

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

AUGUST 11, 2021

The Borough of West Reading Traffic & Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, August 11, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chairman Christopher Lincoln; Council Member Patrick Kaag; Police Chief Glenn Granitz; Interim Borough Manager and Public Works Director Dean Murray; Mayor Andrew Kearney and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

Visitors:	Karen Livingood, Resident	James Rogers, Resident
	Maureen Hasty, Resident	Carl Garman, Resident
	Denise Drobnick, Resident	Ela Perez, Business Owner

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

Public Comment

Mrs. Livingood thanked the Public Works Department for painting the curb along Sycamore Road near the Museum Road intersection in an effort to discourage parking in this busy seasonal pool traffic area.

Mr. Garman inquired as to the status of a new parking study. It was noted that funds have not yet been allocated towards this expense and that this would be a topic of conversation during upcoming budget meetings. The Borough-wide area of the study is needed for concepts on how to address homes with multiple vehicles, and permit parking for commercial and residential uses. Mr. Garman stated that the Borough parking lot along Franklin Street is not being used to its capacity and recommended alerting business owners to this lot to direct employees or customers to utilize this hidden parking area.

Mr. Rogers spoke again of the Franklin Street area between Yarnell Street and South Second Avenue and recommended creating additional parking spaces on the south side of the street and to designate this area as a snow emergency route to prevent vehicles from parking on this slope during slippery conditions.

Mr. Rogers commented on various questionable parking regulations, or the lack thereof, such as permit parking in an alley between Kent Way and South Sixth Avenue, no regulations for the 500 block of Reading Avenue, and signage placement within the 600 block of Reading Avenue. He also spoke of the history of twenty-minute parking spaces near the restaurant at Second Avenue and Franklin Street and Sixth and Reading Avenues. It was noted that regulations exist within the ordinance for these two spaces, however an amendment is needed to correct the placement of these spaces for enforcement purposes.

Mr. Rogers expressed his frustration in obtaining documentation through Right-to-Know requests due to the law exempting meeting minutes or ordinance amendments, which are considered to be in a draft format until the committee or board approves the document. He indicated that this does not allow residents the ability to review documentation and render suggestions prior to approval/adoption.

Ms. Perez requested a status update in establishing a loading zone near her Mecca Caribbean restaurant located at 166 Franklin Street. She indicated that the restaurant is currently open Friday through Sunday with catering activity during the week and the need for short term loading/unloading parking in the area. It was noted that parking regulations are currently being reviewed throughout the Borough and an anticipated date to adopt amendments would be October.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of July 14, 2021 by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Kearney. **Motion carried.**

Old Business

Parkview Road Pedestrian Bridge – Mr. Murray reported that the pedestrian bridge has been placed, however it is not open to the public until the railings are installed, the gas line is tied into place, sidewalks are poured and the abutment areas have been backfilled.

Penn Avenue Infrastructure – Mr. Murray reported that new parking limit signs have been installed along Penn Avenue. It was noted that the white pedestrian crossing signal lights are not working at Fifth and Sixth and Penn Avenue intersections. Telco would be contacted to correct these lighting issues as well as the banner pole that fell across Penn Avenue this evening during a storm.

Time Limit Parking Ordinance – One additional amendment was recommended to this ordinance: on the east side of North Sixth Avenue between Penn Avenue and Court Street it was decided, for uniformity purposes, to also designate the three spaces located near Court Street as three-hour time limit parking.

The next sections that will be reviewed by the committee are § 430-26 Special Purpose Parking Zones; Parking Otherwise Prohibited at All Times and § 430-27 Special Purpose Parking Zones; Parking Otherwise Prohibited on Certain Days. It was recommended to also combine these two sections into one to avoid duplication of regulations.

Committee Members agreed to move forward with a recommendation to Council to adopt revisions to § 430-24 Time Limit Parking. This decision could potentially allow the installation of a twenty-minute parking space in the vicinity of South Second Avenue and Franklin Street a month earlier than previously noted.

Motion to recommend Borough Council to adopt revisions to § 430-24 Time Limit Parking. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Murray. **Motion carried.**

Information Technology Services – Mr. Lincoln asked members for comments on the draft Request for Proposal (RFP) of Information Technology (IT) services. He noted on page three under Submittal Requirements that ten pages may not be enough to include all of the requested information. However, lengthy submissions are not desired. Committee Members agreed to revise this to twenty pages.

The following concerns were recommended to be improved with a new IT provider:

- Communication on recommendations to improve or upgrade network components to allow budgeting of these needs.
- Ensure that security reviews/updates are being performed to avoid data breaches or the need for catastrophic data recovery.

Mr. Lincoln liked the option for the vendor to propose alternative packages that they as professionals felt would best meet the needs of the Borough. Chief Granitz noted recent communication with local IT service providers to decipher their flow process for communication and his research of their municipal references.

Motion to recommend Borough Council to approve the Request for Proposal of Information Technology services language as presented subject to a change on page three for the proposal to be no more than twenty pages. **Moved** by Mr. Murray and second by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried.**

New Business

Banner Pole – Mr. Murray noted that the banner pole came down during tonight's storm and will need to be cut to reopen Penn Avenue. Fortunately, there was no damage caused to structures or vehicles. It was recommended to refrain from large banners across Penn Avenue due to the strength and direction of wind through this corridor.

Delaney Circle – Mayor Kearney noted that Mr. Murray addressed and resolved a resident’s complaint/concern regarding pedestrian crossing signage within the traffic circle area.

Aggressive Driver Enforcement – Chief Granitz thanked the Public Works Department for aiding in the installation of additional speed timing devices around the Borough. The locations were based on Police Department observations as well as resident complaints. This has allowed the department to focus on aggressive driver enforcement as noted in the news last evening.

School Safety – Chief Granitz noted his meeting with Wyomissing Elementary Center School officials to discuss the COVID variant and the anticipated increase to drop-off traffic at the school. Traffic flows and crossing guard areas will be monitored by the Police Department.

Double Parking – Chief Granitz noted double parking complaints along Penn Avenue that have been received by their office as well as observed by officers. The new food delivery service providers for restaurants seem to be the primary offenders. Chief Granitz requested recommendations on how to address this issue from the committee, and the following options were discussed:

- Designation of spaces for these types of pickups; however, this would take away from general parking.
- Designation of spaces within the paid parking lot.
- Mass communication to drivers through the various business Apps as to alternate parking options to avoid double parking. An alternate option may be alley access to restaurants.

Chief Granitz noted further discussion that is planned at the Chief’s meeting next week. The Chief plans to take a more forward educating approach to violators in the meantime.

Public Comment – Mr. Rogers noted the Public Works and Police Department staffing expense of \$9,890.86 that had been incurred for the recent Art on the Avenue event. He also noted that the two Parking Enforcement Officers that assisted with the event in the capacity of traffic control and parking enforcement only issued two parking tickets all day. Workers are entitled to coffee, lunch and/or dinner breaks, although they were on the clock all day. Mr. Rogers felt that additional parking tickets should have been issued. Chief Granitz noted that this event took place prior to his start date, however he has experience in managing large events. The Borough is very lucky to be able to host these types of events, which requires all hands-on deck. There are usually scheduling issues with large events in relation to the number of available staff members, and volunteers are not always dependable. Therefore, the Parking Enforcement Officers are needed in alternate capacities during these events. It was also noted that there was short notice that the event was allowed to take place following a lift in COVID type restrictions.

Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m. by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary