



*CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CONDUCTED AS AN ON-LINE ZOOM MEETING
Northampton, MA*

Announcement of Audio/Video Recording

Public Comment

A regular meeting of the City Council was called to order by Council President Gina-Louise Sciarra at 7:02 p.m.

Councilor Sciarra announced that the meeting was being audio and video recorded. There being no public comment, Councilor Sciarra moved to the next item on the agenda.

Roll Call

At 7:02 p.m. on a roll call the following City Councilors were present:

At-Large Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra	At-Large Councilor William H. Dwight
Ward 1 Councilor Michael J. Quinlan, Jr.	Ward 5 Councilor Alex Jarrett
Ward 2 Councilor Karen Foster	Ward 6 Councilor Marianne LaBarge
Ward 3 Councilor James B. Nash	Ward 7 Councilor Rachel Maiore
Ward 4 Councilor John Thorpe	

Public Hearings

Public Hearings
None.

Updates from Council President and Committee Chairs

Updates from Council President and Committee Chairs
The next City Council Rules Select Committee meeting will be Tuesday, November 23, 2021 at 6 p.m., Councilor Maiore announced. The group is starting to wrap up and get its report together and will accept public comment as usual, she noted.

Recognitions and One-Minute Announcements by Councilors

Recognitions and One-Minute Announcements by Councilors
Councilor Jarrett let the public know that new way-finding signs will soon be coming to seven proposed locations around Florence Center. The signs will help people unfamiliar with the area to navigate whether on foot, bike or motor vehicle. Residents can visit the city website at www.northamptonma.com/Florence to view the current draft and are welcome to give feedback by December 1st to either himself or the planning department.

Manna is holding its annual Thanksgiving dinner at Edwards Church from noon to 2 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day - Thursday, November 25th, Councilor Maiore reminded. Anyone interested in volunteering can do so by clicking on the Volunteers tab at www.mannanorthampton.org

Communications and Proclamations from the Mayor

Communications and Proclamations from the Mayor
The Mayor's office received a request for a proclamation to be issued at City Council, Mayor Narkewicz advised. He read aloud a proclamation recognizing November of 2021 as National Family Caregivers' month and officially proclaiming November of 2021 to be Family Caregivers' Month in the City of Northampton.

Earlier today he issued another proclamation honoring Visiting Nurses Association (VNA) workers and hospice workers who also play a vital caregiving role, he shared. Caregiving was the theme today and is the theme in the month of November, which is also hospice and homecare month. He expressed deep appreciation and respect for everyone engaged in this critical work

Public Hearings

Public Hearings
None.

<p><u>Resolutions</u></p>	<p><u>Resolutions</u> None.</p>
<p><u>Presentations</u></p>	<p><u>Presentations</u> None.</p>
<p><u>Consent Agenda</u></p>	<p><u>Consent Agenda</u> Councilor Sciarra reviewed the items on the consent agenda, offering to remove any item for separate consideration upon request. There being no removals, Councilor Dwight moved approval of the consent agenda as presented. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.</p> <p>The following items were approved as part of the consent agenda: A. Minutes of November 4, 2021 regular meeting and November 8, 2021 special City Council meeting</p>
<p><u>Recess for Committee on Finance Meeting</u></p>	<p><u>Recess for Committee on Finance Meeting</u> The City Council recessed for Finance Committee at 7:11 p.m. The Finance Committee adjourned at 7:30 p.m. The council reconvened at 7:30 p.m.</p>
<p><u>Financial Orders (On 1st reading)</u></p>	<p><u>Financial Orders (On 1st reading pending Finance Committee review)</u> <u>21.354 An Order to Surplus City Land for Shared Use Parking at the Roundhouse Parking Lot - 1st reading</u> Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the order in first reading. Councilor Dwight seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.</p> <p>Councilor Quinlan moved to suspend rules to allow a second ruling. Councilor Foster seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.</p> <p>Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the order in second reading. Councilor Dwight seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.</p> <p><u>The following order passed two readings:</u></p>

21.354 An Order to Surplus City Land for Shared Use Parking at the Roundhouse Parking Lot - 1st reading

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council, November 18, 2021

Upon the recommendation of Mayor David J. Narkewicz and Planning & Sustainability

21.354 An Order to Surplus City Land for Shared Use Parking at the Roundhouse Parking Lot

WHEREAS, As part of the 2021 reconstruction and expansion of the Roundhouse Parking Lot, the city reviewed the history of the overall parking layout and management;

