

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

**MARCH 12, 2025**

The Borough of West Reading Traffic & Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall with the following persons present: Chairman Christopher Lincoln; Council Member Patrick Kaag; Chief of Police Richard Tornielli; Public Works Director Kerry Grassley; Fire Chief and Code Department Manager Chad Moyer; Borough Manager Randall Miller; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira. Mayor Samantha Kaag was unable to attend.

**Visitors:**

Karen Livingood, Resident  
Michael Witmyer, Resident  
Jean Witmer, Resident  
Susan Probst, Business Owner  
John Gantowski, Resident

James Rogers, Resident  
Samuel Goldberg, Resident  
Massimo Grande, Business Owner  
Tony Grimm, Property Owner  
Christina Shenk, Resident & Business Owner

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

**Public Comment**

Mr. Goldberg thanked the committee for the implementation of additional pedestrian safety measures at North Fourth and Reading Avenues. Mr. Goldberg spoke of ongoing pedestrian crossing issues at the intersection of Penn and Third Avenues and urged additional police presence at this intersection. There are multiple pedestrian safety issues that he has experienced along Penn Avenue at the intersections of Second through Fourth Avenues such as speeding, illegal turns, and failure to observe or yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk. Mr. Lincoln shared feedback from PennDOT on pedestrian safety improvements that recommended installation of a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB), which could be funded through grant opportunities. Mr. Goldberg indicated that there are no pedestrian crossing signs posted at this intersection. Mr. Lincoln indicated that these signs could be installed in short order. Chief Tornielli noted a presentation planned later tonight on pedestrian safety and indicated a level of high activity for his department at a number of intersections, including Third and Penn Avenues as the third highest concentration of traffic enforcement operations within the borough. Mr. Golberg noted a number of years that he has been crossing Penn Avenue and has never seen police presence at this intersection.

Mr. Grande inquired about the possible addition of a parking space along North Seventh Avenue near Penn Avenue. Mr. Grassley noted a 20-minute parking space on the west side of North Seventh Avenue that is 29' long. He recommended restriping the area to create an extra parking space while maintaining a safe distance from the traffic signal loop. An experimental period was recommended to determine interference with the traffic signal loop and turning radius. The designation of a 3-hour or 20-minute space was discussed and decided to keep uniformity with an existing adjacent 20-minute parking space.

Motion to recommend the addition of a parking space on North Seventh Avenue between Penn Avenue and Court Street on the west side to be designated as a 20-minute parking space adjacent to an existing single 20-minute parking space. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Grassley. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Witmyer reported two large potholes on Cashmere Way. Mr. Grassley shared that repairs are needed to the cold patch vehicle and plans to borrow the Borough of Wyomissing's vehicle to address these issues in the near future. Mr. Witmyer also shared an area in front of his house in need of patching.

Ms. Sherk shared the following comments, provided in part through a business owner's feed on Instagram:

1. A report of one handicapped parking and four 20-minute designations within the 600 block of Penn Avenue seemed excessive. The area will be reviewed to ensure that there are only two 20-minute parking spaces in this block, one on each side.
2. Parking within the lines was recommended to have some leniency for small infractions and a recommendation was made to post signs that alert visitors to the requirement of parking between the lines. Also, a reduction to the \$50 fine was suggested. Mr. Kaag noted a conference discussion that he attend recommending fines to be painful to avoid future violations.
3. Sufficient parking is a problem throughout the borough and a concern for business owners.
4. Police presence seems to be nonexistent and is a concern for residents and businesses alike.
5. Communication by the Parking Enforcement Officer was requested as a courtesy to work with customers. The appearance of selective enforcement was noted where a truck and trailer are parked blocking the view of businesses within the 400 block of Penn Avenue. It was noted that he used to park on Cherry Street but no longer does so because of parking fines.
6. Driveway or garage access on-street parking violations were discussed. Chief Tornielli shared the importance of being consistent in enforcement efforts and the need to break the 30-year cycle of selective enforcement that has recently come to a head. Placing a moratorium on enforcement would prevent the ability to enforce instances of parking in front of the driveway to the emergency room at the hospital. Dr. Probst noted the necessity of her ability to leave her office on Penn Avenue several times per day to visit the hospital and the long-standing agreement that she could park in front of her four garages. When asked if she could park in the garage, it was thought the garages were too small, and it was too dangerous to back onto Eighth Avenue.

