

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

Wednesday, February 20, 2019

Meeting notes

Committee Members present: David Brosch, Council Member, Ward 1; Joe Schultz, Council Member, Ward 2 and Committee Chair; Linda Verrill, Council Member, Ward 4; Martha Wells, Council Member, Ward 6; Roland Stephen, Council Member, Ward 7

Guests: Chief Harvey Baker, UPPD; Mayor Len Carey; Director of Public Works Mickey Beall

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Agenda

1. 4300 block of Underwood: Ongoing discussions re. school pick-up/drop-off, parking, ordinance enforcement

Linda Verrill and Dave Tully, a resident of the block, presented a summary of recommendations coming out of meetings with various stakeholders and school and town staff. Among them:

- (a) Establish a “kiss-and-wave” drop-off zone on Underwood in front of UPES, @ 225 ft., room for 11 cars. Standing and parking would be prohibited.
- (b) Establish and mark a parallel-parking zone on Underwood, and parallel-parking and nose-in parking zones on Queens Chapel Road. At least some of this parking could be restricted to school staff and residents.
- (c) Define a school zone in the area, which creates options for reducing the speed limit, and improve signage.

Discussion followed. A “kiss-and-wave” zone would have to be created by town council, but the other recommendations related to parking could be done administratively. But there are advantages to considering changes collectively, as part of a coherent response to the situation overall, rather than piecemeal, if that can be done without inordinate delays.

Martha Wells moved to ask the subcommittee to put together a plan for comprehensive, phased implementation of changes to parking and circulation around UPES to present to council, based on the recommendations the subcommittee had developed and presented. Motion passed, 5-0.

2. Underwood/40th Ave. area: Discussion of traffic concerns, particularly wrong-way entries off of Adelphi Rd.

Construction on Adelphi Rd. has pushed more traffic into the neighborhood streets. Wrong-way entries on Underwood are endemic: USPS, FedEx, UPS, scofflaws, as well as people who are just confused. Lack of stop signs doesn't help; at least 40th and Underwood should get a three-way stop. The area sees considerable pedestrian traffic, and the crossing at Adelphi is dangerous. A lack of street-parking restrictions exacerbates traffic problems: narrow roadway and parking both sides can make it difficult for, e.g., school buses and delivery trucks to pass. The rationale for the one-way restriction on Underwood for the short block at Adelphi isn't obvious.

Stepped-up targeted enforcement is feasible, though will entail police overtime. There is a lack of traffic data for this area, relative to other parts of town; better information would help effectively target enforcement, among other things. The town will act immediately to step up enforcement and deploy the speed sign to gather some data, and also begin to look at parking controls and returning Underwood between Adelphi and 40th to two-way traffic.

3. Street repaving, major sidewalk and park path repairs, and possible new sidewalk and park path projects

Discussion, with Mayor Carey and Director of Public Works Mickey Beall, of the results of the committee's review. Some questions remain. The most important, re. estimated cost of work needed on Queens Chapel Road, should soon be clarified by the engineering study council recently voted to authorize. Despite lingering uncertainty on this and other potential projects, the committee agreed to transmit a memorandum to council summarizing its review (attached).

4. Baltimore Ave. / Sheridan St. intersection.

Discussion of this item was postponed until next month's meeting, March 20.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Submitted by Joe Schultz, Chair

To: U.P. Town Council
From: Police, Traffic, and Public Safety Committee
CC: Mayor Len Carey, Director of Public Works Mickey Beall
Date: 10 February 2019

Re: Paving projects review

The committee has completed a review of potential repairs, modifications, and new construction of streets, sidewalks, and paths in town.

The timing of the review is tied to the water-main replacement work underway in town. When that work is completed, some miles of streets will have to be repaved. That presents an opportunity to improve details of the design of those streets, where that makes better sense than simply restoring them to their previous condition. It also creates an opportunity to undertake additional work on streets and sidewalks in town in a cost-effective manner, since construction crews will already be here.

The review had two primary aims. The paving work will be extensive enough that the town will have to issue a bond to finance it. The first purpose of the review was to provide useful context for council's eventual decision on authorizing a bond. The second was to consider what, if anything, should be done as part of this upcoming construction to enhance walkability, improve bike and pedestrian connectivity within the town and at the periphery, and add traffic-calming features.

The director of public works compiled a comprehensive list of all potential work sites in town, which included initial rough cost estimates. That was the departure point for the review. The committee's discussions were spread over six public meetings, including a half-day walking inspection of the potential work sites, led by Mr. Beall.

