

## North Side streetscape gets positive reviews

By Christine Haines HeraldStandard.com | Posted: Thursday, February 9, 2012 2:00 am

BROWNSVILLE — It's been a long, slow road to develop plans to make Market Street in Brownsville a slower road.

Plans for a streetscape project designed to calm traffic in the North Side commercial district were presented for public review Wednesday by the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT).

"This started many, many, many years ago... it was the first year of the Rendell administration, his first term," said Andrew French, executive director of the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority, referring to former Gov. Ed Rendell.

French said a reimbursement agreement was signed by PennDOT late last year for the \$289,000 project. The county had previously committed \$55,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding for engineering fees. French said the project will be let for bids in April, with the contract awarded in June or July and work to be completed within 90 to 100 days of the contract signing.

The project includes the installation of 25 decorative street lights like the ones currently installed in a small park near the Brownsville Wharf Riverside Park that were patterned after lamps in New York's Central Park, French said.

Stamped concrete will be used to make crosswalks look like brick, giving the intersections greater visibility, French said. The same brick-look concrete will be used along the edges of the sidewalks, covering the underground wiring for the new lamps.

"One thing that is not in this project that we really wanted was relocation of all of the overhead utility lines. We thought it would cost \$25,000 to \$35,000," French said. "That figure is now \$95,000."

Resident Bill Zosky noted that earlier plans also called for a changed traffic pattern and another traffic light that would have increased the safety of pedestrians crossing Market Street.

“There were very lofty ideas that were thrown out there. This project has been designed based on what we can afford,” French said.

“It’s better than I thought it would be,” said property owner Andrew Pasquini. “Aesthetically, it will look good, but I don’t know how well it will slow down traffic.”

“I like the project,” said Hugh Rawson, who lives on Market Street and has had five vehicles demolished by out of control vehicles.

“We still need to get rid of the trucks.”

Mayor Lester Ward said studies have shown that some 13,000 vehicles travel on upper Market Street each day.

“We’d like them to slow down a little and enjoy our town,” Ward said.

Traffic will be restricted to one lane in each direction during the construction period, French said.



Dave Rafferty

## Streetscape

Fayette County Redevelopment Authority Executive Director Andrew French explains the project on Market Street in Brownsville which was initially funded under a PennDOT program called "Hometown Streets, Safe Routes to Schools." The project will be put out for bids in April with work starting in June with a completion date of October or November of this year.

Dave Rafferty

