CITY COUNCIL
Standards of Living Committee

Monday, July 21, 2014
Meeting Report

Committee Members Attending: D. Sterner (Co-Chair), C. Daubert (Co-Chair)

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, L. Olsen, R. Johnson, C. Snyder

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by Mr. Sterner.

I. Review Administrative Reports

No reports were received or reviewed.

Ms. Snyder stated that reports should be received by Council quarterly.

Mr. Sterner and Mr. Daubert stated that they are not receiving any administrative reports. Ms. Snyder stated that she will follow up with department directors.

Mr. Sterner requested that this heading be removed from the agenda and that reports will be discussed as needed.

II. Update City of Reading Guidebook

Ms. Snyder stated that minor changes were needed before the guidebook was sent to the printer. She stated that there was a slight delay as Maritza and the printer were on vacation. She stated that the printing is now in process.

Mr. Daubert questioned how long this project has been pending. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that it has been two years. Ms. Snyder agreed but stated that the project was not active the entire time.

Mr. Sterner questioned how the guidebooks would be distributed. Ms. Snyder stated that they will be available at the main library, local colleges, the Council office, other City Hall locations, the City website and will be included in welcome packets.

Mr. Lloyd arrived at this time.

Mr. Daubert also suggested distributing them to neighborhood and community groups. He questioned if Mr. Corcoran's name would appear in the guidebook since the printing has taken so long. Ms. Katzenmoyer and Ms. Snyder explained that this type of information was removed to prevent the need for constant revisions.

III. ADA Transition Plan

Mr. Olsen stated that he has been working with Ms. Butler and Mr. Johnson on the ADA Transition Plan. He stated that a draft report is almost complete and that the plan will need Council approval. He stated that Great Valley Associates began the study of all City facilities in 2013.

The study found that City Hall and the City Park concession stand are ranked good (need the least work to get into compliance), the 3rd and Spruce Rec Center, 11th and Pike Rec Center, the northeast library and the southeast library are ranked fair and that all field houses, the Liberty Firehouse, the northwest library and the Pagoda are ranked poor and need the most work.

Mr. Olsen stated that Burkey construction supplied the cost estimates for the work and that it would be completed over a twenty year time period. He stated that initially the per year cost would have been $100,000 but that this does not include all the needed curb ramps. He stated that curbs must be addressed and that there are approximately 758 at a cost of $5,400 each.

Ms. Snyder left the meeting at this time.

Mr. Olsen stated that the curbs increase the cost and that each ward that needs replacement curbs will take four years.

Mr. Sterner questioned possible grant sources for this work. Mr. Olsen stated that he is not aware of any grants available for the work. Mr. Johnson stated that he has reviewed the grants issue with Ms. DeGroote and that it is his belief that the curbs that were

replaced used CDBG funding and that those not replaced do not quality for CDBG funding and the project did not move forward.

Mr. Daubert questioned how to determine which wards to address first. Mr. Olsen suggested that it either be random or that the ward with the most curb replacements needed be done first.

Mr. Olsen suggested that the improvements needed at City Hall ($15,000), the City Park concession stand ($1,000), and the 3rd and Spruce Rec Center ($130,000) are low hanging fruit and should be addressed first. He stated that the Pagoda is at the other end of the scale and that improvements there are estimated at $750,000.

Mr. Olsen stated that since the Pagoda is on the national register of historic places it may be possible to get an exception and stated that the installation of remote cameras to experience the view of each floor may be substituted.

Mr. Olsen stated that the highest cost item is the ramps at $4.1 million. He stated that with fees and inflation the total cost over twenty years will be approximately $7.1 million - $356,000 annually.

Mr. Olsen stated that the plan has been reviewed by Abilities in Motion and that they disagree with the plan. He stated that a grievance policy has been added to the plan by Ms. Butler.

Mr. Olsen stated that he should have the draft plan completed in several days.

Mr. Daubert expressed the belief that projects with the greatest impact on the highest number of people should be addressed first.

Mr. Olsen stated that Mr. Johnson has been receiving complaints from residents who cannot travel their neighborhoods because there are no ramps. He noted the need for the City to inform residents about the improvements and the timelines. He stated that he welcomes comments from Council about the plan.

There was a discussion about the Liberty Fire Museum, the viability of a museum and the amount of work needed at this location.

