

Upper Tulpehocken Township
State Route 183 improvements
State Route 183 and State Route 4040 (Old Route 22) Intersection

Circa 2009 BOS submitted numerous requests to PennDOT for intersection improvement/ light/ traffic study.

PennDOT responded with the following research and intersection improvement project. BOS Meeting Minute excerpts:

August 4, 2012 Representatives from PennDOT presented the plans for improvement of the intersection at Old Route 22 and Route 183. The proposed improvements include center and edge line rumble strips, larger warning signs, enhanced pavement markings, narrowing and grading of Route 183, and an upgraded flashing signal. Construction is set to begin in Spring of 2014 and last approximately six months. The PennDOT project manager stated there is not enough traffic on Route 183 to warrant a standard signal. Comment forms were left at the municipal office for residents to complete.

April 9, 2013 The Township is in receipt of PennDOT form TE-160, Application for Traffic Signal Approval, regarding the traffic light at the Route 183 and Old Route 22 intersection improvements. This matter was tabled awaiting further information of Township responsibilities regarding state roads within the Township.

May 14, 2013 Steven Davis made a motion to pass Resolution #3 of 2013 to sign the PennDot Application for Traffic Signal Approval, regarding the traffic light at the Route 183 and Old Route 22 intersection. The motion was seconded by Wilson Balthaser and passed unanimously.

July 9, 2013 The Township has received the plans for the Route 183 and Old Route 22 intersection upgrade. Mr. Unger has contacted PennDOT's engineer concerning the lane width through the intersection. PennDOT feels the nine foot travel lanes are acceptable to their safety standards.

July 8, 2014 Mrs. Ehrets presented the Route 183 & Old Route 22 Intersection Travel Advisory from PennDOT, concerning the work scheduled to begin on July 7, 2014.

January 5, 2015 Mrs. Ehrets informed the BOS that maintenance of all traffic signals at the Route 183 and Old Route 22 intersection has been officially turned over to the Township. The signal company assured Mrs. Ehrets there should be no maintenance required. Mrs. Ehrets has been in contact with both Met-Ed and Herr Signal Company regarding duplicate electric bills for the intersection signals. Mrs. Ehrets is awaiting an agreement between these entities before paying the electric bill.

This project was completed and the Township continued to keep the matter at the forefront of transportation discussions. PennDOT assured the Board the new improvements were the best solution.

Additional Notes and Meeting Minute excerpts:

2015-2021 Numerous submissions, requests, meetings, and completed surveys elevated the issue through the Berks County Planning Commission, Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS), Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); the project was ultimately included in PennDOT's 12-Year Program (TYP).

April 13, 2021 Steve Davis made a motion to hire Benchmark Civil Engineering to complete a traffic study as it relates to the Core5 development and the SR183 and SR4040 intersection. The motion was seconded by Rob Deisemann and passed unanimously. (This traffic study was in addition to the Core5 traffic study submitted along with the LDP, and ultimately had the same finding, the Core5 LDP did not increase traffic to meet warrants required for a RYG traffic light.)

February 2023 Through RATS assistance and cooperation with PennDOT the *SR183 Safety Improvement Project Study* from the Intersection of SR183 and I-78 south to SR4016 New Schaefferstown Rd in Jefferson Township began. PennDOT started the planning stage and Engineering selections were made. Crash analysis and safety evaluation of the intersection continues.

May 9, 2023 Mrs. Ehrets and Mr. Deisemann attended the closed-door meeting with BC Planning Commission and PennDot representatives that was facilitated by Bernville Borough in November 2022. That meeting and project includes SR183 only from Jefferson Township south through Bern Township. The PennDot project including UTT extends from I-78 south to New Schaefferstown Road. This project is in the very early planning stages. Mrs. Ehrets has been working with those PennDot engineers, as well as provided the SR183 resident survey of 2021.

November 2022 meeting additional notes from RATS: SR183 and SR4040 intersection corridor study identified potential improvements to the intersection and a roundabout has been recommended. Warrants have been met. Use of safety funding has been approved. This funding is NOT available at this time and no projected date was provided. A scoping field view was conducted. The application for safety funding utilization has been approved, but the project is currently not funded/ programmed on the current or proposed TIP. Reminder: the 12-year cycle of a PennDOT project includes a four-year term of Alternative Analysis, a four-year term of Engineering and a four-year term for construction.

