

## **Planning, Streets and Traffic Committee**

Monday, April 24, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

City Service Center – 915 Quarrier Street – Conference Room

### **Members Present**

Mary Beth Hoover, Chair  
Jennifer Pharr (via phone)  
Becky Ceperley  
Bobby Haas  
John Gianola (via phone)  
Emmett Pepper

### **Staff Present**

Sgt. Oldham  
Terri Allen  
Matt Hartline  
Chad Webb  
Brent Webster

### **Public Attendees**

Lydia McKee

### **1. Call to Order**

### **2. Unfinished Business**

### **3. New Business**

**Resolution No. 783-23** - A Resolution adopting the protection of the brick pavement on portions of Valley Road, Chester Road, Maple Road, Springdale Road, Poplar Road, Somerset Drive, Pine Road, and several alleyways within the City of Charleston.

Mary Beth asked if there were any questions pertaining to the Bill from anyone on the committee.

Mary Beth asked Brent Webster if he had any discussion to add to this matter. Brent said this involved the street department and that public works had no involvement with the proposed resolution. Brent said it was important for everyone to understand that the city does not really have a skill set to repair brick streets. It is one thing to replace a missing brick, but where repair is concerned it might be in some aspect more of a question for engineering or the mayor's office.

Lydia McKee, a resident who has lived on Valley Road for 37 years and represented other residents from Valley Road and Maple Road addressed the committee expressing their interest in keeping the brick streets. Lydia McKee addressed the aesthetics created by the brick streets. Ms. McKee said there are only seven brick roads remaining in the City of Charleston, along with the alleyways. The first six streets are in the Edgewood Area. Pine Road is in South Hills behind the Bridge Road shops.

Lydia McKee said that one of the most important reasons for preserving the brick streets is that it is a relic or remnant of the City of Charleston's history. Charleston was the first city in the world to have brick streets, the first being Summers Street circa 1870-1873. Mordeci Levi, a Charlestonian, filed for the first patent for constructing brick pavement. He filed that patent in 1889. So, there is a lot of local history attached to the brick streets.

Lydia McKee spoke on the benefits of keeping brick streets, having already mentioned the aesthetic benefit. The neighborhoods are historic with older homes. Lydia McKee said that her home is almost 100 years old and many of the homes on these streets are older. Preserving the brick streets is a defining characteristic of these historic neighborhoods. Brick streets are durable. Ms. McKee added that she did not think brick streets required a significant amount of maintenance, other than occasional utility situations. Compared to asphalt, the amount of maintenance is minimal. Brick streets improve property values. Ms. McKee said that spoke with realtors who informed them that the brick streets added a 5%-10% increase in property value and presented a letter from a letter stating the same. Lydia McKee further mentioned that brick streets are less prone to high-speed traffic.

Ms. McKee further stated that many cities have passed resolutions or ordinances to protect and preserve brick streets, Fort Wayne, Wilmington, Columbia, Atlanta, to name a few. Ms. McKee said that she is hopeful that the committee will pass this resolution for the preservation of the existing brick streets in the City of Charleston.

Mary Beth thanked Ms. McKee for her presentation. Mary Beth further stated that the streets are beautiful and she finds it to be a worthy cause to protect and preserve Charleston's brick streets.

**Motion and Vote:** A motion was made by Becky Ceperley to pass Resolution No. 783-23. Resolution No. 783-23 passed based on a unanimous vote. Resolution No. 783-23 now goes before the Charleston City Council a final decision.

#### **4. Discussion**

Requests for lowering speed limits.

Mary Beth said that there are new members on City Council and new people on this the PS&T Committee. The previous council discussed issues pertaining to speeding and actually lowered some speed limits within the city. Then they started receiving numerous requests. The decision was made that the committee should come up with a standard of questions or procedures on how and when speed limits are lowered in the city.

The first step is gathering the data for the speed limit in a specific area from the Street Department. Once the data is reviewed, if it is determined there is a major speeding problem,

that information can be forwarded to the CPD. Then the committee should decide if there is justification for lowering the speed limit.

A council member stated that there are approximately 13 individuals driving at excessive speeds on Wilkie Drive. He also stated when CPD is in this area, their enforcement is effective.

**5. Approval of the Minutes of the February 27, 2023, meeting**

**Motion and Vote:** A motion was made by Becky Ceperley to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2023 PS&T meeting. The motion was seconded. The minutes passed by a unanimous vote.

**6. Adjournment**