

BOROUGH OF WEST READING TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2016

The Borough of West Reading Traffic Committee met on Wednesday, August 10, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall. The following persons were present: Chair Christopher Lincoln, Mayor Valentin Rodriguez, Jr., Police Chief Stephen Powell, and Borough Secretary Cathy Hoffman.

Visitors: Phil Wert and Jim Rogers

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

Public Comment

Mr. Rogers indicated that there are some traffic signs in the Borough that are no longer necessary:

- "Buses Park Here" near Delaney Circle
- "Do Not Pass" at 5th and Franklin
- "No Right Turn Into Bank" on N. 6th Avenue
- A faded sign adjacent to Schweitzers - 433 Penn Avenue

He also stated that when street sweeping is scheduled for both sides of Chestnut and Franklin Streets it is too difficult for residents to find alternate parking. He recommended that each side be done on separate days. Mr. Murray was not in attendance to discuss the issues therefore Mr. Lincoln said that the Committee would discuss it further with Mr. Murray.

Mr. Wert spoke about the illegal parking that happens on N. 7th by Gage Personnel. He noted that this will become more of an issue when the development of the Narrow Fabric building begins. It was recommended that the curbs be painted yellow on both sides as a reminder. Mayor Rodriguez will also speak to the owners concerning the issue.

Trucks Restrictions

The ordinance is now in place and the signs have been ordered.

Radar Signs

Chief Powell reported that both signs are working well and noted that they have hung an aggressive driving sign as well. Discussion ensued about the speed limit in residential areas (25 mph) versus urban areas (35 mph). Chief Powell and Mr. Lincoln will look into this further to determine which designation applies on streets such as Sunset and Sycamore.

Chief Powell also noted that the maximum fine for parking against traffic is \$15 per state statute therefore the ordinance will need to be amended. Also discussed was increasing the handicapped parking fine from \$50 to \$75 as recommended in the parking study. It was also noted that handicapped parking spaces on Penn Avenue are being enforced at a two hour limit, in keeping with all other spaces on Penn Avenue.

Moved by Chief Powell and seconded by Mayor Rodriguez to recommend to Council that the traffic ordinance be amended to lower the fine for 'parking against traffic' to \$15 and to increase the handicapped parking fine to \$75. **Motion carried.**

Parking Study

Mr. Lincoln spoke about the Walker Parking Study which had indicated that there were two recommended steps that had not been taken as part of the information gathering for the study. Discussion ensued regarding the completion of the study which would determine if parking meters or a garage would be viable for the Borough. The cost for this was estimated at \$50,000 to \$75,000. This portion of the study would also determine what type of metered system would be best for the Borough. The impact of metered parking on the side streets and residential areas was also discussed. Parking enforcement was also discussed with regard to the hours of enforcement, the potential hiring of additional personnel, or having police officers enforce parking during evening and weekend hours.

Shared parking, as noted in the Study, was also discussed with regard to all of the potential lots that currently exist and how much of an impact they would have. It was noted that many of the businesses that have private lots do not actively promote their use, which is something that should be brought to the Business Promotion Committee.

Because of the impending development of several key pieces of property in the Borough, it was felt that parking needs to be dealt with now in order to be proactive. As it was unclear what the \$50,000 to \$75,000 would cover as part of the study, Mr. Lincoln will contact Megan Gardo, the parking analyst with Walker Parking Consultants to see if she could attend the September Traffic Committee meeting.

Permit Parking

Mayor Rodriguez said that he had briefly discussed permit parking with the solicitor with regard to expanding these areas in the Borough. Mr. Mooney indicated that it would be as simple as amending the ordinance, therefore Mayor Rodriguez asked if permit parking could be added to the 100 block of Tulpehocken Avenue. He noted that the employees of ManorCare are parking on that block even though alternate parking is available. Given that other institutional uses have caused permit parking to be established in other areas of the Borough, this situation would be no different.

Discussion ensued concerning the upgrading of the parking permits to include a barcode that would ensure that the permit parking areas are being used as intended. The additional cost could be passed on to the resident, which would be nominal. It was recommended that the new permits be put in place by 2017. The zero hundred block on N. 6th Avenue was also discussed, however the situation with parking in that block is not because of an institutional use. **Moved** by Chief Powell and seconded by Mayor Rodriguez to amend the permit parking ordinance to include the 100 block of Tulpehocken Avenue from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Sunday, and the zero hundred block of N. 6th Avenue from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Non-permit parking would be restricted to a two hour limit.
Motion carried.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Hoffman, Borough Secretary