

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE

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Date of Meeting: July 10, 2025, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Chad Henke, Lou Larson, Tom Neal, Sarah Watson

Also Present: Mayor Diny, Allen Wesolowski, TJ Niksich, Jillian Kurtzhals, Dustin Kraege, Andrew Lynch, Jamie Polley, Chad Abbiehl, Carrie Edmondson, 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. Chair Henke called the meeting to order.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. Approve minutes of the June 12, 2025 meeting**

**B. Action on Stormwater Maintenance Agreement with 700 Grand Apartments LLC at 700 Grand Avenue**

**C. Action on Stormwater Maintenance Agreement with Newman Catholic Schools, Inc. at 1130 West Bridge Street**

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Neal moved to approve the consent agenda. Seconded by Watson and the motion passed 4-0.

### **Public Hearing: Vacating and Discontinuing Pine Ridge Boulevard from North 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Westhill Drive**

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Andrew Miller and Jeff Wicklander appeared from Aspirus and presented on their proposed expansion, which would require the vacation of a portion of Pine Ridge Boulevard.

There were no further comments, and the public hearing was closed.

### **Discussion and possible action on vacating and discontinuing Pine Ridge Boulevard from North 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Westhill Drive**

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Neal stated that looking at the neighborhood, the traffic, and the availability of routes around, it seems closing this stretch does not introduce undo harm or prevent anyone from getting anywhere. It also is an important addition to the campus.

Watson has not heard from any constituents. This is in Henke's district, and he has not heard from anyone. The Engineering Department has not received any comments.

Watson moved to vacate Pine Ridge Boulevard from North 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Westhill Drive. Seconded by Larson and the motion passed 4-0.

### **Discussion and possible action on request for the City to transfer its ownership rights by quitclaim deed to Marathon County for parcel of land in the southwest corner of Marathon Park**

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This request came from the Park Department and is more of a housekeeping item.

Polley explained that the Highway Department is looking to relocate and trying to clean up their parcel of land. On the County's GIS map, it showed this sliver of land north of the railroad tracks as part of the Highway Department parcel. When GIS staff looked at it closer, they realized that sliver of land was not part of the Highway Department parcel and is not part of the Park parcel. Going back to the 1800's the County owned the park property and deeded it to the City. At some point it was deeded to the Agricultural Society which then deeded the park back to the County. However, the sliver of land was never deeded back to the County with the rest of the park. This portion of land is within the park parcel and within the fencing around Marathon Park. This issue did go to the County's Human Resources, Finance, and Property Committee. They support the request to the City to have this deeded back to the County.

Neal moved to approve the proposed quitclaim deed. Seconded by Larson and the motion passed 4-0.

**Discussion and possible action on preliminary resolution to vacate right-of-way along the former 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor map**

This request was received from Marathon County. This committee has decided to move ahead with reconstructing 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue on its current alignment. With reconstructing 28<sup>th</sup> Ave on its existing alignment, the excess right-of-way north of Maple Creek Drive and along 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue could be vacated. Approval would forward a resolution setting a public hearing, and a more detailed map would be provided. We would maintain the right-of-way for 30<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> Avenues and Maple Creek Drive. This would vacate the parcels that were bought and dedicated to right-of-way.

Henke noted that the City line is jagged in this area. He asked if the area would go back to the Town of Stettin. Wesolowski said it would stay in the City. The land would revert back to the County as the County had owned the parcels. He believes the County would then look to sell the parcels.

Neal asked the purpose behind this. Wesolowski explained that one of the options for 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue was to curve it to the west and head up 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The County bought the parcels with the intention of realigning 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Since 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue will not be realigned to the west, the area where the parcels were bought is no longer needed for right-of-way. If the right-of-way is vacated, the area will revert back to Marathon County.

Neal moved to approve a preliminary resolution to set a public hearing on vacating the right-of-way along the former 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor. Seconded by Larson and the motion passed 4-0.

**Discussion and possible action on Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee recommendation for typical section of STH 52 (East Wausau Avenue) from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to 18<sup>th</sup> Street**

State Highway 52 was discussed at the last meeting, and it was recommended to go with Alternative A2, which would be a two-way left turn lane (TWLTL) down the center with dedicated bike lanes, 5' sidewalk, and 5' terrace.