The committee's conclusions and recommendations are summarized below. For additional detail, see the attached spreadsheet (filename: *Proposed Street and Sidewalk Projects DRAFT 120318 MOD 02-18*), which includes the original comprehensive list of potential work sites provided by town staff (as updated in December 2018) and site-specific notes re the committee's recommendations.

Major sidewalk repair and park path repair projects

In the committee's view these represent deferred maintenance of infrastructure, all of which remains useful and necessary to the town. The estimated cost of all work is about \$106,000. The town's fund balance at present, approximately \$1.9 million, comfortably exceeds the minimum recommendations of the Government Finance Officers Association. The town could, and arguably should, have funded that maintenance work rather than building additional reserves. Under the circumstances, the committee recommends that all of the potential work in this category be completed, and that it be funded from reserves, not by bond.

Street projects

The WSSC is required to either restore the streets to their previous condition or pay the town what it would spend to do so. The amount is determined according to a statutory formula. The director of public works estimates that the payment in this case will be about \$450,000. The town prefers to accept the payment, rather than have WSSC do the work, because that affords the town the opportunity to contract additional work, and gives the town more control.

One guiding principle for the committee's review was that repaved streets should be finished to a standard comparable to other streets in the town. In the case of Queens Chapel Road, the existing condition is well below that standard. This is due in large part to the fact that the town elected not to repair the parts of QCR that were torn up during the last round of water-main replacement, several years ago, and instead used the WSSC payment for other purposes. In a sense, then, this is another case of deferred maintenance.

Whatever the case, the whole length of Queens Chapel Road must now be repaved, not just the parts that have been torn up in the current project. In addition, curbs and gutters along much of the roadway need to be replaced. In numerous places the roadbed of QCR is higher than intersecting streets, creating persistent problems with stormwater pooling in those intersections that can only be remedied by lowering the QCR roadbed. Additional improvements along QCR could also be most cost-effectively made while such major reconstruction is going on. In particular, the parking area in front of the church should be paved and cleaned up, additional nose-in parking can be added in that area to accommodate overflow from the UPES lot, and some exceptionally narrow (4') sidewalks widened.

Queens Chapel Road is far and away the largest single expense in this overall streets/walkways project. The cost estimates for the several sites under review are necessarily rough at this stage. But even allowing for their preliminary nature, the estimate for the work on QCR doesn't seem firm enough to adequately inform council's decision on a bond. In the course of the committee's review, the estimate for QCR rose from \$500,000 to \$850,000. A more reliable estimate should be acquired before any decision on a bond amount is made.

The initial comprehensive list of projects included only one change to street geometry, a reconfiguration of the intersection at Woodberry and College Heights Drive. That change should make the intersection significantly safer for pedestrians by improving sight lines.

But additional changes on two long, wide straightaways, Wells/Clagett and College Heights Drive, could respond to residents' concerns about traffic flow and speed. Therefore the committee recommends (1) adding landscaped mini traffic circles at the intersection of Wells/Clagett/Eversfield and the intersection of Clagett and College Heights Drive, and (2) taking part of the roadway on the south side of College Heights Drive for the proposed sidewalk and planting strip from Wells Pkwy to Woodberry, rather than confining that work to the town right of way alongside the existing street. The mini traffic circles interrupt drivers' view of the

straightaway, which sends a signal to slow down, and deflect a vehicle horizontally, an effective way to physically reinforce a speed limit. Narrowing a roadway similarly tends to slow traffic.

New sidewalk and path projects

All the potential projects in this category are discretionary, i.e., not repairs or normal maintenance. The committee visited every site. In evaluating each possible project the committee weighed benefits of enhanced walkability, improved pedestrian connectivity, and increased pedestrian safety against costs both financial (construction costs) and otherwise (loss of mature trees, for example).

The table below summarizes the projects the committee supports. The spreadsheet accompanying this report (*Proposed Street and Sidewalk Projects DRAFT 120318 MOD 02-18*) contains additional detail.

