

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: March 14, 2024, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

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

Also Present: Eric Lindman, Allen Wesolowski, Anne Jacobson, Tara Alfonso, Jill Kurtzhals, Tammy Stratz, Dustin Kraege, Blake Opal-Wahoske, Lori Wunsch, Stephanie Christensen – EMCS

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. Chair Larson called the meeting to order.

Approve minutes of the February 8 and February 13, 2024 meetings

Rasmussen moved to approve the minutes of the February 8 and February 13, 2024 meetings. Gisselman seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on sale of 902 and 904 West Thomas Street (Bids were opened by the Board of Public Works on February 21, 2024)

Larson indicated only one bid was received and asked if it should be accepted. Rasmussen believes we should accept the offers since we would no longer have to take care of the properties and they would return to the tax roll.

Rasmussen moved to approve the bids and proceed with the sale. Henke seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on 15-minute parking spaces on the south side of Washington Street between 2nd Street and 3rd Street

Larson suggested trying this for a year and see what happens. Rasmussen noted that we did well when we put a couple of 15-minute stalls mid-block along 3rd Street when there was a need for businesses that have quick services like carryout and pickup. Having 2 or 3 15-minute stalls gives quick service places spots to get in and out quick. She believes there are 3 spots in the block in front of Ciao and Polito's and Gisselman confirmed. Jimmy Johns is located in Washington Square on the south side of the building so the spots near Polito's would not serve them.

Larson asked if this is something we would want to revisit in a year or make permanent. Rasmussen stated the other spots along 3rd Street are permanent. Rasmussen feels these should also be permanent. If we find there is a need or the make up of tenants change, we can revisit. Wesolowski noted that Washington Street is scheduled to be reconstructed in 2025. The plan is to put parallel parking on both sides. It could be revisited at that time with some 15-minute stalls on the other side of the street.

Rasmussen moved to approve three 15-minute parking stalls on the south side of Washington between 2nd Street and 3rd Street with the directive to staff to reevaluate the parking along the street when the reconstruction is complete.

Gisselman stated there are other merchants on 3rd Street that may depend on 2-hour parking. As we add more 15-minute spots, it takes away 2-hour parking for longer term merchants. He asked how many 2-hour spots are along the stretch between 2nd and 4th Streets. Wesolowski stated there would still be a lot of 2-hour parking available.

Blake Opal-Wahoske explained this would not just benefit Jimmy Johns. There is the Chocolate Café that just opened up and a tailor on the 2nd floor of Washington Square. Henke added that there is a parking ramp a half block away that is always empty when he is there.

Larson asked if the signage could indicate during business hours only. Rasmussen indicated that parking is not enforced after 6:00 pm.

Henke seconded Rasmussen's motion and the motion passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on preliminary resolution to set a public hearing to vacate an area of right-of-way south of Adams Street abutting 1012 and 1010 Everest Boulevard and 1100 Highland Park Boulevard

A petition was received to vacate right-of-way. This item is just to set a public hearing on the vacation. Henke asked if this was the alley with the shed and Wesolowski confirmed. Wesolowski explained the City gave an easement to the property owner so he could keep the sheds. One homeowner did not want to vacate, but that ownership has changed and now all are in favor of vacating.

Henke moved to approve setting a public hearing. Gisselman seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on installation of sidewalk on the south side of West Wausau Avenue from Stevens Drive to North 10th Avenue

This is a DOT project with STP Urban Funding. Construction is proposed for 2026. EMCS is going through the preliminary design. A public involvement meeting was held, which did not have good attendance. The only person who attended was a representative from Wausau West. The Wausau School District is not generally in favor of sidewalk on the south side. If sidewalk was on the south side, we would have to mark a crosswalk to get people from the north to the south side. This would interfere with their bus drop off area. A letter was received from the owner of 1303 and 1309 West Wausau Ave who is not in favor of sidewalk due to safety issues and security issues. A letter was also received from someone who walks the area and is not in favor. They feel there are other areas that deserve sidewalk more. Christensen of EMCS spoke with the principal at Newman. Almost half of the sidewalk would abut the back side of their athletic field. They are not in favor of sidewalk. They have a fence along the back side of their property. They do not utilize the back side for access to the field. The asphalt parking lot back there is for maintenance and has very little use. No comments were received in favor of the sidewalk. If the area was used for walking there would be a beaten path, but that is not the case. From a continuity standpoint, sidewalk also does not exist on the south side west of Stevens Drive.

