --
2 spaces.

Mass. Ave. in front of #678 -- 3 spaces.

Mass. Ave., between Norfolk and Essex -- 3 spaces.

Mass. Ave., between Brookline and Sidney, in front of Oh Calcutta --
3 spaces.

Franklin St., between Magazine and Pearl St., opposite curbcut in
what is now resident parking -- 2 spaces.

Porter Square/Alewife Area

Mass. Ave., between Wendell and Sacramento -- 2 spaces.

Mass. Ave., between Linnaean and Martin -- 2 spaces in front of
Ground Round.

Mass. Ave., opposite Mt. Vernon St., in front of Sears -- 2 spaces.

Mass. Ave., between Davenport and Allen, in front of Post Office --
2 spaces.

Mass. Ave., in front of Averof and Masonic Temple, between two
ends of Porter Rd. -- 2 spaces.

Mass. Ave., between Walden and Creighton, in front of elderly
housing -- 2 spaces.

Mass. Ave., between Hadley and Russell, down from Health Stop and
near corner of Russell -- 2 spaces.

Mass. Ave., in front of Health Alliance, between Rindge and Cogswell --
1 space.

Huron Ave., between Concord and Royal, in front of Crate and Barrel --
2 spaces.

Huron Ave., between Fayerweather and Chilton -- 2 spaces.

Huron ave., between Appleton and Sparks, in front of Formaggio --
1 space.

Concord Ave., between Huron and Buckingham, in front of Schenkman
Publishing Co. -- 1 space.

Communication received from Gail M. Enman,
 Director, Commission on Handicapped Persons,
 relative to the handicapped parking problems
 and proposed solutions.

In City Council,
 September 9, 1985

9/9/85
 Referred to Enger
 Rec'd also order by
 C. D. Sullivan on
this subject. submitted
this date -
 check order by C. W. H.
 12/85

Comm. from Gail M. Enman, Dir., Commission
on Handicapped Persons Re: the handicapped
parking problems & proposed solutions.

*copy sent to the City Manager
9/12/85 mde*

In City Council,

September 9, 1985

9/9/1985

*Referred to the
City Manager*

*See Order by
Councilor David Sullivan*

*Adopted this date
5 of Sept 9, 1985*