

Town of University Park

Council Committee on Police, Traffic and Public Safety

Wednesday, August 31, 2016

Conference Room

University Park Town Hall

6724 Baltimore Avenue

Present

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

Guests: Brad Hess, Council Member Ward 3; Michael Wynnyk, Chief of the University Park Police; Jenna Beveridge and Sharon Garrison, Residents of University Park; Lenford Carey, Mayor of University Park

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

Agenda

1. Discussion of Traffic Control on Van Buren Street Between Baltimore Avenue and 44th Avenue

Council Member Hess expressed the concern of several residents about traffic on Van Buren Street between Baltimore Avenue and 44th Avenue. The concerns include drivers running the stop sign at 44th Avenue, speeding and difficult turns into and out of Van Buren Street on to Baltimore Avenue.

Chief Wynnyk and Mayor Carey noted that there is an existing contract to do a comprehensive traffic study in University Park 90 to 120 days following the opening of the Whole Foods Market in Riverdale Park Station. The Committee decided that no additional traffic control measures should be implemented in this area until the traffic study is completed.

2. Discussion of Safety Concerns Related to Tree at 4409 Underwood Street

Sharon Garrison, resident on Underwood Street, discussed her concerns about the safety of a hickory tree at 4409 Underwood Street. She noted that a branch had fallen and injured a person visiting in the neighborhood. Ms. Garrison requested that the tree be removed.

Mayor Carey distributed copies of a letter from the Town Arborist, Mr. John Ana, which states the tree "exhibits no visual defects or anomalies" (see attached document)

Since the tree is part of current litigation, the Committee decided that it would not be prudent to make any recommendation at this time. The situation will be revisited by this committee when the legal issues are resolved.

3. Discussion of Preparations for Traffic Control in Ward 1 after the Opening of Riverdale Park Station
(Joe Thompson)

Council Member Thompson agrees that no traffic control interventions should be implemented in Ward 1 until after the comprehensive traffic survey is completed 90 to 120 days after the opening of the Whole Foods Market in Riverdale Park Station. However, his main concern is the intersection at Sheridan Street and Baltimore Avenue. He considers it a dangerous intersection because of poor sightlines on to Baltimore Avenue and the speed of traffic in the area. In addition, despite the “No Left Turn” sign on Sheridan Street, some drivers still make the dangerous left onto Baltimore Avenue. Council Member Thompson would like to close Sheridan Street at Baltimore Avenue to all traffic.

The Mayor, Chief of Police and the Committee agreed with Council Member Thompson’s assessment of the intersection as dangerous, regardless of the extra traffic that is likely to be generated by the opening of Riverdale Park Station. Therefore, the Committee decided that the Committee Chair should make a recommendation to the Town Council to request the Mayor and his staff (including the Police Chief and Town Attorney) to develop a plan for closing Sheridan Street at Baltimore Avenue and report the plan to this committee.

4. Demonstration and Discussion of Possible Uses of UP Police Department’s New Speed Control Sign
(Chief Wynnyk)

Chief Wynnyk demonstrated the capabilities of the new speed control sign. The sign has many options. It can collect data which is sent to a web address. It can take pictures of cars and it can be used with the speed display on or off. Chief Wynnyk displayed some of the data gathered and noted that the Town police are still learning the many functions of the signs and how to interpret the data. The website and log in were shared with Jenna Beveridge, resident of Van Buren Street, and with the Committee Chair. They will look at the data collected and assist with interpretation.

Chief Wynnyk noted that he plans to move the sign to approximately 15 different locations throughout the Town to assist with traffic control and to record data.

5. Old Business

a. Traffic on Van Buren Street Between 40th Avenue and Forest Hill Drive

Chief Wynnyk and Jenna Beveridge will look at the data from the speed sign to get information that will help determine what type of traffic control could be implemented. Data may indicate when most violations occur so that police officers can be deployed to the area at specific times.

b. Discussion of Need for Traffic Control on College Heights Drive Between 40th Avenue and Wells Parkway

Chief Wynnyk is collecting data on this section of College Heights Drive and will report back to the Committee to discuss the appropriate traffic control measures that may be needed in the area.

c. Update on Town Sidewalk Needs Survey

The Committee Chair has been working with Council Member David Caskey of Ward 5 on a method to survey the residents of Clagett-Pineway concerning the need for sidewalks in that section of Town and how best to make the area safer for pedestrians and motorists.

The Committee Chair will also be asking all Council Members for input about the need for and interest in sidewalks in their wards.

6. New Business

There was no new business.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Attachment



ADIRONDACK TREE EXPERTS

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August 16, 2016

Town of University Park
Attn: Mr. Michael Beall, DPW
6724 Baltimore Avenue
University Park, MD 20782

RE: 4409 Underwood Street

Dear Mr. Beall,

As per your request, I have taken the opportunity to inspect the above referenced tree located in the curb box directly in front of this house address. The tree is alive with nearly 100% canopy foliage and it exhibits no visual defects or anomalies that are visible to the eye. Currently, there is minor, small caliper deadwood in the canopy that is normal in a tree of this age and size.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

John W. Anna, Jr.
President/CEO
Maryland Licensed Tree Expert #769
TCIA EHAP Arborist
I.S.A. Certified Arborist #MA-4082A
TCIA CTSP #1046

