

NOVEMBER 17, 2004

WAYNESBORO, PA 17268

PUBLIC MEETING RE: STREETS

Council President Charles McCammon called the public meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. with the following in attendance:

Borough Council Members - Richard George, C. Harold Mumma, John Cook, Charles McCammon, Ardie Winters and Andrew Benchoff

Mayor Louis M. Barlup, Jr.

Borough Staff - Lloyd R. Hamberger, II, Borough Manager

Kevin Grubbs, Assistant Director of Engineering

Denny Benshoff, Maintenance Superintendent

Ray Shultz, Police Chief

Ron Flegel, Fire Chief

Mr. McCammon stated that the purpose of the meeting was to receive public input on the need for street and road repairs/reconstruction throughout the Borough. Discussion would include general, as well as specific conditions of the streets in Waynesboro, and funding strategies to address the situation. Individuals will be afforded an opportunity to give their opinion and comments on the matter. Anyone wishing to speak will be requested to provide their name and address for the record.

The meeting was then turned over to Councilman Richard George, Chairman of the Borough's Street Committee. He stated that, during the past few months, the Street Committee has been looking at the condition of the Borough's streets and alleys. It is apparent that they are in need of immediate attention, however this action will necessitate a large infusion of money.

Councilman George noted that the Borough is responsible for 97 streets (and 3 additional at Cold Spring Estates), plus 60+ alleys. There are several streets within the Borough which are the State's responsibility (those include Main Street, N. Grant Street, S. Potomac Street, N. Church Street, Clayton Avenue to Fifth Street and State Hill).

Mr. George reviewed the three (3) major sources of revenue that are used to reconstruct and repair streets, including CDBG money (which can only be used in low income areas), Liquid Fuels money (which is restricted to certain uses) and local funding (money set aside in the Borough's General Fund budget). He also reviewed estimated costs involved in the reconstruction of several streets, as an example.

The Borough's Engineering Department conducts a study every five (5) years to indicate conditions of the streets. The last study was done in 2001. At that time, the study revealed that 46% of the streets needed reconstruction, 20% needed resurfaced, 14% needed minor maintenance and 20% required no maintenance. Reconstruction and overlaying has been done to some streets (mostly streets that have qualified for CDBG funding). In addition, monies from Liquid Fuels have been utilized for alley repair, and a minimal amount of General Fund money has been used for maintenance.

The results of past efforts indicates that, in the areas where CDBG funding was available, the streets are in relatively good condition and these areas will continue to receive proper attention (reconstruction and overlaying will be done). Liquid Fuels will also continue to help with the alleys. However, little or no money has been provided in the General Fund budget to take care of those areas not covered by either of these funding sources. Due to the lack of available funding, there are streets in certain areas of town that will not get the attention they need.

Councilman George noted that the Borough's streets have reached the "critical need" time. Streets that require immediate attention include, but are not limited to: Second Street, C.V. Avenue, Park Street, Ridge Avenue (Cleveland Avenue to Third Street), Walnut Street (Third Street to Fifth Street) and Myrtle Avenue, plus sections of other streets throughout town.

Mr. George reviewed the Borough's options with regard to street conditions. One of the options is to do nothing more than has been done in the past, however the result will be further deterioration and a more costly method of repair in the future. Many streets can be repaired by overlaying, which can be done for one-third the cost of reconstruction; however many streets are beyond the overlay stage and must be reconstructed. Secondly, the Borough could wait to see if government funding would become available - that is possible, but would be quite limited. Thirdly, the Borough could take a bold step and borrow money to begin the upgrading needed at this time.

Costs for street repairs were also discussed. Mr. George suggested that taxes could be raised, with the additional amount received to be designated solely for street improvements. He estimated that an increase of 2-3 mills may be needed.

Councilman Cook thanked Councilman George and Kevin Grubbs for their research on the matter. He noted that he has seen street repairs be short-changed, due to the lack of funds available, for the three years he has been on Council. He reiterated that the costs will be greater if Council continues to do nothing.

Assistant Director of Engineering Kevin Grubbs reported that, of the Borough's current 97 streets, 46% were slated in need of reconstruction and 20% for overlay when their study was conducted three years ago. He noted that this is a critical situation which will continue to worsen with time. Maintenance Superintendent Denny Benshoff noted his agreement.

Councilman Winters added that the freezing and thawing during the next several winter months will also make the streets worse.

Mr. Hamberger reported that he received a telephone call from an individual who wanted to remind Council of the condition of Welty Road.

Public comments were then requested.

Ronald Martin, 66 State Hill Road. Mr. Martin stated his pleasure that Council is looking at the street situation, but suggested that they consider using the increased real estate transfer taxes they have been receiving for street repairs (rather than raising taxes). He also requested that something be done to deter utility companies from digging up the streets once they have been completed. He suggested that if a utility has more than one dig in a block, they should be required to overlay that block. It was noted that the utilities are given the opportunity to upgrade their services before the streets are done.