WHEREAS, When the Roundhouse Plaza (a/k/a Peter Pan bus terminal) was first developed on the site of a DPW maintenance building, the city permitted the owner to locate a portion of its adjacent parking lot on city property, both to encourage the redevelopment and to improve inter-urban bus access;

WHEREAS, An extensive search of city and registry records as part of the Roundhouse Parking Lot project revealed that the long-term lease agreement between the city and property owner for that additional land was never formally executed; and

WHEREAS, The eight parking spaces on the southernmost edge of the Roundhouse Plaza building, which are located on city land, remain integral to the successful operation of the bus terminal and offices and the owner wishes to continue that historical use and is willing to execute a proper 30-year lease with the city, consistent with MGL 30B, the Uniform Procurement Act; and

WHEREAS, Those eight spaces are heavily used during the day by the Roundhouse Plaza, but have a high vacancy rate after office hours and on weekends, the times when the public parking system is most stressed;

WHEREAS, The Roundhouse Plaza property owner supports a lease that would limit use of the eight parking spaces by its tenants to office hours while allowing the city to utilize the spaces for public parking when needed most at nights and on weekends;

WHEREAS, The property owner would continue to be responsible for all of the maintenance, landscaping, and snow removal in and around the eight parking spaces resulting in no additional maintenance costs to the city as a result of any lease agreement;

Ordered, that

City Council declares the land on which those eight Roundhouse Plaza parking spaces sit surplus to city needs;

Further that the Mayor is authorized to sign a lease for parking during office hours on those eight spaces, subject to restrictions and conditions that the Mayor imposes to accomplish these needs.



feet. She thanked Mr. Murphy for coming forth and presenting. As a councilor, she has received some calls from people on her ward a little upset about the increase. She told them they need to look at what's happened to the economy, their city and its residents. Right now, Northampton's rate is lower than Amherst, Westhampton and other areas. She thanked the three departments involved in maintaining the flat rate, noting that shifting it "would have been very detrimental for many, many people in the city and businesspeople."

Councilor Sciarra also extended thanks to the responsible departments.

The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

The following order passed two readings:

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council November 4, 2021

Upon recommendation of Mayor David J. Narkewicz

21.350
An Order
To Establish a Tax Classification for FY2022

Ordered, that

The Northampton City Council approves a Residential Factor of One (1) for Fiscal Year 2022.

Passed two readings and enrolled.

Orders

Orders

21.351 An Order for District Heating and Microgrids – 2nd reading
Councilor Jarrett moved to approve the order in second reading. Councilor Thorpe seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

The following order passed two readings:

21.351 An Order for District Heating and Microgrids – 2nd reading

City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council, November 4, 2021

Upon the recommendation of Mayor David J. Narkewicz, Planning & Sustainability, and Energy and Sustainability Commission

21.351 An Order for District Heating and Microgrids

- WHEREAS, The *Climate Resilience and Regeneration Plan*, an element of the *Sustainable Northampton Comprehensive Plan*, acknowledges that natural gas leaks and generation results in higher greenhouse gas emissions than is often disclosed and creates a goal of replacing natural gas for building and water heating with renewable and potentially renewable energy sources;
- WHEREAS, In endorsing that plan, and other City Council orders and resolutions, City Council has gone on record numerous times to supports efforts and innovations to reduce the city’s carbon footprint, while helping the city thrive even with climate change; and
- WHEREAS, Eversource, which provides natural gas to a majority of buildings in the city, is undertaking a pilot study of networked geothermal systems for heating and cooling potential, potentially combined with other sources of waste heat, which could reduce or eliminate the need for natural gas;
- WHEREAS: Replacing fossil fuel sources with geothermal for building water and space heating and cooling can reduce building carbon emissions by about 60 percent;
- WHEREAS: Northampton’s participation in the geothermal pilot can significantly advance progress toward the City’s climate goals and advance Eversource’s offerings;
- WHEREAS: The city is exploring options for extraction and distribution of ground source (geothermal) energy, which could potentially include Main Street which will be open during the Picture Main Street construction project and which already supports diverse energy use demands;

Ordered, that

City Council enthusiastically supports participating in the Eversource Geothermal Pilot, including for Main Street; and

The City Clerk is requested to forward a certified copy of this order to the Eversource Geothermal Pilot and the state legislative delegation.

Passed two readings and enrolled.

21.353 An Order for Special Legislation to Eliminate Party Appointments to the License Commission - 1st reading

21.353 An Order for Special Legislation to Eliminate Party Appointments to the License Commission - 1st reading

Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor Dwight moved to approve the order in first reading. Councilor LaBarge seconded.

