Penn Avenue Reconstruction Committee

Thursday, November 7, 2019 @ 11:00 a.m.

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

MEETING MINS

Attendees: Nina Gibbs, Terence Olesniewicz, Sam Spearing, Cindy Shoemaker, Kevin Fisher, Amber Epps, Mora McLaughlin, Eric Setzler, Kyle Potter, Rick Swartz, Jeanette Coleman, Jeffree N.V., Eileen Kraus-Dobratz, Henry Horn Pyatt.

Amber Epps called to order at 11:08 A.M.

I. Welcome/Introductions

II. Previous Meeting Minutes

Henry approves the meeting minutes and Rick seconds to approve. Sam abstains and Jeffree N.V. opposes. Terence Olesniewicz from Trans Associates compiled the meeting minutes from the meeting.

III. Preliminary Engineering Update/Review Prelim. Engineering Schedule

a. Public Meeting – late January/early February

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. Rick indicated that it would be beneficial to have separate tables or stations for buses, detours, water/utilities, traffic etc. The public meeting venue must be ADA accessible and will be coordinated with the BGC. The community theater at 5530 Penn Avenue may be suitable location and could accommodate 50 to 60 people that would be expected. Eileen indicated that the noise in the meeting room during the meeting should be considered.

b. Preliminary Engineering

Terence indicated that the Line and Grade submission has been prepared and submitted to the City and PennDOT for review. It was explained that this represents approximately a 30% level of design. TA and the City are currently waiting for PennDOT review and comments. A Safety Review Committee submission was submitted to the City and PennDOT, a review meeting was held at PennDOT and comments were received. This submission is similar to the Line and Grade submission, except it focuses on overall safety and functionality issues of the design.

Rick asked if a preliminary overall view (stamped preliminary) could be provided to the BGC. The City indicated that this would be provided. While waiting for PennDOT comments, the drilling and sampling submissions and plans have been progressing. TA and the City are hoping to core bore for geotechnical and environmental sampling in the coming months.

The maintenance and protection of traffic (MPT) will be coordinated with PennDOT and must meet City and PennDOT standards. Jeffree N.V. asked if the operation of the existing one-way streets would be considered during construction in order to speed up the construction process. Eileen also suggested that constructing one entire side of the roadway at a time may be more efficient than working block-by-block. It was agreed that this would be investigated.

Rick asked when coordination would be conducted with the Port Authority? The Port Authority is currently removing stops along arterials to increase efficiency and traffic flow. Eric with the City indicated that this will be coordinated as the MPT is developed.

c. Utility Coordination

Utility coordination is still ongoing. The existing gas line on the project will be replaced by Peoples Gas as part of the project. Rick indicated that Duquesne Light wanted to use wooden poles as part of Phase 1 work, but they were convinced to use black metal or fiberglass poles. There are issues with people posting on the Phase 1 poles and leaving tape residue, but black poles would still be desired for Phase 2 to keep a consistent look along Penn Avenue. There is anticipated to be underground conduit for lighting. There is some electrical service from Penn Avenue, but most services are from the alleys behind the buildings.

Kevin asked about replacing lead service lines. Mora from PWSA indicated that they have a 20" water main in Penn Avenue, but most properties are fed from Gem Way (backs of properties). She further explained that there are only about 10 or 12 services not from Gem Way which are generally for Commercial properties which typically do not have lead service lines. Mora will provide a list of these owners. It should be noted that any Commercial service lines would be the owner's responsibility for repair/replacement. Henry indicated that any laterals not on Penn Avenue would happen at another time independent of this project. Eric from the City indicated further that the City's permitting system would address overlaps with work in areas outside of Penn Avenue and the Phase 2 work. The City would desire that any residential lead service lines would be replaced during the Phase 2 project work while the roadway area is excavated. Nina confirmed that this should be done during the Phase 2 work when the contractor is excavating as it would be easier and cheaper. This conversation should start now and the BGC can send out letters to owners to confirm if their service lines are on Gem Way or in Penn Avenue. Mora agreed and indicated that it is PWSA's experience that it is beneficial to set deadlines for property owners for issues such as this.

