

DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS

September 18, 2009

Water & Wastewater

Administrative – Roy Simonson:

I attended the White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic River, Watershed Management Committee meeting. The group heard a presentation on a plan to reforest areas of the watershed to improve the water quality and wildlife habitat throughout the watershed. They are also working on integrated trail maps for the water shed and surrounding areas within PA and DE. Lots of folks have maps but none of them show the interconnections.

I attended the monthly meeting of the One Call Board of Directors. This is the group that administers the One Call Utility Locate system in the State of Delaware and surrounding areas. We are currently working on some law changes to deal with issues related to the one call system. The group is also looking at additional ways to get information to the public informing them of the need to call in excavation work to avoid the danger and expense of utility dig ups.

I met with the State DOT and other City staff members to discuss the plans for the Elkton Road reconstruction. We are continuing to coordinate issues related to the water and sewer line replacements that will be done in conjunction with the road work.

Electric

In the early morning hours on Tuesday, September 15, a squirrel caused a wire to burn down on Academy Street. This wire feeds the University's chiller plant. The circuit's breaker tripped once and then reclosed, so the outage to other customers on this line was minimal. The crews arrived and quickly restored the chiller plant's power.

The underground boring contractor has finished installing replacement primary cable on Timberline Drive today. The old cable went bad several weeks ago and a contractor was hired to replace approximately 1000' of cable which was done in two sections at different times. The line crews will finish by terminating and installing a pedestal. The underground primary cable on Timberline Drive from Church Road to Panorama Drive should be trouble free for many years.

The line crews continued work on the UD farm in preparation for a primary voltage upgrade and changed a danger pole at the beginning of Main Street across from the Emergency Center.

Parks & Recreation

Administration – Charlie Emerson:

I visited Redd Park with staff to walk and discuss our continuing effort to re-route certain trails for better sustainability.

The Park Superintendent and I committed time reviewing revisions we will make to the landscaping portion of DelDOT's Elkton Road rehab project.

I attended my 2010 Operating Budget meeting with the City Manager's Office and finance personnel.

I reviewed and forwarded comments on the Daffy Deli site redevelopment plan.

I along with parks personnel met at Rittenhouse Park with Rain Garden nursery experts to discuss the possible design and installation of a Rain Garden in a specific area of the park.

Carol Houck and I met with representatives of DNREC to discuss direction and options for funding and design for the Curtis Paper Mill site and Old Paper Mill Road Park.

The Park Superintendent and I attended a meeting of the Bi-State (Delaware and lower Chester County, PA), trail group, to discuss projects, design and maintenance concerns and standards.

I'm committing time reviewing and preparing comments on the 2002 Newark Bicycle Plan as part of the rejuvenated Newark Bicycle Committees effort to update the document.

Recreation – Joe Spadafino:

We conducted an orientation session with youth league soccer referees and instructors for Tiny Tot and Little Kickers program prior to start of the programs and delivered equipment and supplies to fields in support of soccer programs.

We met with a University of Delaware student who is interested in sports to discuss a possible internship. We are looking into getting her involved the youth basketball program, soccer, Toys for Kids Charity Softball Tournament and the Turkey Trot.

Staff continues to prepare for Community Day having assigned 350 vendor spaces with more coming in every day.

We worked on required paperwork and attended an orientation session for the Food Bank to get the Downes After School Program ready for participation. Food Bank snacks should be starting mid-September.

Youth Dance classes started at the George Wilson Center on Tuesday, September 8. The program, which runs through May, currently has 117 participants.

We contacted Yorklyn Center of Creative Arts, Delaware Center of Contemporary Arts, Delaware College of Art and Design and the Newark Art Alliance in regard to the monthly art display in the City Municipal Building.

Director and Recreation Superintendent conducted a meeting with Recreation Supervisors to discuss new program responsibilities.

We are in the process of restructuring activity registration procedures due to the department no longer having Saturday registration days.

Parks & Horticulture – Tom Zaleski:

The Park Superintendent committed time working on items relating to the 2010 Delaware Recreation and Park Society's annual conference.

We committed a significant amount of time reorganizing our maintenance facility by adding shelving and constructing additional storage areas.

Horticulture staff completed a design and began preparing for fall plantings of ornamental cabbage and kale beds.

We completed interior wall repairs at the Wilson Center.

We submitted a permit request to DeDOT for the purpose of placing lights on the downtown trees for the Christmas season. The task requires that we close a lane of traffic intermittently to move the articulating lift from tree to tree.

A semi-final walkthrough, with the contractor and the New Castle Conservation District project inspector, is scheduled later this week for the Redd Park Trail rehab project.

Police

The Fall Crime Suppression Initiative continues to be a success. Last week, officers made the following arrests: 32 criminal arrests, 26 alcohol arrests, and 2 Driving Under the Influence arrests. There were no street robberies or assaults reported. Each weekend, officers continue to monitor large parties on Cleveland Avenue, Wilbur Street, and the surrounding area.

