

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: February 8, 2024, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Gary Gisselman, Lisa Rasmussen, Doug Diny, Chad Henke (Lou Larson was excused)

Also Present: Mayor Katie Rosenberg, Eric Lindman, Allen Wesolowski, TJ Nicksich, Anne Jacobson, Tara Alfonso, Jill Kurtzhals, Brad Lenz, Andrew Lynch, Dustin Kraege, Lori Wunsch

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

Noting the presence of a quorum, at approximately 5:15 p.m. Vice Chair Gisselman called the meeting to order.

Approve minutes of the January 11, 2024 meeting

Rasmussen moved to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2024 meeting. Diny seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on Final Plat for Vistas at Greenwood Hills First Addition and associated easement document

This plat is for seven residential lots on the north side of the proposed Reserve Drive. Some details still need to be worked out. The final version of the easement document was presented today and staff has not had a chance to review it. The developer agreement is in draft form. Both the easement and developer agreement will be finalized before coming to Council. Staff agrees with the general layout provided.

Rasmussen moved to approve. Diny seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on Preliminary Plat for Green Tree Meadows

This preliminary plat is east of 72nd Avenue and north of Sarissa Drive. Staff has worked with Vreeland and Associates to tweak it and they have done a good job moving things around. The layout maximizes the number of lots but also minimizes impacts to wetlands.

Henke moved to approve. Diny seconded.

Diny asked if there are any ground water runoff concerns. Wesolowski indicated there are wetlands scattered throughout. They did their best to put the roads at the narrowest crossings of the wetlands. They are trying to keep the disturbance under 10,000 square feet, which is minimal. The stormwater plan and any parkland dedication will be worked out with the final plat. Diny noted one piece of the plat that is carved out for Stettin. Wesolowski confirmed that there is a parcel in the Town of Stettin that did not annex and would remain in the Town of Stettin.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on Urban Nonpoint Source and Stormwater Management Planning Grant Agreement

Nicksich explained that back in March of 2023, CISM was asked to consider a resolution of support to submit for this grant. We have been awarded the full amount of \$170,000. This is a 50/50 match. If we end up spending the entire amount, \$85,000 would be the City's responsibility. This planning grant includes a stormwater quality management plan update which would include items such as Best Management Practices (BMP) alternative analysis of existing conditions, and a stormwater utility feasibility study. If approved, an RFP would be sent out to select a consultant.

Rasmussen moved to approve the grant acceptance. Henke seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on the closure of railroad crossings

Lynch explained this is related to the development of the River Edge Trail. Back in 2023 the city purchased the former County Material property. The idea is to extend the trail from Winton Street along the river, cross over the railroad tracks to Gilbert Park. On the former County Material site there is a private railroad crossing that County Materials used to get from one side of the property to the other. The private crossing is tied to the business and effectively not ours. Staff was originally hoping that the railroad would consider that one as being removed, but that is not the case. Whenever you petition for a new railroad crossing, the railroad typically wants you to take one away. Staff looked at the Federal Railroad Administration map of all the crossings in the City of Wausau. They removed the trail crossings, sidewalk crossings, park access, business access and street crossings. That left 3 options, which are alley crossings. Lenz added that these are all on spurs and not on the main line. In terms of volume of traffic and speed they are more desirable.

Lynch clarified that they are looking to block access and remove a crossing in an alley. We would remove the material in between the tracks and put up a barrier. We are not talking about vacating the alley.