Marjorie Benson, 2 W. Third Street. Ms. Benson noted that the option of utilizing the transfer tax, as mentioned by Mr. Martin, should possibly be considered. She offered her assistance to Council in any future "brainstorming".

Paul Coleman, 961 Park Street. Mr. Coleman noted that he presented a petition last year to Council regarding the condition of Park Street, however he was told by the Borough Manager that "everyone is too rich on that street and it could not be done". Councilman George stated that Mr. Coleman's petition motivated them to this point. He assured Mr. Coleman that Park Street will be made a priority in their efforts, but they need to find funding to get the job done.

Roy Tressler, 121 W. Third Street. Mr. Tressler stated that "doing nothing" is not an option. He elects to move forward and find a way to finance the program.

Marjorie Benson asked what the proposed timeline for the project is. Councilman George noted he would like to get the process moving as quickly as possible. In fact, he would like to be ready by Council's next meeting to recommend the borrowing of money; but, of course, specifics on the costs and financing options will need to be reviewed first.

Janis Krouse, 160 S. Church Street. Ms. Krouse noted that reconstruction seems to be the way to go, as the costs will only continue to go up. Councilman George explained that attention needs to be given to certain streets right now, but overlay can be done on some others (which could hold them over for an additional eight or more years). He would not be in favor of doing it all at one time -- getting the whole thing started is most important.

Mayor Barlup noted that, when a street is designated to be done, the utility companies are given an opportunity to repair or install services. In fact, work on a street has been held up for this reason, on some occasions. He added that this program should be a gradual process, as the Borough will need to work in conjunction with the various utilities. It was also noted that the Borough should look at what is responsible for destruction of the streets. Trucks and utilities digging were mentioned as certain culprits, and those will also need to be addressed.

Ms. Benson asked for Council members' views on this matter.

Councilman Benchoff stated that something serious needs to be done. He is in favor of repairing the streets in some fashion, but is hesitant to agree to a tax increase and feels that the program could begin with existing monies.

Councilman Winters noted he would like to do the best job possible with money the Borough currently has.

Councilman Mumma noted he is in favor of doing something -- preferably resurfacing as much as possible. He feels that the quicker streets are resurfaced, the less streets will need to be reconstructed. However, property owners need to be aware that they will also be responsible for the costs of any curb and sidewalk repairs necessary. He strongly urged that Council move as fast as economically possible.

Councilman Cook noted that he has already voiced his support of this move. He stated that, as the Borough's streets deteriorate, the community also deteriorates, and it continues on a downward spiral. Resurfacing will save reconstruction in the future. He added that alternate funding will need to be explored, including the real estate transfer taxes and liquid fuels. It is his feeling that Waynesboro will be a better community after this process has been completed. He also noted that better pricing may be received for the street work, as a larger number of streets will be done at one time.

Mayor Barlup noted he supports the project "100%", noting that "you have to pay for what you want".

Council President McCammon stated he supports the Street Committee's decision.

Ben Greenawalt, 809 Anthony Avenue. Mr. Greenawalt noted that, years ago, the Borough had stated that revenues from wage tax would be used for the streets. He questioned, "What happened to that?" Mayor Barlup responded that that was over 30 years ago and this Council cannot provide an answer for that. Councilman George stated, however, that he will personally be diligent that the money set aside for streets will be used solely for streets.

Mr. Greenawalt also stated that the Borough should conduct repairs on a priority basis, completing those which are worse first. Councilman George stated that the only problem with that is that people don't always agree on what is worse.

Marjorie Benson asked for clarification from the Borough Manager on the possibility of utilizing transfer tax for the streets. Mr. Hamberger noted that the transfer tax revenues are "already spent"; and even though those have gone up, you can't rely on that for years to come. When the interest rates go back up, the market will lessen and taxes will decrease. He added that transfer taxes for the last several years have indeed been elevated, and this has helped to forestall an increase in property taxes to date.

Councilman Benchoff clarified that overlaying is not necessarily a "quick fix" -- if it is done at the right time, it can prevent the need for reconstruction in the future. Mr. Grubbs added that an overlay can last for 10-15 years with an extensive maintenance program.

Park Street was discussed in more depth. Mr. Grubbs noted that it is in need of reconstruction, but will also require a new water line (which is an additional cost of \$40,000). In defense of the utilities, Mr. Hamberger stated that many times they have checked all services and replaced any which are bad prior to the street work beginning; but after the paver has gone over the lines, it can sometimes result in a leak.

Councilman George estimated that the Borough will probably need to fund between \$1,000,000 to \$1,250,000 in order to get the process started. He is awaiting figures on the actual costs of that financing, however, prior to making a final decision.

Tax Collector Delmos Oldham recommended placing any additional tax monies in a separate fund (as is done with the street lighting funds). Councilman George again noted that Council's objective would be that the money set aside will be used for streets only.

Hearing no further comments, the hearing adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melinda S. Knott

Administrative Assistant