Two multiple-member bodies in the city are bound by state law with a party affiliation requirement - the Board of Registrars (BOR) and the License Commission, Mayor Narkewicz explained. The BOR requires equal representation from the two leading political parties so he generally solicits members from the Democratic and Republican parties. (Ironically, ‘independent’ and ‘unenrolled’ designations are not considered parties, he said.)

The other odd one is the License Commission. He thinks it is from a bygone era when the city had partisan local elections with Republican and Democratic mayors, city councilors, etc. He can only assume it was intended to make sure there was party equity among this very powerful board but today it doesn’t actually make sense in a non-partisan environment for a board that issues liquor and common victualler licenses.

The order would send a request to the legislature for an exemption from this state requirement for the License Commission only, not the BOR. He can’t really see a reason for it and thinks it is from a bygone era. Although the state may not have corrected the law, he wants to bring it up to modern standards for Northampton.

He expressed uncertainty about when exactly it would be acted on by the legislature. The city could at least get it filed for the start of the next session.

Councilor LaBarge and Councilor Foster expressed support. She reached out to one of the License Commissioners, and, similar to the mayor, this commissioner said the requirement felt archaic to her as well, Councilor Foster shared. She appreciates him taking this up.

The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

Councilor Dwight moved to suspend rules to allow a second reading. Councilor Thorpe seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the order in second reading. Councilor Dwight seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

The following order passed two readings:

**City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS**

In City Council, November 18, 2021

Upon the recommendation of Mayor David J. Narkewicz

21.353 An Order for Special Legislation to Eliminate Party Appointments to the License Commission

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, M.G.L. c. 138, § 4 provides that “[o]ne member [of the License Commission] shall be appointed from each of the two leading political parties and the third member may also be appointed from one of said parties”; and

WHEREAS, Section 8-5 of the Northampton City Charter provides for non-partisan elections in the city; and

WHEREAS, Appointments to the License Commission on the basis of party affiliation does not serve the interests of the City of Northampton.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED

Voted, to petition the General Court to the end that legislation be adopted precisely as follows.

The General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the mayor approves amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court. The mayor is hereby authorized to approve amendments which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition.

AN ACT EXEMPTING THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON FROM APPOINTMENTS TO THE NORTHAMPTON LICENSE COMMISSION ON THE BASIS OF PARTY AFFILIATION

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the Authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding the second sentence of section 4 of chapter 138, the mayor of the city of Northampton may appoint members to the Northampton License Commission without regard to party affiliation.

SECTION 2. The remaining provisions of section 4 of chapter 138 shall continue to apply to appointments to the Northampton License Commission.

This act shall take effect upon its passage.

Rules suspended, passed two readings and enrolled.

<p><u>Ordinances (Not yet Referred)</u> <u>21.355 Ordinance Relative to House-keeping Changes to the General Ordinances</u></p>	<p><u>Ordinances (Not yet Referred)</u> <u>21.355 An Ordinance Relative to Housekeeping Changes to the General Ordinances</u> Councilor Dwight moved to refer the ordinance to Legislative Matters. Councilor Foster seconded. The motion carried 9:0 by roll call vote.</p>
<p><u>Ordinances</u></p>	<p><u>Ordinances</u></p>

21.335 Ordinance
Relative to Stop
Signs on Ever-
green Road and
Chestnut Avenue -
1st reading

21.335 An Ordinance Relative to Stop Signs on Evergreen Road and Chestnut Avenue - 1st reading

The order is to establish multi-way stop signs on Evergreen Road in both directions (East/West) at the intersection of Chestnut Avenue and Chestnut Avenue Extension and on Chestnut Avenue in the northbound direction at the intersection of Evergreen Road and Chestnut Avenue Extension, Councilor Sciarra advised.

Councilor Dwight moved to approve the ordinance in first reading. Councilor LaBarge seconded.

Residents have been increasingly concerned about this intersection because Chestnut Avenue Extension has a lot of young children crossing it to get to the Leeds Elementary School and visibility coming up the hill is not good, Councilor Maire reported. There have been some near misses. She is in full support as are the residents.

One question that came up in the Transportation and Parking Commission (TPC) is why there is no stop sign for the southerly direction of travel, Councilor Jarrett noted. It is because it is on private property and there is already a stop sign there, he volunteered.

The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

See minutes of December 2, 2021 for second reading.

21.336 Ordinance
Relative to Off-
Street Accessible
Parking Spaces -
1st reading

21.336 An Ordinance Relative to Off-Street Accessible Parking Spaces - 1st reading

The order establishes accessible parking spaces at various recreational fields, including Florence Recreation Fields, Sheldon Field, Arcanum Field, etc., Councilor Sciarra noted.