September 12, 2023 Mrs. Ehrets reminded everyone of the numerous traffic studies completed through the recent Core5 development; none of which proved warrants for a RYG light. A standard RYG traffic light at this intersection will be at the expense of the entity/developer that causes traffic warrants to be met. The state-owned intersection and potential traffic light has been discussed and researched ad nauseam throughout the 2021-2022 Township meetings and Core5 land development. Chairman Davis reminded meeting attendees that this intersection is two state-owned roads, and the Township does not have the authority to install any traffic light. **State Representative Jami Barton, in attendance**, confirmed the fact that PennDot is the only entity that can authorize any improvements on state roads, and PennDot makes decisions based on data/traffic studies, not public opinion.

December 12, 2023 Mrs. Ehrets, Mr. Deisemann, and Gary Rosenblatt attended the Berks County Commissioners meeting on November 17, 2023 ... Rob Deisemann questioned the Commissioners how the County is proceeding with SR183 section through UTT since the previous SR183 meetings. Commissioner Lienbach assured us this will again be brought to the forefront of County transportation discussions.

August 2024 PennDOT engineering and project manager continues to follow up on the corridor study; suggests improvement to the intersection.

October 2024 BCPC and RATS held the Reading MPO Long Range Transportation Plan Tulpehocken Region Municipal Leader meeting. This 20-year plan is updated every 4 years, and the current plan extends through the year 2045. RATS also provided the following updates that were shared at UTT BOS meeting.

October 4, 2024 PennDot updates from recent meetings with Berks County (RATS) and PennDot officials:

- a) Old Route 22 Culverts have been held up due to a forced redesign at Birch Lane. When construction begins, it is planned to be one week per culvert, with traffic able to pass through.
- b) A study of the SR183 corridor from Old Route 22 to New Schaefferstown Road has been completed and the following improvements recommended.
- c) The two 'narrow' Northkill Creek bridges in the UTT section of SR183 are scheduled for December 2024 design phase with a potential 2029 Construction phase for improvement.
- d) A study of 6-8 feet shoulder widening at sections of SR183 is suggested. This will not be the entire length of SR183, but rather where topography allows. SR183 centerline and edge line rumble strips. Secondary roads along SR183 line of sight studies recommended for Lakeview Road, Spangler Drive and Dry Hollow Road. These items lack funding to proceed.
- e) The SR183 and Old Route 22 intersection has had a scoping field view conducted, and now meets warrants. There is no funding attached to improvement of the intersection, but it does qualify for safety funding when available. PennDOT's first course of action is mandated to be a roundabout, and as such has been recommended. Mr. Deisemann stated this improvement may need a portion of the ballfield corner property. Mrs. Ehrets explained PennDot projects go through a 12-year TIP with four phases; Analysis, Engineering, Design, Construction. This project is not programmed on the current or proposed TIP.

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Below in red is the PennDOT and Representative Barton office's response to the request for a signal at Old 22 and SR 183, shared at the May 2025 BOS meeting with Township comments in black.

Thank you for Customer Care Concern concerning the possibility of installing a traffic signal at the referenced location.

Concerning the request to replace the SR 183 & Old 22 Flashing Beacon with a traffic signal, all electronic traffic control devices including traffic signals within the Commonwealth are owned, operated and maintained by the local municipality*, Upper Tulpehocken Township in this case. This includes electronic devices (traffic signal, flashing beacons, flashing warning device, speed display signs, etc.) on all public roadways (state & local). The Department of Transportation provides technical assistance and issues the required permits to the municipalities authorizing their installation and operation. *Ownership of these devices is transferred to the municipality after installation.

In order for a traffic signal to be permitted, the Township must submit a request submit a written request to the Department. We would then forward the applicable application and any other necessary information. Once the completed application and a financial commitment are received, the Department would conduct the necessary appropriate traffic study to determine whether a traffic signal is warranted. See notes above, this occurred pre-2010.

For a traffic signal to be permitted, a traffic signal warrant must be satisfied. The warrants are based on traffic volumes, roadway geometry and other related factors. The traffic signal warrants may be found in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). See notes above, warrants were finally met in 2022/ 2023.

In concept, a project to install a traffic signal could qualify for funding as a Capital project. A project would require inclusion on the Department's 12-Year Program (TYP). In order to be considered for inclusion on the TYP, the project must be prioritized by the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which is the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS), on its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The RATS offices are located at the Berks County Planning Commission (BCPC) office located in the Berks County Service Center, 633 Court St., Reading, PA 19601. The BCPC can be contacted through Alan Piper, Transportation Planner, at 610-478-6300. It is through the RATS MPO of which the Department is a member, where project development, prioritization, and implementation is coordinated for this region. See notes above, this has been in process for many years.

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