Mr. Rogers reported that the newly created parking spaces on Chestnut Street near Sixth Avenue are being used. He again recommended creating additional spaces on the south side of Chestnut Street near Fifth Avenue adjacent to Borough Hall. Mr. Lincoln noted a photo taken by Mr. Grassley that depicted vehicles parked on both sides of Chestnut Street and the too narrow appearance of supporting the flow of two lanes of traffic. He also recommended additional parking spaces within the 400 block of Chestnut Street near Fifth Avenue, dual use of the loading zone on North Sixth Avenue, the triangle near Sunset Road and Third Avenue, and parking on Cherry Street in the 500 and 600 blocks. He also reported streetlights that are out on the 100 block of Chestnut Street and Third and Penn Avenue.

Mr. Gantowski noted that he resides on the corner of Sycamore Road and Fifth Avenue and recently received a ticket for parking in a permit parking area without a permit. He visited the police station and was told that because his address is Sycamore Road, he could not apply for a parking permit on Fifth Avenue. It was noted that approximately twenty spaces in that vicinity are not used during the day. The permit parking program as a whole is in need of modifications; however, it was thought that this portion of Fifth Avenue could be removed from the permit parking program to benefit residents in the area.

Motion to remove the permit parking designation on South Fifth Avenue between Sycamore Road and Sunset Road. **Moved** by Chief Tornielli and seconded by Mr. Grassley. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Grassley spoke of additional parking along Tulpehocken Avenue by creating false curbing and restriping that would be setback 30' from the crosswalk. The spaces would coincide with existing time limit parking restrictions of three hours; therefore no ordinance amendment would be needed.

Motion to recommend the addition of parking spaces as applicable on the west side of Tulpehocken Avenue between Penn Avenue and the Traffic Circle as well as on Penn Avenue in front of the existing access drive in front of the gas station property. **Moved** by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Grassley. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Ms. Witmer departed the meeting at 6:54 p.m.

Mr. Rogers noted the absence of a handicapped ramp at the intersection of Second Avenue and Cherry Street.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of February 12, 2025. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Chief Tornielli. **Motion carried 5-0.**

### **New Business**

**Penn Avenue Pedestrian Crossings** – Chief Tornielli reviewed his presentation on Pedestrian Safety that focus' on Penn Avenue noting one pedestrian accident a few weeks ago injuring two individuals and one near miss this past weekend, both within the Seventh Avenue intersection. In both instances there was improper pedestrian behavior by crossing against the pedestrian signal. The instance this past weekend was a vehicle that ran through a red light, where the pedestrian was able to get out of the way. Camera footage enabled the department to file charges. A data driven approach is used to concentrate efforts of proactive enforcement to limit crime and improve traffic safety. The highest concentration of activity is on Buttonwood Street and the second highest concentration is on Third and Penn Avenue.

Pedestrian crash history over the last three years resulted in seventeen incidents. The borough is unique in that there is a high concentration of vehicle and pedestrian traffic which can prove to be problematic. A breakdown of instances along Penn Avenue during the three-year period was one on Fourth, Fifth and Seventh Avenues and two on Sixth Avenue. Sixth Avenue is a difficult intersection to monitor discreetly. The department does try to maintain a presence throughout the borough.

Mr. Goldberg inquired about Third and Penn Avenue statistics. Chief Tornielli reported eighteen incidents along Penn Avenue this past week with the highest concentration on Third Avenue. Targeted patrols are directed on certain days and times based on data to make the best use of limited staff. It was noted that 1,000 calls for service are received by the department each month and 11,000 cars travel Penn Avenue every day.

Mr. Goldberg does not recall seeing police presence at Third and Penn Avenue and asked what he could do to meet with a plain-clothed officer. Chief Tornielli recognizes the need for human experience and welcomes calls to the office to generate more data and offered to join Mr. Goldberg to experience crossing Penn Avenue at Third Avenue.

Dr. Probst, Mr. Grimm and Mr. Goldberg departed the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

**Municipal Parking Lot** – Mr. Miller spoke of the four-hour parking limit within the municipal lot along Franklin Street and the need to clear out four abandoned vehicles recently. He referred to a parking study performed in 2015 that projected a deficit of over 300 parking spaces per day in the Penn Avenue twelve block corridor by the year 2025. At the time there wasn't an agreement with the shopping center parking lot owner. The question arose recently regarding the need for employee parking. Ms. Shenk recommended a permit system offered to restaurants for a fee. Privately owned parking lots along Penn Avenue were recommended within the parking study to be explored as meter parking opportunities.

