



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
Engineering Division – Traffic Section
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To: Municipal Services Committee
From: Michael Hardy, Assistant City Traffic Engineer
Date: January 7, 2020
Re: New Street Light Request – 400 W River Road

I received a request from a resident on W River Road to have a streetlight installed at one of the curves on the street. The resident feels there is not enough light to feel safe while walking at night, specifically at the curve near 333 and 400 W River Road (Figure 1 & Figure 2). The resident indicated that due to the orientation of home and driveway lights, this location is very dark. Upon further review, the entire street/block of River Road is void of street lighting.



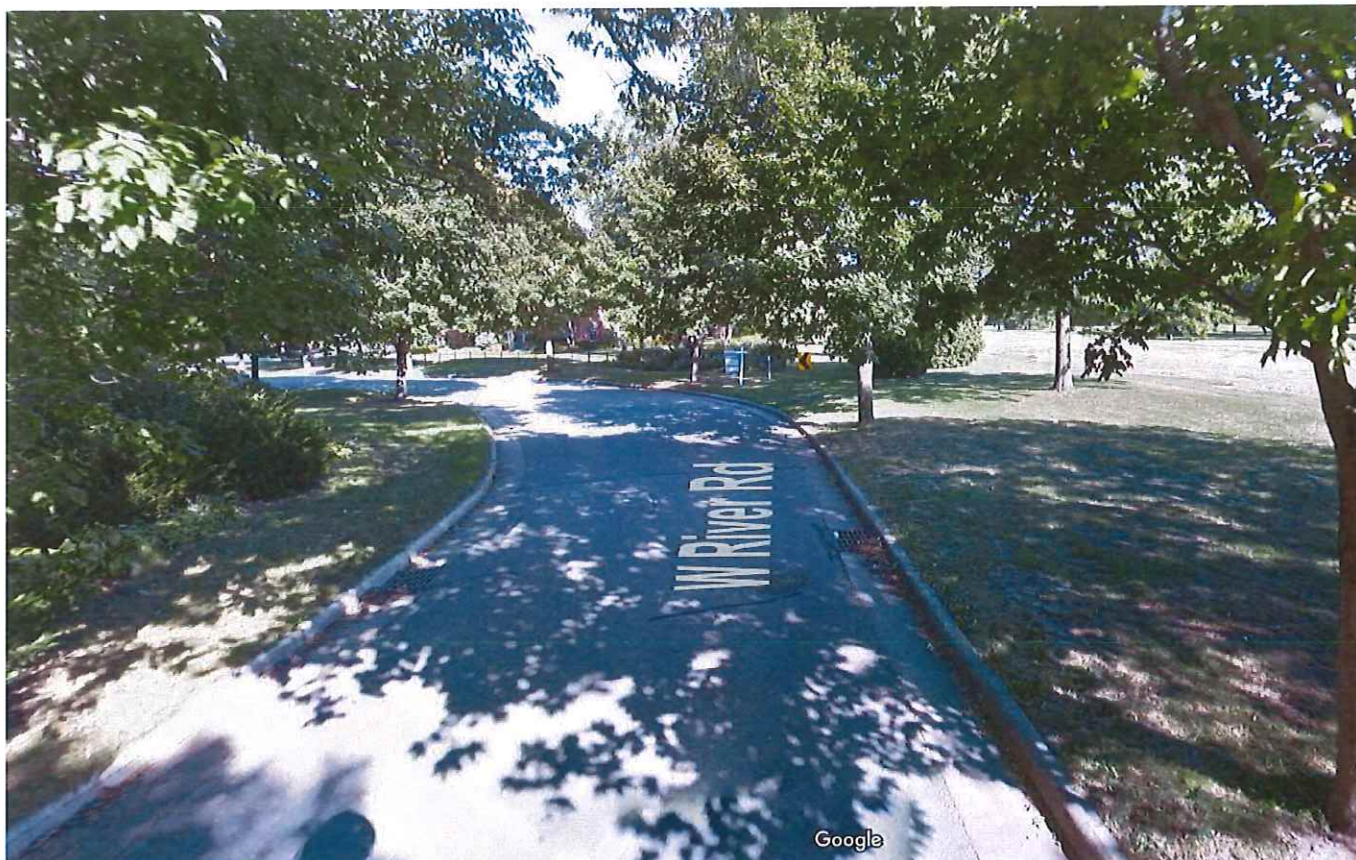


Figure 2: W River Rd, looking east toward the curve near 333 and 400. (Source; Google Maps)

