

BOROUGH OF WEST READING TRAFFIC & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

APRIL 14, 2021

The Borough of West Reading Traffic & Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. via a Zoom meeting with the following persons present: Chairman Christopher Lincoln; Public Works Director Dean Murray; Police Officer Nicholas Karetas; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Borough Manager Nicholas Imbesi; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors: Karen Livingood, Resident Philip Wert, Borough Council Vice-President

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

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of March 10, 2021 by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Imbesi. **Motion carried.**

Old Business

Parkview Road Pedestrian Bridge – Mr. Imbesi noted a voluntary pre-bid onsite meeting that took place this morning to provide information as to the scope of work and answer any contractor questions. Prefab drawing renderings are anticipated to arrive in a week or two and the Department of Environmental Protection joint permit has been received. UGI Utilities, Inc. has not yet returned a fully executed copy of the right-of-way agreement.

Penn Avenue Infrastructure – Mr. Murray requested a direction as to replacing the time limit parking signage for uniformity purposes for motorists as well as parking enforcement officers. Further revisions to the parking restriction timeframes are not anticipated. Mr. Murray offered to obtain pricing information to replace approximately sixty signs for further discussion next month.

Mr. Lincoln indicated that he is still working on obtaining costs to perform a traffic study, make revisions to PennDOT signals and purchase equipment to provide a pedestrian only crossing phase along Penn Avenue.

Reading Avenue/Buttonwood Street School Zones – A description of the area regulated by these school zone permitted signals was unclear. Officer Karetas indicated that these two school zone areas that approach Delaney Circle are intended to warn motorists of an increase in pedestrian crossings during these timeframes and does not provide enforcement of speeding. Therefore, an update to the ordinance would not be required.

Time Limit Parking – Due to the similarity of § 430-24 Time limit parking and § 430-25 Time limit parking certain days it was thought that these two sections could be combined. The primary difference between these two sections are overtime parking zones and no parking on certain days. The Solicitor would be asked if there were any reasons why these two sections should not be combined.

Philip Wert joined the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

The following regulations were discussed:

- A 20-minute parking space has been requested on Reading Avenue near Sixth Avenue. There is a 20-minute space designation within the regulations near this intersection that is not currently signed. A policy would be needed to justify the creation of additional 20-minute parking spaces to avoid an influx of requests. It was also noted that enforcement of these short-term spaces is difficult and time consuming. It was decided to install a sign for 20-minute parking as listed in § 430-24.

- Current time limit parking regulations within § 430-24 that pertain to the 500 and 600 blocks of Reading Avenue were recommended to remain while increasing the limit from two hours to three hours for uniformity purposes. Methods to prevent parking at the corner of Sixth and Reading Avenues that pose dangerous line-of-sight issues while exiting Sixth Avenue onto Reading Avenue were discussed. Brightening the painted yellow curb was recommended as well as the installation of a tapered line of delineator posts. Another option that was discussed was to alter the flow of traffic on North Sixth Avenue to one-way southbound from Reading Avenue. It was noted that plans to proceed with a trial closure of North Sixth Avenue, from Penn Avenue to Court Street, to create a Pocket Park have been placed on hold for roughly one year since the owner of the shopping center has delayed the relocation of dumpsters in this vicinity.
- South Second Avenue in front of RM Palmer is currently signed and regulated as a two-hour parking limit Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Following a discussion with a representative from RM Palmer it was decided to retain these regulations.
- North Sixth Avenue is currently regulated as permit parking under § 430-29 which is in effect Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. This timeframe does not provide time limit parking regulations after 6:00 PM on weekdays nor on Saturday. Options for this area will be reviewed and discussed next month.
- South Seventh Avenue near Penn Avenue currently has regulations for time limit parking that is not signed. It was decided to replace these signs.
- South Sixth Avenue regulations between Chestnut and Spruce Streets would need to be revised from the east side to the west side of Sixth Avenue and the description should be revised to include a distance from Chestnut Street to the patient loading zone area.
- South Sixth Avenue near Penn Avenue has overlapping regulations between § 430-24 and § 430-25. This will be reviewed for next month.

AT&T Small Cell Tower – It was noted that AT&T first approached the Borough to install a small cell tower on an existing pole located adjacent to the Borough Hall building while removing the unused siren. Emergency personnel wished to retain the siren, therefore AT&T offered to purchase a smaller siren to be mounted on the side of the pole to allow the installation of a cell tower at the top of the pole. Federal Signal has neglected to provide the requested specifications in a timely manner and last month Borough Council permitted AT&T to install an additional pole. AT&T will be applying for a Zoning Permit and have submitted plans that illustrate the location of the new pole that would be approximately twelve feet from the existing pole near the side stairwell. Electric service to the cell tower would be tied into the underground service from Borough Hall, AT&T would provide a stipend for these services. Mr. Lincoln recommended review of the overhead fiber line to ensure a sufficient clearance for higher profile vehicles. Guidance will be requested from the Solicitor as to monetary options for an annual license agreement since the pole will be installed on private/public property.

New Business

Pine Street Paving Project – Mr. Murray requested guidance with regards to determining the areas of curbing to be repaired or replaced and the levels of curb reveal. It was decided to arrange an onsite meet with the Engineer, Borough Manager, Public Works Director and Mr. Lincoln to review the two-block area.

Pedestrian Complaints – Mayor Kearney shared two complaints he recently received regarding pedestrian crossing safety near the cloverleaf area and speeding within Delaney Circle onto the connecting roadways. Mr. Lincoln noted the installation of new pedestrian warning signs in the cloverleaf area following the Penn Street Bridge reconstruction. Rectangular rapid flashing beacons would be beneficial to this area, however PennDOT likely will not go to the expense to install. Mr. Lincoln noted an option to reduce the width of Delaney Circle in an effort to calm traffic. Delineators or markings to reduce the width of the travel lane could be explored.

Public Comment

Mr. Wert reported that the West Reading Community Revitalization Foundation building located on North Sixth Avenue has been damaged by a delivery vehicle for the fourth time in two years. Mr. Wert requested the Committee to consider restricting parking along Court Street or to alter the Court Street traffic pattern to one-way to allow sufficient room for delivery vehicles to navigate this narrow roadway since deliveries are prohibited along Penn Avenue. Mr. Lincoln reported that Court Street is approximately sixteen-feet wide which is not wide enough for two-way traffic. There is merit to altering Court Street and North Sixth Avenue to one-way for a number of reasons. Also, it may be helpful to remove parking spaces on the east side of North Sixth Avenue to allow additional room to maneuver alignment to Court Street. It was recommended to restrict parking along Court Street within the 600 and 700 blocks. Mr. Lincoln indicated that property owners could be queried as to their preference in either restricting parking or limiting the direction of travel. The ordinances will be reviewed for regulations regarding restricted parking at all times for discussion next month.

Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m. by Mr. Imbesi and seconded by Mr. Murray. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary