

BOROUGH OF WEST READING TRAFFIC & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 13, 2021

The Borough of West Reading Traffic & Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, October 13, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chairman Christopher Lincoln; Council Member Patrick Kaag; Police Chief Glenn Granitz; Borough Manager Dean Murray; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Public Works Crew Leader Kerry Grassley; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors: Karen Livingood, Resident Michael Witmyer, Resident
Maureen Hasty, Resident Carl Garman, Resident

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Lincoln noted a minor item that staff is requesting to add to the agenda. Motion to add a discussion on Sycamore Road parking space removal. **Moved** by Mayor Kearney and seconded by Mr. Murray. **Motion carried.**

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of August 11, 2021 by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried.**

Old Business

Penn Avenue Infrastructure – Mr. Murray noted that cost estimates are needed to replace the banner pole that fell during a windstorm. The banner pole located on the opposite side of the downed pole also was removed due to deterioration at the base of the pole. The West Reading Community Revitalization desires to replace these banner poles for future banner rentals and intends to budget for these replacement costs that would be above insurance proceeds. Mr. Lincoln requested specifications for the banners from the manufacturer to ensure the banners used for street advertising are wind resistant.

It was noted that the pedestrian crossing signal located at the Sixth and Penn Avenue intersection is still not operating properly. Another call will be placed to Telco to request repairs.

Four new trash cans have arrived and will be placed within the 500 block of Penn Avenue between Great Wall and Sweet Ride Ice Cream; and the 400 block of Penn Avenue between Benchwarmers and the new building at 428 Penn Avenue.

Information Technology Services – Mr. Murray recapped the three proposals that were received noting that Omega Systems was the highest proposal for onboarding and monthly support. Lynx Computer Technologies came in second with regards to expense for the middle support package. Onboarding fees would be waived with a 12-month contract. Solve IT Solutions seems to be the best option with the monthly support fee coming in under the current contract. Reference calls have been placed which has raised some concerns regarding Omega Systems.

Chief Granitz concurred that Solve IT Solutions seems to be the best offer noting that they agreed to waive afterhours service fees during the transitional period. They also offer a 30-day opt out clause should the Borough not be satisfied with their services, and the ability to change levels of service based on needs. Necessary upgrades to Microsoft 365 will incur additional costs upfront. A positive aspect of the existing system is that the server age and space are in good condition.

Mr. Murray is waiting for return calls from a few reference checks and would like to refrain from making a decision until this information is gathered. The committee was comfortable allowing staff to make a final recommendation to Council next week and seemed to think that Solve IT Solutions was the most

accommodating. A full list of necessary upgrades will be requested to include these costs in the 2022 budget discussions. The transition between IT service providers would take place at the end of the year.

Walnut Street & Tulpehocken Avenue Intersection Study – Mayor Kearney noted resident concerns that were shared with him as to the safety of traffic controls at this intersection. It was noted that this intersection, as well as the Walnut Street and Cashmere Way Intersection, are scheduled to be studied in the near future. Findings from the study may be available for discussion at the November meeting.

New Business

Grape Street (200 block) – Chief Granitz noted a review of this narrow alleyway by himself, Mr. Grassley and Fire Chief Moyer that was precipitated by resident complaints of repeated damage to homes and fences. Damages typically occur during overnight hours presumably by patrons of a local club. An ambulance, fire truck or snow plow would not be able to access this alleyway and there are no off-street parking spaces for the homes fronting Yarnell Street. It was recommended to install removable bollards at the entrance to the alley near 3 Grape Street and at the end of the fence at the grassy area behind 3 Grape Street, while allowing access to maneuver out of the three parking spaces owned by Brewer's Bar & Grill. A no outlet sign should be placed at the opposite end of the alley near Franklin Street. The solicitor should be asked for feedback prior to installing these bollards.

Motion to recommend Council to approve the installation of four bollards in the unnamed alley between Grape Street and Franklin Street. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mayor Kearney. **Motion carried.**

Chestnut Street (500 block) – Chief Granitz requested feedback on parking restrictions that are currently in place on the south side of the 500 block of Chestnut Street from 1:00-5:00 p.m. during weekdays. It was thought that this parking restriction was established a number of years ago to accommodate school bus activity. Section 430-23 Parking Prohibited Certain Hours of the Code of Ordinances will be reviewed next month.

Special Purpose Parking Zones – Section 430-26 Special purpose parking zones; parking otherwise prohibited at all times, and Section 430-27 Special purpose parking zones; parking otherwise prohibited on certain days were reviewed and recommended to be condensed into one section to avoid duplications in the future. The following regulations were discussed:

- The duplication of regulations pertaining to a loading zone on Cherry Street east of Seventh Avenue would be corrected.
- Various handicapped parking space designations that are not in use will be removed from Chestnut, Franklin, and Kline Streets, North Sixth, Penn, and South Fourth Avenues, and Sunset Road. It was decided to allow the two handicapped parking space designations established for pool patrons on Sycamore Road near Museum Road to remain year-round to accommodate park visitors.
- The fire zone designation on the south side of Franklin Street east of Fourth Avenue near Bethany Lutheran Church was recommended to be removed from the ordinance. The Fire Chief indicated that the 20 feet designation would not be large enough to support parking of a fire truck.
- The location designation of the loading zone on the east side of North Sixth Avenue was adjusted.
- The location designation and days and times for valet parking on the east side of South Seventh Avenue would be adjusted for accuracy.

Curb Replacement – Recently Council decided to take on the responsibility of curb repairs and Mr. Grassley offered to review the upcoming paving project curbing with the engineer to allow the Public Works Department to repair or replace curbing as time permits prior to the commencement of the project in an effort to reduce the cost to the Borough. Mr. Lincoln agreed to a trial period wanting to ensure that normal Public

Works activities would not suffer by taking on this added responsibility. Handicap ramp replacements would not be addressed in-house. The proposed 2022 paving project along Sycamore Road would be reviewed and addressed as time allows, including other various curb damaged areas around the Borough.

Sycamore Road Parking Space Removal – Mr. Murray reminded committee members of a resident's request to install a mirror in the intersection of an unnamed alley near Sycamore Road to improve the visibility of oncoming traffic especially during pool season when there are increased parking demands. In lieu of installing a mirror, two parking spaces, one on either side of this alleyway, were temporarily removed to improve line-of-sight. Residents in the area were pleased with this modification. A permanent designation of no parking in this area would be marked in yellow paint on the curbing.

Motion to recommend Council to remove one parking space on each side of the alley that intersects Sycamore Road in the vicinity of the pool driveway. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mayor Kearney. **Motion carried.**

Public Comment – Mr. Witmyer asked if an online portal, similar to the new online vacation report, would be available in the future for visitors to request temporary parking. Chief Granitz is interested in pursuing additional online reporting options, however the Crime Watch website limits these options. The online vacation reporting portal required a change to the website platform. Chief Granitz will be attending an Upsafety training seminar and will review additional virtual options. Changes to the permit parking program are not planned to be pursued until a parking study has been completed.

Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m. by Mayor Kearney and seconded by Mr. Murray. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary