

DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS

April 9, 2010

Planning & Development

Planning

At its meeting Tuesday evening the Planning Commission recommended that City Council adopt a Zoning Code amendment establishing a new "New Center Village" overlay zoning district.

The Planning and Development Department has finished submitting the materials for the City's five year site visit recertification process required for FEMA's Community Rating System. This program results in substantial reductions in flood insurance premiums for property owners with lands within the floodplain.

As a result of noting a liquor license legal notification in the newspaper, we have informed the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission that the sale of alcoholic beverages is not a permitted use in the zoning district at 420 Willa Road (the location of the Unitarian Church).

Mike conducted two site visits for work write-ups for Home Improvement Program loans this week.

Economic Development

Maureen continues to work on the AZD/DNP 5K Walk/Run, scheduled for Saturday, April 17th. The race benefits AZD charity Autism Speaks and Downtown Newark Community Arts Projects.

Maureen also prepared an E-News You Can Use e-newsletter this week.

On Wednesday morning Maureen hosted a meeting of the DNP Merchants' Committee. Agenda items included a review of the Wine & Dine event, information on upcoming events including Newark Nite, and a discussion regarding the Downtown Parking Validation Program.

Community Development

Planner Mike Fortner indicates that the University of Delaware has sent out an email reminder to students, both on and off campus, to remind them to complete and return their 2010 Census forms.

Parking

Considerable time was spent this week preparing for the changes in Sunday parking fees that will begin on Sunday, April 11th.

Parking Administrator Marvin Howard is also continuing to work with Assistant Planning and Development Director Maureen Feeney Roser on our Parking Validation Program.

Code Enforcement

The Code Enforcement Division continues to work on the proposed 2009 amendments to the International Building Code.

Public Works

Engineering/Planning and Inspection:

- 129 E. Main Street: Reviewed revised Construction Improvement Plans. There is only one outstanding item to be supplied before granting final approval.
- U of D Proposed Centralized Cross-walk on Delaware Avenue: Public Works reviewed the revised plans and stormwater calculations. Public Works sent an approval letter to Engineer.
- Drainage Complaints:
 1. Inspected drainage complaint from resident on Tyre Avenue regarding water ponding at the rear of Delaware National Bank.
 2. Inspected and investigated pipe run from lawn basin between Kenilworth Avenue and Aster Avenue to Christina Creek. Resident on Kenilworth Avenue is concerned about ponding in the rear yards.
 3. 759 Arbour Drive & 300 Arbour Drive: Residents came in to discuss concern with water from road draining through property during heavy rain events.
- Villas at Twin Lakes: Reviewed revised subdivision plan. Met with owner, Public Works Director, and engineer regarding public works primary concerns.
- Pomeroy Trail: Met with engineer and Public Works Director to go over comments related to E&SC and stormwater. Performed a site visit at a location where public works had some additional concerns regarding erosion.

Survey Crew

- Shot elevation along 160 l.f. in a swale at Rahway Park for future re-grading project.

Field Operations/Streets

- Street crews assisted Refuse Department on 3-man packer and also picked up bulk pick-ups.
- Street crews performed the third week of spring leaf collection.
- Street crews repaired potholes citywide as needed.
- Street crews removed brush and debris from drainage ditch at storm sewer at the Cherry Hill Manor Service Road.
- Street crews saw cut behind the City yard in preparation for installation of pipe and proposed wash area.
- Catch basin crews rebuilt the following catch basins: 103 Walker Way, 7 Giliberti Lane, and on Ray Street in front of the dorms near N. College Avenue.

Electric

The City's contractor for utility pole relocation for DelDOT's Elkton Road Project is finishing up. Delmarva has started working at Casho Mill Road and when finished the contractor will have a couple days of work left.

The line crews have been busy with maintenance and a couple of underground streetlight circuits. A failed 34kV lightning arrester is being changed today. They are also working on fixing up the lighting for city parking Lot No. 3 behind Abbott's Shoe Store.

The electricians are installing piping and wiring for relay communications to the SCADA system and correcting general maintenance issues.

Engineering attended an informative seminar in Dover which compared many energy efficient devices. Mostly LED lighting systems were presented, but several other utility focused applications were discussed.

Engineering also researched right of way and ownership issues concerning the CSX overpass on the future Pomeroy Trail by the Chapel Street bridge. The City needs to build a new circuit from Kershaw Substation to Lovett Avenue for the new University Science Building and Chiller Plant. To get there, circuits have to cross over or under CSX railroad and because of the bridge, extra steps not anticipated in the original design are being called for. These requirements will jeopardize the construction timeline, so alternatives are being examined.

Water & Wastewater

Work on the Silverbrook lift station is underway. If we are able to stay on schedule the work should be done by the end of the month. Notices were sent out to residents in the surrounding area advising them of the work and providing our phone number to call if they have any questions or concerns.

I met this week with representatives of the firm with whom we have established a communications system for the Electric Department SCADA system. I am working on the SCADA system for the water and waste water system and will be utilizing the same communications system. This will allow us to develop redundancies between the water and electrical systems.

