

Report on Crosswalk at Sunrise Assisted Living, 1395 Mass Ave.

1. Request:

Sunrise Assisted Living has requested a new crosswalk from their facility at 1395 Mass Ave. across Mass Ave. Request was made by Mary Morgan, Program Coordinator, dated 2/28/05. Met with Ms Morgan on July 27, 2005.

2. Situation:

Pedestrians

- Elderly at the assisted living cross the street to the bank rather than go to the nearest crosswalk (over 700 ft walk to the bank one way). Being infirm, this 1400 ft walk is a significant distance to them.
- Bank has been supportive with occasional onsite services, but it has not been successful for the residents. Banking is an important, personal activity for the residents.

Existing Crosswalks:

- Crosswalks are located across Mass Ave at the following nearby locations, from west to east:
 - From west side of Dundee Rd to Trader Joe's shopping area.
 - From east side of Paul Revere Rd. to Trader Joe's shopping area. About 400 ft from Sunrise entrance.
 - From Panera to MBTA facility. About 320 ft. from Sunrise entrance.
 - Across Mass Ave between Panera and the Park Ave signal.
 - At the signal at Park and Mass Ave.
- The shortest path from Sunrise to the bank would use the crosswalk at Panera – a distance of about 700 ft. one way.

Parking:

- Parking in the Heights is at a premium in general, although the most pressure is around the Trader Joe's shopping area and at the Park Ave intersection with Mass Ave.
- A crosswalk as requested will reduce on street parking by probably two places, at most three.
- The parking counts were delayed until summer vacations ended and business returned to normal (see below).

3. Investigations:

Parking:

On street parking in the area, from the edge of the MBTA lot up to Paul Revere Rd., was examined during the second week of September.

- The available inventory of on street parking is about 30 places between the MBTA lot west side and Paul Revere Rd. In addition, there is substantial off street parking at Citizens Bank (12 cars). Sunrise has a larger lot and allows some local business employee parking in their lot.
- The average use of on street parking during the observations was 9.8 vehicles. The peak use was 17 vehicles at 1:40PM on Saturday 9/10. The next highest was 16 at 3:15PM on Wednesday 9/7. The evening hours were substantially lower. At peak, only 55% of available on street parking was used.

Traffic:

- Daytime traffic is usually rather heavy. Trader Joes, Walgreens, Panera, Swifty Printing, Cleaners, Post Office, Quad Bicycles, etc. The Heights is a busy place.
- Traffic is very often slow during the daytime because of the signal at Park and the various other parking/pedestrian and commercial activities.

New Developments:

- The Taylor Tool rental space will become commercial space in the future (unknown occupants) with a parking area behind the building. Access to this parking will be through the current Panera driveway since the buildings have the same owner.

Economics:

- Installation of curb cuts, signs, and thermoplastic would cost roughly \$4,000.
- Maintenance would be refinishing the thermoplastic every 4 years (about \$500).

TAC Guidelines:

- Degree of meeting current Draft Crosswalk Guidelines:
 - Requested crosswalk meets the requirement that it be more than 300 ft from nearest crosswalk.
 - Crossing distance is about 50 ft
 - Pedestrian volume is low, but uniquely very elderly and slow moving.

4. TAC Decision Criteria

Safety:

Pedestrian: A marked crosswalk might improve pedestrian safety in the area around the bank by alerting drivers that pedestrians might be present. If the crosswalk were located near the eastern driveway entrance to Sunrise, visibility of pedestrians by vehicles would be good. On the west side of the street, a parking place would need to be taken to create a similar level of visibility.

Vehicular: A crosswalk with appropriate signage would introduce eastbound traffic to the upcoming congestion.

Mobility:

An additional crosswalk should not decrease driver mobility because of the present congestion. Pedestrian mobility would be improved.

Equity:

In general, priority of crosswalks should be locations where there are both substantial pedestrian and vehicle volumes. Further, we should not be willing to provide crosswalks near all businesses that request them. What makes this situation different is the physical condition of the residents and their special needs.

Environment and Public Health:

The health benefit is to the residents of the assisted living facility. Others and the environment are not impacted in any significant way.

Priority:

Since the pedestrian volume is apparently low, the priority is relatively low.

5. Conclusions:

1. The loss of two or at most three parking spaces will not substantially impact on-street parking in the area around of Sunrise Assisted Living.
2. During the daytime, when the crosswalk will be used by Sunrise residents, the traffic is already congested.
3. An additional crosswalk can further emphasize the congestion in the area, and will continue the pattern of a crosswalk every couple hundred feet in this area (see attached figure). It would help connect the Shopping Center to the rest of the Heights businesses for pedestrians.
4. The crosswalk will allow easier access to the bank for both Sunrise residents and for the many who are driving west and who now jaywalk.

6. Recommendation:

The Working Group (Ed Starr and Ralph Elwell) support the request for a crosswalk between Sunrise Assisted Living and Citizen's Bank. Details of installation are to be worked out by the Town Engineer.