BOROUGH OF WEST READING
TRAFFIC COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2014

The Borough of West Reading Traffic Committee met on Wednesday, May 14, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall, with the following persons present: Mayor Valentin Rodriguez, Code Enforcement Officer Tracey Levering, Borough Manager Rich Sichler, Public Works Director Dean Murray and Parking Enforcement Officer Jason Witman. Police Chief Stephen Powell was unable to attend.

Visitors: Phil Wert

Mr. Sichler called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

PennDOT

Mr. Sichler provided an update concerning the Buttonwood Street Bridge project and noted that PennDOT's 'readingbridges.net' site is now live. The site shows the three bridge projects in the Reading area, construction time frames, and alternate routes.

Permit Parking

Administrative personnel continue to work on this project. It was noted that many residents with permit parking have turned in their old parking stickers for the new and improved stickers. Increased ticketing of vehicles without permit parking stickers has also encouraged residents who should have had them to come to the Hall to obtain a new sticker. Letters will soon be sent out to residents who need to update their information and sticker.

NEW BUSINESS:

Expansion of Permit Parking Area

Mr. Sichler said he had been asked about expanding the permit parking area and had spoken with former Police Chief Ed Fabriziani to determine how the current permit parking area came to exist. He was told that in 1995 and 1996 the Traffic Committee had worked with PennDOT to enact the ordinance that would allow permit parking, which was approved because the Reading Hospital is the largest employer in Berks County and the impact of their employees parking in residential neighborhoods was taking a toll.

Mayor Rodriguez asked if it was possible that ManorCare on the north side of the Borough could be considered because of its impact with employees parking in the residential areas. He wondered if it would be helpful if a group of residents were to petition PennDOT. Mr. Wert suggested that views at PennDOT may have changed over the past 20 years considering the impact of urban density. It was noted that this situation exists in other areas of the Borough, including the streets surrounding the Elementary School.   Mr. Sichler will contact both the school and ManorCare to see what they can do to prevent employees from parking on Borough

streets. He will also contact PennDOT to see if they are receptive to allowing permit parking in other areas of the Borough.

Curb Painting

Mr. Wert asked that consideration be given to the painting of the yellow curbs, which had been done in the past. He noted that it should be done because drivers are inventing parking spaces throughout the Borough.

Mr. Murray said that it could be done, however it would have to be scheduled so that one third of the Borough is completed each year. He did specify that curbs at handicapped spaces should not be painted blue because of the fact that handicapped spaces are moved from time to time. He also indicated that the granite curbs on Penn Avenue could not be painted.

Mr. Wert also spoke about two areas on the north side of the Borough that need traffic control devices:
1) The intersection of Elm and Olive Streets – there are no stop signs in either direction at the intersection, and there have been a number of near misses.
2) There is a portion of Cashmere Alley, behind the 100 block of Tulpehocken Avenue, where visibility is poor. It was suggested that a 'do not enter' sign be placed behind Sunshine Wellness (the alley is one way at that point) and a stop bar painted on the roadway behind Berkshire Village at the intersection of Cashmere.

Other Business

Mr. Sichler said he will be meeting with PennDOT on May 16th concerning the Buttonwood Street Bridge project.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Hoffman
Administrative Assistant