

BOROUGH OF WEST READING TRAFFIC & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 12, 2022

The Borough of West Reading Traffic & Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, October 12, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chairman Christopher Lincoln; Council Member Patrick Kaag; Sergeant Ryan Phillips; Public Works Director Kerry Grassley; Borough Manager Dean Murray; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira. Mayor Samantha Kaag was unable to attend.

Visitors: Karen Livingood, Resident (arrived via Zoom at 6:01 p.m.)
Jesus Irizarry, Resident (arrived at 6:03 p.m.)
Isai Irizarry, Resident (arrived at 6:03 p.m.)
William Daley, Resident (arrived at 6:30 p.m.)
Ronald Shubert, Haverford Systems, Inc. (via Zoom)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of September 14, 2022. **Moved** by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried.**

Old Business

Council Chamber Upgrades – Mr. Shubert provided an overview of equipment upgrades that are being proposed for the meeting room:

- Two 55" televisions mounted to the wall with swing arm mounts. The display options were discussed and noted that Haverford Systems, Inc. (HSI) would install borough purchased devices. Commercial grade devices with higher NIT values are recommended to balance the contrast within the room, which could be achieved by closing the blinds and dimming the lights. The other factor to consider in purchasing commercial grade devices would be based on the length of time the device would be powered on.
- One pan/tilt zoom camera with wall mount that would be mounted above the audience area. It was thought that an additional camera could be purchased based on the savings of purchasing televisions from a local retailer and mounted on the opposite side of the room for presentation and public comment periods. Two cameras can be controlled by the mini-PC to manually focus on the person speaking in the room.
- The existing speakers and microphones would be interfaced with the new system by tapping into the analog system and converting to a USB system.
- One mini-PC with Wireless Keyboard and mouse mounted in the credenza.
- Cat cable interface boxes would be installed by HIS, this excludes network connectivity.

A revised quote will be provided for consideration next month.

Mr. Shubert departed the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

Delaney Circle – Mr. Lincoln shared comments that were received from a representative of PennDOT on modifications to the traffic circle. Sign locations would need to be shifted if the decision is made to change to all stop intersections. The exception would be Fifth Avenue that would remain a yield intersection to avoid traffic backing up onto Penn Avenue. Traffic studies will be performed for Reading Avenue, Tulpehocken Avenue, and Buttonwood Street. The colors of pavement markings would need to be revised for stop

intersections. Based on the time of year the pavement markings may need to wait until spring. The engineer will be asked to modify the plan to include stop bars on all approaches except Fifth Avenue. The goal is to gain Council's approval to be ready to implement these changes as the weather allows.

Utility Billing Policy – The proposed water, sewer, and refuse billing policy was reviewed noting the following:

- The option to provide the tenant an additional copy of the water, sewer, and refuse invoice would be granted if agreed to in writing by the owner. It was decided to remove the requirement of the tenant to sign the form to expedite the process. The illustration and instructions on how to read the meter at the change of tenancy would be provided to generate interim billings that would facilitate fair mid-billing cycle practices.
- The eligibility of residents to participate in a budget payment plan (BPP) to budget average monthly payments would require a billing history of one-year and the account may not be delinquent at the time of entering into a BPP. Termination of the plan for reasons such as non-payment, moving or written notice would require the account to be paid in full. The ability for a tenant to enter into a twelve-month agreement was discussed, as well as the legality of not offering this feature to a tenant and the borough entering into an agreement that may thereby remove the owner's ultimate financial responsibility, as well as the added administrative time associated in establishing a plan, and monitoring monthly payments were discussed. It was decided to inquire with the solicitor and allow staff to decide if a monthly program would be too difficult to implement, monitor and enforce prior to establishing a BPP program.
- The payment plan time frames were revised to twelve months for residential accounts and six months for commercial accounts. It was thought to be acceptable for the plan agreement to clarify that monthly bills or reminders would not be provided to quarterly account customers. The total amount would be due if the customer is late in providing a payment, defaults on any conditions, or the customer is moving or selling the property.

The noted changes will be made for further review next month.

New Business

Handicapped Parking Applications – The following handicapped parking applications were reviewed:

- 438 Franklin Street & 443 Franklin Street – There are two existing handicapped parking space designations within this block, one on the north side near Fifth Avenue and one on the south side near Fourth Avenue. It was unknown as to whether the one near Fourth Avenue was still in use since it seemed to be associated with Franklin Manor. Per the new policy a total of three handicapped parking spaces may be designated within this block. It was decided to bag the sign near Fourth Avenue to determine if someone is using this space. Approval was recommended of an additional space designation on the south side of Franklin Street, five spaces from Fifth Avenue. Should it be determined that the space located near Fourth Avenue is not in use, it was recommended to redesignate the space to the north side of Franklin Street, three spaces from Fifth Avenue.
- 332 Penn Avenue – This space designation was shared with another individual that has moved. It was recommended to retain the existing handicapped space designation for the second party.
- 307 Chestnut Street – There is one existing handicapped parking space designation within this block on the south side near Fourth Avenue, a total of three spaces may be designated within this block. Approval was recommended to add a space designation on the north side of Chestnut Street three spaces from Third Avenue.

- 314 Chestnut Street – Mr. Irizarry indicated that he submitted an application last week requesting a handicapped space designation near his home. Approval was recommended to add a space designation on the south side of Chestnut Street five spaces from Third Avenue.
- 114 Tulpehocken Avenue – There is one existing handicapped parking space designation within this block on the west side near Walnut Street, a total of three spaces may be designated within this block. The Chief recommended against approving this request based on the availability of a gravel off-street parking area behind the home that provides easier access than through the front entrance. This decision was agreed to by the Committee in order to retain the availability of space designations for individuals that do not have access to off-street parking.
- 120 Yarnell Street – There are no existing handicapped parking space designations within this block, a total of three spaces may be designated within this block. Approval was recommended to add a space to the west side of Yarnell Street in the first space north of Grape Street.

Motion to recommend the approval of the handicapped parking space designations as discussed. **Moved** by Mr. Grassley and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried.**

Public Comment

Mr. Murray shared an inquiry from a Chestnut Street resident that recently received a notice of violation regarding high grass and her question about the responsibility of the alley that is not maintained by the borough and the weed growth from this roadway. This area will be reviewed for further discussion next month.

Mr. Murray asked for direction, on behalf of Chad Moyer, to address sidewalk damages that are caused by Borough tree roots. This item will be added to next month's agenda.

Mr. Daley expressed concern over the number of vehicles that travel in the wrong direction on Kline Street that borders his home and the number of children that play in the area. He noted that roughly a year ago he requested one-way signs be placed to deter vehicles from traveling in the wrong direction on Kline Street and wondered if anything further could be done to address the ongoing issue. Mr. Lincoln indicated that Do Not Enter signs could be placed at the Kline Street access from South Second Avenue as well as street markings.

Mr. Daley reported macadam repairs that are needed to Kline Street and inquired about the responsibility of the macadam area behind his garage. It was confirmed that this alley is maintained by the borough, Mr. Grassley plans to meet Mr. Daley to review the area in question in the near future.

Mrs. Livingood is excited for upgrades to the audio system to improve the experience of future virtual meetings. She asked if the audio and visual upgrades would benefit the police department by providing better clarity during times of unruly residents. Mr. Lincoln indicated that the quality of the camera would be improved and the addition of a second camera would capture the room more fully.

Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Grassley. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary