



TOWN OF ARLINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING and
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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MEMORANDUM

To: Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager

From: Daniel Amstutz, Senior Transportation Planner

CC: Jennifer Raitt, Director, Department of Planning and Community Development
Ali Carter, Economic Development Coordinator, DPCD
Phyllis Marshall, Treasurer-Collector, Treasurer's Office
Mike Rademacher, Director, DPW
Officer Corey Rateau, Traffic Unit, APD

Date: September 4, 2019

RE: Route 87 Layover Relocation & Additional Parking Meters on Broadway

The Parking Advisory Committee (PAC; formerly the Parking Implementation/Governance Committee) voted at its August 22, 2019 meeting to recommend the approval of two measures that will improve traffic and parking conditions in Arlington Center:

- Move the MBTA Route 87 layover location from Broadway Plaza to 283 Broadway, in front of Play Time, Inc. at the corner of Broadway and Franklin Street; and
- Install nineteen (19) parking meters on both sides of Broadway between Franklin Street and Webster Street.

The following sections detail the background and outreach that has occurred to come to these recommendations.

Route 87 Layover Relocation

The current location of the terminus of MBTA Bus Route 87 (Arlington Center or Clarendon Hill to Lechmere Station), where the layover also occurs, is on Broadway at Broadway Plaza. For many years, the location of this layover has been known to be problematic. The curbside space that is dedicated to the layover is of inadequate length, and it is difficult for bus drivers to get the bus very close to the curb. As a result, the bus usually encroaches into the travel lane and blocks access to two or three parking spaces while it is stopped, including a handicapped space adjacent to the Plaza. During the layover, it can be difficult for traffic coming from Broadway exiting to Mass Ave to maneuver around the parked bus. Finally, the bus stop itself is inaccessible due to several obstructions directly in the bus stop footprint, including a granite wall, a tree with a granite tree collar, and the sign post for the bus stop

itself. The obstructions make the sidewalk adjacent to the bus stop extremely narrow and do not meet ADA minimum sidewalk widths. During summer and winter months, the bus usually idles so that the driver and any passengers on board during the layover can avail themselves to heat or air conditioning depending on the weather. The idling is a disturbance to passersby and patrons of the food establishments with outdoor seating on Broadway Plaza.

Town staff and the PAC have spent the last few years attempting to identify a better location for the layover. Several different options were reviewed with the PAC, MBTA, and local business and property owners. This past summer, Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) and MBTA staff met again to review more potential options to relocate the layover. After discussing these options with PAC members and the MBTA, it was determined that 283 Broadway meets the goals of the Town and the MBTA.

This site is being recommended based on the following considerations:

- Two unmetered parking spaces will be impacted by this change. This is the smallest number of spaces impacted out of all possible options.
- This option impacts only one business, which already has a private parking lot for its business.
- This proposed site is approximately 500' from the current layover location, which will require alighting bus riders to make a two-minute walk to get to the Plaza. Sidewalks in Arlington Center are slated for repair in the spring of 2020, which will make the walk safer and more accessible for pedestrians than it is today; the relocation would be planned to occur after the sidewalk repairs have been complete. The MBTA has indicated that transfers between Route 87 and Route 80 are infrequent, and are not concerned about the increase in distance between the two layover locations. Transfers to the 77, 79, and 350 can be safely accomplished by walking down Franklin Street to the Mass Ave at Franklin Street stop (outbound) or by crossing at the traffic signal at Mass Ave and Franklin Street to Mass Ave at Avon Place (inbound).

The layover at 283 Broadway will be a drop-off only stop. The current layover location at Broadway Plaza will continue to operate as an on-boarding only bus stop with no layover occurring there. This will allow the bus to keep the same route: turning left onto Mass Ave from Broadway, left at Franklin Street, and right on Broadway to go back towards Somerville. The accessibility issues at the Broadway Plaza stop will be addressed by the sidewalk work planned for Arlington Center, which will include removal of the obstructions at this stop.

Parking Meters on Broadway from Franklin Street to Webster Street

The 2014 Arlington Center Parking Study recommended that parking meters be installed on Broadway between Franklin Street and Webster Street. As such, parking stalls were striped on Broadway in 2016, but meters were installed on Mass Ave between Academy Street and Jason/Mill Street instead to address issues of turnover in that area. However, Broadway still experiences issues of high parking utilization with low turnover. Additionally, in the summer of 2018, a business owner on Broadway submitted a petition to the Board, with signatures from many of their customers, requesting action from the Town to address parking-related

concerns on the same section of Broadway. Follow-up conversations between that petitioner and the Town Manager along with DPCD staff indicated that the installation of meters, including the 15-minute grace period (which would facilitate drop-off and pick-up traffic for businesses on the block), would address their concerns. Funds for this purchase are sourced from existing parking meter revenues used to maintain and upgrade the system. Town staff expect to install the new parking meters this fall, pending arrangements with DPW and the meter vendor, IPS.