

## **DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS**

**January 15, 2010**

### **Planning & Development**

#### **Planning:**

Work continued this week preparing materials for the upcoming February 2, 2010 Planning Commission. The Commission is tentatively scheduled to review a proposed rezoning, resubdivision and site plan approval plan for the Villages at Twin Lakes adult community. The applicant is requesting that a portion of the site be revised so that townhomes can be constructed without being restricted to purchasers 55 years in age and older.

On Friday morning I attended a very productive meeting at the Delaware Transit Corporation's offices in Wilmington concerning the Passenger Rail Location Study. The consultants are making good progress on coming up with options that, hopefully, will ensure that the station remains at a central S. College Avenue location.

At its meeting on Monday evening Council took action on the following planning related items:

- A. Approved the series of environmental standard updates and revisions concerning wetlands, riparian buffers, landscaping, and steep slopes.
- B. Tabled discussion of the underground electric utility fee proposal – this will be discussed at Council's January 25, 2010 meeting.

#### **Economic Development:**

Assistant Planning and Development Director Maureen Feeney Roser continued to work with Community Affairs Officer Dana Johnston on publicity and logistical matters for our upcoming Restaurant Week beginning on January 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Community Development:**

Planner Mike Fortner continued to put the finishing touches on the Newark Resident Survey. We hope to have the detailed final report available shortly.

Mike also continues working with the United States Census Bureau to establish a Questionnaire Assistance Center (QAC) at the Newark Municipal Building. The Center will assist Newarkers who have questions regarding their 2010 Census Questionnaire.

#### **Parking:**

Parking Administrator Marvin Howard reports that he continues to work on renewing monthly permits in our off-street lots and continues to assist the DNP with enrolling merchants in the Gift Card Program.

## Public Works

### Engineering/Planning and Inspection:

- 2009 Performance Measures: Completed compiling data and producing spreadsheet with quantities of street patches, 4" p.c.c. sidewalk, 6" p.c.c. sidewalk, and curb installed during the past year. Also completed filing of all Inspection Daily Reports for 2009.
- Annual Stormwater Management Facilities Maintenance Inspections: Performed annual inspections at 48 facilities, produced inspection reports, and updated data on computer spreadsheets.
- Attended a stormwater utility meeting at the City of Wilmington
- Reviewed the EPA public notification for potential modifications to the stormwater regulations. Topics currently under consideration include:
  1. Expanding the areas subject to stormwater regulations.
  2. Developing specific controls for stormwater discharges from new development and redevelopment.
  3. Developing a single set of requirements for all Phase I and II MS4's.
  4. Requiring MS4's to address stormwater discharges in existing development through retrofitting with improved control measures.
  5. Adding requirements to protect water bodies, such as buffers. These changes could have a big impact on our NPDES MS4 permit.
- RSMS – Road Survey Management System: Performed and completed street survey for the Northwest section of the City and entered the data into the computer.
- U of D Engineering and Science Building: Met with the U of D, City personnel, Engineer, Architect and Construction Manager to discuss upcoming utility installations, stormwater requirements for this phase and building phases, and proposed submittal and construction schedule.
- U of D East Campus Meeting: Met with U of D Representatives, Project Engineer, Architect, and other City personnel regarding proposed East Campus Housing Project.

### Survey Crew:

- Began updating the City Charter to reflect current municipal boundaries from annexations.
- Continued scanning paper plans into digital format.

### Field Operations/Streets:

- Street crews worked on Christmas tree collection citywide.

## **Water & Wastewater**

I have signed up with the EPA Water Sense program as a Partner Organization. As a partner we will have access to literature and promotional information that we can use to promote water conservation. There is no cost for this program and it should help with the visibility of our program.

The cold weather has resulted in several water main breaks in the recent week. Fortunately they have been on side roads for the most part and not on State highways. As the frost goes deeper into the ground we experience more ground movement that can over time cause the pipe to break.

Work on the first phase of the sewer study (preparing the base map) is going well. With these maps we will start our transition from paper maps to computer based maps that can be accessed from the trucks. Updating of the maps will be much easier as well.

## **Electric**

The utility pole relocation for DelDOT's Elkton Road Project started this week. The contractor has started setting poles in the Casho Mill area. Another contractor has started putting temporary curbing around where poles are to be relocated to. There are nine spots for this curbing, mostly in parking lots, but some will be in the bike lane on the north side around Amstel and Delaware Avenues.

The line crews have continued work on a 4kV to 12kV upgrade on circuits along Delaware Avenue. They also responded to an underground cable failure at the Delaware Technology Park. New cable was spliced onto the existing where a squirrel had chewed through.

Engineering and technicians are investigating power quality issues at 201 East Delaware Avenue. After reporting trouble with a new microprocessor controlled AC/heating unit, a recording meter was put on the service. So far the data has been inconclusive and no corrective action will be taken. The recorder has been reinstalled and will be reevaluated after the unit fails.

The alarm annunciator at Kershaw Substation has been completed. It is tied into the police 911 center and will eventually alarm on the SCADA system.