Rasmussen goes through this area multiple times a day. The sidewalk on the north side is used, but she does not see people using the south side. She agrees with safety concerns with a mid-block crosswalk. She thinks we should keep the sidewalk where it is today, on the north side. She has always felt that as long as we have sidewalk on one side there is a safe place for pedestrians to navigate. We run into trouble when there is sidewalk on neither side. She supports keeping the sidewalk on the north side and not installing on the south side. This will also keep costs down on the project.

Henke asked if there were requirements from the DOT to have a sidewalk. Wesolowski indicated there are no requirements. As part of the application, we indicated we would look into pedestrian and bicycle accommodations.

Gisselman asked if there was street parking on the south side. Wesolowski confirmed there is parking from where the Newman fence starts to the east. There is no parking in front of the houses. Gisselman said there is sidewalk on the east side of Stevens Drive. Wesolowski confirmed and stated there is sidewalk on both sides of Stevens going north and south, further west on West Wausau Ave there is no sidewalk on the south side.

Larson asked the estimated cost for installing the sidewalk and what would the City's portion be. Wesolowski said it is a 70/30 split. Cost would depend on the bid, but there is a cap around 1 million for this project. We would most likely have to move the fence and there would be real estate issues. Just the sidewalk would cost about \$100,000 plus real estate costs. The decision should be based more on continuity. Rasmussen added that if

sidewalk was installed there would be impacts to driveway lengths and the front yards of the houses. There would be different takings and homeowners would have sidewalk to maintain.

Rasmussen moved to proceed with sidewalk on the north side of West Wausau Avenue and omit sidewalk on the south side. Henke seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on CISM Committee duties and responsibilities

Jacobson provided a copy of her notes and a rough draft of an ordinance. On January 11 this committee discussed the duties and responsibilities and possible interconnections with other committees. At the February meeting, Jacobson included the 1966 report, the website description and all the references in the code. The website is almost verbatim to the 1966 report duties. She brought a draft ordinance to the February 8 meeting that directs proposals to sell property directly to CISM, rather than Council first, and added a section where Economic Development (ED) would report to CISM regarding the sale of any property pursuant to its Property Disposition Program. On March 7, ED reviewed a revamp of the Property Disposition Program which clarified that the committee would recommend the purchase of land for redevelopment purposes other than for municipal purposes, and sale of developable properties through RFP, such projects consisting of more than a 4-unit, non-owner-occupied housing development or other type of commercial or mixed-use development. The Program also includes the sale of lots to adjoining owners would be exempt from the procedure outlined in Chapter 3.12. Rather than soliciting bids, the City Assessor would set the value for the sale price.

Jacobson does not know if all the committee descriptions will get adopted during this term. The Property Disposition Program is slated to go to Council on March 26th and would be adopted by resolution. She would like to see the duties codified in ordinance. Jacobson provided a draft amending Section 3.12 and indicated the title would change to Purchase or Sale of City-Owned Real Estate. Any request for proposal for a purchase, sale, or leasing of property would be directed to CISM first. The only sales not subject to the procedure would be sales to adjoining owners of lots that are deemed undevelopable by the Zoning Inspector. The committee can make recommendations to Council for the use or disposition of vacant or unutilized property and may recommend the acquisition of real property for municipal purposes. ED would report to CISM on proposed sale of property through the Property Disposition Program. CISM would receive proposals or requests not only for the sale or lease of City-owned property, but also for the purchase with exception of the purchase of an adjoining lot, sale of land in the Business Campus, and sale of land acquired by the City for purposes other than municipal purposes. It was also recommended to change the name of CISM to Infrastructure and Facilities.

