

Warrant Article Questionnaire Citizen Petitions Articles

Section III – Questions with Response Boxes – To Be Completed By Petition Sponsor

Article #42	Date Form Completed: Sept 29, 2019
Article Title: Feasibility Study for Increasing Parking Spaces for Morse Institute Library	
Sponsor Name: Saul Beaumont et al	Email: saulbeaumont@hotmail.com

Question	Question
1	Provide the article motion exactly as it is intended to be voted on by the Finance Committee.
Response	Move that the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$15,000 from 2021 Tax Levy for the purpose of implementing a feasibility study for modifying Clarendon Street (the street between the library and the police station) to increase parking spaces for Morse Institute Library and to move the disabled parking spots next to the library. Said funding to be expended under the direction of the Morse Institute Library Board of Trustees and the Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works.
2	At a summary level and very clearly, what is proposed purpose and objective of this Warrant Article and the required Motion?
Response	The purpose is to improve and make safe the inferior parking at the library to benefit the disabled, seniors, parents with young children, and typical patrons. The objective is to obtain funding to perform a feasibility study of modifying Clarendon Street to create a superior parking arrangement that eliminates the current lack of safety and other deficiencies.
3	What does the sponsor gain from a positive action by Town Meeting on the motion?
Response	The sponsor has no equity interest nor any benefit from the article except as a regular patron of the library.
4	Describe with some specificity how the sponsor envisions how: the benefits will be realized; the problem will be solved; the community at large will gain value in the outcome through the accompanied motion?
Response	Clarendon Street is not a very busy street. It is primarily used by three groups: 1. people using the library 2. Police or Firefighters going to their building 3. People taking a short cut to avoid traffic lights or traffic jams. Benefit to Library Patrons: When this street is removed as a public thoroughfare, the patrons of the library will benefit greatly by increased safety for all and accessibility for the disabled. Currently this library has less than ten percent of the parking availability per patron as most towns have in Massachusetts. Currently all people who use library parking need to cross this

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	<p>street to get to the library including the disabled and this would be changed. Currently all parking except the disabled is timed parking. Of the seven spaces, five are limited to fifteen minutes and two are limited to thirty minutes. This has forced parents with young kids to park elsewhere when they visit the library which usually means they need to cross streets which can be a challenge with young kids and the heavy traffic in downtown Natick.</p> <p>The library is a town institution and resource and should be supported in all ways by the community. A comparison of Natick parking and neighboring towns can be seen in the chart on page 4 entitled “Comparison of Natick Library Parking with Neighboring Towns” which demonstrates the deficiency of the Natick parking situation.</p> <p>Impact on other users of Clarendon Street: The Police and Firefighters should easily adapt to driving one more block and using Washington Street to get to South Avenue. People who use Clarendon as a short cut will be able to adjust to the loss – library patron safety is a higher consideration.</p>
5	How does the proposed motion (and implementation) fit with the relevant Town Bylaws, financial and capital plan, comprehensive plan, and community values as well as relevant state laws and regulations?
Response	<p>The Bylaws say to preserve and promote safety, convenience and welfare of the townspeople. Improving library parking safety and convenience resonates with the Bylaw statement. The \$15K cost for the study could add to the 2021 tax rate but has no significant impact. The town exists to serve the residents and this is part of the cost of the fantastic resource the library is.</p> <p>Overlap with other town projects? There have been at least three studies including Natick2030, that have looked at downtown parking and none consider the library’s problem of seven timed spaces plus two disabled spaces across the street except to say that maybe some library spaces might be assigned behind the police station. Not only is there no overlap, this study will address deficiencies in the exclusion of library parking in those plans.</p>
6	<p>Have you considered and assessed, qualified and quantified the various impacts to the community such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town infrastructure (traffic, parking, etc.) • Neighbors (noise, traffic, etc.); • Environment and green issues (energy conservation, pollution, trash, encouraging walking and biking, etc.);
Response	<p>There is no significant negative impact on the abutters on this street. There are some tradeoffs to be made but no deal breakers. It is an idea whose time has come. In the future, there will be less opportunity to find a place to park one’s car, and in Natick, most residents can not walk to the library.</p>

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7	Who are the critical participants in executing the effort envisioned by the article motion? To this point what efforts have been made to involve those participants who may be accountable, responsible, consulted or just advised/informed on the impacts of executing the motion?
Response	<p>In the past 18 months, approaches have been made to many organizations including the Board of Selectmen, Safety Committee, Transportation Advisory Committee, town administration departments, Natick 2030, and the Library Board of Trustees. In general, all responses were essentially to comment on why it couldn't be done except for the Library Trustees who are 100% in support of this article. In addition, during the past year, I have spoken with many residents about this and more than 95% of those people are in favor. The more people approached, the more the need is obvious. The article was written because it is felt that as the Town Meeting Members are the elected representatives of the people, they will have a different perspective than the organizations with specific agendas that don't include the library. Recently, members of the Commission on Disability have expressed support. Also members of the senior center, and also many residents who are happy to share their feelings in support when asked.</p> <p>In 18 months I was not able to gain any official interest other than the Trustees and now it is time to see if the Town Meeting Members will indeed reflect the overwhelming interest and needs of the town residents.</p>
8	<p>What steps and communication has the sponsor attempted to assure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested parties were notified in a timely way and had a chance to participate in the process, that • Appropriate town Boards & Committees were consulted • Required public hearings were held
Response	As noted in Question 7, the attempt was made to talk with all appropriate departments and committees prior to the filing of the article. I am prepared to support any public hearing asked of me. The Library Board of Trustees is in full support. Hearing requests were sent to the Planning Board, who will not hold a hearing and the Board of Selectmen who plan to decide on article hearings on September 3. FINCOM will be informed if another hearing is scheduled.
9	Why is it required for the Town of Natick AND for the sponsor(s)?
Response	I'm involved because residents have asked me to do something about library parking. I have moved forward because I have the full support of the library board of trustees and all the residents who reached out to me. The time has come to fulfill the promise made by the town to the Trustees twenty years ago that the town would provide for library parking.
10	Since submitting the article petition have you identified issues that weren't initially considered in the development of the proposal?
Response	None that I am aware of.

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11	What are other towns and communities in the Metro West area, or the Commonwealth of MA doing similar to what your motion seeks to accomplish
Response	As noted in the response to question 4, Natick parking deficiency is demonstrated by comparison with six neighboring towns. Please see chart below.
12	If this Warrant Article is not approved by Town Meeting what are the consequences to the Town and to the sponsor(s)? Please be specific on both financial and other consequences.
Response	The library is a treasure of Natick and it is a special resource that is always looking for other ways to serve the public such as the recent library of things they started to loan out special one use tools and also the 3D printer that the public has access to. If the article is not passed, it will be business as usual with the continuing safety issues, disability access issues, inconvenience issues, etc. 1200 people per day use the library and the idea of adequate parking and increased safety is an idea whose time has come. It is probable that the library is used by more different people than any other town facility and it should be supported.

Comparison of Natick Library Parking with Neighboring Towns

Town Library Parking Sorted by Residents per Parking Space

town/city	population	main library total spaces	residents per parking space
Dover	6279	40	157
Sudbury	18,317	68	269
Wellesley(3)*	27,982	100	280
Needham	28,888	100	289
Wayland	13,444	44	306
Framingham(3)	68,318	137	500
Natick(2)	35,282	9	3920

*= not counting parking at two branches