



Diamond Renaissance Project Update- 1/11/18

(conducted at Chamber Business Breakfast)

I. Jim McDonnell, Ligonier Borough Council

- It's the 5th time this Diamond has been through a renovation...about every 50 years.
- There is a brochure coming about the project that will be available in businesses and widely in the community.
- It's a very ambitious project, but everyone is working to get it done in as short a time as possible. Jim believes that there will be an influx of people coming into town to see the project during and after.
- The cost of the project is \$3 million. There is no cost to taxpayers due to benefactors stepping up to the plate.
- Groundbreaking will officially be on January 30 at 10 a.m. Demolition will shortly follow that date. The contractor has the ability to proceed on February 5.
- This is strictly a Borough project and they hope to have it done in a reasonable period of the time. One of the big deals at the end of the process will be the landscaping.
- The Borough Council welcomes ideas and concerns regarding the project.

II. Greg Elliott, EADS Group (Architect)

- The goal of the project is to renew the legacy of the Diamond for another many years. History shows that about every 50 years an update is done to keep up to date with technology and safety.
- The project will include: Snow melt system under Diamond sidewalks, bandstand railings and floor updates, security systems, new and improved sidewalks, new landscaping, new curbing, new paving on street surfaces among other updates.
- Storm sewers and other utilities that must be replaced are a large reason that the trees must be removed. An arborist and forester were consulted and it was determined that the shade trees on the Diamond would not survive.
- These trees will be replaced with 8" caliper trees. They will be maples and Zelkovas about 25 to 30 feet tall and are already selected and at Helka Nursery in New Jersey. These trees should have uniform growth until another project of this scope takes place.
- This project will greatly benefit the community of Ligonier for years to come. Greg said he has a lot of experience with the contractor, Darr Construction, Berlin, PA, and thinks they will be good for the job since they have all resources available in-house.
- The majority of the work will be completed by August 31, excluding the landscaping work. Those tasks will be completed by September 15. The last item to be completed will be the planting of bulbs, which will be done after Fort Ligonier Days.

III. Paul Fry, Ligonier Borough Public Works

- Paul Fry discussed how the Diamond will be returned to its prior beauty once the project is complete.
- There is discussion going on to put WiFi on the Diamond, but nothing is set in stone yet.



- The construction company will be Darr Construction out of Berlin, PA. There were 8 bidders and they were all very competitive.
- Some of the wooden benches may be removed before Ice Fest. The Borough has donated some of the benches to SAMA to have them painted by artists. The Loyalhanna Watershed Association, Country Market and the Weeders and Seeders club are also being given some of the benches.
- The fountain will also be removed from the Diamond soon. The shops and businesses will always remain open throughout the project. You will always be able to get around town.
- The big concern is the detour, as dictated by PennDot. Detours will not be implemented until the beginning in April due to snow plows.
 - There will likely be a red light near the Hair Parade on North Market and past the Creamery on South Market.
 - No traffic will be permitted on to the Diamond from East and West Main Streets.
 - Paul believes the detour won't be in place all summer long. Only when necessary for the contractor to do so.
- The trees have to come down and Paul Sirofchuck is contracted to repurpose them for the receiving desk and tables at the library. The trees will be removed in the days shortly following the groundbreaking.
- Once the trees are down and the weather is cooperative. Darr Construction has the opportunity to begin demolition on the inner Diamond only beginning February 5.

IV. Susan Grunstra, Ligonier Valley Chamber of Commerce

- Susan said that there has been a Facebook page developed for the project that will keep the public and businesses updated.
- There is a substantial marketing program in the works to bring people to Ligonier during construction.
- This will be 6 months of inconvenience for a lifetime of beauty for our town. Stay positive and supportive throughout. There will be contact info and other information on the Facebook and readily available to you.
- Jim Faccenda added that we need to get very good at communication. We need to promote Ligonier during this project as well as after it.