



**Beachmont – Cummings Square (Crescent Avenue and Winthrop Avenue)
Revere, MA**

April 25, 2019

Funded by the Cummings Foundation – 100K for 100 Grant Program

The Beachmont Improvement Committee (BIC) and City of Revere Staff identified Cummings Square as an area in need of improved walking infrastructure given the number of pedestrians moving through the square, its proximity to Beachmont Veterans Memorial School, and the fast-moving traffic experienced by neighborhood residents. The City Department of Public Works (DPW) is in the process of repaving several of the roads surrounding the square (Crescent Avenue and Orchard Street), which will allow some of the short-term recommendations described in this memorandum to be put in place quickly. The long-term recommendations should be considered as priority projects to be named in the Revere Complete Streets Prioritization Plan or other infrastructure planning document.

Walk audit participants

City Staff: Julie DeMauro, Elle Baker, Techrosette Leng

Beachmont Improvement Committee Members: Ed Deveau, Kathleen Heiser, Katie (last name?)

WalkBoston: Adi Nochur, Stacey Beuttell

Weather

Beautiful, sunny spring day. Approx 50-55 degrees

Time of Day: 9:30 to 11:00

General Observations:

Vehicular traffic and pedestrian traffic were relatively light during the audit. School was already in session and commuting traffic had died down. Those vehicles moving through the area were moving at relatively slow speeds.

Streets in proximity to Cummings Square have concrete sidewalks on both sides approximately 5' wide in most places. Winthrop Avenue is a 1-way residential street where parking is permitted on both sides of the street. Signs indicate 30-minute parking zones and resident parking areas. Crescent Avenue, which circles Cummings Square, is primarily a 2-way residential street. The street converts to one-way in front of a senior housing building along a short section on the south side of Cummings Square.

Pavement markings are minimal with standard crosswalks and stop lines at some intersections, but not across all approaches. Crescent Avenue has yellow centerlines on the 2-way sections around Cummings Square. Parking spaces are not delineated. The majority of curb ramps are not up to current ADA/universal design standards, which is a challenge throughout the neighborhood.

Walk audit participants were particularly concerned with the location and lack of crosswalks across Winthrop Avenue and Crescent Avenue. Families with children cross through the square between school and home, and do not have a convenient, complete crosswalk network to get from Belle Isle Avenue across Winthrop Avenue.



Crosswalk and traffic island parallel to Winthrop Avenue along the north side of Cummings Square

The crosswalk that spans Crescent Avenue along the north side of Cummings Square is approximately 120' long with no protected refuge island. The traffic island in the center of Crescent Avenue is used as a pedestrian refuge island; but, it was not designed as a refuge, is not ADA compliant, and does not provide sufficient protection. Visibility within crosswalks is compromised by cars parked too close to intersections and crosswalks. It is understood that parking is a premium in this neighborhood, but the strategic removal of a few spaces could significantly improve the safety of everyone walking around Cummings Square.

The average width (from curb to curb as measured on Google Maps) of Winthrop Avenue and Crescent Avenue is 30 feet. With the two parking lanes along Winthrop Avenue (each 8' wide), the travel lane remains wide at 14 feet. Painted parking lanes or "Ts and L" could reduce lane width and help to slow traffic. While the 30' width of Crescent Avenue is reasonable with 2-way traffic and parking lanes, there are wide expanses of pavement at the intersections that surround Cummings Square. The wide turning radii could be narrowed with paint and flex-posts, which would help reduce traffic speeds as vehicles turn around the corners.

Short-term recommendations:

- Paint parking lanes or "Ts and Ls" along Winthrop Avenue to narrow travel lane and delineate parking zones
- Paint high visibility crosswalks (continental or ladder) across Crescent Avenue at Belle Isle Avenue on the west side of the intersection, and a crosswalk at the stop sign at the intersection of Crescent Avenue and Winthrop Avenue. Vehicular traffic must stop at this location already and are more likely to see pedestrians crossing here than at a mid-block, uncontrolled crossing across Winthrop at the east side of Cummings Square.
- Repaint all crosswalks in the area with high visibility crosswalks (continental or ladder).
- Where possible given current street projects, install curb ramps and/or replace non-compliant curb ramps Crescent Avenue and Winthrop Avenue corners. Install detectable warning panels.
- Paint stop lines where they are missing and refresh existing stop lines.
- Use Ts and Ls to delineate parking spaces around Cummings Square. Ensure spaces are marked a sufficient distance away from crosswalks (approx. 20'-25').

- Investigate the history of the highway scale safety barrier. Its presence conveys danger.
- Observe quality of street light levels at night around Cummings Square and at major crossing points.

Long-term recommendations:

- Install curb ramps and/or replace non-compliant curb ramps at any remaining Crescent Avenue and Winthrop Avenue corners that are not repaired as part of current road repair project. Install detectable warning panels.
- Consider re-routing traffic around Cummings Square in a one-way loop. This strategy could remove some of the confusion drivers now experience when driving in this area. It could also provide opportunities to reclaim some of the pavement with expanded curb bump-outs that would shorten crossing distances for people walking and reduce traffic speeds. It would require the reallocation of some parking spaces.
- Conduct parking utilization study to determine need and desired location of parking around Cummings Square
- If needed, conduct a study of light levels around Cummings Square to inform a pedestrian scale lighting strategy.

In addition to Cummings Square, walk audit participants discussed potential improvements to the Crescent Avenue/Orchard Street intersection. There are no crosswalks painted across Orchard Street or Crescent Avenue at this intersection and no functional curb ramps. The City has agreed to install a sidewalk along the northeast side of the existing traffic island. However, the alignment of the sidewalk in this location sets up a long-term conflict with an existing driveway and parking area, which could be remedied if the sidewalk is placed within the traffic island.



New sidewalk is proposed where the construction barrels are now (Photo1).

Curb bump-out is proposed at corner shown above (Photo 2).

The City plans to build a curb extension at the southeastern corner of Orchard Street and Crescent Street with a curb ramp that leads to a crosswalk and corresponding curb ramp on the new sidewalk. However, no crosswalk or curb ramp will be installed on the north side of the traffic island at this time. While constructing a sidewalk is a welcome improvement in the short term, the sidewalk will most likely need to be reconstructed to adequately complete the crosswalk network in this area.

WalkBoston, the BIC and city staff plan to conduct walk audits in other locations within the Beachmont neighborhood later this Spring and Summer. This is the first of several reports outlining short-term and long-term recommendations that will be produced for use as guidance in making the Beachmont neighborhood more walkable.