Penn Avenue Reconstruction Committee

Thursday, August 1, 2019 @ 11:00 a.m.

BGC's Community Activity Center, 113 N. Pacific Avenue

MEETING MINS

Attendees: Nina Gibbs, Jeffree N.V., Terence Olesniewicz, Kyle Potter, Eileen Kraus-Dobratz, Steven Lowry, Amber Epps, Joseph Lentini, Minette Vacarieleo, Jeanette Coleman, Henry Horn Pyatt.

Amber Epps called to order at 11:09 A.M.

I. Welcome/Introductions

II. Previous Meeting Minutes

Jeanette approves the meeting minutes and Nina seconds to approve.

III. Preliminary Engineering Update/Review Prelim. Engineering Schedule

a. Public Meeting – Tentative 10/2019

Terence explained that the public meeting will most likely be in October based on review by the City and PennDOT of the current plans submission. Once a meeting date has been set TA will advise the BCG and there will be a two (2) month advance notice before the meeting takes place in order to complete the necessary notifications and advertisements.

b. Property Owners Meetings – Update

Property owner meetings with larger stake-holders to discuss property operations and overall use to be considered during construction have been completed except for the Family Dollar which is currently scheduled for August 21. The meeting notes from the completed meetings are currently being compiled.

c. Utility Coordination

Utility coordination is still underway and a utility coordination meeting is scheduled for August 14. The Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) investigation of the roadway to determine the location of the trolley ties and rails as well as any previously undiscovered utilities has been completed. Existing trolley tracks and ties are to be removed as part of the project.

d. Vault Inspection

Vault inspection has been completed including reconnaissance on potential vaults discovered by the GPR investigation.

e. Final Design-05/2020

Final Design is anticipated in mid-2020 to early 2021. With a project of this complexity and with the City and PennDOT oversight/reviews required, the overall design process may take longer than anticipated.

IV. Other Issues / Items

It was explained for those not at previous meetings that the project would involve full reconstruction of the roadway, curb, and sidewalk with traffic signal, lighting, and drainage upgrades and that the reconstruction would generally be phased with work on one side of the roadway at a time.

It should be noted that the PWSA was not present at the meeting. However, they had indicated that they do not feel that their sewer laterals are in danger of being damaged during construction or will need to be replaced as they are approximately 9' to 13' deep.

Steve inquired as to how the mouse and rat issue would be handled. Once the roadway and sidewalk is removed small rodents tend to look for shelter in nearby homes and businesses. He requested that this issue be aggressively pursued and incorporated as part of the project. Kyle indicated that he would look into the possibility of any available City and/or County mitigations for this issue. Steve also inquired if U.S. Mail and other deliveries would be impacted. Terence confirmed that access to homes and businesses would be maintained and Bus service would also be maintained through the work area. Kyle indicated that the City would be looking into identifying parking lots in the area that may be able to be utilized for businesses and residents during construction.

Minette asked how porch drains would be handled as part of the project. Terence indicated that PWSA desired that these be connected to their combination sewer system. She also asked about how the existing planting beds and areas between the sidewalks and porches would be treated. Terence indicated that currently it is anticipated that these will be maintained and not paved over. However, if there are surface beds sitting on top of sidewalk, these will probably need to be removed as part of the project. It was indicated that the City will formulate a policy regarding how stoops, steps, and planting beds will be addressed for the project design. If the sidewalk extends beyond the right-of-way line to a residential front porch and the sidewalk is to be replaced, a Temporary Construction Easement agreement would need to be made with the property owner. Property owners would be given notice regarding removal of trees and sidewalk widths/replacements. The question was also asked how homes will be impacted by vibrations from construction equipment. It was indicated that as part of the Phase 1, property owners were advised to document conditions before and after construction. Furthermore, it would also be advisable for residents to contact their home owner's insurance company as well.

Jeanette inquired regarding the use of fences and gravel during construction with temporary walkways as pedestrians were hurting themselves walking on these uneven surfaces during Phase 1 work. It is hoped that the next contractor will provide safer accommodations for pedestrians during Phase 2. Kyle indicated that the City is very focused on pedestrian safety and will be reviewing and enforcing pedestrian safety measures to ensure that ADA accommodations are made during the project. Creative solutions for pedestrians and business accommodations will be needed during construction. There may also be the potential for individual side streets to be converted from one-way to two-way operation during construction if beneficial.

Jeffree asked that all properties/residents to be impacted by the work, particularly impacts to sidewalks, be identified especially at the intersection of Graham Street intersection since it is offset and the limits of work may extend further due to this configuration. Terence indicated that this would be determined once the design has progressed further.

The purpose of the proposed bump outs was questioned. It was explained that they were to enhance pedestrian safety by decreasing the distance needed for pedestrians to cross the roadway at the designated cross-walks. Phase 1 also had planted beds and lighting/seating cubes in the bump outs. Phase 2 could use the bump outs for architectural amenities and/or planting beds. Eileen indicated that these planted beds are not necessarily just for flowers, but in Phase 1 are planted with non-mowable native grasses that can sometimes look like weeds. The intent is for BGC to potentially maintain planting beds, but a specific budget and policy for this has not been established at this point. Eileen also asked about features such as bio-swales and it was explained that this may not necessarily be within the scope of the current project, but that PWSA does encourage green infrastructure features. Nina indicated that she would invite the contact from PWSA who handles these issues to the next meeting.

Adjourned at Noon

Date for next meeting: November 7, 2019