Larson wants to move this forward before the next Council is installed. He is okay with the changes but does not feel there is a need to have ED report to CISM. He is good with having CISM responsible for properties bought and sold for municipal purposes and having ED handle the rest.

Rasmussen agrees and feels we want to be involved with land acquisition for public use, public purposes, or public facilities which essentially removes property from the tax roll. She proposed the committee name change because sometimes there is confusion when we talk about capital projects and where it conflicts with the CIP Committee. Facilities has never really had an oversight home. When a facility has needs it ends up in Finance because it needs money. No one ever talks about long-term maintenance plans or replacement plans. If we call this committee what it really does, Infrastructure and Facilities, it would be clearer for the public and new members.

Henke agrees and is okay with the name change. He asked about striking Section B regarding ED reporting to CISM from the proposed ordinance. Larson agrees and does not think that is needed.

Stratz closely worked with Jacobson on preparing the policy and feels comfortable with what is proposed. Gisselman asked if ED purchases would go to Council. Jacobson confirmed because we are acquiring the property because of blight, for redevelopment, or to RFP it. Gisselman asked if a park would be a municipal purpose. Jacobson said yes if acquiring property to dedicate as a park owned by the City. That could either go to the Park and Recreation Committee and/or CISM.

Rasmussen moved to accept the draft ordinance with removal of Item B under 3.12.010 referencing ED reporting to CISM and moved to change the name of this committee to Infrastructure and Facilities to begin with the commencement of the April Council term. Henke seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

Update on 17th Avenue Railroad Crossing

Council passed a resolution to petition the railroad to determine the adequacy of the current railroad crossing facilities at 17th Avenue. The Attorney's Office prepared a letter for the Mayor to sign, which was uploaded to the Railroad today. It could possibly be 3 months before we hear anything. There will not be a hearing. The Railroad will announce their findings along with who will be paying for it.

Henke heard the horns very late last night. He noticed they were doing maintenance on one of the arms on 1st Avenue. He is not sure if someone hit it or what was going on, but wanted it noted that it is still an issue.

Update on the proposed Fleet Maintenance Facility property

Larson stated we are no longer going to the West Street property. No other properties in the report jumped out to him. He thinks we should possibly look at the former Menards site or the Westwood Drive site. Rasmussen does not know if Westwood is up for sale for a public purpose. She believes the owner is planning to develop or sell for commercial use. She cannot begin to say how disappointed she is with the way negotiations on West Street went as she had high hopes on that site. She asked if the former Menards site is even available. Lindman believes it is still for sale. He will inquire on it with committee direction. If it is available, he can bring options back. There would be challenges with the site as it is odd shaped.

Rasmussen feels the Menards site is worth inquiring about. All the other options we looked at before had sound reasons why we did not want them. Cleveland Avenue is not a viable option; the neighborhood would not be happy and never accept it. To look at acquiring property adjacent to the existing facility, in the same neighborhood, will have the same struggles. Larson said there are also challenges with being in a floodplain. He is sad because we offered 7 to 8 times what the owner paid for West Street. Rasmussen is also disappointed and feels we negotiated in earnest and fairly. She would support staff inquiring about the former Menards site. Lindman stated the original thought was to keep the fleet facility near the existing DPW facility. If we do build the fleet facility in another location, maybe in the future the rest of the DPW facility could move towards the fleet facility. We do not know what will become available in the future.

Larson asked if the plans by Barrientos would fit on the Menards site or if we had to start from scratch. Lindman feels we would not have to start from scratch, just the site work. Larson questioned if this site is limited as far as turn around space. Lindman said it is an odd shape and we will not know until we try to lay it out.

Henke asked about the rules with right-of-way as far as on ramps. Near the on ramp there is a triangle space where the ramp goes over. Wesolowski said that is owned by the DOT. It is a stormwater facility that carries flood waters from the area. He does not think we could touch that space unless we move the stormwater facility.

The committee agreed by consensus to direct engineering staff to look into the former Menards property.

Adjourn

Henke moved to adjourn the meeting. Gisselman seconded and the motion carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:05 p.m.