Councilor Dwight moved to approve the ordinance in first reading. Councilor Maire seconded.

Councilor Foster made not only a reasonable but an appropriate recommendation to modify the language to remove the term 'handicapped' and replace it with 'accessible' as an expression of dignity, Councilor Dwight noted. Legislative Matters members agreed this was appropriate and right but in this case only changed the title. The city solicitor is in the process of going through the entire code to make changes to all language denoting accessibility and intends to present such changes throughout the code to the City Council as a package, he advised.

He was concerned that if they removed the term 'handicapped' from the schedule it wouldn't have a place to go in the code book because there is not currently a section for 'accessible' parking. The choice made was to endorse the changing of terms generally without changing the language in this section in isolation.

Councilor Foster and Councilor LaBarge spoke in favor of this important change to modernize language related to people with disabilities. ADA Coordinator Keith Benoit has actually gone through the code of ordinances and identified 47 or so occurrences of the term 'handicapped' which can be changed to the term 'accessible,' thereby providing an opportunity to codify this kind of dignity and proper language in city ordinances.

Administrative Assistant Krutzler pointed out that some if not all of those language changes are in the package of ordinances referred tonight to Legislative Matters. The city solicitor has in fact presented those changes for approval, she confirmed.

Councilor Dwight commented that little prosaic actions such as changes in terminology actually have value and resonate beyond their immediate effect because they help define a culture. He finds it touching that they are playing catch up at the end of this term by correcting language, adding accessible parking spaces, etc.

Councilor Maire said she is glad to see these spaces being established. When she was a special education teacher, she was surprised to see pushback around handicapped spaces with some people complaining that they are not ever all full. Often caregivers are dropping people with accessibility issues off so it is really crucial that those spaces be available and

not taken by people without mobility issues, she stressed.

The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

See minutes of December 2, 2021 for second reading.

**21.337 Ordinance
Relative to Parking
on Main Street -
1st reading**

21.337 An Ordinance Relative to Parking on Main Street - 1st reading

Councilor Dwight moved to approve the ordinance in first reading. Councilor Jarrett seconded.

The proposed changes are to various parking spaces listed on the 'Parking Prohibited at All Times' and 'On-Street Parking Meter Zones' schedules (Schedule I and Schedule VIII), Councilor Sciarra noted.

The proposed changes to eliminate certain parking spaces came out of the Transportation and Parking Commission (TPC), largely at the recommendation of Parking Administrator Nanci Forrestall, Councilor Nash advised. To exit or enter these parking spaces motorists have to either drive through or back up into a crosswalk. Ms. Forrestall has been working behind the scenes on the TPC for years to move this forward. He thinks it is a great idea to eliminate these spaces which could be dangerous.

As a Legislative Matters (LM) member, she voted to positively recommend the change but her only question is how the empty spaces will be delineated, Councilor Maiore said.

Councilor Nash said he did not know but that he imagined there would be some striping to indicate it is no longer a space.

The Office of Planning and Sustainability (OPS) received a shared streets grant from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) so the city has funding for cross-hatched lines and 'No Parking' signs, Director Feiden confirmed.

Councilor Maiore asked if it made sense to put bike racks there.

He thinks it would be fine for the summer, Director Feiden responded. They did actually just buy a six-bike movable rack which they are primarily planning on using for 'Summer on Strong.'

Since they are eliminating an accessible parking space, Councilor Nash asked if there are plans to replace it.

Yes; they are just sliding it over, Director Feiden confirmed.

Councilor Foster said she also thinks it's a great idea to free up space and increase safety in the crosswalks. However, without an appropriate deterrent, it would be awfully tempting for people to pull up and park in a vacant slice of asphalt when picking up a pizza, etc., she suggested.

Councilor Jarrett made the request that, in the future, staff please carry over links to maps associated with parking ordinances from the TPC's agenda.

The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

See minutes of December 2, 2021 for second reading.

**21.338 Ordinance
Relative to a Stop
Sign on Cross
Path Road - 1st
reading**

21.338 An Ordinance Relative to a Stop Sign on Cross Path Road - 1st reading

Councilor Dwight moved to approve the ordinance in first reading. Councilor Nash seconded.

Over the summer, somebody went and removed vegetation along the river bank on Riverbank Road, Councilor Nash reported. Cross Path Road runs directly into Riverbank Road and, without vegetation there, both the police and DPW were very concerned that someone might not stop and might drive directly into the river. Emergency steps were

taken; a concrete barrier was placed along the opposite side of the roadway to make sure people wouldn't enter the river by mistake and DPW employees assessed ways to make the intersection safer. It was from this assessment that the recommendation for a stop sign at the T-intersection came. Along with the stop sign, there will be line striping to indicate where cars should stop and an arrow sign opposite the stop sign on the other side of Riverbank Road indicating that cars should go in either direction rather than straight. There will also be some cleanup of brush on the side of the road to improve sight lines.

