



TOWN OF KNIGHTDALE
PLANNING AND ENGINEERING COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes

950 Steeple Square Court, Knightdale, North Carolina 27545

January 13, 2014

The Knightdale Planning and Engineering Committee met in the upstairs conference room in the Town of Knightdale Town Hall 6:00 p.m. on January 13, 2014.

ITEM I. CALL TO ORDER

...Councilor Tripp called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., Monday, January 13, 2014.

ATTENDING: Councilor Tripp, Councilor Swan, Doug Taylor, Richy Narron, Seth Lawless, Chris Hills, Fred Boone, Jeff Triezenberg, Courtney Jenkins

ITEM II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

...Mr. Taylor moved to approve the December 9, 2013 minutes. Councilor Swan seconded. Without objection the motion carried unanimously.

ITEM III. OLD BUSINESS

A. Emerald Point Speeding Concern

Mr. Boone noted that baseline data has been collected from the Stealth Stat for traffic on Aqua Marine Drive and passed out a summary report. The data was collected between December 11 and December 17. Mr. Boone explained that the machine monitors cars both approaching and proceeding away from the device. In looking at the summary report, current policy dictates that the 85th percentile speed is most important. This report shows that 15 percent of traffic is traveling at more than 35 miles per hour. Consequently, the data shows that there is a speed issue.

Mr. Boone stated that he is looking at speed limit sign spacing. He noted that existing signs meet spacing standards, but he also noted that this is an unusually long straight stretch of road. For now, two additional signs will be added at the mid-point of the street in each direction. Mr. Boone noted that the Police Department will be able to attach their own speed monitoring device to these poles as well. The Public Works crews are waiting on utility locates so that the signs can be installed. Mr. Boone stated that he will go back in a week after the signs go up and collect data again.

Mr. Butch Dyer, a resident of Emerald Point, asked whether the Stealth Stat could be deployed on other streets in the subdivision.

Mr. Boone replied that the device only requires a pole to which it can be mounted. He noted that the Town is using Aqua Marine as a test case to see which implemented measures (such as additional speed limit signs) are helping. If the measures are shown to help, then the Town can employ the same measures on other streets in the subdivision.

Mr. Dyer then asked about installing speed limit signs that read 15 miles per hour.

Mr. Boone noted that in this case it would only make the problem appear worse.

Mr. Dyer noted that the Town had previously posted 15 miles per hour on Star Ruby Lane so that the data would support the installation of speed cushions. He asked if speed cushions would be considered on Aqua Marine Drive.

Mr. Boone replied that he would be happy to share the process under which speed cushions might be considered, but noted that it is fairly regimented.

Mr. Boone mentioned that a more detailed report is available, and reminded the committee that what was presented is just a summary. Mr. Boone noted that he has shared the data with the Police Department so enforcement times may be targeted at those specific times when speeds are the worst.

Mr. Dyer noted that the homeowners are also trying to eliminate parking on the street, which would also raise traffic speeds. Consequently, that is why the residents want to continue moving towards the installation of speed cushions. He also noted that the homeowners are spending \$10,000-\$15,000 to spruce up the aesthetics of the neighborhood.

Mr. Boone stated that he will email the report to Mr. Dyer for his inclusion in a presentation to the homeowners.

B. First Avenue Sharrow Plan

Mr. Boone passed around handouts showing map and sign examples, and noted he had been tasked with cost estimates for signage and markings. He called the committee's attention to the actual sign mock-ups, and noted that they are two different styles: one is caution yellow, and the other is an advisory white.

Mr. Taylor noted he wanted to use the yellow at the entrances to the corridor, but also introduce the white sign to the general public, so he is ok with the two signs looking different.

Mr. Narron asked for clarification on locations where the signs and sharrow markings would be posted.

Mr. Boone noted that sharrow markings cost about \$250 each, and the signs cost about \$250 as well, according to recent Raleigh bids. As depicted in the draft plan, that would total \$7,900 for the entire project, all phases.

Mr. Lawless stated that six (6) signs seemed like a lot for a half mile stretch of roadway.

