

BOROUGH OF WEST READING TRAFFIC & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

JULY 13, 2022

The Borough of West Reading Traffic & Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, July 13, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Council Member Patrick Kaag; Chief of Police Wayne Holben; Mayor Samantha Kaag; Engineer Tom Unger; Borough Manager Dean Murray; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira. Chairman Christopher Lincoln and Public Works Director Kerry Grassley were unable to attend.

Visitors: James Rogers, Resident Dale Miller, Resident

In the absence of Chairman Christopher Lincoln, Council Member Patrick Kaag called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Public Comment

Mr. Miller inquired to Mayor Kaag as to when the potholes would be permanently patched on Spruce Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, and on Parkside Drive North near the hospital and museum. It was noted that this inquiry should be directed towards the Public Works Department and in the absence of the Public Works Director, both Mayor Kaag and Mr. Murray made note to follow up with Mr. Grassley.

Mr. Miller expressed his frustration with speeding, double parking, truck traffic, rollback tow trucks, and unnecessary school bus use, along Sunset Road and inquired as to what Gross Volume Weight (GVW) constitutes a truck. Chief Holben did not have the GVW information at his fingertips and noted upcoming details that could be established in that area as well as a speed monitoring device to record speeds. Mayor Kaag offered to draft a letter to the school districts in an attempt to deter bus traffic on Sunset Road. It was noted that the only other option to travel through the Borough would be Fifth Avenue with a hard right onto Penn Avenue.

The public comment period was recessed to accommodate the Borough Engineer's schedule at 6:15 p.m.

Old Business

Delaney Circle – Mr. Unger provided an aerial view of Delaney Circle with paint striping, a signage plan and comments from PennDOT's Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). The recommendation from LTAP to create yield intersections for all six access points to the circle will be reviewed further between the engineer and PennDOT. It was thought that all stop intersections could be justified based on the number of roadways accessing the circle and the volume of pedestrian use, both of which differ greatly from normal roundabouts.

A painted yield triangle was illustrated from the Buttonwood Street access to the circle to reduce the width of the pedestrian crosswalk. Mr. Unger intends to discuss this feature further with the LTAP representative. Another topic of discussion will be the placement of yield and pedestrian crossing signage.

The inner portion of the circle would be striped with yellow paint to reduce the travel lane width. Should this feature achieve the goal of slowing traffic, this area could then be upgraded to mountable curbing.

Mr. Unger noted a recent conversation with Chairman Christopher Lincoln regarding the benefits of shortening the proposed right turn lane from Reading Avenue to Fifth Avenue to avoid a conflict with merging traffic. This would allow traffic to flow from Reading Avenue into the lane of travel prior to electing to access the turning lane onto Fifth Avenue.

Mr. Unger noted that further details of short-term pedestrian safety improvements to the traffic circle would be fine-tuned with LTAP prior to implementing changes.

Sanitary and Storm Sewer Inspection Project – Mr. Unger stated that the sanitary sewer summary report of findings has been provided to the Borough and noted a number of lines that are in need of rehabilitation. He indicated that he would pursue available grant opportunities to offset the roughly \$150,000 of needed repairs.

Televising of the aging storm water system revealed offsets, cracks, and a few obstructions. These lines are not as deep as the sanitary sewer lines and can primarily be repaired in-house. The Public Works Director has earmarked the priority areas.

Mr. Unger departed the meeting at 6:24 p.m.

Public Comment (continued)

Mr. Miller reported that he has observed a number of new residents that have moved into the area from larger cities that exhibit reckless driving habits. Chief Holben noted a number of safe driving details planned in the coming months. Mr. Miller was not interested in changing the direction of travel on Sunset Road, nor creating a two-way travel pattern.

Mr. Rogers thanked the police department for an officer that had recently been monitoring the traffic circle. He noted from previous Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes that the Mayor has the ability to impose temporary traffic restrictions and suggested that stop sign controls with blinking lights be installed as a trial basis at the Reading Avenue and Delaney Circle intersections.

Mr. Rogers also noted a car that was recently parked within the 700 block of Court Street on the south side and indicated that this could be avoided if additional no parking signs would be installed in the same manner as the north side of this block. He also noted two dumpsters that are placed on the garage apron of 719 Penn Avenue.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of June 8, 2022 by Mayor Kaag and seconded by Mr. Murray. **Motion carried.**

Old Business

Penn Avenue Infrastructure – Mr. Murray indicated that tree trimming and mulching of the planter boxes along Penn Avenue was completed prior to the Art on the Avenue event and that trash cans are being cleaned and refurbished as time allows.

Handicapped Parking Policy – The proposed 2019 policy changes were reviewed further noting that Section 430-26.1. A. Policy for installation and use of handicapped parking was revised to indicate that Borough Council may approve or deny a request and that the Borough is under no obligation to provide on-street handicapped parking spaces.

Changes to the proposed Handicapped Parking Space Application were noted to provide an area to confirm that off-street parking is inaccessible. The demonstration of a need for on-street handicapped parking spaces would be satisfied by providing a copy of the valid handicapped placard, plate, or card.

Motion to recommend Borough Council to approve the advertisement of a revised handicapped parking policy, Section 430-26.1. **Moved** by Mayor Kaag and seconded by Chief Holben. **Motion carried.**

Review of § 430-21 Parking Prohibited at All Times – Mr. Kaag noted a prior review of this section that required an onsite review of a few references. The following matters were discussed:

- The roadway between Obold Street and South Third Avenue from Franklin Street was discovered to be an alley based on surrounding parcel deeds. Therefore, a name of Raisin Alley has been assigned to this roadway and included in this section to prohibit parking on both sides at all times.

- Fulton Alley was added from Highland Avenue to Warren Alley on both sides of the roadway.
- Myrtle Street was added from Reading Avenue to the dead end of Myrtle Street on both sides.
- It was decided to revise Court Street to include the blocks of Fourth Avenue through Eighth Avenue.

Motion to recommend Borough Council to approve an amendment of Section 430-21 Parking prohibited at all times. **Moved** by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mayor Kaag. **Motion carried.**

Review of § 396-19.1 No Winter Maintenance – Mr. Kaag referred to a proposed new subsection to the section entitled “Plowing and Removal of Snow and Ice” that lists roadways designated as non-maintained routes that will be posted to indicate the lack of winter maintenance. Mr. Murray indicated that the seven alleys listed within the proposed ordinance are not wide enough to support vehicle access during winter weather events.

Motion to recommend Borough Council to approve the list of roadways designated as non-maintained routes pending Solicitor review of the proposed new Subsection 396-19.1. **Moved** by Mayor Kaag and seconded by Chief Holben. **Motion carried.**

Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m. by Mayor Kaag and seconded by Chief Holben. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary