

Streetlight Committee Report

Street Light Committee:

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Wilchester West HOA Board,

After spending some time reviewing issues surrounding the streetlight project, the most constructive information we can provide are the notes from our call with the City/CenterPoint. Please find them attached below.

Regarding safety/crime we reviewed historicals with comparisons to Nottingham and Wilchester but found it to be inconclusive. The board may want to hire experts to better evaluate.

Regards,

Steve Blundell

**Notes from call with Public Works Supervisor Martin Herrera,
City Engineer Keri Hayes, CenterPoint District Manager Santos Calderon
and CenterPoint Consultant Christina Botello**

What constitutes a ‘majority’ of community support?

The city wants documentation that the neighborhood wants to move forward with streetlights. They will go by what our bylaws say is needed to request a project, thus a ‘majority.’

What constitutes an obstruction in installing lighting infrastructure?

An obstruction is anything that impairs the underground boring. The crew (CenterPoint) has some limited flexibility of 5-10 ft for adjustments if the obstruction can be avoided. The crew will call the city with an alternate plan, and it is typically accepted without re-design. The turnaround approving to move a light slightly, to avoid obstructions, is typically one day. Examples of obstructions may include sprinkler systems, drains and gas lines. People have tried to block the location with parked cars and that is an obstruction, but they will have the car removed. If it is greater than 10-15 ft, then it likely interferes with the light “pattern” uniformity wise and will be rejected. With that said, they can look at moving the light to the opposite side of the street if parties are agreeable as this does not change the light “pattern” only the aesthetics. Not a guarantee, but they will consider.

What is the largest 1st time lighting project done by the city in an established neighborhood?

They have done hundreds of projects in the past 8 years that Martin has been the City Public Works Supervisor but mostly first-time developments and one-off streets. This is the largest original project on an existing neighborhood. Wilchester West project is 175 lights. Martin and Santos did not have concern about it. They have done 23 lights on Tidwell and are starting work on a large (600 lights), new commercial project. They have done multiple ones in River Oaks with concrete foundations and CenterPoint has one on the East side that is an original project on an existing neighborhood but is contracted out and does not involve the city.

What, if any, issues were faced during installation?

They had no examples of installation issues. Most damages have been water lines and sprinklers. They rarely have tree problems now that they bore the lines. Early days they used trenches, and it caused damage but not now that they use underground boring equipment. When asked, they said they would not do just the main streets, this could make them liable if an incident happened and a homeowner questioned why they didn’t do all the streets. They follow “Illumination Society for North America Manual” for guidelines and if a request is made and majority by the bylaws approves it, then they follow these guidelines, which generally is to put lights where needed from a safety perspective to illuminate the road right of way.

How was any damage to home-owners property handled?

If in the city right of way (stated but not verified as 60 ft road right of way, center of street to 30 ft each side), then it is the property owner’s responsibility. With that said, minor damage that could be handled were handled by the installation crews, this includes sprinklers if the crew has the tools and supplies, no guarantees they will. Larger damage issues are the responsibility of the homeowner. Light pole footings are generally 18” square, three to five feet deep. The

underground boring is 24" to 36" deep and in the easement right of way – 14' from the road – with light poles 3' from the curb. Pull boxes are 12" x 17". CenterPoint is responsible for maintaining the light poles (i.e. faded powder coating).

Does the city have any pre vs post lighting installation crime stats to show whether the installation of lights has any effect?

After explaining that the city's concern is not crime, but road safety, they offered traffic accident numbers for Wilchester West. Dividing the neighborhood in North (8 accidents over the past year) and South (0 accidents over the past year). When questioned, it showed that only three of the eight accidents occurred at night, when streetlights might have made a difference.

They suggested that additional, albeit general, crime/accident statistics might be available from the Illuminating Society of North America. The comment from Martin was that their goal is to prevent problems rather than fix existing problems and that illuminating at a minimum helps the drivers. Also, studies have been done that lighting has reduced crime after putting in, but those are not the city's, and this is difficult to truly prove.

For installation/damage questions, who at CenterPoint should we contact?

If the project goes ahead, they want one point of contact from the Board, i.e. Robert. For any further questions that deal with CenterPoint, our contact would be Christina Botello.

Other Information Discussed:

Tree canopy could be an issue. They try to work around it, but if there is no alternative and if it prohibits light uniformity, they will trim it.

For the homes that will have boring underground along the side to the back (should be minimal homes, less than 10), the city is willing to come and look at what obstructions might be there, and now is the time to request that. Keri Hayes is the person to contact.

If homeowners are concerned that light trespass is occurring in their home, CenterPoint can put shields on the streetlights to mitigate it. They can provide us with illustrations of this.

The question was asked by the city if Wilchester West has an easement for the gas lamps in the city's road right of way. I don't think we do, but if so, any damage within that easement would become the city's responsibility.

They typically use white 4,000 Kelvin temperature lights, 26 ft tall, 45 watts. Could look at 3,000 Kelvin, but the issue is that any repairs/replacements once installed could take longer as they are not the norm and may not have supplies. The plan we were given had 30 ft poles.