Councilor Swan noted that the "share the road" signs were larger and more obtrusive and might not fit in downtown. He also noted the total number of sharrows and signs might be more than necessary.

Mr. Triezenberg noted that the plan shows sharrows every 200 to 250 feet.

Mr. Taylor noted there is no established signage for bicycles and we need to begin calling attention to the issue.

Mr. Boone called attention to the phasing.

Mr. Lawless noted that the crosswalk at Sycamore Street would also have a caution pedestrian crossing sign.

Councilor Swan noted that there are already quite a few signs on the roadway and noted that the sharrows would likely be less obtrusive.

Councilor Tripp suggested a field trip and having everyone go out and take a close look at the entire corridor.

Councilor Swan suggested asking LURB for their opinion and focusing on just how many signs and markings should be added right now.

Mr. Hills suggested emailing LURB members to get their opinion.

Mr. Lawless wondered about any needed Town Council action.

Mr. Boone replied that the matter could just come out of committee for a Town Council decision if we keep the cost down and would not require a budget amendment.

Councilor Swan suggested moving the "Share the Road" sign farther out on the north end for southbound traffic and keep the one on the south end for northbound traffic. He further suggested that the Town then add the first phase of sharrows, and omit the full lane signs.

Mr. Taylor and Councilor Tripp noted their agreement.

Mr. Taylor recommended that staff obtain further input and reaction from LURB members once this stage has been implemented.

...Councilor Swan moved to forward a recommendation to the full Council to direct Public Works staff to install two "Share the Road" signs as discussed and all sharrow lane markings as depicted in the draft plan and identified as "Phase 2A". Mr. Taylor seconded. Without objection the motion carried unanimously.

C. Construction Projects Update

Greenway – Phase II

Mr. Boone reported that the contractors for the greenway construction had received an automatic 90-day extension due to time of year and the associated difficulties in laying asphalt and pouring concrete. He expects the greenway to be open for business in late March or early April.

Knightsdale Park – Phase II

Mr. Boone noted that footings for the structures have been poured and that the Town should see the improvements going vertical in the near future.

Councilor Tripp inquired about the proposed fencing around the stormwater BMP.

Mr. Boone replied that the fencing has been installed along with the split rail fencing adjacent to the walkway by the Watson House.

Smithfield Road Sidewalk (CDBG)

Mr. Boone reported that the pre-construction meeting for this project is set to take place on January 22, 2014 with actual construction likely to begin sometime in February or early March.

Smithfield Road Improvements (CMAQ & STPDA)

Mr. Boone reported that the Town has now obtained construction authorization for both pieces of this project. He noted that the Town intends to manage these projects together, and will bid them at the same time. He further noted, though, that the Town has reserved the right to award each bid separately to individual contractors. The bid advertisement is currently scheduled for January 19.

ITEM IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. BMP Surety Discussion

Mr. Boone noted that the commercial building community has been giving him feedback on the Town's stormwater BMP surety process. He stated that presently, a commercial property owner must give the Town surety to confirm that they are going to conduct the necessary maintenance for their BMPs. Mr. Boone mentioned that many developers would like the surety process to go away and have the Town rely on the enforcement measures and fines available through Chapter 18 of the UDO, or go to a one-time cash payment that the Town would hold in escrow.

Mr. Boone noted that the stormwater utility has been operational for over a year now, and that the Town now has funds in the utility to earmark towards maintenance if need be. He surveyed other communities in Wake County and shared the widely varying results with the committee.

Mr. Boone further noted that the Town has not had to call a surety in 5 years, nor has the Town had to execute any penalties under Chapter 18 of the UDO. He is also of the opinion that we might just be able to amend the UDO and rely on the enforcement measures of Chapter 18. He noted thus far that any issues have been able to be handled in a friendly manner.

Councilor Tripp asked how the enforcement measures in Chapter 18 would work.