Option A is between 3rd Ave, 4th Ave, Stewart Ave, and Garfield. Access would be maintained for users on the north and south. Option B is between 8th Ave, 9th Ave, West Street and Sherman Street. This has an interesting parcel that has challenging access issues. The parcel is not accessed from 9th Ave; they have a garage in the back. He cannot speak to how they are accessing their garage, but it seems that blocking off this alley might create a less than safe option. Option C is between 3rd Ave, 1st Ave, Sherman Street and West Street. This option has a similar situation where there is a residential parcel in a unique spot. They do not have access of 3rd Ave; they access the property off the alley. With the idea of having little disruption as possible and maintaining a safe situation, placing barriers on this alley is not ideal. Staff recommends pursuing Option A. Lenz and Lynch looked at this option and checked driveway and garage access. Properties on Stewart Ave go out to Stewart Ave. There is one property with a garage setback and it uses a little bit of the alley. Properties on 4th Ave go out to 4th Ave. 3rd Ave has 2 residential units that access the alley. There are 2 commercial lots and the Marjon Motel. If we were to block off this alley access, people could still travel north or south in the alley. It may be more inconvenient if they use the alley, but it would not be impossible. With direction from this committee, staff would like to gather input from property owners and residents and bring it back to CISM possibly with a resolution. When we petition the OCR, it will be 2 petitions; one to close a crossing and another to open a crossing.

Assuming the committee would direct staff to pursue Option A, Rasmussen asked if installing a barrier and closing access would reduce the train horn. Lynch does not believe so because they go across two street crossings in this area.

Rasmussen agrees that Option A is the best option as it is less disruptive to the surrounding area.

Rasmussen moved to direct staff to begin a process on Option A and report back the results. Seconded by Henke.

Diny asked if the crossing by County Materials could be counted as closed if it is being eliminated. Lynch stated it is a private crossing and we are asking for a public crossing, which is a different use profile with different restrictions. Lynch would love to be able to count that crossing as closed, but he wants to go into the petition with the best chance for success. Lenz said staff has had ongoing discussions with the railroad for several months. They have talked about this crossing and their position was that it was a private crossing that did not transfer to new ownership. He believes they are willing to work with us and when they write the petition it can be a factor. It may not count as an official closing, but it is one that would go away. When they have talked with the railroad in the past, they have said we have to look at closing three crossings to get a new crossing. Their negotiations so far have been relatively positive. Staff will proceed with the one and see where it gets us.

Henke would like to see staff try as hard as possible to get the closed crossing to count. With closing of Option A, he asked if there would be a public input session. Lynch intends to send out a letter to make sure property

owners are notified. They have also been talking about holding a meeting of some sort but not quite sure where. Henke suggested a Werle Park meeting if staff is looking for a time and place.

There being a motion and a second, motion to direct staff to begin a process on Option A and report back the results passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on the purchase of icebreaker equipment for the Department of Public Works

Kraege included background information on this item in the packet. Public Works has received complaints when residential streets get ice and snow buildup. We have looked at other options such as plowing more and using more materials, but those are more costly and harder on the environment. This option came from one of our crew members who came from Colorado. Icebreakers are more common out west where they do not use salt on the roads. This would provide another option if we would like to do more on side streets when we get buildup.

Rasmussen moved to approve. Seconded by Diny.

Rasmussen is excited to see this. She has received a lot of complaints about side streets. We recently looked at the cost of additional product, curb to curb sanding, and other things that are not sustainable. She would love to have this as a treatment option. If we get a winter with a bunch of rain, a bunch of snowpack and then freeze and thaw keeps happening, sometimes streets get in a bad state beyond the corners. That is when all the complaints come from people who are trying to walk, delivery people, etc. She feels we should try at least one.

Diny asked if Kraege has seen this in operation locally. Kraege has not seen it locally; the closest is the Minnesota DOT. They have been using it on highways for about 10 years and have had good luck with them. Kraege reached out to local vendors but no one had anything like this. Diny asked where this is from and Kraege replied Canada. Diny questioned if Kraege knew how much this would offset salt/sand usage. Kraege said it depends on the winter. This unit would give the option to break up snowpack, scrape it down to pavement, and let the sun do its job. Diny asked if special training would be needed or if there is a concern about who would operate it. Kraege is confident that all the loader operators could run it as it is just an attachment to the frontend loader. It basically works like a plow where the breaker runs in front of it and there is a built-in snowplow on the backside to scrape.

