

PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 10, 2009

ATTENDEES:

Bill Pritchard, Chair
John Barnes
Andy Freimuth
Sue Hill
Larry Lannom
Michael Lebowitz
Susan Milner Reynolds
Arthur Schatzkin
Don Sherk
Al Lang, Council Liaison

Absent: Catherine Cecere, Scott DeCain

Guests:

Joseph Cutro
Dave Eason
Janet Freimuth
Jennifer Perkins, 4314 Willow Lane
Scott Henderson, 4314 Willow Lane
Bari Schwartz, 4300 Willow Lane
Barry Hager 4300 Willow Lane
Katie Smythe Newman, 4316 Willow Lane

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm.

Open public comment: There was discussion among the Willow Lane residents and the PSC regarding (1) process for any changes (2) need for resident input in a timely manner (3) traffic through the Leland Center parking lot, particularly during the rush hour Town entry restrictions (4) potential solutions, including reopening of Willow Lane and redirecting traffic from the Leland Center to other streets. Willow Lane residents expressed concerns about the process in general, need for openness and their wish to participate in the deliberation. The Chair reviewed the general process and approach as well as the current status.

The minutes of the February 10, 2009 meeting were approved.

Traffic:

Joseph Cutro provided a preliminary review of 4 issues: Leland Center cut-through; Leland St/East Ave/Thornapple Path/44th St; Leland St/46th St circle; and traffic signal on East-West Highway. Potential solutions and related issues at the confluence of Leland Street, Thornapple Path, East Avenue and 44th Street were reviewed with details to be considered at a future meeting.

Security:

A Town meeting is schedule for Thursday March 12 on Security and Town police services. The Chair will present background information and the policing options followed by a presentation on Neighborhood Watch by the Community Relations Committee. Bill Pritchard will moderate the discussion.

The PSC has collected information on five options or models, some specifically at the request of the Council members at the January Council meeting. They are:

1. Current model: off duty police, private security service
2. Merged Village and Town police force. The Village identified several strong barriers to implementing this potential option.
3. Subcontracting to the Village. At this time, the Village only fulfills its contract to other municipalities a few months of the year.
4. Friendship Heights model – dedicated MCP officer. Montgomery County Police representative indicated that with current staffing and limitations, this not an option.
5. Town Policeman

There is a public perception of decreased safety in the Town with security being a significant issue. The relative advantages of these approaches were discussed with the PSC advocating a Town Policeman who would provide direct services as well as professional coordination of other security assets. Key advantages are Town control, visibility and coordination.

Power/Electricity:

The subcommittee is continuing its evaluation of the current state and potential solutions. The PSC approved the request for the purchase of a light meter for assessment of current lighting.

Parks:

The Leland Center playground is open.

The parks group plans to request funds from the Town to contribute toward CCES playground renovations. Councilman Lang noted that the Council is considering how to evaluate such requests for funds.

Water Run-off:

The proposal for water engineer consultant, similar to the arborist, will be discussed at a future meeting.

Town budget meeting (April):

Potential expenses related to PSC issues:

Traffic: \$25-30k; circle at Leland and 46th would be approximately \$40-50k

Elm street park: \$110k

Lighting: consultant study \$25k

Water drainage consultant: \$15k

Town policing

Electricity (light purchase)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 7, 2009