## **Parks & Recreation**

### **Administration – Charlie Emerson:**

I met with parks personnel to complete an evaluation of our recent snow removal efforts. We also spent time discussing our work order system and work order form, the prioritization of maintenance tasks and scheduling of routine tasks.

Along with Carol Houck, I attended a meeting at the DeIDOT's Dover office last Friday to discuss topics relating to the Pomeroy Trail. The primary focus of the meeting involved DeIDOT's real estate section's work to secure the necessary permanent and temporary construction easements for the project. I'll be working closely with their real estate folks to get this project task completed.

Last Wednesday our internal Curtis Paper Mill /Old Paper Mill Road Park committee met with Pennoni to further create concept plans for the sites. Pennoni will create three (3) plan options to be presented for public comment at a meeting/workshop on Thursday, March 4 at 7 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

The letter regarding the expansion of our parks meadow program will go out this week to those residents who live adjacent to these park areas. Nearly 20 areas totaling more than 13 acres will be added to our meadows program.

Tom Zaleski and I met with Officer Greg Micolucci about a volunteer organization that works with convicted graffiti vandals to paint over or clean graffiti. We hope to foster a relationship with the group to work with the City to help us with local graffiti problems.

#### Recreation – Joe Spadafino:

The Recreation Supervisor Paula Ennis sent out letters to the 40 participants in the Pint Size Basketball program informing them of the hotline, class schedule, etc. She also sent out emails and flyers to last year's participants in various programs and activities and placed activity information on the Delaware Online Calendar of Events to promote upcoming recreation programs.

We are working with the Deaf Communication Services to set up an interpreter for the upcoming soccer instructional class starting January 23 for one of the participants.

The Recreation Supervisor of Community Events has been planning and sending requests for facilities and services to various organizations for the upcoming 2010 event season. This includes requests to the University of Delaware, AETNA Hose Hook & Ladder, and the Newark Police Department. She also mailed out event sponsor information for upcoming events.

The e-newsletter was delivered on Monday to over 3,100 individuals and families in and around Newark. We continue to market the programs with flyers, PSA's and library drop offs of information.

The first week of winter/spring activity registration has concluded. A total of 337 enrollments were received. First week enrollments in 2009 totaled 1,025 and 1,212 in 2008. Several factors are having an impact on registrations:

1. Newsletter Distribution: the change from postal mail to email. We've received numerous calls from people who expressed a concern that they did not receive it in the mail. Hopefully this transition will take care of itself over time as more people are added to the email list.

2. Increased Activity Fees: we have heard many comments regarding the fee increases.
3. The Current Economy - no doubt this is influencing some people's decisions.

The Recreation Superintendent attended the Curtis Paper Mill Master Plan meeting and reviewed some of the design ideas. He is also working on the 2009 Annual Report that will highlight the year in review for the Parks and Recreation Department.

#### Parks & Horticulture – Tom Zaleski:

We mulched the landscaped beds at Olan Thomas Park.

The crew participated in a review/evaluation of our recent snow removal efforts.

We are continuing to work with representatives of Stine Haskell regarding the relocation of fencing that separates the 10 acres they donated to the City and their property.

We completed the installation of a replacement slide unit at Devon Park and will begin installing a similar slide unit at Stafford Park next week.

#### Police

On Friday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, a Newark resident reported that he had attempted to purchase a Yorkshire Terrier from a person in Oklahoma. The victim wired a total of \$1,400 over four separate occasions but never received the dog and has been unable to locate the seller.

On Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, at 11:29 p.m., officers responded to a report of an armed robbery at the Friendly's Restaurant located on South College Avenue. Employees stated that a man armed with a handgun entered the restaurant through the rear door and entered the office. The suspect then took all of the money and ordered the employees into a freezer. After the suspect fled, an employee called police.

On Tuesday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to Dunkin Donuts on Main Street on a report of a man sitting on the floor asking employees for a knife so he could kill himself. The subject was transported to CER.

Crime in Newark decreased in 2009. Robberies decreased by 10.6% from 2008. This represents a 40.4% decrease in robberies since 2006. Aggravated Assault decreased by 28.2% from 2008. This represents a decrease in aggravated assault of 40.4% since 2006. Burglary decreased by 23.9% from 2008. This represents a decrease in burglary of 27% since 2009. Overall serious crime in Newark was reduced by 17.7% in 2009 from 2008. The total number of calls for service handled by NPD in 2009, increased by 9.5%.

Beginning in 2010, the Newark Police Department will change the way crime is classified. This change is necessary in order for Newark's crime categories to match the Federal Bureau of Investigations Uniform Crime Report. As a result of this change, certain crimes will show an increase in 2010 from 2009. For example: In Delaware, if a suspect threatens to hit a victim with a stick, the criminal charge would be "Aggravated Menacing." The FBI categorizes and reports the same action as: "Aggravated Assault." As a result, we expect Newark's 2010 crime statistics to show a large increase in reported "Aggravated Assault," while the actual number of people who are actually assaulted or struck will not increase. The change will also affect certain other crimes to a lesser extent.

KRS/mp