

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: January 14, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Rasmussen, Larson, Wadinski; *By WebEx*: Ryan, Neal

Also Present: Lindman, Wesolowski, Niksich, Alfonso, Buckner, Kilian; *By WebEx*: Lenz

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and received by the *Wausau Daily Herald* in the proper manner.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approve minutes of the December 10, 2020 meeting

B. Action on temporary easement with Bruce Buchkoski at 1202 and 1204 North 3rd Street

C. Action on Stormwater Maintenance Agreement for Nidus Holding Company LLC at 201 N. 17th Ave

Larson moved to approve the consent agenda items. Wadinski seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

Public Hearing: Discussion and possible action on vacating and discontinuing Hilltop Road north of Forest Valley Road to termini

At this time Chair Rasmussen opened the public hearing.

Corey Pierce owns the property to the north with the easement and is available for questions.

Patty Sowinski owns 4530 Forest Valley Road, which abuts the easement. She is concerned about water flow coming down from Forest Valley Road. She would like to know more about what is being proposed and if there will be a driveway. When the City originally blacktopped Forest Valley, they were kind enough to realize there could be an issue with water coming down Forest Valley and possibly going into her backyard. The City put a blacktop lip in beyond their property line so water would go into the easement.

Glenn Sowinski, 4530 Forest Valley Road, does not want the water table in the back to affect their land in any way. The land in back is a wetland and he does not want to be flooded out.

No one further came forward for public comment and the public hearing was closed.

Larson asked the purpose in vacating this. Wesolowski said a request came from the owner of 4602 Hilltop Road. When the area was originally platted, it was platted with a right-of-way and the thought the City would extend the road to the north. Given the wetlands and Town of Wausau to the north, there are no plans or use to extend the road. The owner wants to utilize the area for a possible driveway. If it would remain right-of-way, he would have to get an easement across the right-of-way for a driveway. There is no desire for the City to put a road in. If vacated, the land would revert back to the property owner.

Rasmussen said when the area was subdivided the roadway was placed on the Official City Map; this would undo that process. Wesolowski further explained that when this was platted, the owner of 4602 gave the land for right-of-way; therefore, the land would revert back to that parcel. Rasmussen indicated the vacation would relieve the City of its access right for this piece of land and allow the private sector to utilize it.

Larson moved to approve vacating and discontinuing Hilltop Road north of Forest Valley Road to the termini. Wadinski seconded and the motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on temporary or permanent parking restrictions on the 300 block of 3rd Street for Valet Parking Program

Rasmussen explained that during this pandemic we have extended the temporary allowance of a couple of parking

stalls dedicated for valet parking. This expired January 9 and a decision should be made to extend another 6 months or make permanent.

Neal moved to extend the temporary parking restrictions for 6 months on the 300 block of 3rd Street for the Valet Parking Program. Seconded by Larson.

Neal indicated the reports received after this was first instituted were very positive. Directing some parking to the ramps relieves some concern of not being able to park.

There being a motion and a second, motion to extend the temporary parking restrictions for 6 months on the 300 block of 3rd Street for the Valet Parking Program carried unanimously 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on naming a segment of roadway south of Single Avenue (Deferred from the December 10, 2020 meeting.)

Rasmussen noted this was deferred and staff was asked to come back with other options as the committee was not interested in naming it after an individual. Staff researched back to 1892 for the original plat dedication to figure out who owned it first and the history. The original owner was the Chicago Excelsior Company so one suggestion is naming the road Excelsior Drive. Another option is Trostel Way after the president of the Excelsior Company. When naming public spaces after individual people, we look to see what larger contributions were made to the community.

Wadinski likes Excelsior Drive. Rasmussen does as well as it is less individualized but reflects some of the history.

Wadinski moved to approve naming the segment of roadway south of Single Avenue as Excelsior Drive. Seconded by Neal and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on parking restrictions in the 500 block of Franklin Street

Alder Kilian was contacted by residents asking for 2-hour parking restrictions as the block immediately west has it. A map and a copy of the petitions received were included in the packet.

Wesolowski reviewed the situation and does not recommend approval. In the past there were two-hour parking regulations on several different blocks downtown between 5th and 6th Street. It was a hodgepodge. When downtown parking came back to committee, it came back as a rectangular area bounded by 1st Street, 5th Street, Washington Street, and McIndoe Street. This makes it easier to enforce and explain. Wesolowski is concerned if this one block becomes 2-hour parking, it may spur others blocks to request the same and we will end up with the same hodgepodge as in the past. Over the last several weeks, he visited the block 8 times and has not seen anyone parking there. He does not see a parking issue. There currently is No Parking Here to Corner marked on each end. He received a call from Krista Salas of 511 Franklin Street who is neutral on the topic. She wants to go along with her neighbors but does not see an issue. She does want to maintain the No Parking Here to Corner.

