

Town of University Park

Council Committee on Police, Traffic and Public Safety

November 10, 2015

7:00 PM

Conference Room

University Park Town Hall

6724 Baltimore Avenue

Present

Committee Members: Linda Verrill, Council Member, Ward 4; Michael Cron, Council Member, Ward 6; Joe Thompson, Council Member, Ward 1; James Gekas, Council Member, Ward 2; Roy Alvarez, Council Member Ward 7, Committee Chair

Guests: Lenford Carey, University Park Mayor; Michael Wynnyk, University Park Chief of Police; Brad Hess, Council Member, Ward 3; David Caskey, Council Member, Ward 5; Bryson Couvillon, Daniel Hoffacker, Shari Sanderson, Jan Johns, Diane Griffith, all Town Residents

Agenda

1. Request for Four Way Stop at Woodberry and College Heights

Several Town Residents expressed concern about the danger caused by the speed vehicles travel around the corner of Woodberry Street and College Heights Avenue. It was noted that there is limited visibility due to bushes near the roadway at the corner. It was also noted that school children waiting for a bus at the corner at 7:00 AM may be in danger from the vehicles making turns.

Chief Wynnyk agreed to discuss the visibility problem with Mickey Beall, Director of Public Works. If Chief Wynnyk and Mr. Beall find the bushes are impeding sight lines and that they are on Town property, the bushes will be trimmed or removed. Chief Wynnyk will observe or have his officers observe traffic at the corner to determine if there are alternatives to adding a stop sign to alleviate the problem. Chief Wynnyk will advise the Committee on possible alternatives and on how effective he believes a stop sign at that corner might be.

Chief Wynnyk volunteered to contact the Friends School to discuss the possibility of moving the bus stop to a safer location.

This item will be included for further discussion on the agenda for the next Police, Traffic and Public Safety Committee meeting.

2. Request for Speed Bump on Tennyson between 41st and the Park

Council Member Jim Gekas requested a speed bump be added in the block on Tennyson between 41st Avenue and the Town Park. This is a narrow, dead end street and residents believe many cars travel too fast for the conditions, thus endangering people and property.

Chief Wynnyk agreed to check the “no outlet” signage on the street to determine if a more prominent sign may be helpful to keep unintended traffic from the area.

The Committee Chair will investigate the estimated cost of a traffic study for that area, the estimated cost to install a temporary speed bump and the estimated cost to install a permanent speed bump on the street in question.

This item will be included on the agenda for the next Police, Traffic and Public Safety Committee meeting when the information and costs will be discussed.

3. Request for Parking Restrictions on “Upper” Queens Chapel

Council Member Brad Hess requested that parking be restricted to one side of the street on Queens Chapel Road between Baltimore Avenue and 44th Avenue. He stated that the street is three feet narrower in that area compared to the rest of Queens Chapel Road. He noted that when cars are parked on both sides of the street across from each other, it appears to be difficult, if not impossible for some emergency vehicles, such as fire trucks, to move through the area. He noted that several times school busses have not be able to move through the area without having cars moved.

Council Member David Caskey noted that that area of Queens Chapel Road is in the rear of his home and he has not encountered any problem with busses or emergency vehicles moving on the street. Another Town Resident who lives on Queens Chapel Road also noted that she did not see a need for the parking restrictions at this time.

It was decided that Council Member Hess would inform his neighbors to contact the Town Police when a school bus or emergency vehicle was unable to get through the area because of parked vehicles on that section of Queens Chapel. The Police will establish a record of occurrences over a given time period.

The Committee Chair expressed his concern that even one delay of an emergency vehicle would be a serious problem. Council Member Hess noted that the Hyattsville Fire Department would not comment publicly on the concern when they were asked to contact Town Hall.

The Chair will get an estimate for the cost of widening that section of Queens Chapel Road by three feet and report back to the Committee.

This item will be placed on the agenda for the next Police, Traffic and Public Safety Committee meeting for further discussion.

4. Early Morning Construction Noise on Baltimore Avenue

Council Member Hess expressed his concern about disturbance to Town Resident by the noise and disruption just east of University Park that has been caused by construction on Baltimore Avenue. He was particularly concerned about the recent problem with night work being done by Washington Gas that caused much consternation for residents in the area.

The Mayor explained that the Town had not been informed by Washington Gas that work was to be done in the evening on Baltimore Avenue. Washington Gas had been given direction and a permit by the State Highway Administration (SHA) to do the work at night to prevent traffic disruption during the day. The Mayor and other Town officials have since discussed the situation with SHA and the evening work has been curtailed.

Council Member Hess requested information about what Town Police could do if such a situation occurred again so he can inform Residents on how to respond to the problem. The Mayor suggested that Council Member Hess meet with the Chief of Police and the Town Attorney to discuss what legal actions the Town Police can take in such a situation and who Residents should contact if a similar incident occurs.

A Town Resident also noted how disruptive the Washington Gas work was and generally how annoying the construction in the area has been for her and her family.

5. Implementation of Security System Rebate Program

The Committee decided to table this item until the next Police, Traffic and Public Safety Committee meeting.

6. Update on Signage

The Chair has received estimates for Town signs from three vendors and estimates for proposed signage for the Town Hall from two vendors. The information will be given to the Mayor so that he, the Director of Public Works and the Treasurer can decide on the most appropriate vendor and signage for the Town. The Committee will follow the progress of Town signage and assist when requested.

7. Renewal of Contract for Traffic Camera at East-West Highway and Baltimore Avenue

(This item was added to the agenda at the meeting with no objection from the Committee Members)

The Town of University Park has had a contract with a company for a traffic camera at the corner of East-West Highway and Baltimore Avenue since 2008. Chief Wynnyk asked the Committee to support a bid override to continue the contract for another five year term. The Committee agreed to support a motion for a bid override request at the next Town Council meeting scheduled for Monday, November 16.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.