Flushing of the water lines this year was not without problems. We have in the past been identifying sections of the city (typically in the business and university areas) that are best flushed early in the morning when there is little water use and therefore impact to our customers. I am looking to expand more of our flushing to this type of schedule. As we work to flush more and more deposits from the system we are cleaning the system better but we are also inconveniencing more customers. On a positive note we received lots of compliments on the signs that we placed along the roads advising of the flushing.

Parks & Recreation

Administration – Charlie Emerson

We met with representative of DeIDOT's Bridge Section and Pennoni at the Paper Mill Road (White Clay Creek) to discuss the concept of the placement of a separate bicycle/pedestrian bridge across the creek. We'll include the concept in our final Master Plan report for the Curtis Mill/Old Paper Mill Road Park project.

I had discussions with the design team for the Barnes and Noble project regarding landscaping and tree preservation.

We began reviewing the most recent plan submittal for the Villages at Twin Lakes project.

Recent rains followed by lots of sun have caused the grass to explode. We began our parks mowing operations.

Recreation – Joe Spadafino

Paula worked on graduation certificates for the Preschool and the emergency procedure guide for the Before and After Care program. She completed the orientation of the Before and After Care Administrator and continued to contact individuals who were late with payments for Preschool and Before and After Care programs.

Paula worked on schedules for four (4) summer volleyball leagues and summer softball league and continued to contact teams who have outstanding balances to finalize payments so schedules can be sent out.

The Recreation staff has been working on a summer camp guide for 2010. This guide lists all full and half day camps being offered by the Parks and Recreation Department and is scheduled to be emailed this week.

Sharon has been contacting bands to perform at this year's Spring Concert Series. Five of the eight concerts are currently confirmed. This year's focus is on singer/songwriters.

Tyler completed the Dance Recital information packet for youth dance parents. The Recital will be held on Saturday, May 8.

Joe attended a meeting at the Curtis Paper Mill with Charlie to discuss the Paper Mill Bridge and possible pedestrian/bicycle path expansion.

Joe is reviewing and updating (as needed) our summer program manuals and part-time personnel manual.

Recreation staff is editing the first draft of the e-newsletter. The newsletter is to go out the first of May.

Parks & Horticulture – Tom Zaleski

With the assistance of the Public Works Department, we completed the removal of two Main Street tree pits that were in conflict with the cross walks.

Tom committed a good amount of time preparing for the Christina Clean up scheduled for April 10. Tom coordinates the clean up within Newark.

We spent a lot of time on the Hall Trail, near Lewis Park, cutting back bamboo that had fallen over due to the winter's heavy snow fall.

An Eagle Scout candidate completed the installation of a footbridge in Redd Park.

We are nearly finished creating the computer program that will track our labor and maintenance costs for park, horticulture and building maintenance tasks and projects.

Police

On Sunday, April 4th, around 1:30 a.m. people on a rooftop deck of a house in the first block of East Cleveland Avenue observed a car parked in the parking lot of 60 North College Avenue, directly behind the house. They could see the sole occupant of the car looking at houses through binoculars while still in the car.

The suspect then walked to the house where the witnesses were on the roof. The suspect appeared to try to gain entry to the house through a window. When that was not successful, he walked around the house and attempted to gain entry through a door. At that time, the people on the deck scared off the suspect. Officers arrived at the suspect's car, and were able to intercept him before he was able to get into the vehicle. The suspect was taken into custody in the parking lot.

He had in his possession a hammer, screwdriver, multi-tool, flashlight, black mask, gloves, and a folding knife. An inspection of the window where the suspect was seen revealed that the screen had been cut. The door the suspect attempted to enter was found to be ajar, although it had been closed by the residents.

The defendant was charged with Attempted Burglary 1st Degree, Possession of Burglary Tools, Carrying a Concealed Deadly Weapon (knife), and Criminal Mischief. He was brought before the Justice of the Peace and was released on an unsecured bond of \$11,600.

On Tuesday, April 6th, at 4:29 p.m., Cpl. Schwagel, while on uniform patrol, stopped a vehicle that had a fictitious license plate attached to it. The driver of the vehicle, admitted to using a license plate from another vehicle. A check of the driver revealed that his driver's license was suspended and that he was wanted by the New Castle County Court of Common Pleas. The driver was transported to the Newark Police Department where he posted \$493 bond and was released.

On Tuesday, April 6th, at 7:41 p.m., Cpl Schwagel, while still on uniform patrol, stopped a vehicle at the College Square Shopping Center. The driver of the vehicle was wanted on four (4) active warrants. The driver was transported to the Newark Police Department and released on \$2,000 bail.

On Friday, April 9th, the five (5) new Newark Police Officers graduated the Delaware State Police Academy.

During the first three months of 2010, there has been an upward trend of motor vehicle accidents that has increased by twenty (20) compared to this time last year. The Newark Police Department's goal to reverse this trend is to implement a traffic educational and enforcement program to begin soon.

KRS/mp