Rasmussen questioned the width of the roadway. Wesolowski believes it is 60'. Rasmussen asked if cars on the street cause any difficulty with traffic or snow removal. Lindman has not heard of any issues. Rasmussen said the other situation for residents is the amount of traffic at 5th and Franklin. Franklin to the east becomes a County road and there are a fair number of large trucks coming off of 5th onto Franklin. She asked if there are issues with turning movements when cars are parked there. Wesolowski indicated the turning movements are aided by the No Parking Here to Corner.

Cliff Gidlund, 504 Franklin Street, initiated the petition. There has not been a parking issue recently. For several months, one person was parking between his driveway and the No Parking Here to Corner sign. When pulling out of his driveway, a car was right there. The No Parking Here to Corner is about 20 yards from the corner and on the opposite side it is 60 yards. If it cannot be two-hour parking, he would at least like to move the No Parking

Here to Corner back so his driveway is not between it and the No Parking sign. If a car is parked there it becomes dangerous when he is backing out of his driveway. Wesolowski feels this makes sense. Wadinski likes this solution. The original request would not necessarily get rid of the problem as a car could park there for two hours.

Wadinski moved to extend No Parking Here to Corner to the east past the driveway of 504 Franklin Street.

Larson will not support this motion due to the number of signatures on the petition.

Tom Kilian, 133 East Thomas Street and Alder for District 3, thanked Gidlund for bringing up a potential alternative. Sometimes we get into contentious issues but in this case, it is a fairly straightforward request. As Larson pointed out, there are quite a few signatures on the petition. While he appreciates staff's observations, there is a list of citizens who feel it is a problem. If it is a problem for the citizens, it is a problem for us. Staff's concern is essentially theoretical that this or that would happen in terms of patchwork and seems like speculation. We have residents telling us this would be a benefit. He asked the committee to entertain heeding the residents' request.

Rasmussen would like to know if the neighbors are supporting the petition because they are aware the problem exists in front of Gidlund's home or if they have experienced the same behavior.

Kurt Schubring, 516 Franklin Street, signed the petition in support of the Gidlunds because of their problem backing out. He feels extending No Parking Here to Corner would alleviate the problem. Rasmussen would like to solve the problem with the least evasive option first. If over time it is not solved, nothing says this cannot come back.

Wadinski made the motion because the petitioner came up with a great suggestion that would do a better job to alleviate his concern. He feels this motion is the best solution at this time.

In Ryan's neighborhood, several blocks are affected with parking from Eastbay. Maybe extending No Parking Here to Corner will solve the problem at this location.

Neal feels moving the No Parking Here to Corner is a great solution. In the future, he would like to look at other heavily traveled streets in the City where there are large vehicles or school buses turning and restrict parking near the intersections.

Alfonso asked for clarification on how far the restriction should be. Lindman replied just east of the driveway for 504 Franklin.

Neal seconded Wadinski's motion.

David Burke, 520 Franklin Street, signed the petition. He does not have a problem with revising the petition to go with what has been proposed. If it works for the Gidlunds, it will work for him.

There being a motion and a second, motion to extend No Parking Here to Corner to the east past the driveway of 504 Franklin Street carried 4-1 with Larson the dissenting vote.

Discussion and possible action regarding establishing parking restrictions on Myron Street from Cleveland Avenue to McCleary Street and on Emter Street from Myron Street to Thomas Street

Wesolowski indicated this was brought forward by Mohelnitzky, Public Works Superintendent. The DPW shop is at the end of Myron Street. Trucks coming from the east side cross the Thomas Street Bridge and travel down Emter to Myron Street to the shop. This route is the preference to get to the east side. From the West, they travel Cleveland to Myron. Mohelnitzky has observed people parking on both sides of the road over the years and it makes it difficult for trucks to get through. The proposal is no parking on the south side of Myron from

Cleveland to McCleary and no parking on the west side of Emter from Myron to Thomas. Stop sign placement will depend on what is decided and traffic counters would be placed in spring. Notices were sent out to the property owners on Myron and Emter Streets. He received two emails that were forwarded to the committee. He also received two calls. Mark Westberg of 1212 Emter Street called to say he is not in favor of restrictions on Emter Street and wants the trucks to use Myron Street. Christy Hinkens, owner of 1314 Emter Street, understands the need during the winter months and would support this during the winter only. If it was year round, she couldn't understand why it would be every day. She requested during the summer months, the restrictions be in place only Monday through Friday. Rasmussen said in other areas with plow issues restrictions were put in place from November 1 to April 1 to accommodate residents.

