

Handicap Egress Ramp/Stair Right-of-Way Agreement that has been signed by the owner of the property. The agreement includes the cost and expense of constructing, maintaining, and removing the ramps on the property owner, as well as indemnification of the borough. Concerns were expressed last month regarding the ramp encroachment on the sidewalk and the tree pit. Updated plans show a decrease in ramp width from 5 feet to 4 feet. Mr. Moyer provided images showing the proposed distances at which the ramps will encroach on the public sidewalk, noting two inches beyond the existing flower beds for the ramp and a level turning-radius landing of five feet six inches that will encroach on the sidewalk by roughly one foot. One ramp will cut back in before the tree pit; the other two ramps are near street signposts, which provide more room than the tree pit. Ramp heights are roughly 1 foot 2 inches, with a 36-inch-high handrail. Existing sidewalk panels will be saw-cut to accommodate the width of the ramps that will be poured with a frost footer. Mr. Moyer noted that the commercial building inspector has reviewed and approved the revised plans as compliant with code and accessibility standards.

Motion to recommend Borough Council enter into a Right-of-Way agreement with Back 9 Realty, LLC, property owner of 559 Penn Avenue, and approve the construction of three ADA ramps on North Sixth Avenue. **Moved** by Mr. Grassley and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Ciatto departed the meeting at 6:14 p.m.

Traffic Calming – 700 Block Cherry Street – An LTAP traffic study found that the 85th-percentile speed was 18 miles per hour. The highest speed in one direction was 20 to 25 miles per hour, and in the other direction, 25 to 30 miles per hour. Total daily traffic counts were under 300 vehicles. Chief Tornielli will share this information with representatives of Sacred Heart School. No further action was taken at this time.

Mr. Lincoln noted receipt of a traffic study of the Third and Penn Avenue intersection that will be discussed in more detail next month. A brief review appears to be a recommendation similar to in-house discussions.

433 Penn Avenue Paid Parking Update – Mr. Miller noted a strongly worded email and a phone call placed this past month that have received no response to a request for new zone signage for this property. Mr. Lincoln noted two zones listed in the ParkMobile App. The shopping center lot is 73501, the 433 Penn Avenue site is 73502 and 73503. It was recommended to have only one zone for 433 Penn Avenue and to use the odd number 73503.

Privately Owned Parking Lot Paid Use Agreement Update

- **Gage Personnel Parking Lot** – Based on the property owner's concern about a steep stairway, the engineer has recommended amending the previously approved proposal for an additional \$1,000 for an ADA ramp scenario. Mr. Grassley spoke with Mr. Gage earlier today, who was agreeable to a step-landing-step-type of graduated crossing over this steep grade. It was noted that the previous engineer's proposal was \$2,000.

Motion to recommend Borough Council amend the January 20, 2026, Systems Design Engineering, Inc., approved design proposal to include an additional \$1,000 for a stairway-landing-type crossing from the Gage Personnel parking lot to the Reading Avenue sidewalk.

Moved by Mr. Grassley and seconded by Mr. Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

North Seventh Avenue Experimental Parking Update – Mr. Grassley indicated that the lines have not been painted yet on the 100 Block of North Seventh Avenue. He spoke with Mr. Gage about the

proposed changes, who thought this would be beneficial in deterring illegal parking during payday timeframes. The lines should be painted within the month.

New Business

Event, Construction, and Emergency Road Closure Policies – Mr. Lincoln noted that in 2023, Borough Council introduced a policy via resolution for street closures due to last-minute utility company road closures that were not always brought to the borough's attention. Larger events along Penn Avenue and elsewhere have a Special Event Committee that meets monthly to review applications.

Mayor Kaag stated that a previous mayor, Shane Keller, implemented a policy twenty years ago requiring the mayor's approval for street closures to streamline the process. Borough Code specifies that Borough Council approves event road closures. Mayor Kaag thought it would be beneficial to find a middle ground to avoid the need for Borough Council to conduct emergency meetings to approve or deny applications. Mayor Kaag referred to Resolution 2023-22 Road Closure Request Policy, which doesn't specify who approves road closure requests, and suggested a more streamlined review and approval process rather than reverting to an outdated Borough Code.