The City's *Street Light Installation Policy* (enclosed) supports lighting public rights-of-way for vehicular and pedestrian traffic safety, and its favorable use as a deterrence and aid in response to public safety issues. City policy would support lighting the entire length of River Road. More generally, the policy supports street lighting implementation when new roadways are constructed or when existing roadways are reconstructed and/or urbanized. The developer is responsible for the construction costs associated with new roadways and the City's *Special Assessment Policy* would apply with reconstructions and/or urbanizations. Traffic's operations budget (17023 account) does include an annual allocation of about \$5,000 earmarked for special streetlight requests. Typically, these funds address voids in the street lighting network identified by our office or City residents.

River Road has a unique history. According to City records, it was once a private entity until dedicated to the City in 1973. Records indicate it was more of a farmer's lane servicing about nine (9) homes at the time. With the dedication, the City took steps to more formally establish the roadway and build the cul-de-sac at the end. There was a recommendation by the City to implement street lighting in conjunction with the dedication, but this never occurred (our files do not indicate why). There was a subsequent request by a resident of River Road in 1987 to add a streetlight at a curve and at the cul-de-sac, but it was denied by the City (again, our files do not indicate why). The City reconstructed and urbanized River Road in 1993 with curb and gutter as seen today, but there are no records indicating the consideration of streetlights. River Road currently services nineteen (19) homes.

The estimated up-front cost to have WE Energies install one standard streetlight (wood pole, metal arm & luminaire) at the requested location is \$5,543. The additional ongoing monthly facility and energy cost would be \$10.32. This cost includes underground fed cables, so the streetlight would be the only item extruding from the ground. The underground cable would route from the power pedestal between 400 and 340 W River Road, across the street and southwest along the street to the streetlight pole (Figure 3). Based on feedback from the neighborhood, we subsequently requested a price from WE Energies for a decorative streetlight (black coach style post-top lighting unit). The up-front cost for a decorative streetlight would be \$5,880, with an ongoing monthly facility and energy cost of \$14.84.