Edmondson explained that the Bike and Ped Committee had concerns about the recommendation moved forward from the Infrastructure & Facilities Committee. One concern was if a TWLTL was necessary for the length of the project. Another concern is the speed limit. The speed limit is 25 for some of the stretch and then it goes to 35. Bike and Ped felt 25 MPH would be a better fit to slow the traffic. They also had concerns about property acquisition and would like the least amount of property acquisition. While a 4' bike lane is deemed to be sufficient it should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Bike and Ped Committee feels this project necessitates enhancements and recommends a multi-use path. That committee also felt pedestrian safety should be prioritized through pedestrian refuge islands and a multi-use path.

The formal recommendation from the Bike and Ped Committee is a 25 MPH speed limit from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to 18<sup>th</sup> Street, an 8' to 10' wide multi-use trail on one or both sides of the roadway, they agreed with a 5' terrace but said it could be 3' to 5' with street trees, left turn lanes only at high priority intersections of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and 18<sup>th</sup> Street, addition of pedestrian refuge islands at 6<sup>th</sup> Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street for traffic calming and to aid pedestrian circulation, all while not extending the right-of-way or with limited property acquisition only when needed.

Gordon Clements, 1307 East Wausau Ave, and some of his neighbors have concerns with the A2 design. In a previous meeting it was noted that the frequency of alternative lanes would essentially create a TWLTL but an email that was sent included a clear math example that debunked that position. He feels a TWLTL will increase traffic speed. If safety is a goal, he questioned how an element could be included in the design that will increase speed. He has worked in insurance his entire life. Speed increases the frequency of accidents, and the frequency of accidents will increase the severity of accidents. It is his understanding that roads are built to handle certain speeds of traffic. In his observations, people tend to drive 30 MPH or more in a 25 zone. In a 35, they tend to

drive 40 or more. He hopes having it 25 MPH to 18<sup>th</sup> Street is considered. Over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend, he saw several people on bicycles on East Wausau Avenue. They all used the sidewalk. That tells him they do not feel safe in the road. The Chair of the Bike and Ped Committee will not even ride on that road. He would like to see a multi-use trail to give the bicyclists a break and get them out of the high-volume traffic. He believes the worry about people backing out of their driveway and conflicting with bicycles is a moot point. The people that live there will learn to handle it. In a previous meeting it was talked about how the answer does not always have to be a straight line. The DOT examples were all straight-line examples. We have the opportunity to think outside the straight line and come up with a better solution. This is a once-in-a-generation project for most of us. He would like the problems addressed now rather than waiting for the next generational project.

Richard Gerblich, 1306 East Wausau Ave, believes the right-of-way between 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets is 66'. He assumes that is from the edge of the sidewalk to the edge of the sidewalk. If that is the case, he would lose half of his driveway. He does not want sidewalk installed on the north side of the street. If a 10' multi-use path replaces the sidewalk on the other side of the street, it would be adequate. He knows there are safety concerns and crossing the street is an issue for kids going to the high school. Most often kids go up 13<sup>th</sup> Street to get to school, not up Wausau Ave. His main concern is losing a lot of his front yard. If the option of shifting the road 6' to the north is chosen, it would be at his front door. As far as safety, he agrees with dropping the speed limit to 25. He feels the center turn lane from 13<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> is unnecessary and would increase people's tendency to speed.

Neal is the guilty party that mentioned straight lines do not have to rule all our decisions in respect to preserving street trees during street reconstruction projects. It was an appeal to creative thinking and to look at things on a case-by-case basis. A lot of thought has gone into this and there has been considerable feedback from residents. Cross sections do not show the environment and do not show where the houses and driveways are. He would like to see an aerial view of this stretch with an overlay of the options and impacts to the neighborhood. It is a well-traveled automobile route, but he does not feel it is a heavily traveled pedestrian and bicycle route. He feels we could look at a multi-use trail on the south side of the street with no need for any additions on the north side. This is an important decision, and he does not like how the options have been presented and the lack of environmental feel for the neighborhood. The cross sections provided do not deal with the realities.

