

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

Wednesday, May 20, 2020  
(via Zoom teleconference)

Meeting notes

Committee members present: 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: Mayor Len Carey; Director of Public Works Mickey Beall; Town Administrator David Deutsch; Police Chief Harvey Baker

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

Agenda

When the meeting commenced a new item was added to the agenda, a status update on the RFP for engineering design for Queens Chapel Road and other work planned for later in phase 2 of the streets and sidewalks work.

1. Update on RFP, engineering design [Beall]

Mr. Beall summarized conversation he has had concerning the benefits of expediting the selection of an engineering firm to do the design work required for Queens Chapel Road and other segments planned for later in the infrastructure project (primarily Clagett-Pineway, College Heights Drive, Underwood where sidewalks are proposed). In lieu of an extended RFP process, the town could directly approach firms that already have bid contracts with Prince George's County which the town could ride and invite them to visit the site and provide an estimate. Based only on preliminary exploratory conversations Mr. Beall has already been contacted by three firms: AMT (which also works with WSSC), Wallace Montgomery, O'Connell Lawrence.

An expedited process would allow the town to leverage the engineering expertise of county staff in evaluating and contracting with engineering consulting firms; make it more cost-effective for potential consultants to estimate and bid this project, which could produce a better-quality bidder

response; and allow the design work to start as early as midsummer, which would increase the likelihood that paving work can begin on QCR this fall.

After discussion, the sense of the committee was that this would be not only the fastest option but also likely produce the best design outcome.

Ms. Wells moved that the committee recommend to the town council that council authorize the DPW director to negotiate with three or more engineering firms with rideable contracts, recommended to the town, with a view to retaining a firm to begin design for Queens Chapel Road and, if desirable, to complete all additional design work required for the later stages of the project. Seconded by Mr. Stephen. Approved 4-0.

## 2. Welcome and general introductory discussion with Town Administrator David Deutsch

Mr. Deutsch briefly talked about his experience with traffic planning and management, particularly with reference to the impacts of development, and the benefits of stakeholder engagement, sound process, and public participation.

## 3. Update from Chief Harvey Baker

Chief Baker noted the nationwide increase in speeding incidents tied to radically lower traffic volumes. He sees a somewhat similar pattern in town as he patrols, though primarily on the perimeter roads. The UPPD has a plan for stepped-up, targeted enforcement, which they'll be implementing next week.

The town now deploys three speed signs, and Chief Baker summarized traffic volume and speed statistics collected over the past several months. Mr. Schultz asked if the town could develop a coordinated plan to shift the sign locations regularly according to a set of aims for speed reduction and data collection. Chief Baker and Mr. Deutsch had already talked about that idea, and Mr. Deutsch said the committee should see an initial plan within a month.

Chief Baker noted that he is exploring the idea of acquiring a handheld speed camera, which could be used not only to monitor traffic speeds but also for enforcement, again primarily on the perimeter roads.

The UPPD has nearly completed changes in the patrol rifle program authorized by Council earlier in the year. The department has purchased six rifles to replace the privately owned weapons that qualified officers had been authorized to carry. A revised General Order has been drafted and reviewed by the town attorney, and is under review by the mayor and town administrator.

Chief Baker is also exploring the idea of deploying license plate reader cameras (Flock Safety System, [www.flocksafety.com](http://www.flocksafety.com)) at some entrances of town. The idea behind these cameras would be to give

UPPD officers a starting point that they typically lack for investigating crimes. The committee looked forward to more information and continued discussion of the idea.

#### 4. Committee work session: long-range traffic planning and management

The committee resumed a discussion it began last fall on taking a longer-range and more integrated view of traffic management in town, with a view to developing a practical plan to guide spending to change street configurations, install physical traffic calming in strategic locations, and take other proactive measures.

Ms. Wells suggested the committee recommence by surveying recommendations that have been made but not implemented over the past two years, such as stop bars or better deployment of speed signs or better signage, and ideas where discussion is not yet resolved, such as mini traffic circles or chicanes. Ms. Verrill suggested, as a matter of process, that a better tool for tracking recommendations and discussions and proposals would help. Mr. Schultz volunteered to put together an initial spreadsheet tracking tool, to be stored in the committee's Dropbox and developed as needed.

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

Submitted by Joe Schultz, Chair