

10 years in the making, project under way

By Nicole Lemal nlemal@heraldstandard.com | Posted: Wednesday, April 24, 2013 2:00 am

BROWNSVILLE — A streetscape project on Market Street is designed to not only beautify the area but make it safer, too.

Traffic tends to move faster than the posted speed limit of 25 mph, Mayor Lester Ward said.

“For us, it’s going to be a blessing because the cars go through there too fast, and this will slow (them) down, hopefully, and force them into the habit of going through there more slowly,” Ward said.

The state Department of Transportation (PennDOT) provided funding several years ago that is being used to complete the project, which was 10 years in the making, according to Josh Zakovitch, PennDOT local project manager for design. The borough was first overseeing the project, but it is now being handled by the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority.

The contractor for the \$196,670 project is Kishmo Inc. of Apollo, according to PennDOT.

Updates will be made from the Market Street and Spring Street ramps to Broadway Street. Construction is being done during the day, with traffic restricted to one lane in each direction.

As part of the project, the crosswalks are being updated to alleviate traffic concerns, according to Andrew French, executive director of the redevelopment authority.

“That’s the intent of this project through the crosswalks by enhancing those crosswalks to calm the traffic down in the area,” he said. “That has been a major safety concern for the residents along Market Street.”

Conduit is being installed along both sides of Market Street, and the sidewalks and intersections on Market Street, which also is Route 40, are being updated for that purpose. Sections of the sidewalks have been cut out to make room for the conduits. The other side of the road will be addressed in similar fashion this week.

Crosswalk stripes will be repainted to ensure safety of pedestrians with physical disabilities. Trees and shrubs are being planted. Ramps for people with disabilities also will be updated.

The project so far is on schedule to be completed by June.

“We’re glad to be at the point now where construction is taking place,” French said.

Many residents are pleased the project has started, but they are also upset with how that could affect parking on the North Side, said Carl DellaPenna, vice president of the Greater Brownsville Area Chamber of Commerce. Maintenance of the trees and plants that are being planted also is a concern, he said.

DellaPenna said, “The shrubs and trees are beautiful, but who is going to take care of them? I really don’t feel the property owners will take ownership.”

Aside from those issues, the borough is pleased overall with the work that has been completed thus far and is anticipating what it will look like upon completion, Ward said.

“For the businesses, it’s an upgrade for Brownsville,” Ward said. “At last, we’re going to get it.”

Once additional funding is in place, Zakovitch said the project will include new lighting.

“This is a first good step,” Zakovitch said.



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Streetscape project underway

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A streetscape upgrade being made to Market Street in Brownsville is designed to not only beautify the area but also will include updating sidewalks and intersections to ensure the safety of pedestrians.