Lindman explained with the right in right out only on McCleary, the primary routes are Emter and Cleveland. He would hate to restrict DPW traffic all the way to Cleveland as coming from the east Emter is a better route. It is not just salt and plow trucks in the winter but heavy equipment as well. The trucks can make turns onto Emter better. Staff will talk to the crew and operators and let them know the preferred route is out to Cleveland. However, he feels to restrict using Emter is not practical. Staff will encourage the use of Cleveland whenever possible and try to minimize traffic on Emter. Rasmussen feels the management of where City vehicles travel is an administrative function and not a committee function. It is up to the departments to manage their people and equipment in such a way that it is effective while being good neighbors. She can still see limiting the parking restriction to winter only. If this is less of an issue in summer, inconveniencing the neighbors 12 months of the year is a little much.

Larson asked if trucks from the east use McCleary as often as they can. Lindman said they typically use Emter. Larson followed a City truck over the bridge and it did a quick left turn onto McCleary even though it shouldn't with the median there.

Ryan stated Dairy Queen is on the west side of Emter and the Hmong Sanctuary on the east. She is concerned with foot traffic and cars going to Dairy Queen. She would like them to try to use Cleveland as much as they can.

Kilian noted that as with the last item, sometimes a creative alternative comes up. In this case, the feedback he received is less of a concern with parking and stop signs from residents. The main concern is the concentration of heavy truck traffic. The change of the median on Thomas Street probably took traffic from McCleary to Emter. Whether it is committee policy or administrative, we do have three north-south streets in the vicinity; Cleveland, Emter and McCleary. There may be some approach which does not inconvenience workers. He suggested a schedule for DPW to use Cleveland Monday to Wednesday and Thursday to Sunday use Emter. This would cut heavy traffic down on each residential street. Rasmussen said that directive could come from a management standpoint. She asked if there was opposition to a parking restriction from November to April. Lindman said there are issues in summer as well. He would like to see parking restricted on Myron year round as large equipment is used year round. Operators can use Myron to Cleveland as the preferred route.

Kilian noted resident Hayenga's concern with the concentration of truck traffic. Anything that can be done to defuse it would be appreciated. Larson noted there are two gates to enter Public Works and asked why Cleveland couldn't be designated as the main right-of-way. It is a wider street than Emter. One gate could be designated as exit and the other for an entrance. Kilian said Cleveland was often suggested as the better alternative; mainly because half of the street on the west side is commercial. Lindman would be happy to talk with the crew to focus on using Myron to Cleveland. There will be times equipment will go down Emter and he would hate to totally restrict that. Larson would like to encourage the use of Cleveland. It is bad enough that DPW is located where it is and now McCleary is no longer an option.

Wadinski does not feel we should leave Emter out, especially in the summer when Dairy Queen is busy. In his past career he had gone through there and at times had a hard time getting through with a regular size vehicle.

Larson would like to table this item until more options are available. Rasmussen said the request for DPW to emphasize using Myron and Cleveland rather than Emter is a management decision that Lindman can make.

Sue and Tom Doering, owners of the Dairy Queen at 145 East Thomas Street came forward. Tom Doering explained that it is illegal to park on a portion of the west side of Emter as there is a driveway, alley and another driveway. On the other side of the road, a sign restricting parking from the corner back may be a better alternative. They are trying to make a living and need parking. Sue Doering noted they have a postage stamp parking lot. Tom Doering added in the winter they are closed so there shouldn't be an issue with turning the corner. Discussion followed.

Wadinski moved to restrict parking on the west side of Emter Street from Myron Street to Thomas Street and on the south side of Myron Street from Cleveland Avenue to McCleary Street year round. Seconded by Neal and the motion carried 3-2 with Larson and Ryan the dissenting votes.

Discussion and possible action regarding establishing parking restrictions in the 1000 block of South 12th Avenue

Rasmussen indicated the parking situation with new homes in the area is creating congestion near the intersection. Buckner explained he is now proposing to restrict parking 135' from the corner on the west side, versus the original 85'. Larson added the reason to go back further is due to a call from a resident. If only restricting for 85' it would leave her house as an island. Larson described how cars park too close to the driveway, violating the 4' rule and causing visibility issues when exiting the driveway. Rasmussen feels it would also help with trash and recycling pickup and the plow coming around the corner.