Street	Location	Est. cost	Committee comments
Wells Pkwy	6800 block	\$25,000	connection to Van Buren bridge means significant enhancement of pedestrian connectivity in that part of the town, persuasive grounds for this.
Adelphi Rd	Adelphi Field	\$10,000	ADA-compliant mulched path, north side of creek, through pollinator meadow. Better alternative to replacing stairs to path on south side of creek with a ramp; has about the same effect for connectivity at a fraction of the cost. Path over hardscape; consistent with the aims of the meadow project, evades possible permitting issues. Can be funded from reserves.
Underwood	4200 block	\$46,000	A sidewalk on Underwood is essential to any safe routes to school effort in UP. This should be a high priority. Even-numbered (east) side, despite the loss of numerous mature trees. In this case, thinking long term, that's a tradeoff that should be made.
Clagett Pineway	4300 block	\$50,000	Important pedestrian corridor now, significant vehicle traffic. This is a high priority. Right of way is mostly clear, construction should be uncomplicated.
CHD/Woodberry	4200-4300 blocks	\$76,000	Roadway is 30' wide or more, town right of way on south side of the street is reasonably clear, sidewalk and planting strip using both would significantly change street geometry in favor of pedestrian safety, traffic calming.
CHD	Bridge over Wells Run	?	To connect existing sidewalk to the west w/ new sidewalk to the east of the creek

University Park Sidewalk Projects								
Proposed NEW Sidewalk and Path Projects								
Priority	Street	Location	Description	DPW Comments	LF	Cost	Construction Issues	Committee comments
	Wells Pkwy	6800 block (even)	install new sidewalk	connect to VB bridge--55' from exist., add'l 70' from Van Buren bridge to corner	185	\$25,000	fence, R&R 60' of sidewalk, 3 tree removals (\$3k), steps at 6812 Wells	
	Wells Pkwy	6600-6700 blks (even)	install new sidewalk	connect across both sides of intersection to the Beechwood bridge	250	\$14,000	3 large trees would have to be removed on the 6600 block side, 2 ramps, replace 50'+	very little vehicle traffic on this dead-end street, and the town park is across the street — more economical to construct a path in the park, if that's truly necessary.
	43rd Ave	6500 block (even)	install new sidewalk	connect dead end sidewalk to sidewalk along church property	125	\$3,500		Insufficient foot traffic to justify this.
	Adelphi Rd	Adelphi Steps/Ramp	install ramp to Adelphi Rd from park	supplement steps	100	\$50,000+	need easement or acquisition to have enough space for a switchback, WSSC sewer main	There is access to Adelphi nearby at Tennyson and Beechwood, and a new path on the opposite side of the creek can add to that much more economically.
	Adelphi Rd	Adelphi Field	install new path	connect Beechwood path to Adelphi Rd across the field	475	\$10,000	likely a cheaper alternative to building a ramp	Should be built as an ADA-compliant mulched path, funded at a level consistent with the estimate provided by the Anacostia Watershed Society in its concept plan for the meadow (~\$10,000). Furthermore, should be funded out of reserves, not bonded.
	Underwood	4200 block (odd)	install new sidewalk	appears to be enough ROW on odd side	560	\$46,000	slopes away at one driveway, 2 retaining walls some tree conflicts, on even side would have to remove 11 mature trees, manage 8 sets of front steps and hill	Adding sidewalk on Underwood is key to improving walkability around UPES. This should be a high priority. But later info from DPW is that walk would have to be built on the EVEN side (east), despite the loss of numerous mature trees. In this case, thinking long term, that's a tradeoff that should be made.
	Wells Pkwy	6900-7100 blocks (o/e)	install new sidewalk	Adelphi Rd to Wells Pkwy at Clagett may not be enough ROW on odd side	1960	\$120,000	homeowner objections, multiple tree conflicts, ROW limitations on north side, one set of front gates, on street striping narrows road to 20' or less	Existing pedestrian traffic doesn't argue for assuming such a large expense now, and the wide right-of-way on the south/west side of the creek is a complicating factor that probably can't be dealt with effectively at this moment.
	Clagett Pineway	4300 block (o/e)	install new sidewalk	install 2 blocks to connect Pineway and Woodberry--recommend even side	585	\$50,000	multiple issues on either side of street, narrowing road does not appear to be a good option	Important pedestrian corridor, significant vehicle traffic = very high priority. If necessary for cost savings, the block between Woodberry and Clagett could be dropped from this item
	CHD/Woodberry	4200-4300 blocks (odd)	install new sidewalk	connect Woodberry to Wells-recommend odd side and extend to Clagett	1150	\$76,000	multiple issues on either side of street, could be done in road to narrow road 2'-8'	South side of the streets seems quite feasible. Use the opportunity to narrow the roadway; this is a long straightaway and wide, narrowing the roadway should also slow traffic.
	CHD	Bridge over Wells Run	install new sidewalk		?	?		to connect existing sidewalk to the west w/ new sidewalk to the east of the creek

