



# *CITY COUNCIL*

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## ***Public Works Committee***

***Monday, August 15, 2011***  
***Meeting Report***

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

**Others Attending:** V. Spencer, C. Geffken, C. Younger, C. Jones, T. McMahon

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz, Chair, called the Public Works Committee meeting to order.

### **Update Recreation Commission Re: Appointments**

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that three (3) interviews are being conducted this evening. She stated that Mike Schorn was appointed to represent the Administration. She noted the need for a total of eleven (11) members.

Ms. Kelleher noted the need for Council to appoint two (2) members representing City Council. Mr. Spencer suggested that the issue be discussed at the August 22<sup>nd</sup> COW meeting. Mr. Schorn noted the need for the Recreation Commission to hire an Executive Director and begin work on the list of recommendations that are included in the Summary Report drafted by the facilitator.

Ms. Reed noted that the City's partnership with the Reading School District and that the City's Act 47 status will enhance our ability to obtain grants from the DCNR.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that an initial grant application to cover the Executive Director's salary of \$70,000 per year over a four (4) year period (100% first year, 75% second year, 50% third year and 25% forth year) and that the grant application was already submitted to the DCNR.

### **Citadel Traffic**

Dennis Campbell, Principal at the Citadel arrived and described past consideration of traffic issues at the Citadel by the School Board and School Administration. He expressed the belief that the stop sign at the Walnut and North 12<sup>th</sup> Street intersection is needed to provide a safe crossing area for students coming to and leaving the building.

There was next a discussion on the need to add a bicycle zone at the school.

Mr. Spencer questioned how the District could build a school without considering its ability to provide an off-street bus loading area for students. He stated that the lack of planning has created a variety of traffic issues City-wide. He also noted the traffic obstructions created by the changes at the Citadel.

Mr. Campbell agreed but noted the need to consider student safety. Mr. Spencer questioned why student safety was not considered when the School was in its planning phases. Mr. Campbell noted his respect for that opinion and agreed with the need for improved planning around construction. He stated that when the Citadel was in the planning phase he was the Principal at Northwest Middle School, but now that he is the Principal of the Citadel he needs to address the student safety issues.

Mr. Sterner noted a variety of options that were discussed at prior Public Work Committee meetings.

Mr. Campbell stated that after discussions with the School Administration and School Board they are now considering a request to change the flow of traffic to Northern bound, rather than Southern bound. He stated that this request is based on the need to drop students off on the same side as the school.

Mr. Jones stated that the original plan allowed one-way traffic flowing north only; however the City requested two-way traffic to allow both north and south travel on this particular block of North 12<sup>th</sup> Street.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the concern expressed by those who reside near the school.

Mr. Campbell noted the need to provide some resolution as two-way traffic is too dangerous for students traversing across 12<sup>th</sup> Street. He stated that the District will consider traffic flow running south; however there is preference for northerly flow of traffic. He also requested designation of the school zone area.

Mr. Spencer agreed with the need to return the traffic to one-way South and require bus access via Elm Street.

Mr. Waltman arrived at this time.

Mr. Campbell stated that currently the District blocks northerly flowing traffic at the beginning and end of the school days. He noted the need to define a next step. Mr. Waltman noted that the community presented a petition to the City with approximately 400 citizen signatures who object to changing the flow of traffic to one-way north.

Mr. Sterner suggested that the School District consider designing a drop-off area on the athletic field. Mr. Campbell stated that the field is planned for athletic events; however, was not used last year due to seeding issues. The marching band was supposed to use the field this summer; however, rain disrupted that plan. He stated that the District also plans to conduct Middle School soccer and other outdoor activities on this field.

Mr. Waltman suggested a meeting with the surrounding community.

Mr. Spencer suggested a meeting with the Committee and the School Board followed by a meeting with community members. He stated that the City should be the party to conduct the party with citizens, as citizens brought this issue forward to Council.

### **Acquisition of Hillside Pool**

ReMax Realtor's Phil Macaronis and Randy Weidner arrived stating that they represent the Hillside Pool Association. Mr. Macaronis is a residential realtor and Mr. Weidner is a commercial realtor.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that the pool would be a great addition to the City's recreation resources.

Mr. Macaronis stated that the Association listed the pool for sale approximately three (3) years ago at \$480K. He noted the wide variety of commercial and residential projects considered for this parcel. He stated that originally the association hoped that the property could be sold for a continuation of the condo project located on North 14<sup>th</sup> Street; however the housing collapse disrupted that plan. He stated that he and Mr. Weidner are attempting to find the highest and best reuse for the parcel.

Mr. Macaronis stated that the property is currently listed at \$280K. He stated that the property is 2.6 acres. He stated that over the years the Association has been selling off components of the pool infrastructure to pay taxes and other bills. He stated that the assessment paired with the market ratio generates a sale price of \$272K.

Mr. Waltman noted the pool's key location adjacent to the Hillside playground. Mr. Sterner described the existing condition of the pool noting that many of the primary components that support the pool service have been sold off, including the copper tubing.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that the purchase of the pool should be considered by the Recreation Commission.

Ms. Kelleher inquired how motivated the Association is. Mr. Macaronis expressed the belief that they are now very motivated as they have to continue to meet various bills such as property taxes.

Ms. Reed questioned the rationale of taking this taxable property off the tax rolls.

**Ordinance Regulating Utilities in City Streets**

Mr. Jones stated that progress on this issue continues. He stated that they are currently addressing technical issues in this ordinance.

**Update Egelman's Park**

This issue was not discussed.

**Other**

Ms. Reed questioned if the Downtown Lighting Project, at a cost of \$250K, was reviewed by the Planning Commission. Mr. McMahon stated that the street lights have not been ordered but are only in the pricing phase. He stated that funding for the lighting project for the courtyard behind 645 Penn Street was obtained through Congressman Gerlach.

Mr. Jones stated that lights will be installed from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to 7<sup>th</sup> Street and 8<sup>th</sup> Street to 11<sup>th</sup> Street. The lights will be modeled in a manner similar to those that currently front the Sovereign Center. He stated that all lighting plans will be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

As no further business was brought forward, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by  
*Linda A. Kelleher, CMC City Clerk*