Neal moved to accept the parking restrictions as recommended by staff, recognizing 135' on the west side. Seconded by Larson and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Discussion and possible action regarding establishing parking restrictions in the 1000 block of South 15th Avenue

Rasmussen noted the jog in the road at 15th and Thomas where cars are creating a bottleneck. It is proposed to restrict parking on the west side for 118' and 92' on the east. Wesolowski received a call from Mark Feldkamp of 1006 South 15th Avenue, who is in favor of restricting parking and would be in favor of pushing it further.

Larson noted that the City owns a plot of land across from the new building. He wondered if it could be negotiated to allow them to park there instead of on the street. This would alleviate maintenance and alleviate parking on the street. Wesolowski stated that piece was vacated several months ago and is no longer owned by the City.

Larson moved to restrict the parking as recommended by staff. Seconded by Wadinski and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on preliminary design alternatives for street infrastructure in the North Riverfront Area near the former Great Lakes Cheese property

Lenz described three options, two of which were previous discussed at Economic Development. Option 1 was the design started with when working with proposals received for the old Great Lakes Cheese site. There were concerns about what kind of parcels would be created with Option 1; particularly on each side of the street. The parcels are oddly shaped and narrow. Parcels on the east side of the street would not be riverfront properties. There is concern about the desirability of those lots and being able to develop the parcels due to the size and shape.

The second option moves the street to the river. This option tries to weave around constraints of the railroad tracks. This option is favored by planning staff because of best practices from an urban planning perspective. Our urban design standards suggest that this is the way the street should be developed; development just on one side of the street. Development would face the street and the river. All of the area becomes riverfront property, not just a couple parcels on the river. It creates larger square parcels.

Discussion took place at Economic Development about a third option. This provides a perpendicular street by Wausau Avenue versus a curved street. Neal feels Option 3 provides better land use options and maximizes the size of available lots.

Ryan asked if the railroad would be abandoned. Lenz replied no, we would have to work around the railroad. The railroad right-of-way is very wide in this area; approximately 100' wide. Ryan noted in her experience it is difficult to gain permission to cross the railroad. She doesn't think the railroad wants a lot of crossings and may dictate where you can.

Wadinski asked why we would want to build a road along the river when we can have prime parcels on the river with a public walkway; high value property that will bring in tax base to pay for other infrastructure and services in the community.

Lenz stated there would be a 10' buffer between the trail and the street. We all agree the river is valuable. Having a river road is an asset and doesn't necessarily prevent riverfront development. Other cities have streets along the river and all of that area is considered riverfront development. It is a public amenity to have a scenic drive and have development along that drive that is still valuable riverfront property. When you bisect the land, you are creating higher value on the river, but much lower value off the river and next to the railroad tracks. It would still be urban riverfront land. Lenz feels it would be more valuable to the general public to have better access and a scenic drive.

Rasmussen said Option 1 was designed when there were three project owners proposing projects. Two of those projects have fallen by the wayside. She asked if Option 1 should be ruled out entirely. Neal and Ryan agreed.

Wadinski asked if it would be possible to get another drawing with properties on the river and a road by the railroad tracks with a size difference and value difference of the properties. Ryan feels it would be more valuable along the river with parking west of the track. Getting the history of the train schedule may also be helpful.

Lenz stated a consultant was hired to work on the preliminary designs. There are constraints with properties on the north and south ends. From an urban design perspective, if you put the road against the railroad tracks, the road is no longer a riverfront drive. You would face the backs of the developments with the railroad tracks on the other side. You would lose the scenic drive. Trying to put a value to that would be difficult if not impossible. We are going off of best practices and what other communities are doing, which is maximizing public access with a scenic drive along the riverfront.

Rasmussen noted that a concern from Economic Development was ensuring the riverfront does not become anyone's front lawn. The area was purchased with a heavy community investment so we want to make sure that everybody can access the area without feeling like they are somewhere where they do not belong. If we were to push the road back, it puts us in a situation where we have to ask all the developers to design their buildings with two fronts as we don't want them to be only aesthetically pleasing on the water side. Their design costs would be elevated.

