

Ward 5 Update May 9, 2013

Approximately thirty (30) residents attended a Ward 5 meeting on May 9th at Mrs. Mitchell's at the plaza at Homestead and 202 from 6:30-8:30PM.

Traffic/speeding/parking issues: Traffic Officer Eddie Moskal attended and gave an overview of the traffic division and how they rotate throughout the city from one ward to another. Sgt. Cruz also stopped in at our meeting. They took questions and listened to issues, noting them as residents shared their concerns. Some concerns expressed which have come up before included parking on Homestead Ave straddling the curb and sidewalk, parking in front of McMahan School (I will follow up. The order has already been filed for the signs), people parking at the corner right up to the street and leaving no room for those trying to turn on to the street, speeding cars on Mt Road and 202. A suggestion was made that the employees of the school be required to park in the lot for the school as it is noted spaces are available and cars are parked on the street. Re: crosswalks, a suggestion was made to use strobe type light at the crosswalk near McMahan School to make it more visible to drivers. A request was made to improve old crosswalks with ramps like the new ones have. The idea of speed humps was raised and the process for getting them was discussed. There must be a majority of the neighbors that want one in order for it to be considered. Residents on Blueberry Hill asked for traffic calming ideas near the Elks and the small traffic circle. An order will be filed for that issue.

HCC Road Update: Jeff Hayden, Executive Director of the Kittredge Center at HCC gave an update on the road. The new road from Rt.202 to HCC has been approved and construction will begin in June if the bids come in within budget.

Big Y Project Update: Marcos Marrero stated that as recently as one month ago, Francesca Maltese from O'Connell's assured him that Big Y is still planning to come to Holyoke. There will be no building of the store until the intersection work is done.

City Budget: The Mayor presented his proposed budget to the City Council on Tuesday night. If any attendees are interested in a more detailed review please note your interest on the sign-up sheet and a separate meeting will be set. It was noted that in the Mayor's summary, over \$500,000 in cuts were made and the proposed budget is lower than last year's budget. However, there is still a short fall of over \$800,000 due to payments owed to Macy's and Verizon due to approved tax rebates following their appeals.

Other Issues:

New lights have been installed on many streets. A few are not happy with the change. I have followed up with Jim Lavelle at HG&E, but due to cost savings of the fixtures and ongoing savings of electricity they will not be returning to the older style fixtures. If there are unique circumstances he asked that residents contact the department.

There was very good participation by those in attendance. Once new information is available another forum will be announced. Thank you all for your attendance and participation!

Linda Vacon,
Your Ward 5 City Councilor