Mr. Boone replied that the process would be very similar to grass cutting: the Town would do the work and send the property owners an invoice. If the owner does not pay the invoice, then the Town would assess the property. Mr. Boone noted that the Finance Department works closely with Wake County to collect these assessments as part of the annual property tax billing process. Mr. Boone commented that the improvements in assessment collection have changed his mind on the need for the BMP surety process.

Councilor Tripp noted that he was fine with relying on the UDO penalties and property assessment process.

Councilor Swan asked for clarification on the costs to the developer.

Mr. Boone noted the Town accepts three kinds of surety: cash, letters of credit and bonds. He stated that cash and letters of credit tie up the developer's money dollar for dollar. Meanwhile, bonds only tie up a percentage of the total value and paid to the bank in annual installments. Mr. Boone also replied that most BMP sureties are in the range of \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year, although some may be as high as \$25,000. Mr. Boone noted that he believes that developers are looking for a simpler payment system that does not tie up their cash.

Mr. Boone stated that the three purposes of the stormwater fee and utility are street sweeper and stormwater maintenance, permit compliance, and stormwater system improvement projects.

Councilor Swan wondered about any possible strain on the level of utility funding and that strain being placed on residents if the Town were to change the way the BMP surety process works.

Mr. Boone noted that of all Wake County communities, the Town currently operates most similarly to Wake Forest.

Mr. Hills wondered how many BMP facilities are in the Town and also wondered about the paperwork required to change the process.

Mr. Boone noted the initial paperwork would be largely the same and would result in the same amount of work and effort to manage.

Councilor Tripp noted that this process is mostly a monitoring issue that we might run into only once in a while. He also commented that it does appear to tie up private capital in perpetuity that might be put to more active use and investment.

Mr. Boone noted that a couple of BMPs have slipped through the cracks as far as establishing the surety and changing the process would put everyone back on the same playing field.

Mr. Taylor asked what would happen to existing sureties.

Mr. Boone replied that the Town would simply release them.

Mr. Taylor asked about the potential impacts of a large storm affecting a large number of BMPs around Town.

Mr. Boone noted that each property would still file their own insurance claim to obtain the necessary funds to make repairs. He also noted that the current system would only cover 5 to 7 percent of repair costs anyhow.

Councilor Tripp stated that the more likely scenario of a larger impact to the Town is when someone goes out of business and the property sits vacant. It is at that time that the Town is more likely to spend its own funds on BMP maintenance.

Mr. Hills wondered about impacts to the Town's Federal stormwater permit.

Mr. Boone noted that in the worst case scenario the Town's permit would be revoked, resulting in the Town's stormwater system being taken over by a larger state or Federal agency, and that is a step that the development community would not ever want to see happen. Therefore, that is another incentive for owners to keep their BMPs maintained.

Mr. Hills explained to the committee that the next step is a text amendment to the UDO.

...Mr. Taylor moved to forward a recommendation to the full Council to support a text amendment to the UDO eliminating the current BMP surety process and instead relying on the provisions of Chapter 18. Councilor Swan seconded. Without objection the motion carried unanimously.

B. Feeding of Stray Animals

Councilor Tripp explained the complaints he has received about someone feeding feral cats in Harper Park and near the entrance to Brookfield Station. He noted the potential health issues with rabies and ringworm from fecal matter left in the sand at playgrounds.

Mr. Taylor asked about efforts to catch the cats. Mr. Hills noted that the Town would need to contact Wake County Animal Services who would set a trap, but the Town would have to monitor the trap and call them when the trap is sprung.

Councilor Tripp noted that there are so many that capturing them in combination with the spay/neuter program may not help.

Mr. Hills noted that Police Chief Godwin is working on things from that end, and noted that Mr. Lawless has indicated that the Public Safety Committee will take this matter up.

Councilor Tripp noted that he has asked Mr. Bowman about doing a public relations campaign from a public health perspective.

ITEM V. OTHER BUSINESS

ITEM VI. ADJOURNMENT

... Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.



Attest, Chairman of the Planning and Engineering Committee, Dustin Tripp



Acting Clerk to the Planning and Engineering Committee, Jeff Triezenberg