The ordinance was positively recommended by both TPC and LM, he added. **The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.**

See minutes of December 2, 2021 for second reading.

21.349 Ordinance
Relative to Parking
on Meadow Street
- 1st reading

21.349 An Ordinance Relative to Parking on Meadow Street - 1st reading

This ordinance establishes an area on Meadow Street where parking is prohibited at all times, Councilor Sciarra indicated.

Councilor Dwight moved to approve the ordinance in first reading. Councilor Maiore seconded.

The field's parking lots are closed in winter, leading residents using the field and visitors to Grow Food Northampton to park along the side of the road, evidently degrading the shoulder, Councilor Maiore explained. A 'No Parking' area is being established along the unpaved shoulder and a more suitable asphalt parking area will be created and delineated.

Councilor Foster mentioned the availability of some additional parking for community garden days at Grow Food.

Councilor Nash commented that if people are using the fields and recreating there in the winter, it might make sense to open the parking area, and Councilor Maiore agreed.

The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

See minutes of December 2, 2021 for second reading.

Zoning
Ordinances (Not
yet Referred)
21.356 Ordinance
Relative to
Housekeeping
Changes to the
Zoning Ordinance

Zoning Ordinances (Not yet Referred)

21.356 An Ordinance Relative to Housekeeping Changes to the Zoning Ordinance

These are the language changes and other non-substantive housekeeping changes referred to earlier in the meeting, Councilor Sciarra noted. Since they were recommended by the Ordinance Review Committee, it would make sense to have them enacted by the sitting council during this council session, if possible. This might necessitate two readings at the council's final meeting in December.

Councilor Jarrett moved to refer the ordinance to the Planning Board and LM. Councilor Dwight seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

Zoning
Ordinances
21.318 Ordinance
to Amend §350-17
FFR District and
§350 3-4 Zoning
Map to Include
Recreation Land -
1st reading

Zoning Ordinances

21.318 An Ordinance to Amend §350-17 FFR District and §350 3-4 Zoning Map to Include Recreation Land - 1st reading

Councilor Foster read the ordinance.

Councilor Dwight moved to approve the ordinance in first reading. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

Councilor Sciarra said she thinks most councilors have seen this. She asked if there were any questions.

Councilor Nash applauded the outreach by the planning department, expressing his understanding that 117 letters were sent to individual property owners. People were given terrific notification, and he really appreciates that.

<p><u>21.319 Ordinance to Require Installation of EV Charging Stations in Parking Lots over 25 Spaces - 1st reading</u></p>	<p>Councilor Jarrett pointed out some anomalies in the numbering. Administrative Assistant Krutzler offered to work with Assistant OPS Director Carolyn Misch between now and 2nd reading to correct the anomalies.</p> <p>The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.</p> <p><u>See minutes of December 2, 2021 for second reading.</u></p> <p><u>21.319 An Ordinance to Require Installation of EV Charging Stations in Parking Lots over 25 Spaces - 1st reading</u> Councilor Sciarra read the ordinance.</p> <p>Councilor Dwight moved to approve the ordinance in first reading. Councilor Jarrett seconded.</p> <p>Ms. Krutzler noted that the reference to 75 spaces in the first paragraph is a typo. The number should be 25.</p> <p>Councilor Foster made a public appeal that community decisions about where EV charging stations are located within the city be made with an equity lens.</p> <p>Councilor Jarrett said he noticed the ordinance doesn't talk about a particular kind of charger and Tesla chargers aren't interoperable with other kinds of chargers. He wondered if they are assuming market forces will address this issue.</p> <p>Councilor Jarrett is absolutely right, Councilor Dwight agreed. He said he is pretty sure any chargers the city installs will be more universal.</p> <p>From a zoning standpoint, any type of charger would qualify, Director Feiden stated. If the city were installing them they would certainly want universal models.</p> <p>The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.</p> <p><u>See minutes of December 2, 2021 for second reading.</u></p>
<p><u>New Business</u></p>	<p><u>New Business</u> None.</p>
<p><u>Motion to Adjourn</u></p>	<p>Upon motion made by Councilor Foster and seconded by Councilor Dwight, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m. The motion passed 9:0 by roll call vote.</p> <p>Attest: _____ Administrative Assistant to the City Council</p>