Ms. Shenk suggested increasing the time limit from four hours to six hours to accommodate evening staff schedules.

Mr. Moyer spoke of an exception created by Borough Council in the Central Business District that does not require the establishment of off-street parking to support staff and residential parking needs that allow former row-home type structures to be converted into commercial uses which have allowed the business district to grow and flourish. This of course comes at a cost for residents and businesses alike.

Mr. Massimo recommended a night of free parking in the shopping center lot to entice patrons to local businesses and someone to assist older visitors with installing and using the app.

Chief Tornielli recommended an experimental period of enforcing parking within the municipal lot during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to allow evening staff and residents to use the lot between the hours of 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., which would continue to allow enforcement of abandoned vehicles.

Motion to amend the parking restrictions within the municipal parking lot on Franklin Street from four-hours in a twenty-four-hour period to four-hours between 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. **Moved** by Chief Tornielli and seconded by Mr. Grassley. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Grande departed the meeting at 7:54 p.m.

**Towing Contract** – Chief Tornielli indicated that information is still being gathered from local towing companies for a comparison assessment.

## **Old Business**

**Experimental Parking Regulations Update** – Mr. Grassley reported that additional parking has been established on the 500 block of Chestnut Street and the addition of a 3-hour parking space and conversion of a 20-minute parking space to a 3-hour parking space on North Fifth Avenue has been implemented. Legacy Cigar Lounge indicated their deliveries arrive early in the morning and were pleased with the recommended parking revision on North Sixth Avenue that converts a portion of the existing loading zone into additional parking spaces and limits the loading zone to weekday hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to allow evening and overnight parking opportunities. The creation of three additional parking spaces was appreciated by neighboring businesses and the committee was in favor of these experimental regulations.

**Wayne Avenue and Lakeview Drive Intersection** – Mr. Lincoln reported that the report from the Pennsylvania Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) arrived late this afternoon. This will be reviewed for discussion next month.

**Kline Street and Second Avenue Stop Intersection** – Mr. Lincoln provided stop sign placement parameters for this narrow roadway. A 24" sign can be placed on the pole shared with the street sign; a stop bar is needed 4' behind the crosswalk which should fall before the first parking stall. A supplemental stop sign can be placed on the left side near the utility pole. A minimum of 7' clearance from the ground is required.

**Handicapped Parking Space Application and Policy** – A business requested handicapped parking space precipitated a business policy. The residential policy proposes a change to the review and adoption timeframes to March, June, September and December to align with the annual renewal process. Mr. Lincoln reviewed the parameters of the business policy that is reviewed at the same times of the year as residential applications. The number of business requested spaces may not exceed one per block and

would not preclude the number of maximum residential designations. The space is open to any person with a placard and would adhere to time limit restrictions.

Motion to recommend approval of a business requested accessible parking space policy. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Grassley. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Motion to recommend approval of a revision to the residential accessible parking space policy. **Moved** by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Grassley. **Motion carried 5-0.**

**Delaney Circle Update** – Mr. Miller shared thoughts on creating parking on the outer edge of the traffic circle allowing traffic to flow towards the inner circle increasing line of sight visibilities from the approaches to the circle. The sidewalk through the circle would be removed to implement a stormwater remediation zone. Mr. Lincoln expressed his thoughts with six streets intersecting the circle, pedestrians on every approach that is challenging to cross while adding parking maneuvers in a circular roadway. There were three areas around the circle that were proposed to yield ten additional parking spaces with additional parking opportunities on Buttonwood Street. The engineer will be requested to map these changes for review next month since paving is planned this spring.

**Motorcycle / Compact Car Parking** – Mr. Miller discussed the idea of establishing shortened stalls in each block of Penn Avenue for the purpose of establishing compact car parking, and to allow motorcycles to use said stalls to park more than one at such locations. The Chairman requested Mr. Miller to draft changes to the ordinance inclusive of identifying which subsection to insert amending language.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Rogers asked if the new 20-minute parking space along North Seventh Avenue is designated for certain hours or all day.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Chief Tornielli. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira  
Borough Secretary