



CITY COUNCIL

Public Works Committee

Monday, April 19, 2010 Meeting Report

Committee Members Attending: D. Sterner, S. Marmarou, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, Chair

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, C. Jones

The Public Works Committee meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm by Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, chair.

Honorary Designation of Crestmont St in Recognition of the Sokol's

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that this item does not need discussion as Mr. Acosta is working with the Administration.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that discussions have begun to rename the Orange & Cherry Playground.

Strategy for Repaving of City Streets

Mr. Jones reviewed the list generated by the former traffic engineer. He stated that this list is outdated and needs revision. He noted that there are other streets which need attention that are not included on the list.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need to balance the use of liquid fuels funding for street lighting and repaving projects.

Mr. Jones noted that an electric bill is generated monthly and must be paid immediately. He noted that it currently costs approximately \$700,000 per year for street lighting. He stated that more efficient lighting is installed during repair projects.

Mr. Sterner noted the need to stop paying for street lighting through liquid fuels funding. Mr. Jones noted his agreement stating that he requests street lighting be paid from the general fund when preparing his budget but that it is moved to liquid fuels during the budget process.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated her belief that it is important to use liquid fuels funding for street repaving. She noted the need to find other ways to finance the cost of street lighting. Mr. Jones stated that Council could implement a street light assessment based on the front footage of property. He stated that the average municipality assesses 50 cents per foot.

Mr. Sterner stated that the residents may not object to this assessment as there are tangible results.

Mr. Sterner questioned how/when the City would bill the assessment. Mr. Jones stated that most municipalities bill this assessment annually on their tax bill.

Mr. Marmarou noted his agreement with this assessment but stated that no action should be taken until the Act 47 recommendation report has been received.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that it should be policy for liquid fuels funding to be used for repaving projects.

Mr. Jones stated that he would like to add the following repaving projects to the initial list:

- N. 13th St – from Rockland to Pike
- Laurel St – From S. 5th – S. 9th
- Oley St – From N. 6th – N. 9th
- The 500 block of N. 8th St

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned the repaving of Cotton St. Mr. Jones indicated that UGI will be repaving one lane at the completion of their project.

Mr. Marmarou noted that similar problems may occur on 11th St where the Water Authority has begun a similar project.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if UGI had any other large projects planned. Mr. Jones stated that they will also be doing work on 11th St.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if there was an ordinance requiring utilities to make proper street repairs and/or repaving when projects are complete. Mr. Jones stated that this used to be policy and he is currently researching the issue. He will make a recommendation to Council.

Mr. Sterner noted the need to begin paving City streets.

Mr. Jones noted that Penn DOT will be repaving the following:

- 9th St – from Chestnut St – Hiester's Lane

- 11th St – from Franklin St – Penn St

He also noted that the City will begin working on:

- N. 6th St – from Amity – Hiester’s Lane
- Bern St – from N. 5th St – N. 6th St

These projects will be completed using federal highway earmark funding.

Note: In addition, the Reading Area Transportation Study has compiled a list of repaving projects in Reading in the event an additional round of Jobs Creation Funding becomes available.

These projects include:

- 6th St – from Chestnut St – Hiester’s Lane
- Penn St – from 2nd St – 11th St
- Bern St – Front St – 6th St
- Laurel St – 5th St – 9th St
- 9th St – from Laurel St – Bingaman St
- Exeter St – from Kutztown Rd – 13th St
- 8th St – from Kutztown Rd – Chestnut St
- Cotton St – from 9th St – 19th St
- 19th St – from Cotton St – Perkiomen Ave
- 11th St – from Chestnut St – Rockland St
- 10th St – from Chestnut St – Exeter St
- Buttonwood St – from Reading City Line – 6th St and Reading City Line – Tulpehocken St
- 15th St – from Cotton St – Perkiomen Ave
- Clymer St – from Perkiomen Ave – Hill Rd
- 13th St – from Hill Rd – Walnut St and Spring St - Rockland St
- Rockland St – from 11th St – 13th St
- Greenwich St – from Schuylkill Ave – Oley St
- Oley St – from Greenwich St – 13th St
- 7th St – from Laurel St – New Canal St
- New Canal St – from 7th St – Canal St
- Canal St – from New Canal St – Riverfront Dr
- 2nd St – from Riverfront Dr – Franklin St
- Franklin St – from 2nd St – Front St
- Front St – from Franklin St – Washington St, Walnut St – Green St, Green St – Windsor St - Cathedral St
- Cathedral St – from Front St – Centre Ave
- Windsor St – from Schuylkill Ave – 5th St
- College Ave – from Hampden Blvd - Bern St
- Bern St – from College Ave – 13th St
- Upland Ave – from Morgantown Rd – Reading City Line
- Museum Rd – from Reading City Line – Reading City Line
- Kenhorst Blvd – from SR 0222 – Museum Rd