Mr. Sterner noted the need to prioritize projects. He stated that this is an unfunded federal mandate and expressed the belief that funding sources should be fully investigated. Mr. Johnson stated that he is searching for funding sources but that he has been unsuccessful. He stated that ADA compliance should have been completed by 1993.

Mr. Daubert expressed the belief that the wheelchair bound are struggling. Mr. Johnson stated that if he receives calls he will move that neighborhood up as a priority for ramps.

Mr. Sterner questioned the next steps. Mr. Olsen stated that he will complete the report, the 20 year plan and its cost and prioritize projects.

Mr. Sterner questioned who makes the final decision on projects. Mr. Johnson stated that he would make the final determination. He stated that he has included $381,000 in his 2015 draft budget to move forward with year one.

IV. Installation of Natural Gas Regulating Station at 14th & Green Sts

Mr. Sterner stated that he met with Ms. Hoag at this location. He stated that he suspects that she is continuing negotiations with UGI. Mr. Johnson stated that she and Mr. Younger are drafting an agreement. He stated that UGI hopes the project can be completed before winter.

Mr. Sterner stated that it is hoped that UGI will fund improvements to the field house and landscaping around the station. He stated that the location is at the end of the driveway and is very muddy during rains. He expressed the belief that this is the first of many of these types of stations that will be installed throughout the City. He noted the need for each location to have an agreement.

Mr. Sterner requested that this topic be moved into the Updates section of the agenda.

V. Updates

- Wyomissing Park Street Lighting

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that the bid opening for this project is scheduled for Thursday, July 24. Mr. Johnson stated that the intent is to reuse the underground conduits.

- Truck Parking

Mr. Johnson stated that he has contacted the Parking Authority and that they will monitor the problem areas.

- UGI Meter Replacement

Mr. Johnson showed a photo of a meter relocation in the Philadelphia area. The photo shows the meter at the end of a patio at the beginning of the lawn area.

- Trade Code Updates for new language re PVC versus copper piping

Mr. Sterner questioned if there was any forward movement on this item. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she will check with Ms. Snyder. She stated that it would need to be the plumbing and electrical codes.

Mr. Lloyd stated that requiring copper piping discourages improvements to properties.

- Pagoda MOU

Mr. Lloyd stated that Council must approve the resolution before the MOU can be signed. He stated that the administration does not perform public signing sessions and that this is the only point of disagreement.

Mr. Sterner stated that the agreement can be signed during (or right after) the meeting without it being a staged public signing. Mr. Lloyd stated that the administration does not agree with this point.

Mr. Sterner and Mr. Daubert noted their willingness to move forward without the need for a public signing as long as Mr. Spencer signs the agreement with no further delays.

Mr. Sterner stated that he will speak with Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz about the issue.

Mr. Daubert suggested that this point be removed from the MOU and that the issue move forward.

Mr. Lloyd suggested that it be added to Council's regular meeting agenda. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she will check with Ms. Snyder.

- Snow Emergency Plan and Snow Removal

Mr. Johnson stated that he will be working on this item before bad weather hits. He explained that he currently has approximately 500 open projects and that he is doing his

best to prioritize them. He stated that the list is overwhelming at times but that he is making progress.

VI. Former Market location on S 6th St

Mr. Daubert reported that the weeds on this vacant lot are approximately 6 feet tall. Ms. Katzenmoyer expressed the belief that this lot is owned by the Redevelopment Authority. Mr. Johnson stated that he will follow up.

VII. Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Lloyd requested that this topic be added to the August agenda for discussion. He stated that he is working on a complete streets strategy to include in the comprehensive plan and would like Council to approve the strategy before it is added to the plan. He explained that the strategy makes streets safer for autos, bikes and people.

Mr. Sterner suggested that Mr. Lloyd speak with Ms. Snyder about moving this issue forward. Mr. Lloyd noted his hope that Council would pass a resolution supporting complete streets and that grant funding would be available.

Mr. Johnson stated that Mr. Lloyd has shared this information with him and that it is an exciting program. He stated that he supports the strategy.

Mr. Daubert stated that people lose their lives on streets. Mr. Lloyd stated that the strategy would work to decrease the lives lost through better design.

VIII. Municipal Equality Index

Mr. Lloyd stated that this report was well received by the pride community. He stated that the administration is looking for small but measurable ways to market Reading.

The meeting adjourned at 7:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Shelly Katzenmoyer
Deputy City Clerk