

## **BOROUGH OF WEST READING TRAFFIC & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE**

**OCTOBER 11, 2023**

The Borough of West Reading Traffic & Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, October 11, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chairman Christopher Lincoln; Public Works Director Kerry Grassley; Borough Manager Dean Murray; Chief of Police Richard Tornielli; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira. Council Member Patrick Kaag and Mayor Samantha Kaag were unable to attend.

### **Visitors:**

Karen Livingood, Resident  
James Rogers, Resident

Maureen Hasty, Resident

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

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Rogers noted that parking regulation discussions for the 600 and 700 blocks of Court Street are not on the agenda this evening and expressed his desire to establish permanent parking restrictions.

Mr. Rogers questioned why permit parking had been established on North Sixth Avenue, yet it is not established for the residents of the 000 block of South Sixth Avenue. It was noted that funds for an overall permit parking study have not yet been established. North Sixth Avenue regulations were formed by a previous mayor in conjunction with the 100 block of Tulpehocken Avenue, the paid parking program within the shopping center lot, and an outpatient medical facility that had been located on North Sixth Avenue.

Mr. Rogers shared his safety concern for the residents of the 500 block of Grape Street where there are parked cars, locked gates and/or no available access to rear yards by emergency personnel in the event of a fire. Mr. Lincoln noted the preexisting building conditions that could be reviewed by the code department for possible emergency safety improvements.

Mrs. Livingood expressed her appreciation of a Public Works member that took the time yesterday along Sunset Road that was not scheduled for street sweeping to exit the street sweeper to rake leaves from the area surrounding a parked vehicle.

Mrs. Livingood inquired as to budgeting funds next year to trim trees along Sycamore and Sunset Roads. Mr. Grassley shared plans to remove deadwood from trees along Sycamore and Sunset Roads this year. A budget of \$30,000 has been proposed for the 2024 budget to address tree trimming in the areas of South Seventh Avenue, Olive Street, and Sunset and Sycamore Roads. A schedule to trim trees on a six-year rotation is being established with Bartlett Tree Experts.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of September 13, 2023. **Moved** by Mr. Grassley and seconded by Chief Tornielli. **Motion carried.**

### **Old Business**

**Motorcycle Permit Parking** – Mr. Lincoln recapped previous discussions of permit parking for motorcycles and the visibility of a permit affixed to a motorcycle parked on a public street that is under cover. Chief Tornielli recommended designating a location to affix the permit to the motorcycle and requiring the permit to be visible regardless of the use of a motorcycle cover. It was unknown how many motorcycles this would apply to in the Borough or if any motorcycles have been registered in the permit parking program. Staff will be requested to provide feedback and to allow a warning period prior to enforcement.

**Lofts at Narrow Elm Street Intersection** – Mr. Lincoln recapped previous discussions noting the owner of the Lofts at Narrow installing a stop sign to slow traffic exiting the Lofts at Narrow parking lot onto Elm

Street and the additional request to install a speed bump to slow traffic exiting the private parking lot onto a public street where several children are generally at play. Mr. Murray shared his efforts to contact the owner and plans to follow-up in the near future.

**Yarnell Street Parking Restriction** – Parking restrictions on Yarnell and/or Grape Street were discussed to improve trash hauler access to this narrow roadway. To improve access to Grape Street it was thought that a single space could be restricted on the southwest corner of Yarnell Street. Also, the three designated parking spaces along Grape Street could be restricted on trash collection days. Mr. Grassley will review the realignment of spaces between Grape and Chestnut Street on Yarnell Street to potentially retain the same number of spaces and the new trash hauler contract will be reviewed prior to taking any action. It was noted that the removal of one space on Yarnell Street would assist in snow plowing efforts.

**One-Way Streets** – Mr. Lincoln recapped a discussion and recommendation made to Borough Council last month to limit the direction of travel on Holland Square and Juniata Street based on the narrow width of roadways that do not support two-way traffic. Mr. Grassley shared highlights of his meeting with a PennDOT representative to review the criteria to limit the direction of travel and study the intersections to implement stop intersections. Mr. Ta's report and stop intersection study results should be available within the month.

Mr. Lincoln noted some additional updates that are needed within this ordinance section such as the inclusion of alley names, and the Oak Terrace designation that limits direction of travel from Fifth Avenue to Fourth Avenue. Adoption of an amendment to this ordinance was tabled for further discussion next month.

**Plane Alley Parking Restrictions** – Mr. Lincoln noted that Plane Alley, located between Sunset Road and Sycamore Road, has signs posted restricting parking on trash collection days between Parkview Road and Fifth Avenue that are not currently designated within ordinance Section 430-23 Parking prohibited certain hours. It was noted that Plane Alley from Parkview Road to Linden Lane is currently signed and designated within ordinance Section 430-21 Parking prohibited at all times. Mr. Grassley noted a fifty-foot designation within Section 430-21 that restricts parking on the south side of this alley from Parkview Road to accommodate access to an off-street parking area. Based on the consistency of areas along Plane Alley with limited freedom of movement to access driveways it was decided to prohibit parking at all times from Linden Lane to Sycamore Road. It was thought that there may be an influx of requests to create off-street parking pads in the future. A draft ordinance amendment was requested for review next month that could be included with the One-Way Street amendment.

**North Sixth & Reading Avenue Intersection** – Chief Tornielli shared observations from thirteen traffic checks totaling five-hours that show line-of-sight to be adequate from Sixth Avenue when cars are not illegally parked to pick up takeout food from the Takkii Ramen restaurant. It was noted that these violations are difficult to enforce based on the short length of time vehicles park in this area. It was also noted that when traffic flows decrease, the speed of traffic increases. Chief Tornielli recommended the addition of speed lines on Reading Avenue in the 500 and 600 blocks to provide speed enforcement. He also recommended refreshing the faded crosswalks and the addition of in-street pedestrian crosswalk signs. Mr. Lincoln requested the second speed radar sign to be installed in this area to collect data. It was recommended to begin monitoring traffic heading eastbound in the 500 block of Reading Avenue.

**Fourth & Penn Avenue Intersection** – Chief Tornielli shared observations of this intersection during a Back-to-School Aggressive Driving Pedestrian Safety Detail and indicated that children adhered to the crossing signals while adults ignored the signals and darted out into traffic. Officers are monitoring the intersection and do not see anything that is overly concerning.

Mr. Lincoln inquired as to last month's comment on a crossing signal that had not been operating correctly at this intersection, and Mrs. Hasty noted the southwest crossing signal of the Fifth and Penn Avenue intersection that is not operating correctly. These two crossing signals will be reviewed.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Rogers inquired as to a ticket that had been issued and found to be unenforceable by the recipient and wondered if that ordinance section had been amended. It was noted that this ticket pertained to parking on Court Street, which is still under review.

Mrs. Livingood noted that the West Reading Fire Department is hosting an Open House event tonight from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 p.m. by Mr. Grassley and seconded by Chief Tornielli.

**Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Borough Secretary