	Clagett	4200 block (o/e)	install new sidewalk	connect to new sidewalk on Clagett-Pineway-recommend odd side	365	\$33,000	substantial conflict on either side--stone walls, brick columns, trees, aprons--odd side more feasible	Mini traffic circle at CHD and Clagett should slow traffic. New sidewalks on Clagett-Pineway should direct pedestrian traffic in that direction. Those factors, plus light existing pedestrian traffic and multiple construction issues argue against this.
	QCR	6300 block (odd)	install new sidewalk	connect between dead ends	275	\$12,000	7 tree conflicts, remove at least 4 (\$4k)	Little vehicle traffic. Existing sidewalk on one side of the street, which pedestrians decline to use now.
	Van Buren	4000 block	install new sidewalk	install sidewalk from Adelphi Rd to Wells Pkwy	1550	\$90,000		
						\$207,000		doesn't include cost for building sidewalk on CHD bridge over Wells Run
				Committee supports				
				Committee recommends against				
				Added by the committee				
University Park Street Projects								
Priority	Street	Location	Description	DPW Comments	LF	Cost	Construction Issues	Committee comments
	QCR	full length	complete upgrade of street	install 175' of new sidewalk on 6300 block, replace asphalt curb w/ concrete curb and gutter	3275	\$850,000	replace 26 asphalt aprons and several concrete aprons, improve water conveyance, reduce impervious surface at some intersections	
	QCR	bridge	repair issues noted in bridge inspection report		NA	\$50,000		
	Woodberry/CHD	intersection	reconfigure intersection	extend sidewalk on odd side	NA	\$50,000		Significant improvement to this intersection for pedestrian traffic by improving sight lines. High priority.
	Wells/Clagett/ Eversfield	mini traffic circle	landscape		na	\$15,000		Small landscaped traffic circle. Aim of adding this and another at Clagett and CHD is to break up a long, wide, mostly straight road, and discourage speeding.
	Clagett/CHD	mini traffic circle	landscape		na	\$15,000		
	Clagett-Pineway	4300 block	repave	coincide with new sidewalk	310	\$550,000		
	Woodberry	4100-4300 blocks	repave	coincide with new sidewalk	2785			
	Van Buren	4100-4300 blocks	repave		2635			
	CHD	4200 block	repave	coincide with new sidewalk	450			
	Wells Pkwy	6900 block	repave		730			
	Underwood	4200 block	repave	coincide with new sidewalk	1200			
	Beechwood	4100 block	repave		275			
	Clagett	4000 block	repave		835			
	Holly Hill	4400 block	repave		445			
						\$1,530,000		

Added by the committee								
Major Sidewalk Repair Projects								
Priority	Street	Location	Description	Comments	LF	Cost	Construction Issues	Committee comments
	Wells Pkwy	6700 block(odd)	R&R sidewalk	low areas and trip hazards--water pools on sidewalk	460	\$15,000	minor elevation adjustments for front walks	
	Wells Pkwy	6600 block (odd)	R&R sidewalk	low areas and trip hazards--water pools on sidewalk	425	\$14,000	minor elevation adjustments for front walks	
	Tuckerman St	4200-4400 blocks	replace 100's of linear feet of sidewalk	various locations from a few sections to entire blocks	1200	\$37,000	avoidance of tree roots	
						\$66,000		Fund from reserves, not bond
Park Path Repair Projects								
Priority	Street	Location	Description	Comments	LF	Cost	Construction Issues	Committee comments
	43rd-44th	Tot Lot	R&R path	R&R entire path	700	\$8,000		
	Tennyson-41st	Tennyson-41st	R&R path	R&R entire length of asphalt path	700	\$8,000		
	M Lucas Trail	Falkenberg Bridge	eliminate step up onto bridge	sawcut about 25' from bridge to make ADA compliant rise to bridge elevation	25	\$2,000		
	40th-41st	40th-41st	R&R path	R&R 60' of concrete curb and gutter, ramp, and minimum 175' of concrete sidewalk	250	\$6,000	PG Co storm water BMP proposed for location was abandoned due to too many complications	
	Adelphi-40th	Adelphi-40th	R&R path	concrete ramp, and minimum 220' of concrete sidewalk	325	\$6,000	PG Co storm water BMP proposed for location was abandoned due to too many complications	
	Beechwood-9/11	Beechwood-9/11	R&R path	100' concrete and 700' asphalt	800	\$9,000		
	Tennyson-QCR	Tennyson-QCR	R&R path	only 2 small sections may need replacement	60	\$1,000		
						\$40,000		Fund from reserves, not bond
				Subtotal		\$1,843,000		
				Contingency (15%)		\$276,450		
				Engineering (10%)		\$211,945		
				Total		\$2,331,395		
				Anticipated WSSC reimbursement approximately		-\$450,000		
				Net Bond Amount		\$1,775,395		