

BOROUGH OF WEST READING TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2016

The Borough of West Reading Traffic Committee met on Wednesday, September 14, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall, with the following persons present: Chair Christopher Lincoln, Public Works Director Dean Murray, Police Chief Stephen Powell, and Borough Secretary Cathy Hoffman. Mayor Valentin Rodriguez arrived at 7:00 p.m.

Visitors: Megan Gardo, Parking Analyst, Walker Parking Consultants
Michael Hacke P.E., Project Manager, Walker Parking Consultants
James T. Rogers Resident

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

Public Comment

James T. Rogers asked if street sweeping was going to be discussed and then commented about the handicapped spaces on Penn Avenue being subject to the two hour limit. He also spoke about signs that need to be removed.

Old Business

Parking Study – Megan Gardo from Walker Parking Consultants was in attendance to discuss next steps. Fines were discussed and Chief Powell noted that the revenue is up by about 20% since the introduction of the new equipment. Ms. Gardo recommended that the next step would be to go to 6:00 p.m. for enforcement before going with paid parking. She also said that there are other options that should be looked at before discussing the installation of a garage. She also recommended providing people with the location of the public lots and mentioned changing the 24hr restriction on the Franklin Street lot. She also suggested leasing some space from the shopping center. There are a lot of downtown spaces that are available however if a structure were built, there are grants available and bonding that can be pursued.

The business model, as written by Walker, spoke about a parking meter analysis and Mr. Lincoln asked about the cost. It would be \$50,000 to prepare the plan and \$25,000 to \$50,000 to purchase the equipment.

Ms. Gardo spoke about the original study having been done in January which may not have been the best time to do it. She recommended further investigation and that it would be good to spend a week collecting data including evenings. This could include the expansion of hours as well as a license plate survey. The cost for an additional study would be about \$7000. She spoke about the cameras on a vehicle to do the data collection which use License plate recognition technology. She also recommended not going past 8 p.m. and including Saturday which would provide higher numbers. Ms. Gardo referred to the perception that people will not walk a long distance to get to their destination therefore they need to park within sight of it, however noted that the local mall is 1300 feet in length and shoppers have no problem walking the estimated 800 feet to get to their destination in the mall.

Much discussion ensued:

- the municipal lot could be metered
- space could be leased from the Shopping Center
- maps of local parking areas could be provided or available online
- paying by plate is an easy way to begin
- additional staff may need to be hired to cover additional enforcement time
- a kiosk at the Franklin Street municipal lot could be obtained to charge for parking (the current 24 hour parking limit would have to be reduced)

Trucks on Residential Streets – Signs were picked up yesterday and installation started today. There is a sign that needs to be removed on Museum Road which will be installed on 5th Avenue heading toward the playground.

ARLE Grant – The ‘Green Light Go’ grant was briefly discussed. Chief Powell has worked on completing the application however there are many items that require assistance. The application was reviewed and information provided. Any outstanding information will be provided by Mr. Lincoln. The grant would provide signal modernization for the intersections on Penn Avenue from 4th to 7th Avenues which includes led signal heads and a battery backup system.

School Zone Signage – S. 4th Avenue – This has been completed.

Parking Signage/Stall Lines – 700 Block of Penn Avenue – This has been completed.

Wrong Side Emergency Vehicle Pre-emption – The preemption at the traffic signals on Penn Avenue may need to be adjusted because emergency vehicles can trigger the sensor at 4th Avenue even though they are at 5th Avenue because the signal sometimes bounces back. Due to the fact that the signal can be reflected off of a number of things, Mr. Murray was asked to speak with Telco to see if anything can be done to alleviate the situation.

Street Sweeping – Mr. Rogers had brought it up at Council about the possibility of not restricting the parking on both sides on street sweeping days. Mr. Murray said that the residents have acclimated to it and there have been no complaints of late. He noted that it’s two days per month now, but if it were changed per Mr. Rogers’ recommendation, it would be 4 days per street. Mr. Rogers countered that many people have complained to him however they do not wish to waste their time by coming to Borough Hall to complain. Mr. Lincoln said that this will be discussed further by Council at the next meeting.

New Business

None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Hoffman, Borough Secretary