

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

NOVEMBER 13, 2019

The Borough of West Reading Traffic & Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall, with the following persons present: Chairman Christopher Lincoln; Public Works Director Dean Murray (arrived at 6:14 p.m.); Police Chief Stephen Powell; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Main Street Manager Mark Ratcliffe; Borough Manager Nicholas Imbesi; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors: Karen Livingood, Resident
Mindy Wiczowski, MAW Communications
Frank Wiczowski, MAW Communications

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

Public Comment

Karen Livingood noted conversations on the Voices of West Reading Facebook page about the need to educate drivers navigating the intersections of Obold and Chestnut Streets; turning right from Ann Street to Sunset Road; the one-way portions of Spruce Street; and the Grape Street and Third Avenue intersection. Mrs. Livingood spoke of her efforts to bring residents to meetings to discuss their concerns; however there appears to be a lack of interest.

Mr. Lincoln indicated that the intersection of Grape Street and Third Avenue could have an additional one-way sign added to the end of the roadway in addition to the existing Do-Not-Enter sign, and he would review the regulations pertaining to this additional signage. Chief Powell stated that their department educates through enforcement; however they would need to witness this violation.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of Wednesday, October 9, 2019 by Chief Powell and seconded by Mayor Andrew Kearney. **Motion carried.**

MAW Communications

Mindy Wiczowski provided an overview of the history of their family-owned company and services offered to provide fiber optic networking, which creates a symmetrically based broadband speed for uploading and downloading. Their company has begun deploying services in West Reading and intends to upgrade the entire Borough. Services are primarily installed overhead on existing Met-Ed or Verizon utility poles. Ms. Wiczowski expressed an interest in expediting their goals with funding assistance from the Borough, which would provide revenue sharing of 5% annually. A map of the fiber optic cabling that is currently installed was provided as well as samples of the cabling and box that would be installed on homes that opt into these services. It was noted that fiber optic cabling has a reliability rate of 99.99% with an average down time of five minutes per year.

Currently there is ability to offer wireless services for the Penn Avenue corridor, from Fourth Avenue to Eighth Avenue during events. A map of Penn Avenue was provided to illustrate the range of services. Samples of a mesh Omni-directional radio device and electric box that would be installed on existing traffic poles were provided. Also, cabling has been installed underground near the park area where wireless services could be offered on a continual basis. It was noted that MAW's specialty is to provide municipal direct service connections. A timeline to begin contacting potential customers through door hangers to begin the installation of service drops is scheduled at the end of this year. Chief Powell requested communicating this planned action to the Police Department approximately 48-hours in advance.

Frank Wiczowski provided a summarization, which was to gain the Borough's support in funding the deployment to accelerate full coverage of the Borough. Mr. Lincoln stated that a final decision would come from Borough Council and noted that \$3.5 million dollars is the entire annual budget and the likelihood of loaning funds is low. Mr. Wiczowski stated that smaller steps such as \$50,000 could be negotiated and asked what the next step would be. Mr. Lincoln indicated that the committee would discuss this further next month and potentially make a recommendation to Council.

Old Business

Penn Avenue Parking – Mark Ratcliffe noted the second month of parking recap reports indicates an average of \$3,000 earned per month with the kiosk being the preferred method of payment. Chief Powell noted continued efforts to monitor and educate visitors that park in free spaces and leave the shopping center area between the hours of 11 a.m. to noon and 6 to 7 p.m. Also, the need to void parking tickets has diminished.

Mr. Imbesi conveyed information provided by a Mobile Now App representative as to an option to avoid the initial \$20 deposit, which is a pay as you go option that would incur an increased convenience fee. Also, there is an option to offer both methods simultaneously, providing the user choices upon initial sign up. The representative stated that a "jagged edge" message warns the user of the "wallet environment". It was recommended to offer a trial phase where the user could choose their preferred method and to obtain additional information such as: the pay as you go convenience fee; does a deleted account receive a refund of the remaining balance; and request a clearer message for the "wallet environment".

Chief Powell indicated that the West Reading Drug Store was in favor of offering a 15-minute paid parking interval for their pharmacy customer's use in lieu of installing a 20-minute parking space along Penn Avenue. Confirmation is needed to offer this time interval through the Mobile Now App.

Motion to recommend Council to approve a 15-minute parking time interval within the paid parking lot.

Moved by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mayor Kearney. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Ratcliffe noted that the Mobile Now App is waiving fees and offering free parking for three-hours during the Small Business Saturday event. The owner of the parking lot has agreed to allow this free parking time frame. Chief Powell stated that the two-hour parking enforcement would also be waived on November 30th.

Mr. Ratcliffe departed the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Green Light-Go Grant – It was unclear as to the status of the grant closeout paperwork at this time. Mr. Imbesi is awaiting communication from the engineer.

Missing Stop Sign Inventory – Chief Powell indicated that this review has not yet begun.

Parkview Road Pedestrian Bridge – Mr. Imbesi indicated that he has not yet received a response from UGI as to their assistance in funding construction of this bridge.

Designated Bike Route – Wyomissing Borough has secured funding to create bike lane designations via sharrow's and signage for both Wyomissing and West Reading Boroughs. Wyomissing Borough provided a map of the connections from Vanity Fair to parklands and the museum via Seventh Avenue. The only route concerns were in the vicinity of Delaney Circle that would connect the bike lanes to the Buttonwood Street Bridge. Wyomissing Borough is requesting approval of the map, it was suggested that Michele Bare attend next week's Council meeting to answer any questions. Mr. Murray requested stencil information to properly freshen the sharrow's in the future.

In-Street Pedestrian Crossing Signs – Chief Powell stated that he is waiting on a response from PennDOT for the additional sign request.

Penn Avenue Infrastructure – Mr. Murray reported that six trashcans have been refurbished along Penn Avenue and there are no major projects planned next year. Pricing to paint the Penn Avenue Railroad Bridge is being gathered; Mr. Lincoln recommended obtaining a quote to paint the Buttonwood Street Railroad Bridge.

New Business

Walnut Street Parking Concerns – Gage Personnel has shared concerns regarding parking and standing in the narrow Walnut Street alley near the children's clinic. Chief Powell stated that they are aware of this concern and they are monitoring the area to move people out of the alley. It was noted that there are no optimal locations to install signage and the installation of lines would not be feasible. Should the problem persist, consideration may be given to limit this road to one-way.

GIS System – Layer options and complaint reporting considerations were provided to the committee this evening and it was recommended to review these options for a later discussion.

Pine & Ann Street Alleys – Due to cars parking in these alleys the trash hauler has experienced difficulty gaining access to remove trash. The committee reviewed parking restriction options and determined that the Pine Street alley has limited areas to install signage due to garages and driveway access, it was recommended to place signs restricting parking on a full-time basis at either end of the block. The Ann Street alley was recommended to restrict parking during trash collection timeframes.

In an effort to save money, Mr. Lincoln recommended reviewing alley restrictions in-house as opposed to including this in the overall parking study.

Mr. Imbesi also noted the recent revision to the noise ordinance that allows trash collection services to begin at 6am and the existing signs that state 8am. Mr. Murray will revise these signs throughout the Borough.

Public Comment

Mrs. Livingood inquired as to the status of tree trimming along Sycamore Road. Mr. Murray indicated that the project to remove dead wood and maintain a 16' clearance above the surface of the ground had been completed. Mrs. Livingood indicated that her block had not been addressed. Mr. Murray will be requesting the arborist to return to this area to complete the project.

Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m. by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mayor Kearney.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary