

BOROUGH OF WEST READING
TRAFFIC & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2018

The Borough of West Reading Traffic & Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, August 8, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall, with the following persons present: Chairman Christopher Lincoln; Council Member Nicholas Imbesi; Police Chief Stephen Powell; Main Street Manager Mark Ratcliffe; Public Works Director Dean Murray; and Assistant to the Manager Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors: Karen Livingood, Resident
Michael & Helen Witmyer, Residents
Suzanne Thompson, Council Member
Jeffrey Reiff, Resident/Business Owner

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

Public Comment

As a resident of Tulpehocken Avenue, Mr. Witmyer noted confusion regarding parking changes and one-way traffic during the Criterium event. Chief Powell noted the original intent to prohibit parking along one side of Tulpehocken Avenue to improve the flow of traffic and a change made during the event, as suggested by a resident, to alter the flow of traffic to one-way, which allowed 20 additional parking spaces in this vicinity. For future events, Mr. Witmyer recommended providing Fire Police at the intersection of Walnut Street and Tulpehocken Avenue. Chief Powell noted Fire Police were called away due to an accident, which necessitated rearranging assistance to more dangerous intersections. Mrs. Witmyer requested replacement of the pedestrian crossing signs to the traffic circle that were removed for the event.

Mr. Reiff expressed frustration with the four-hour parking limit within the municipal lot located on Franklin Street and the lack of parking available for residents. Mr. Reiff provided photos again to the Committee of an area he believes to be an alley located adjacent to the municipal lot bordering the rear of South Seventh Avenue properties that he would like to utilize for parking. Mr. Imbesi noted his previous research of deeds, dating back to 1920, of the properties in this vicinity resulting in no mention as to an alley or street abutting the rear of the South Seventh Avenue properties. Mr. Reiff noted the majority of the municipal lot remains empty due to the new four-hour parking limit while the Borough experiences ongoing parking issues. Mr. Imbesi stated he would research the deeds again as to a potential alley in this vicinity and provide the information to Mr. Reiff.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of Wednesday, July 11, 2018 by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Murray. **Motion carried.**

Old Business

Parking – Chief Powell noted the part-time Parking Enforcement Officer has begun enforcement of the recently adopted extended parking restrictions along Penn Avenue and the municipal lot. Modifications to signage along Penn Avenue are needed to include the new regulations. Mr. Murray reported this would be completed by the end of the week.

Mrs. Hoffman previously reviewed regulations currently in place to enforce parking upon private parking lots and determined Section 3353(b)(1) of Title 75; Vehicles should be sufficient to allow enforcement. Chief Powell noted enforcement of over-time parking with use of a kiosk is not referenced in the Vehicle Code and recommended amendment to the ordinance.

A Parking Lot Lease Agreement drafted by the Solicitor was provided to the Committee for review. Committee members recommended the agreement be revised as a management agreement to remove requirements of a lease, which would require snow removal/upkeep of the privately owned lot. Mr. Ratcliffe will provide Committee members with an electronic version of the agreement with his recommended revisions. All suggested revisions to be provided to the Solicitor to modify the agreement and provide to Council for review during the August meeting.

Green Light Go Grant – There was nothing new to report.

7th & Walnut Intersection – Mr. Murray noted three verbal bids were received resulting in a quote of approximately \$7000 less than the original quote. Construction should begin at the end of August. Following this construction, Mr. Murray intends to review the budget to determine if enough funding is available to mill and overlay the Walnut Street alley.

Missing Stop Sign Inventory – Mr. Murray continues to monitor available LTAP training classes for a closer venue in order to obtain certification to perform traffic studies.

Parkview Road Bridge – Mr. Lincoln noted bridge closing signs are in place notifying motorists of the pending bridge closure on August 27th. The Committee expressed concern regarding navigation devices leading trucks to this bridge, which would require the large vehicle to back up onto Third Avenue. Mr. Lincoln will review avenues to provide bridge closure information to update navigations.

Concerns regarding speeding along Sunset Road following the bridge closure were discussed. Chief Powell plans to obtain traffic counts again before and after bridge closure for this roadway and will request State Police to perform speed checks following bridge closure.

Sunset Road Traffic Control – Mr. Lincoln reviewed Mrs. Hoffman's previous request to post "No through Traffic" signs during peak traffic volume time frames in an effort to limit the number of vehicles traversing Sunset Road once the Parkview Road Bridge is closed. Mr. Lincoln noted enforcement would be difficult, however the low cost expense to post signage might reduce traffic flows. Mr. Lincoln also suggested revisiting an option to create one-way traffic on Sunset Road from Museum Road to Fifth Avenue to disperse traffic onto Oak Terrace and Pine Street.

2018 Street Projects – There was nothing new to report.

Penn Avenue Infrastructure – Mr. Murray reported there has been no improvement to trash being placed within the recycling bins on Penn Avenue. However, event recycling bin use is doing well. Mr. Lincoln suggested review of alternate recycling bin labels, such as stenciling since the current decals are detaching.

Technology Infrastructure – Mr. Lincoln inquired as to improvements to the Wi-Fi signal at Borough Hall. Mr. Imbesi noted discussions during a recent Finance Committee meeting and plans to purchase a new Wi-Fi extender that is under the purchasing threshold.

Route 422 West Shore Bypass Project – Mr. Lincoln noted positive feedback received during a recent meeting between the Greater Reading Chamber Committee Alliance and PennDOT where plans were provided regarding future plans for trail connectivity and bridge access points.

ARLE Grant – Following a review of grant particulars it was determined that the option to extend the grant has lapsed.

New Business

Museum Road/Parkside Drive N/Sycamore Road Signal – Residents have expressed concern regarding the traffic signal at this intersection and the difficulty to turn left from Sycamore Road onto Museum Road due to oncoming traffic from the Reading Hospital area. Also, traffic at this intersection will more than likely increase following closure of the Parkview Road Bridge. A costly traffic study would be required; funding for this study to be considered during budgeting of 2019.

Multi-Way Stop Analysis for Intersections – Intersections such as Fourth & Reading Avenue should be studied, following staff training, to determine the necessity to require an All-Way stop. Mr. Lincoln noted criteria required to convert this intersection include: number of vehicles per hour; crash history; line-of-sight issues that could be addressed, such as limiting parking near the intersection or justification as to the strain this would cause. Further discussions pertaining to this study would be discussed following training of staff.

West Reading Criterium Event – Chief Powell reported no major issues during this recent event. There were approximately 330 parking spaces reserved, a message board rented to direct traffic from Buttonwood Street to the Reading Hospital, a total of 147 over-time hours logged by Police Department personnel, all of which worked not less than 13 hours, 26 volunteer Fire Police, 12 officers from the Sheriff's Department and 25 hours logged for traffic planning and notification of residents bringing a total cost of approximately \$26,191 for the Police Department. Chief Powell also noted 11 vehicles were towed, nine of which were not from the area. Mr. Murray noted Public Works expenses were approximately \$11,000. Final numbers for the event will be provided to Council.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:09 p.m. by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Murray. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Assistant to the Manager

Cathy Hoffman
Borough Manager