Wesolowski stated the options were laid out on aerials at the public information meeting. This project has identified a safety hazard; rear-end crashes for 16- to 20-year-olds. The DOT's recommendation is to put a TWLTL in, which was presented at the public information meeting and received overwhelming favorable comments. The majority of the people that showed up to the public information meeting were in favor of a TWLTL. Those people are not here tonight, and we have one person representing the opposite of that. We have to remember that 16- to 20-year-old kids are getting into rear end crashes on this section on a higher than state average static. The Federal Highway Administration agrees and is willing to give the state federal money to correct the crash situation. There is no study that backs up the claim that speeding increases with a TWLTL. The Federal Highway Administration's official stance is that TWLTL's do not increase speed. Wesolowski also received a call from the regional traffic engineer for the state, who also stated that TWLTL's do not increase speed. We do want to rebuild the corridor right. What the state and design engineer presented met the goals of the regional plan for bike and ped by providing on-street bike lanes and sidewalk. The option of a multi-use trail came up after the public information meeting. The DOT also has to look at a purpose and need. Wesolowski does not know if the DOT would be able to prove a purpose and need to get federal money to construct a multi-use trail. If they cannot show enough pedestrians for a purpose and need, funding will not be available for a multi-use trail. Wesolowski added that according to state statutes, the condemnation process cannot be used to obtain property for a multi-use trail. That would present an issue with obtaining real estate.

Neal noted the severity and frequency of accidents in a 25 MPH versus 35 MPH. He feels we could have a nice sized multi-use trail on the south side by removing the combined 8' of bicycle lanes from the roadway. Getting bikes off the street is important as bike riders do not often get a lot of respect. It was mentioned a multi-use path could be a danger with people pulling out of their driveways; it would be the same situation with a bike lane on the street. He feels the danger in the street is far greater than crossing a driveway. The Bike and Ped Committee is here for a purpose. The chair of that committee looks at things from a different perspective than city engineers and the DOT. Neal hopes to see how a trail would look on this stretch.

Henke asked about the timeframe for the project. Wesolowski said construction is scheduled for 2029. Real estate for the project is expected to take two years. Delays may push construction back a year.

Addressing the speeding, Wesolowski said most crashes are between 6<sup>th</sup> Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street, which is already 25 MPH. There were really no crashes within the 35 MPH zone between 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets. He would bet that a speed study would show the 85 percentile speed between 35 and 40 MPH. That indicates people are comfortable with traveling that speed. A speed study will not tell you to decrease the speed but rather keep it where it is as people are comfortable with traveling at the speed and there are no accidents. The accidents are between 6<sup>th</sup> Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street where people are stopped waiting to make left-hand turns.

Neal said the norm throughout the city is a two-lane road. There is nothing magical about this stretch that needs a TWLTL to accommodate people pulling into their driveways. There may be rear end crashes, but we have them throughout the city. We also have intersection collisions throughout the city, but we are not putting in traffic circles everywhere. The reasons why we might not look at a full three-lane thoroughfare on this stretch is because we have other accommodations like Bike and Ped have brought forward. He wants to look at how a compromise can be met.

Henke noted that this stretch is a little special as it is a state highway; not every street is a state highway. He asked if a decision could be pushed to the August meeting. Wesolowski will have to talk with the DOT and the consultant to see how they feel about this and how they want to move ahead.

Larson moved to table this item to the August meeting. Seconded by Neal.

Wesolowski said the DOT and the consultant do not have an overhead view that shows the Bike and Ped recommendation. Wesolowski will ask if they will consider a multiuse trail on one side and draw up the option. Neal said the Bike and Ped Committee recommended the addition of a bike and ped path on one or both sides of the street. If a path is maintained on the south side of the street, Neal wants to keep in mind that it should occupy space from the right-of-way, not from people's yards. Neal doesn't think sidewalk would be needed on the north side as the word from the neighborhood is not many people are using it. Lynch feels it would be a great idea to look at all options. We could probably still fit sidewalk on the north side east of 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Neal added that if we are gaining 8' from the elimination of the two on-street bike paths, the 8' can be shifted to the south for a nice sized multiuse path.

There being a motion and a second, motion to table this item to the August meeting passed 4-0.