Rick asked that since there were leaks in the PWSA water main during Phase 1 work what was the plan for Phase 2? Also, owners have indicated that water is currently wicking into their foundations and that there may already be leaks. Mora explained that there is still life left in the 20" water main and its replacement is not included in the Capital Plan for the next few years. An urgent contract is issued if there is a major break such as what had occurred at Smallman and 15th. For smaller point repairs PWSA maintenance forces are used. Mora indicated that these repairs would be coordinated and prioritized with DOMI and PWSA during construction.

Eileen mentioned that there are historically water pressure issues within the project area. There are some commercial buildings that have residential uses on the upper floors. Mora indicated that this area is between two Pressure Districts and this is an ongoing issue. She indicated that she will contact the PWSA Engineering Unit to discuss. Jeffree N.V. indicated that he had his old lead service connection replaced and the new line has good pressure. The old lead line was very twisted. Mora indicated that one of the reasons that lead was used in the past was its flexibility. This allowed a service line to be installed around utilities and other underground obstructions.

d. Final Design

It is anticipated that Final Design will most likely extend into 2021. As a result, construction may not start until 2022 as there is generally three (3) months between the approval of the Final Design and the Notice to Proceed (NTP) for construction. Eric also confirmed that generally winter work is avoided and cannot be done for some tasks, but that this will be considered when the construction milestones are developed for the contractor.

Rick indicated that the fencing/blockades used during Phase 1 were an issue with residents and business owners and asked if a different style could be used? Eric indicated that these barriers may be required for adequate work zone protection.

Rick asked if concrete or asphalt would be used for the roadway. It was initially indicated that this may be dictated by pricing. However, it was explained that 10" of concrete is currently the City standard with full-depth reconstruction including the removal of the trolley tracks for this project. Budgets would be evaluated as part of the Final Design process.

Eileen asked about the use of bioswales? Nina stated that a PWSA stormwater representative needs to attend the next PARC meeting. Eric indicated that green infrastructure elements were being discussed including an underground system that would be better for tree roots. However, the system will be selected during Final Design.

Eileen also asked about discussions with Bike Pittsburgh, incorporation with future bicycle facilities, and safety. Nina and Eric both confirmed that Coral/Friendship is being considered for dedicated bicycle facilities and Penn Avenue will be mixed flow. Henry stated that the bump outs should be designed as to not impede bicycle flow, and this will most likely come up at the public meeting.

IV. Other Issues / Items – Questions submitted by community in advance of the meeting.

1. A written breakdown of who is in charge of what in terms of the project.

This is a City project and contact should go through Eric Setzler at the City. It was confirmed that Penn Avenue is a City-owned and maintained street. Henry asked if Penn Avenue was still a Federal back-up route for the Parkway.

2. ***A description of what was discussed with individual property owners – see handout.***

TA conducted a survey with the designated representatives of the eight (8) largest owners to discuss property operations and issues following the provided handout. It was confirmed that these property owners were not driving the overall design of the project. Jeffery indicated that he would like an individual meeting with the City to discuss his property. The City agreed to meet with him.

3. ***Details about the water main in the service area and will it be changed.***

PWSA will provide a list of properties/people served from Penn Avenue vs. Gem Way.

4. ***Has the company that manufactured the posts for the traffic posts that match Phase 1 been notified? Will items like this be ready to be installed so everything matches? Is that moving forward?***

The question was asked that wouldn't the same company who made the poles for Phase 1 have to make the poles for Phase 2? Identical poles are desirable. Eric indicated that the City must use approved suppliers from PennDOT Bulletin 15 and adhere to PennDOT/City standard drawings. The proposed traffic signal and light poles will be black and will be consistent with the poles used in Phase 1, however, the approved designs may have changed since Phase 1 was constructed.

5. ***What federal funds are involved and how are they spent?***

It was explained by Eric that the City Capital Budget would be used for the project. It was confirmed that the BGC is not receiving money for the project.

6. ***Will the property owners get final approval on their sidewalk design before they are submitted to the City or PennDOT?***

Eric explained that the City will work with the public and property owners, but the City has the ultimate approval role in the design process. Jeffery reiterated that he would like to see the preliminary design and an individual meeting to discuss his property.

Eileen Kraus-Dobratz motioned to Adjourn at 12:30 P.M. and Jeanette Coleman seconds.

Terence Olesniewicz compiled the above meeting minutes.

Date for next meeting: February 6, 2020