

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

MARCH 11, 2026

The Borough of West Reading Traffic & Infrastructure Committee met on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, 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; Borough Manager Randall Miller; and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira. Mayor Samantha Kaag was unable to attend.

Visitors:

James Rogers, Resident

Karen Livingood, Resident

Maureen Hasty, Resident

Michael & Helen Witmyer, Residents

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

Public Comment

Mr. Rogers spoke of his review of parking spaces on the north side of Penn Avenue between Fifth and Tulpehocken Avenue with Mr. Grassley earlier this week. Mr. Rogers recommended shrinking the length of parking spaces to 18' to add three additional parking spaces. He also recommended designating handicapped parking spaces on the north and south corners of Penn Avenue, noting that they will not always be in use and that, when not in use, they would expand the line of sight. Mr. Grassley recommended seven 20' parking spaces while removing the hash marks at the Fifth and Penn Avenue intersection. Mr. Lincoln recommended reviewing the traffic signal permit prior to removing the striping.

Mr. Rogers inquired about the allowance of left turns at the Fifth and Penn Avenue intersection. Mr. Lincoln noted that a designated left-turn lane would not be supported and would therefore delay vehicles traveling straight through the intersection. Mr. Grassley spoke of an intersection in the City of Reading with a no-left-turn light that is activated according to conditions and times. Mr. Lincoln noted difficulties in enforcement.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the Traffic and Infrastructure Committee minutes of January 14, 2026. **Moved** by Mr. Grassley and seconded by Chief Tornielli. **Motion carried 5-0.**

New Business

Met-Ed LED Streetlight Conversion Program – Mr. Lincoln spoke of a charge on Met-Ed electric bills over the past year for converting streetlights to more efficient LED lighting. There will be savings on municipal streetlight electricity bills following the conversion program, which is proposed to be completed by 2029. The LED lights will be a whiter tone, similar to the fixtures around the Reading Hospital campus. Mr. Grassley noted that the Playground Drive streetlights have been converted, which can serve as an example of lighting in a residential neighborhood.

2026 Road Paving Projects – Mr. Grassley shared the list of roadways budgeted for paving this year: Parkview Road, 200 Block of South Second Avenue, 000 Blocks of North and South Sixth Avenue, 400 Block of Reading Avenue, 700 Block of Court Street, and Cowboy Alley, which is located between Seventh Avenue and Lakeview Drive and Spruce Street and Wayne Avenue. Striping of Delaney Circle has also been budgeted, which will provide striping in the center, pushing traffic to the outer edge to slow vehicular traffic and provide a turning lane onto Fifth Avenue.

Expansion of the Permit Parking Program to the 100 Block of South Fifth Avenue – The addition of the 100 Block of South Fifth Avenue was proposed to include these residents in the expanded permit parking program. This would allow parking on the adjacent permit parking streets on Chestnut Street and South Sixth Avenue. It was noted that there are only five parking spaces in this block.

Motion to recommend Borough Council approve the inclusion of the 100 Block of South Fifth Avenue, between Franklin Street and Grape Street, in the expanded residential permit parking program. **Moved** by Chief Torielli and seconded by Mr. Miller. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Handicapped Person & Time-Limit Parking Revisions – Following the annual renewal process for handicapped parking designations, it was noted that four designations could be removed, and two new applications were received. The new applications were for the 300 Block of Chestnut Street and the 600 Block of Franklin Street. It was noted that the Chestnut Street applicant requested a designation on the 200 Block of South Fourth Avenue. The spaces to be removed were within the 300 Block of Chestnut Street, the 300 Block of Summit Street, the 400 Block of Franklin Street, and the 400 Block of Chestnut Street.

Motion to recommend Borough Council approve the addition of handicapped parking spaces as the applicants requested. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Grassley. **Motion carried 5-0.**

An update is needed for the time-limit parking section to remove the duplicate regulations on North Fifth Avenue.

Motion to remove the twenty-minute parking at all times designation on North Fifth Avenue between Penn Avenue and Court Street. **Moved** by Mr. Grassley and seconded by Chief Torielli. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Third and Penn Avenue Rapid Flashing Beacon – Mr. Grassley spoke of another multimodal grant opportunity to install rapid-flashing beacons to improve pedestrian safety at this intersection. It was noted that the WalkWorks meeting discussion recommended retaining both crosswalks across Penn Avenue and installing overhead mast arms.

Motion to recommend Borough Council apply for a multimodal grant for the installation of rectangular rapid flashing beacons at the intersection of Third and Penn Avenue. **Moved** by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Grassley. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Reading Gateway Bridge Project – Mr. Miller stated that our office was contacted for assistance in transforming this bridge. The Schuylkill River Greenways (SRG) manages and owns parts of the Schuylkill River Trail. The Reading Gateway Bridge is an old railroad bridge owned by the county that needs renovation. The SRG is seeking agencies or municipalities to apply for grant funding. It was noted that the bridge is outside the borough. The county is applying for grant funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. It was unclear if the borough could apply for funding when the project is located outside of the borough's jurisdiction. Mr. Miller will follow up to ensure we are a qualified organization. Letters of support have been provided to SRG.

Old Business

Traffic Calming – 700 Block Cherry Street – Mr. Grassley noted plans to meet with an LTAP representative in the first week of April to set up traffic data-collection equipment on this block and on Penn Avenue. It was recommended that funds be allocated to purchase data-collection equipment.

433 Penn Avenue Paid Parking Update – Mr. Miller reported that the ParkMobile signs have not yet been received, but it appears they may have been fully reorganized and should arrive soon. The parking lot is currently open for use at no charge. When the signs are received, the fee will match the shopping center parking lot fees.

Privately Owned Parking Lot Paid Use Agreement Update

- **Gage Personnel Parking Lot** – A notice to proceed has been issued to the engineer to design stairway access from Reading Avenue to the Gage Personnel parking lot. Mr. Miller noted a request to the engineer to review precast options for cost savings.
- **Shopping Center Parking Lot** – Mr. Miller noted some additional changes to paid parking spaces and designated times. The old Legacy Cigar Lounge is being converted into three retail spaces with access to one of the stores from North Sixth Avenue. The old Rite Aid building is close to being leased to a tenant for a ten-year term. A net gain of ten paid parking spaces is now planned.

Fifth Avenue & Pine Street Pedestrian Crossing – Mr. Lincoln shared the news of grant funding awarded to install a rapid flashing beacon at this intersection to alert vehicles to a pedestrian waiting to cross. The engineer is preparing the cost proposal for the design work and permitting. Flashing signals must be permitted by PennDOT. Once plans are approved, the project will move to construction. The anticipated timeframe for operation is the end of this year or the spring of next year.

Municipal Trash Collection Service for Business Update – There were no updates available from the solicitor’s office. Discussions were tabled at this time.

Potential List of Parking Space Review – The identified areas for additional parking spaces will be striped when the weather permits. Mr. Rogers asked to consider measuring parking spaces on North and South Sixth Avenue following the paving project to potentially create additional parking spaces before restriping. He also suggested adding a handicapped parking space to North Sixth Avenue. A review of the loading zone needs and associated ordinance modifications was suggested by Mr. Grassley.

Public Comment

Mr. Rogers stated that West Reading Borough should take an interest in helping development along the river to increase foot traffic.

Mrs. Hasty inquired about the timing of the 422-bypass project. The latest prediction is 2027, beginning at Buttonwood Street. The duration of the project is eight to ten years. Two lanes of traffic in both directions will be maintained during the project.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 p.m. by Chief Tornielli and seconded by Mr. Kaag.

Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary