

BOONSBORO MAYOR AND COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 21, 2022

The Mayor and Council of Boonsboro held a Special Meeting on Tuesday, June 22, 2022 in the Meeting Chambers. The Meeting was streamed via GoToMeeting. In attendance were Assistant Mayor Tony Nally, Council Members Ray Hanson, Eric Kitchen, Terri Hollingshead and Ricky Weaver. Also present were Town Manager Paul Mantello, Office Manager Kimberly Miller, Town Planner Reiley Stanley, Boonsboro Municipal Utilities Commission Chairman Stu Mullendore, Washington County Board of County Commissioners President Jeff Cline and Commissioner Charlie Burkett and Town Attorney Ann Rotz. Mayor Howard Long and Council Member Marilee Kerns were not in attendance due to prior commitments. The meeting convened at 6:00PM.

Assistant Mayor Nally opened the meeting with a brief background of the Chase Six Boulevard - Campus Avenue Realignment and Intersection Project and the importance of the Project for the safety of the children going to-and-from the Boonsboro Educational Complex.

Town Manger Mantello stated that Maryland Route 66, known as Maple Avenue as it travels through Boonsboro, is a thoroughfare for residents traveling to-and-from Hagerstown. He stated that Maple Avenue borders the Boonsboro Educational Complex, where approximately 2,100 Elementary, Middle and High School students go to school. He further stated that every day around 4,200 vehicles travel the stretch of Maple Avenue bordering the campus, and on average 650 of those vehicles are travelling 12-or-more miles per hour over the posted speed limit of 30 miles per hour. Town Manger Mantello stated that high traffic, speeding and the absence of crosswalks to safely ferry students across Maple Avenue to campus creates a dangerous school environment. He explained that the original plan was to connect Chase Six Boulevard to Maple Avenue approximately 400-feet northeast of the educational complex's Campus Avenue intersection and that the Town Staff met with the developer and the State Highway Administration to discuss solutions. He further explained after working through many issues, the only viable option is to realign Chase Six Boulevard and Campus Avenue to intersect, and that Staff has been working with the developers engineering staff to draft a Concept Plan for the Realignment and Intersection Project. Town Manger Mantello stated that the Realignment and Intersection Project includes a land swap with a Town property owner at 202 Maple Avenue, that it creates the crosswalks and sidewalks needed to safely ferry students walking to-and-from campus and that the installation of a traffic light would serve to slow traffic on Maple Avenue and control traffic during School arrival and dismissal. He stated that originally the Washington County Public School Board of Education pledged all available resources to complete the Project and a representative even traveled to Annapolis with Mayor Long and himself to lobby for funding. He further stated that on June 15, 2022 the Town received a letter from the WCPS BOE Attorney that they were no longer interested in engaging in further discussion about the land swap and that the WCP BOE does not have the legal authority to convey land directly to the Town.

Town Manager Mantello reviewed the following documents for the Assistant Mayor and Councils input, as well as an overlay graphic created by Boonsboro Municipal Utilities Commission Chairman Mullendore showing the proposed detailed realignment and intersection.

- Chase Six – Campus Realignment Original Concept and Chase Six – Campus Realignment Concept Version 4
- Board of Education Deed – July 1, 1949 and December 21, 1959
- Letter of Support from Property Owner of 202 Maple Avenue to Town
- Letter of Intent from Property Owner of 202 Maple Avenue to WCPS BOE
- Washington County Board of County Commissioners Letters of Support
- State Highway Administration Letter of Support
- Washington County Board of Education Letter of Support – March 17, 2022
- Washington County Board of Education Attorney Response Letter – June 15, 2022

Kim LaBrush, representing the Public Safety Commission, and Ena Martin, Fletcher's Grove Home Owners Association President, both voice their concerns over the safety of the children crossing Maple Avenue to go to school. Ms. LaBrush asked if there is an option to have 'dual red lights' at off-set roads. Town Manager Mantello stated that Chase Six Boulevard and Campus Avenue are too close together to have tandem lights. Ms. Martin stated that currently school children are walking a dirt trail 'goat-path' to get from the Fletcher's Grove development to Maple Avenue, and then crossing the busy road without a crosswalk. She asked if it would be possible to have a school crossing guard to assist the children in crossing Maple Avenue. Town Manger Mantello stated that the WCPS Board of Education does not employ school crossing guards.

BMUC Chairman Stu Mullendore stated that the major safety factor is to connect sidewalks and crosswalks to get children safely to school and home.

Town Attorney Rotz stated that it is her understanding that the Washington County Public School Board of Education is requesting to keep the elected officials out of the discussions but to have staff continue to communicate with the Town, noting that they stated in their letter dated June 15, 2022, that the WCPS BOE stated that it does not have the legal authority to convey land directly to the Town.

Assistant Mayor Nally asked Washington County Board of County Commissioner President Jeff Cline what the County Commissioners have to say about all of this. President Cline stated that if the realignment of the intersection for Chase Six Boulevard and Campus Avenue is what the Town wants, then to continue to stick to our guns and that is all he has to say. President Cline thanked the Town and then left the Meeting.

Town Manger Mantello stated that the Chase Six Boulevard - Campus Avenue Realignment and Intersection Project will be completely State funded and that the Washington County Public School Board of Education will not have to pay a penny for the Project. He stated that Town staff met with Jeff Proulx, WCPS BOE Chief Operating Officer, and Rob Rollins, WCPS BOE Director of Facilities Planning and Development, and that they both seemed to be in favor of the Project before the letter dated June 15, 2022. He stated that he reached out to Scott McIlwee, owner of 202 Maple Avenue, the property that would be demolished and relocated for the Project, and he said that he is not interested in moving to a different area of Town, and that he wants to stay near his property on Maple Avenue.

Washington County Board of County Commissioner Charlie Burkett stated that he agrees with President Cline and that the Town should stick to their guns. He suggested calling the State Highway Administration and asking them to put down their foot for the Project because they have the authority to do so on Route 66 (Maple Avenue).

BMUC Chairman Mullendore suggested having the WCPS BOE sign off on the Project and then figuring out where to relocate Mr. McIlwee property. Attorney Rotz stated that she does not think the WCPS BOE would go for that.

Assistant Mayor Nally stated that the Town needs to draft an Ordinance to restrict heavy weight vehicles on interior Town roads, thus making WCPS BOE buses exit the School Complex via Campus Avenue onto Maple Avenue.

Scheduling of Public Hearing: Assistant Mayor Nally will formally discuss the scheduling a Public Hearing with the Mayor and Council at the Workshop Meeting on June 27, 2022, noting that it will tentatively be held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022.

Motion by Council Member Hollingshead, second by Council Member Weaver to adjourn the Special Meeting at 7:40PM.
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Miller, Office Manager