Mr. Moyer referred to Chapter 430-3, Temporary and emergency regulations, which authorize the mayor to temporarily regulate traffic and parking during emergencies. And 430-5 Traffic on streets closed or restricted for construction, maintenance, or special events, which designates Council as having the authority to close any street to vehicular traffic.

Chief Tornielli reported that 95% of the time, construction activity requiring either parking restrictions or road-closure requests comes through the police department, allowing both forms to be filed at the same place. The process for reviewing these requests has been to upload the applications and provide a brief synopsis to the Borough Manager, Public Works Director, Fire Chief, and Mayor to determine whether there are any conflicts. This process has worked well in coordinating projects or expressing concerns. Block party-type applications are handled in the same manner.

Amendments to the ordinance defining the process were recommended for future staff and elected officials to follow. Chief Tornielli also offered to draft a no-parking sign and road-closure policy for their policy manual, which the mayor would have access to. It was noted that Resolution 2023-22 was to be converted to an ordinance for enforcement purposes.

Maureen Hasty joined the meeting at 6:53 p.m.

Mr. Lincoln was hesitant to grant a single elected official the power to close roadways without recourse. Because Borough Council meets once or maybe twice per month, it may not line up with needs. If it is at some level of staff, Borough Council would have oversight to address any issues that arise. Staff was requested to draft ordinance language to review next month.

Handicap Parking Application – A request has been received for the 300 Block of South Third Avenue. It was noted that there are four available handicapped parking spaces within this block. The requested space was at the corner of Third Avenue and Spruce Street, on the west side of the road. It was noted that this space would be visible and easily accessible to restaurant patrons. Chief Tornielli offered to share this concern with the applicant to potentially modify the designated parking space before the adoption of an ordinance amendment.

Motion to recommend Borough Council approve the designation of a handicapped parking space in the vicinity of the applicant on the 300 Block of South Third Avenue. **Moved** by Mr. Grassley and seconded by Mayor Kaag. **Motion carried 6-0.**

BusPatrol Update – Chief Tornielli shared that, at the end of April, 98 citations were approved for the year; 83 were approved last fall. The number of citations approved has declined from 37 in March to 15 in April. Hopefully, this trend will continue. There are three repeat offenders: two have two citations, and one has three.

Traffic Enforcement – There were 341 traffic checks where we've parked to observe traffic and haven't stopped anyone. Otherwise, 554 traffic stops and 676 traffic citations have been issued, along with 2,183 parking violations this year. Statistics are being reviewed as to where they're seeing crashes and DUIs. It was noted that a request will be presented to Borough Council this month to purchase a Black Cat II Radar kit that does traffic counts and records speeds. This device is less conspicuous, which helps to get more accurate speed readings.

Motion to recommend that Borough Council approve the purchase of two Black Cat II Radar Kits with a laptop for the Police and Public Works Departments. **Moved** by Mr. Grassley and seconded by Chief Tornielli. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Public Comment

Mrs. Hasty noted her attendance at a school board meeting tonight, where they discussed opening the refurbished elementary school playground to the public. She reported that it doesn't seem likely they will open the playground to the public due to recent vandalism. The superintendent suggested a key card system that residents could purchase for access. Mrs. Hasty inquired about providing a key card to the West Reading Police Department to host community outreach events. It was thought that the Recreation Department could host community outreach events. If interested, the borough would need to communicate with the school district.

Mr. Rogers again requested consideration of creating one or two parking spaces on Obold Street at Chestnut Street. Chief Moyer expressed concerns about the fire truck's ability to access this roadway given the current parking configuration. Coming off Chestnut Street in the wrong direction is the easiest way to access these homes. Creating parking in this vicinity would create a pinch point at both ends of the street.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m. by Mr. Kaag and seconded by Mr. Grassley.

Motion carried 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Madeira
Borough Secretary