



## City of Somerville, Massachusetts

JOSEPH A. CURTATONE  
MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 10, 2009

### PARKING SOLUTIONS TASK FORCE SUBMITS RECOMMENDATIONS

*Advisory Group Calls for Phased Approach with Initial Actions to Include Meters to Go to \$1 Per Hour Until 8 p.m.; 8 Major Streets Will Convert to Resident Permit Parking from 2 a.m. to 10 a.m. but Will Remain Open to Non-Resident Parkers at Other Times; No Immediate Move to 10 p.m. Meters in Davis and Magoun; City to Wait Until Technology in Place for Easy "Pay-Once-and-Walk-Away" Payment Options*

SOMERVILLE – Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone announced today that he had received detailed recommendations from the 14-member Parking Solutions Task Force (PSTF) he appointed in early June to advise the City on meter rates, hours and resident permit parking policies. Among the group's key recommendations was a call for the City to adopt a phased approach to the changes voted by the Traffic Commission on May 21<sup>st</sup>. While the PSTF did not suggest that the City slow its planned conversion of meter rates at curbs and lots to \$1 per hour citywide, the group recommended that, at least in Phase I of its three recommended phases, the hours of operation of all meters be extended to no later than 8 p.m., "with a strategic 3-hour limit in the lots in Davis Square, Magoun Square, and the spur streets off of the squares."

"These thoughtful and creative recommendations represent an enormous amount of hard work and I am deeply grateful to the task force for their concentrated efforts over the last 30 days," said Mayor Curtatone. "We will be implementing all of these recommendations, which we think will put Somerville at the forefront of creative, high-technology parking management."

"When the Traffic Commission voted the new meter rates and hours, as well as the change to citywide permit parking, I think the business community had a lot of legitimate questions and concerns about how this would work," said task force member and Chamber of Commerce Chairman Ron Bonney, Jr. "The Task Force addressed all of

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those issues, but also looked at the special needs of the faith community and non-profit arts groups. In the near term, we have a workable solution. But what's really important is that we also have a collaborative body working on a long-term planning approach that will be based on additional research, experience and analysis."

The Task Force also recommended that the City return to the Traffic Commission with a request that, "Eight main thoroughfares (Broadway, Medford Street, Highland Avenue, Holland Street, Elm Street, Somerville Ave, Beacon Street, and Washington Street) be changed to Resident Permit Parking Only between 2 am and 10 am with non-permitted two-hour parking and unrestricted permit parking during other times." The change will preserve daytime and evening parking options for non-permitted vehicles, but discourage overnight "dumping" and commuter parking.

Additional recommendations in Phase I, which begins immediately, include:

- Promoting and enhancing the City's underutilized Park Cards program, which allows motorists to purchase special cards that eliminate the need for quarters to feed current city parking meters.
- Extending the hours for current daytime business permits to 6 p.m.
- Creating a new "second-shift" business permit that allows local business employees to park in designated areas from 6 p.m. to 3:30 a.m.
- Publicizing the city's permitting system for non-profit performing arts groups that allows their patrons to park in permit areas for arts performances.
- Continued negotiations with owners of private lots throughout the city to make additional parking available to patrons and businesses.
- A citywide assessment and inventory of available parking spaces as well as an analysis of the impact of all new parking policies.

"The assessment and inventory will help us implement follow-up phases, including our plan to use parking kiosks in Davis and Magoun Squares to provide easy payment options and greater flexibility in varying prices and time limits according to demand," said Curtatone. "To make sure these next phases go well and meet everyone's needs, we will keep the Parking Solutions Task Force as an active advisory body for the foreseeable future."

A copy of the full Parking Solutions Task Force Report and Recommendations is available online at Traffic and Parking Department web page at [www.somervillema.gov](http://www.somervillema.gov).

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