- Hancock Blvd – from SR 0222 – Wyomissing Blvd
- Wyomissing Blvd – from Hancock Blvd – Wyomissing Blvd
- Parkside Dr – from Wyomissing Blvd – Museum Rd
- Hill Rd – from SR 2021 – Reading City Line
- River Rd – from SR 0012 – Reading City Line
- Fern Ave – from Morgantown Rd – Grace St
- Grace St – from Fern Ave – Lancaster Ave
- 3rd St – from Chestnut St – Walnut St
- 5th St – from Canal St – Laurel St
- Chestnut St – from 2nd St – 4th St

Egelman's Park

Mr. Jones indicated that the City had an agreement with an area resident for the past several years in which the resident would lock the gate in the evening and open it in the morning. He stated that the resident has become concerned with activities that are occurring at the park and no longer wishes to lock/unlock the gate. However, the activity has not been reported to the police. The resident recommended closing the park. The park will not be closed.

Mr. Marmarou questioned when the park was locked. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that parks close at sunset.

Mr. Marmarou suggested that the district police car lock/unlock the gates. Mr. Jones agreed with this suggestion and stated that he will discuss this with the Police Chief. He also noted that the officer can deal with any activity at the park at that time.

There was a discussion of the use of Egelman's baseball field.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that criteria be established for public/private partnerships. She stated her belief that if an area is used more, there will be fewer problems.

Mr. Jones stated that the Egelman baseball field agreement has expired and he will begin reviewing the agreement with the Law Department. Mr. Marmarou volunteered to assist with this review.

Pendora Park

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz explained the chronic problems with those using this baseball field parking on the street and not in the park parking area. She suggested that teams not using the parking area not be allowed continued use of the field.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if the spaces were legal spaces. Mr. Jones noted that they are.

Skateboard Park

Mr. Jones stated that the Park and Recreation Advisory Committee would like the skateboard park to be rehabilitated. He stated that staff is not aware of the amount this park is used as they are not on duty in the evenings and weekends. He stated that the use must be assessed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that it is used regularly.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that those who use the skateboard park should have input on the rehabilitation.

There was discussion on the history of the skateboard park.

Mr. Jones stated his position that he was not willing to fund the rehabilitation of the skateboard park at the expense of other rehabilitations which may have a higher priority. He stated that the cycle needs to begin again with rehabilitation of playgrounds that were done ten years ago.

Neversink Playground

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz complimented the Public Works Department with the work that has commenced to date.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that many people are using the quarry for target practice. She stated that she will be contacting the Conservancy regarding this very unsafe situation.

900 Penn St

Jon Haney of the Reading Parking Authority joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Haney stated that Pennsylvania Counseling Services has requested that the meters in the 900 block of Penn St be changed from one hour meters to two hour meters. The Parking Authority recommends keeping the meters at one hour to accommodate the other businesses in this block. He further stated that the new parking garage will be completed in August and clients of PA Counseling Services can use this or other area parking garages.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the sessions are longer than one hour. Mr. Haney stated that they are but that he would still recommend keeping the meters at one hour.

The Committee agreed to keep the meters at one hour.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned when the new garage would be completed. Mr. Haney stated that the Parking Authority is planning on its opening the end of August or beginning of September.

Residential Parking Permits

Mr. Haney stated that the signs posted in the 000 block of S 2nd St specify enforcement until 9 pm.

However, the ordinance sets the enforcement hours from 8 am – 6 pm. Due to staffing issues, enforcement cannot occur after 6 pm.

Mr. Haney stated that there are many problems in the area of RACC as students are on campus long after 6 pm and park in residential areas. Mr. Marmarou stated that this is also an issue in the Albright area.

Mr. Sterner questioned how the signs would be changed. Mr. Jones stated that the existing signs would be replaced with the current enforcement hours. He requested a copy of the spreadsheet noting the locations of the incorrect signs.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if there were any other parking issues which needed to be addressed at this time. Mr. Haney indicated that there were not.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that parking in East Reading is always problematic.

Mr. Marmarou described a problem with tractor trailers parking for the weekend. Mr. Haney stated that these violations are difficult to win at the District Justice office.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz questioned if the ordinance banning truck parking would apply. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that the problem area is not a residential or preservation zone.

Church parking was discussed.

Other Business

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that Council meet with PFM regarding issues for the Act 47 recovery plan. Mr. Jones stated that he worked with a team from PFM regarding public works issues.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted problems with Verizon phone lines in the City being very aged and in need of replacement. She questioned how the City could leverage their replacement. She noted that it would be in their best interest to replace the lines as they will begin losing customers.

The Public Works Committee adjourned at 6:26 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by
Shelly Katzenmoyer, Deputy City Clerk*