Henke asked what is typically done today. Kraege said in residential areas they expect to have a hard pack and apply sand to the intersections, curves, and hills. Henke feels this would be a big win as he gets a lot of calls about sand in driveways and on medians.

Diny asked about delivery time and where would it be expensed from. If approved, Kraege will take this to Finance for a budget modification. Delivery time is a month to two so it would be late to try it this year.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on CISM Committee duties and responsibilities

Jacobson explained that CISM by ordinance considers requests or proposals for the sale only of city-owned property with the exception of the duties assumed by the Economic Development Committee (ED). Those duties include the sale of land in the Business Campus, land acquired by the city for redevelopment purposes, and by virtue of the property disposition program. It does not address the purchase of property, just the sale.

Rasmussen feels the processes in place for the property disposition program and the lands managed by ED make sense and believes the committee does not want to mess with that. She thought the goal was to match our duties with where we appear in ordinance. She feels like Jacobson should work with Stratz to firm up the disposition program to make sure it is clearly aligned. It seems like the pinch point of feeling left out of the mix was not so much land acquisition for development, but land acquisition for a public facility. This committee expressed an interest to be more involved when we look to acquire property for a public use that is not private sector

development. She believes confusion is generated by the name of this committee. We do more than street maintenance, and when you put capital improvements in the mix, you create conflict and confusion with the CIP Committee. She feels if the committee description is going to be rewritten the committee should be called what it is; Infrastructure and Facilities. The work we do would not be affected at all, but it would be easier for perspective council members and the public to understand. She would like to see us call it what it is and make the duties match the ordinances. She suggested bringing some proposals back to the March meeting and try to clean this up before a new council in April.

Henke is in favor of changing the name. He believes this committee is still a key part of purchasing property as there is expertise as far as utilities, what might have been there at some point, and making sure we are not unearthing something we do not want to. He suggested that as soon as something makes the CIP list, it should come to the standing committee of whoever is driving it or the chair should bring it up so we are not surprised come budget time.

Diny agrees and noted when looking at the history this committee had different names. As we evolve we should call it what it is. He also agrees this should get done before the end of this term so it is not left on a new council to sort through.

Gisselman feels strongly about the word property; how to incorporate that into the larger scheme is debatable. He believes this committee should be involved in some way with CIP, be that a listing or some form of foreknowledge of projects so there are no surprises along the way.

Rasmussen noted that CIP is wide ranging and we may have to define what specifically in CIP we are interested in. She agrees with Henke. Departments that are asking for things in CIP would be well served to talk to their committee of oversight. There are a lot of different things in CIP and not just CISM items. When we get into trouble is when CIP gets requests for land, buildings, or staffing and we feel like we miss a step. If a department feels it needs a couple of employees, they really should go to HR before the request gets to CIP. If someone needs a new building, it would be a good idea to go to the committee of jurisdiction. There are only 3 alders on CIP and we cannot rely on those alders to report back to committees on behalf of whomever is asking. We would get a long way having an agenda item before the budget for CIP planning so we do not get to the end of the budget and are surprised.

Jacobson feels the proposed name change and the distinction between facilities for public use and acquiring land for resale for private development is very helpful. Gisselman questioned if it could be further defined. Jacobson explained if land is purchased for redevelopment purposes, that should be placed in the resolution. Gisselman noted that after a few years the purpose may have changed. He feels this needs to be more clearly defined.

Rasmussen explained that when you are purchasing property to offer it for redevelopment or private sector development, our intent is that it will be a tax generating property. When you buy for public use that is either a public amenity or public building, it does not pay tax. Whether you are acquiring property for tax generating purposes, might be where you start to define.

Jacobson noted that there was talk about having a Committee of the Whole or the Executive Committee meet on all the descriptions and then make recommendations to the full Council to adopt duties/names for all the committees. Since the chair of this committee is not present, Gisselman said we should have one more meeting regarding this.

Adjourn

Diny moved to adjourn the meeting. Henke seconded and the motion carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:00 p.m.