Overall crime is down in the city. So far compared to last year Part 1 Offenses (serious crime) have decreased by 201 incidents and Part 2 Crimes (assault, criminal mischief, etc.) have decreased by 580 incidents. At the same time, calls for service to the police department have increased by 1,716. Officers have done a tremendous job of decreasing crime while responding to more calls for service.

Compared to this time last year, motor vehicle accidents in the city have decreased by 119. However, the number of traffic summons continues to decrease as traffic officers are assigned to other duties and the absence of two full time parking enforcement officers due to injury.

Planning & Development

Planning

The Department continues to collect comments from other departments regarding an application for a rezoning from BN (neighborhood commercial) to BB (central business district), major subdivision and special use permit for a .227 acre property located at 109-111 Elkton Road. A Subdivision Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 18th to review this submittal in depth.

Work continued this week preparing for the October 6, 2009 Planning Commission meeting. Agenda items include:

1. Election of Planning Commission Officers
2. Amendments to the Zoning Code and the Subdivision and Development Regulations updating Newark's environmental and aesthetic standards, including wetlands and riparian protections and buffers; steep slope protections; landscaping and mature tree protection; and establishing a downtown above ground utility impact fee. [Tabled August 4, 2009]

On Friday of this week, Research Aide Joan Barrett will be retiring after nearly 34 years of service with the City. The Department will celebrate Joan's service and her new beginning with cake in the City Manager's Conference Room on Friday, September 18th at three o'clock. The Department thanks Joan for her service and wishes her all the best for the future.

Economic Development

Considerable time was spent this week in contract review and design for the Downtown Newark Gift Card Program.

Considerable time this week was spent preparing for the Downtown Newark Partnership's presence at Community Day scheduled for this Sunday, September 20, 2009 from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

On Thursday, September 10, 2009, the Downtown Newark Partnership Board met to review proposals for a Downtown Business Services Assessment, two Design Committee improvement projects and upcoming events. The Partnership Board will meet again on Thursday, October 8, 2009, to continue discussions on the Downtown Business Services Assessment.

Code Enforcement

The Department is pleased to announce that Amos Wilson, Property Maintenance Inspector passed the ICC Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector test for certification. Congratulations to Amos!

This week Fire Marshal Matt Schumacher and Fire Prevention Inspector Bill Street attended the NFPA Lifesaving Seminar held in Dover. The Seminar consisted of three days of training at the Delaware State Fire School in Dover.

Community Development

On Monday evening, Planner Mike Fortner staffed a Community Development Block Grant/Revenue Sharing Advisory Committee meeting to discuss applications for the upcoming year's programs. The Committee has very nearly completed its deliberations and will be submitting a recommendation for City Council consideration early this fall.

Parking

Some time was spent this week working on the trash compactor project for Lot #4 including meeting with merchants in that lot.

The Parking Office staff continues to work on issuing student parking permits.

On Tuesday afternoon, Parking Administrator Marvin Howard staffed a Downtown Newark Partnership Parking Committee meeting. At this meeting, the Committee discussed parking operations and free parking promotions.

Public Works

Engineering

- Contract #09-03 – 2009 Street Improvement Program: Mumford & Miller Concrete, Inc. and Wrangle Hill Enterprises worked on Devon Drive completing:

- 1) 155.5 s.f. of 4" p.c.c. sidewalk at handicap ramps.
- 2) 16.0 s.f. of red truncated dome block installation at ramps.
- 3) (1) double catch basin adjustment and bonnet pour.
- 4) 276.5 l.f. of p.c.c. rolled curb replacement.

*Contractors used 20.0 c.y. of DeIDOT Class B concrete in above pours.

Mumford & Miller Concrete, Inc. completed the pouring of 8" p.c.c. road patches on Darwin Drive (1) and Kirkwood Highway (2) totaling 73.7 s.y. using 20.0 c.y. of DeIDOT Class A road patch concrete.

- Contract 09-06 Handicap Ramps: Paoli Services completed the following on Benny Street and Chambers Street:

- 1) Formed and poured 250 s.f. of 4" p.c.c. sidewalks for handicap ramps.
 - 2) Formed and poured 38 l.f. of integral curb and gutter.
 - 3) Installed 32 s.f. of red truncated domes.
- Wyncliff: Brian Johnson installed the final wearing course hot mix surface for the Wyncliff subdivision using 284 tons of hot mix.
 - Stormwater Coordinator forwarded a draft stormwater utility credit structure to the City Manager, Public Works Director, University of Delaware WRA, and Engineering Assistant. Also forwarded several stormwater management area maintenance options.

Survey Crew

- Performed a topographic survey behind the Maintenance Garage for future installation of a wash rack.
- Staked out 130 l.f. of centerline of swale at Redd Park for Rodell Construction.

Field Operations/Street

- Concrete crews excavated, formed, and poured 90 ft. of rolled curb at 734 Art Lane.
- Street crews repaired brick pavers in the driveway entrance alongside Rainbow Records.
- Street crews removed a tree from the roadway blocking the entrance to Windy Hills on S. Dillwyn Drive.
- Street crews removed blockages of debris from the Church Road Bridge and the Barksdale Road Bridge along the creek.

KRS/mp