

**Town of University Park**  
**Council Committee on Police, Traffic and Public Safety**

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

Meeting minutes

Committee Members present: Joe Schultz, Council Member, Ward 2 and Committee Chair; Linda Verrill, Council Member, Ward 4; Martha Wells, Council Member, Ward 6 (via teleconference); Roland Stephen, Council Member, Ward 7

Guests: Mayor Len Carey; Director of Public Works Mickey Beall

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m.

Agenda

*Item 1. Streets, sidewalks, and park paths projects. Review of staff recommendations and proposed timeline presented to Council 3 February 2020.*

The discussion was framed around the four items, corresponding to phases in the overall streets/sidewalks/paths infrastructure project, outlined in the memorandum from Mr. Beall to Mayor Carey dated January 30, 2020, which is quoted here for convenient reference.

*“1. Infrastructure Project – Phase 1, Non-Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Scope of Work Work on streets, sidewalks, and park paths. Budget -- Approximately \$999,486 funded from reserves, WSSC compensation for its water main replacement project, and a portion of the \$1.6 million bond.”*

Mr. Beall confirmed that except for Queens Chapel Road none of the proposed street paving requires engineering. Work can start this spring, and should be done by summer.

Mr. Beall and the town attorney have already started negotiating a contract for this part of the infrastructure work with NZI Construction, riding Prince George’s County paving Contract # 925-H (F)/B, as authorized by the. That County contract does not cover park paths, but an alternative may be available using an MNCPPC contract and NZI.

A critical factor in the Council’s and the Town’s decision making at this stage is that the Prince George’s County paving contract reflects unit costs negotiated in 2016. Project estimates developed last year by the Town were based on these costs. The contract expires at the end of this year. Unit costs for streets and sidewalks after that will almost certainly be significantly higher, no matter whether work is

contracted by riding a subsequent County contract or separately negotiated by the Town. Mr. Beall estimates they may go up by 30%.

NZI Construction has given Mr. Beall a verbal commitment to carry through the costs under the existing contract on any work that has been commenced before it expires. In practical terms that gives the town a significant incentive to start as much work as possible before November 2020.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Beall suggested that the Town add all work on park paths and QCR as options to the paving contract currently being negotiated with NZI. Because this would exceed the scope authorized by the Council on Feb. 3, it requires further action from Council. The committee highly recommends that Council authorize this change.

Recs to get engineers on the case to evaluate intersections where traffic circles planned, if possible, to see if the best idea is to pave intersection and then, pending \$\$, potentially come back and put the circle back in. Otherwise, if they can't do preliminary engineering and will leave some unpaved, in case they have to come back to do circles.

In general, the preference is not to pave streets where new sidewalks may go, funding permitting: CHD, Clagett-Pineway, Underwood. But ... may be able to push the limit a bit there, e.g., pave C-P if can get solid.

*“2. Adelphi Meadow – 9/11 Memorial Path and Fountain Project. A new 450’ pervious path is to be constructed across the Adelphi Field from Adelphi Road and connecting to an existing asphalt and concrete path from Beechwood Rd. to the parking lot at the playground, which will be removed and replaced. Budget – \$81,500 funded equally by FY20 operations funds and a grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.”*

In 2019 the Committee recommended that the new path alongside the Pollinator Meadow on Adelphi Rd. be an ADA-compliant mulch path, both to save costs and as an aesthetic preference in the meadow. The \$81,500 estimate from 2019 is based in part on an assumption that that section of the path would be impermeable asphalt—more expensive than mulch, less than pervious pavement. The proposal to use permeable asphalt rather than either mulch or impermeable material reflects concern that a mulch path, which passes through low-lying areas in the meadow, could become a mud pit, making it less usable in particular for anyone using or pushing a wheeled chair or bike, and also raising maintenance costs.