When this first started, Neal felt having a road along the railroad tracks is the best as it would up the value of the property closer to the river. He also feels we have to optimize walkability, bikeability, and access to the riverfront while still having development. He would be happy to have a house facing the river with a scenic drive in front, street lights, walkway, and the river. He does not think we will lose much and will add a sense of community. He feels Option 3 is the most workable. Rasmussen said with Option 2 there is a concern about odd parcels and being able to develop. Creating a corner is traffic calming and creates a square parcel, which will maximize the space to offer to the private sector.

Neal moved to accept Option 3. Larson seconded.

Larson does not want to limit access for citizens and supports Option 3. Wesolowski has design concerns with Option 3. He does not know how the 90 degree turn will function. A pinch point is the Dive Point building. He would hate to lead the committee down a path thinking we can design this road. Neal said the city is full of 90 degree intersections. If there is a problem making a turn, he would suggest taking a little of the southwest corner of the 2.67 acre lot and have a slightly more moderate turn. Wesolowski stated staff can do a preliminary design to see the turning radiuses. He explained on the north end there is an 18' driveway and a guardrail between the trail. We would have to purchase right-of-way from that parcel to make it work.

Wadinski asked if there is a development on the table that needs the roads. Lindman stated there is some interest. Staff is trying to nail down developable parcels. Rasmussen explained a RFP was started in 2019 leaving options open. There were three proposals; one that had a specific request for roads to be built around his facility. That plan has since dropped by the wayside. From a public purpose standpoint, it is easier to figure out what parts we have to retain for our use and what we can offer up to others. If we figure out what we need to do for infrastructure, Economic Development can decide to issue a new RFP knowing what parcels are available.

Rasmussen suggested directing staff to get a preliminary design and figure out if the corner can be altered to accommodate decent turning movements. Discussion followed.

The committee agreed by consensus to have staff work on a preliminary design using Option 3 and bring this item back.

Discussion and possible action regarding 2021 Street Reconstruction Projects

Niksich explained per WMC, the minimum road width is 32' for residential streets with 36' the maximum from face of curb. The code also states the Board of Public Works has the authority to put in sidewalk where needed.

3rd Avenue is currently 40' wide and will be narrowed to 36'. This is a bus route and receives heavy traffic. There is sidewalk on the east side that ends near Bos Creek. Staff is recommending to extend the sidewalk. Sidewalk on the west side stops midblock. Staff is recommending extending to Bos Creek with the potential to connect to West Campus in the future.

The width of 5th Avenue varies between 30' and 32'. Staff is proposing to make that continuous at 32' to match the existing. This is a bus route but we have not received any complaints. Sidewalk is existing on both sides.

There is no curb on Rosecrans Street and it is narrow; between 20' and 26'. Staff is recommending widening the street to 32'. It is a bus route, however, it is making its way through now. There are no sidewalks and no sidewalks on connecting streets with the exception of 17th Avenue. New sidewalk is not proposed as there is very limited right-of-way. Larson said as much as sidewalk is needed, there is no room for it.

McIntosh Street is currently 33'. Staff is recommending widening to 36'. This is a truck route and as soon as you cross the railroad tracks it widens to 36'. The truck route makes a turn onto Bellis Street where it widens to 40'. There will be quite a few trees removed during the project. The boulevard is 5½' so we can replant trees. There is sidewalk on both sides. Wadinski asked if any of the trees are ash trees. Niksich replied 3 of the 8 trees are ash.

Larson moved to accept as proposed. Wadinski seconded and the motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Follow-up on WPS street lighting / LED lighting

After the last meeting, Wesolowski reached out to our WPS representative, Dave Schneider. WPS owns and maintains the lights on wooden poles. The City pays a monthly flat fee per WPS pole. When high pressure sodium bulbs burn out, WPS will replace them with LED. WPS does not have the staff or money to convert all lights to LED. The City would not see a savings as there is a flat rate. Wesolowski will look into converting

lights during street projects. A lot of the times poles have to be moved anyway during reconstruction. There are no new decorative street lights proposed during projects this summer.

Ryan asked when the contract with WPS expires. Alfonso is not aware if we have a contract or not but she can look into it.

Future Agenda Items

The design alternative for the road in the North Riverfront Area will come back next month.

Wesolowski indicated he can approve driveways up to 44'. He will be bringing forward a couple in excess of 44' next month.

Ryan asked if it was too early to talk about the access for the Plaza development and possible traffic issues. Lindman stated curb cut proposals would come to staff. He hasn't seen anything at this point.

Parking restrictions in the 900 block of Scott Street will be brought forward next month.

Adjourn

Wadinski moved to adjourn the meeting. Neal seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:25 p.m.