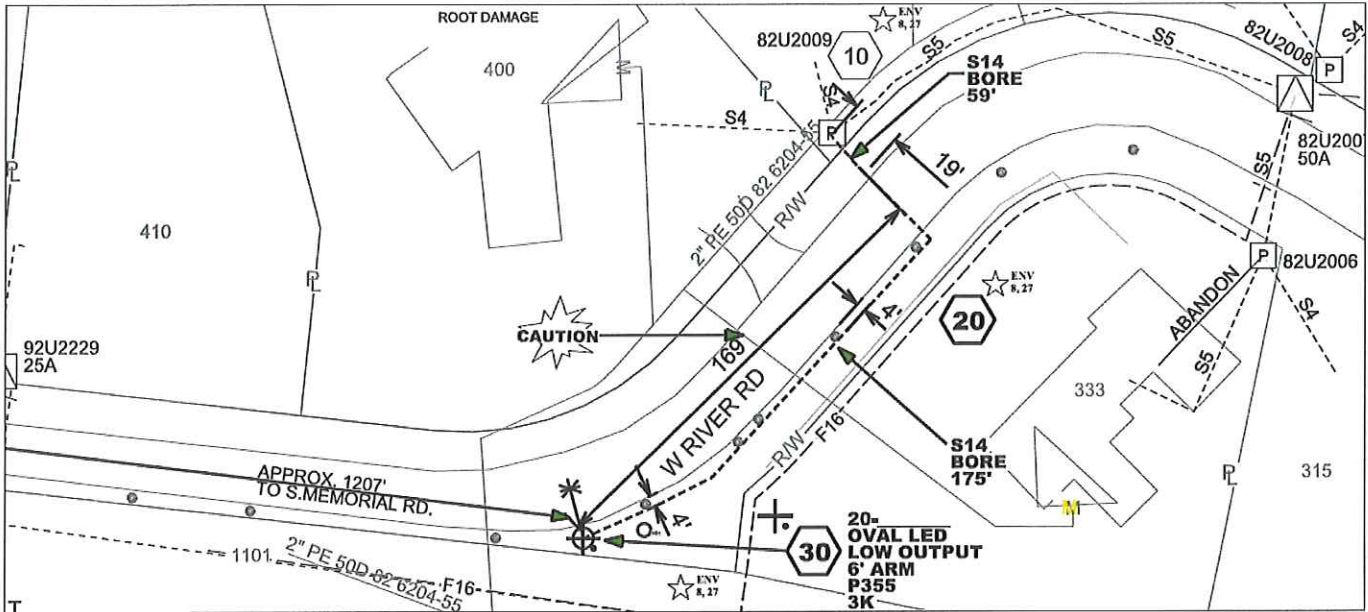


Figure 3: WE Energies Work Plan for standard streetlight

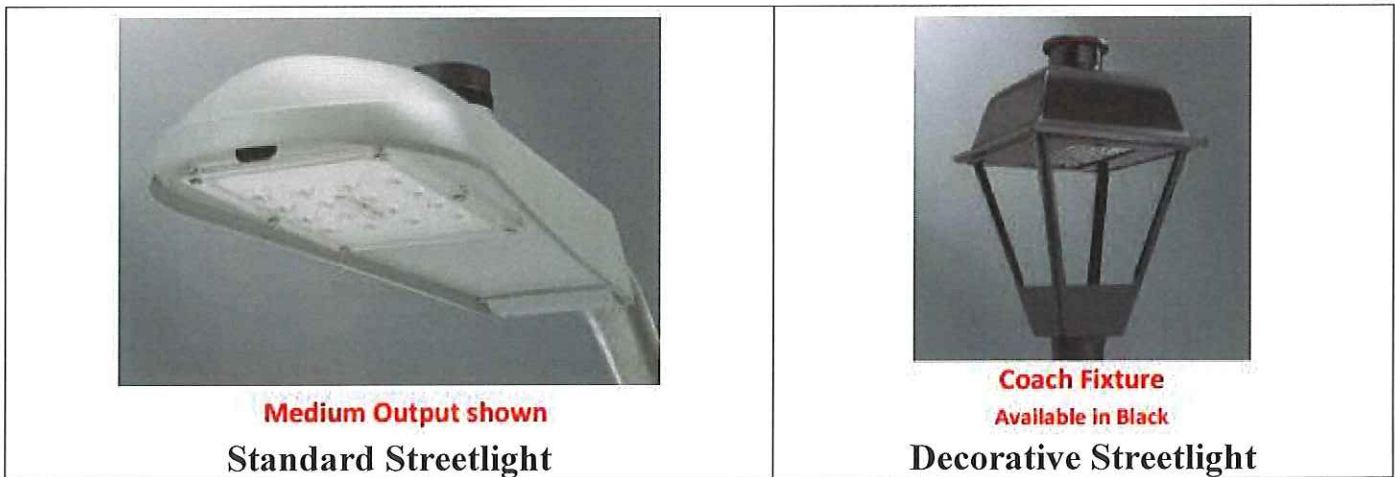


Figure 4: WE Energies streetlight styles

The River Road resident requesting the street light did share information of our correspondences with neighbors. I have had conversations with several on the details of the request and the interpretation of the policy, and have received a variety of opinions and feedback about this request. While City records do not provide much detail, it is clear from neighbors who have been through River Road’s unique history there has been a strong opposition to streetlights. More recent discussions among neighbors indicates an acceptance of the requested streetlight, but conditioned on this light being of a decorative style and being limited to just one light.

Considering the request, City policy, the history, and more recent discussions among the neighbors relevant to streetlights on W River Road, I recommend the implementation of the requested light using Traffic’s operation budget. I understand this falls short of City policy, but I feel it is a step in the right direction. If the desired light is a decorative unit, the up front and ongoing costs above and beyond that of the standard unit need to be paid by the W River Road property owner(s) per the City’s *Street Light Installation Policy*. In this case, this could be any number of the nineteen (19) homes, but must be at least one waiver of special assessment. Likewise, one, some or all of W River Rd must agree in perpetuity to pay the ongoing cost difference.