Plans already call for the permeable pavement to be used in replacing a section of path at the location of the new fountain west of the playground. If permeable pavement were also to be used in the meadow, in

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<sup>1</sup> A point of reference that did not come up in the committee discussion: In April 2019 the town estimated that asphalt and concrete paving costs alone, calculated by units, for QCR, College Heights Drive, Underwood, and Clagett-Pineway—the streets that could potentially be pulled within the scope of a Safe Routes to Schools grant, as outlined in Mr. Beall’s January.30.2020 memo—adds up to approximately \$1.1 million. A 30% increase in just those costs would exceed \$300,000.

Mr. Beall's view, it would then make sense to use the same pervious material for the rest of the work on this portion of the park path.

Mr. Beall did not have estimates for the additional costs involved but will provide those. The Committee senses that the benefits of both permeable pavement and mulch are real, and the choice between them for the meadow section will depend significantly on the cost difference. Similarly, the benefit of using permeable material to replace the existing path is significant, but an accurate cost estimate is needed before the Committee can arrive at any position on that.

*"3. NEW- Queens Chapel Rd. (QCR)/Pineway Clean Water Partnership (CWP) Stormwater Project. A stormwater BMP to be installed by the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) to address stormwater issues on Queens Chapel Rd from Pineway to Clagett Road. Budget – Presently unknown, funding to be provided entirely through the CWP."*

Mr. Beall provided a status update. The project is approved for design and engineering by CWP, but not the construction. CWP's 2020 construction budget appears to be already committed, and it includes several major stream reconstruction projects, so there is little realistic prospect of construction on this project this year. Mr. Beall noted that CWP would do a full analysis of stormwater flow on 44<sup>th</sup> to make sure the project resulted in no negative impacts and to handle permitting info requirements.

The Committee sensed that design and engineering for this project can and should proceed on whatever timeline CWP is prepared to follow. The timeline for design and engineering should fit neatly with the need for design work on the length of QCR. Coordination with that other QCR work will be necessary, but that can be managed in the normal course and appears to pose no particular challenge.

*4. Infrastructure Project – Phase 2, Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Scope of Work. Roads and new sidewalks that required engineering before construction, including traffic circle locations. Budget – Approximately \$1,628,189 funded by an \$80,000 design grant from SRTS; an anticipated construction grant from SRTS, and a portion of the \$1.6 million bond."*

QCR (and SFTS). JMS: Town evaluation and planning for all this work never relied on hopes for grants, we should continue that stance. QCR part of the overall project is a priority, delays that seem unavoidable part of SRTS are very problematic. LC: SRTS Federal \$\$, therefore NEPA. RS: Safe Routes design and construction separate. [Discussion]

MB: Sees overall work in these phases. Phase 1 = non-Safe Routes streets. Phase 2a = QCR, as the highest likelihood of contingency. Phase 2b = all SRTS streets. Benefits: commences simple stuff with no delay, minimal fuss, good chance for quick and straightforward completion of that; turns to hardest, most expensive, and the riskiest work next, prudent from cost management, risk management point of view.

Meanwhile, remove QCR from Safe Routes' scope of work, so as not to delay engineering. MW: Some potential benefits to separate engineering for QCR and all the streets with new sidewalks. RS: Could be a benefit to oversight, if smaller and separate projects.

Need to issue RFP for design/engineering of QCR ASAP—any delay jeopardizes the ability to realize savings from riding current county contract, and risks pushing construction out more than one year.

Oversight and inspection.

MB: Talked to Steve Halpert, the Engineer for College Park. SH recommended inspector vs. engineer for Phase 1 work — says have to have on-site at all times when paving, for concrete just checking forms and finished work. Cost ranges up to ~\$60/hr. MB would prefer, if we go that high, to hire Mr. Sidhu because he's maintained Town's roads for 30 years. RS (JMS): Will he be on site all the time? Does he want to do this? Some discussion; probably content to defer to MB/LC preference here.

What about Phase 2? Natural option is to include project management in RFP for design and engineering of QCR. Could ask as an optional part of RFP. General agreement. The next step then is MB/SF finalize RFP in such a form.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by Joe Schultz, Chair