### **Discussion and possible action on installation of sidewalk and street lighting on STH 52 (East Wausau Avenue) from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to 18<sup>th</sup> Street**

The DOT has agreed to put standard overhead street lighting throughout the project with a 50-50 cost share. This is not currently in the State/Municipal Agreement, so the agreement would have to be amended. The City's estimated portion would be \$357,500. If decorative lighting is requested, the estimate would be about doubled; however, there is an opportunity to apply for state grants for enhancement. Spacing for decorative lighting is a lot less and they would be on both sides of the street, which is why the cost doubles. There is Community Sensitive Design funding available, but there is no guarantee we will get that.

Larson would be alright with standard lighting. He does not feel there is a need for decorative lighting every 20'.

Larson moved to go forward with standard lighting. Seconded by Watson.

Neal considers 6<sup>th</sup> Street to 10<sup>th</sup> Street as a city-center neighborhood. It is not far from Athletic Park and not far from the river. The city center is an area where we have concentrated our decorative lighting. It adds to the aesthetic of our city and goes beyond simply adding light. He would be interested in a compromise of having decorative lighting transitioning to standard overheads.

Neal moved to amend the motion to look at the option of decorative lighting from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to 10<sup>th</sup> Street and then transitioning to standard lighting the rest of the way. Seconded by Henke.

Larson feels the aesthetics of two different lights on the street will be awkward. He is unsure of how much light the decorative lights give. He is concerned about having unnecessary light coming into houses.

Watson asked about light pollution from the decorative lights. Wesolowski indicated cut offs are on the back side of the lights to try to prevent light pollution into yards and different types of heads can be used. Watson asked if they provide the same amount of light and if someone riding a bike would be able to see just as good. Wesolowski explained that decorative lights are spaced closer together so that there are no dark spots. The standard lighting can be spaced further apart as they are higher and the light spreads. No matter what lights are chosen, they will run a lighting design to make sure there are no dark spots.

Neal stated there are ways to address light pollution. The main concern is light going up for people that want a dark sky. Decorative lights are capped off to direct light downward and outward; not upward. Decorative lights were put in on 7<sup>th</sup> Street and it made a market improvement to the neighborhood. He believes they increase property values to some degree. He believes there are plenty of occurrences in the city where lighting transitions from decorative to overhead.

Watson would be interested in seeing the cost of decorative lighting for 4 blocks. Wesolowski explained the City would be responsible for \$357,000 and any costs over. There is an opportunity to apply for Community Sensitive Design funding to possibly cover additional costs.

Larson will not support the amendment because it is not cost prohibitive. There is standard lighting along Thomas Street and it works fine.

The amended motion to look at the option of decorative lighting from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to 10<sup>th</sup> Street and then transitioning to standard lighting the rest of the way passed 3-1 with Larson the dissenting vote.

The motion of adding lighting to this project with the amendment of adding decorative lighting from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to 10<sup>th</sup> Street and direct staff to apply for Community Sensitive Design funding passed 3-1 with Larson the dissenting vote.

Watson moved to table action on the installation of sidewalk until the August meeting. Seconded by Neal and the motion passed 4-0.

### **Discussion on additional streets for asphalt overlay in 2025**

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Engineering staff met with DPW to brainstorm about the \$250,000 moved from winter maintenance for paving. A list of streets and map were presented. The cost of purchasing the materials is estimated at \$239,000. The cost for milling and pulverizing is approximately \$50,000. That portion would have to be bid out. The first bid we put out this year came in with a good price, so there is additional money available.

Watson questioned the street ratings. Wesolowski explained streets are rated from 1 to 10, with 10 being brand new construction and 1 being basically gravel. Any rating below a 5 can be considered for a mill and overlay. We do not want to mill and overlay streets that still have lead water laterals. We look for streets that have good curb and gutter and the pavement structure is still good.

Watson advocated for Quaw Street and Knox Street, rated 3 and 2, to replace Woodland Ridge rated a 5. Wesolowski explained that Woodland Ridge is one of the streets where the chip seal is peeling off. It could wait another year.

Neal is happy to see Hamilton Street on the list. It is a recurring problem every spring. Larson noted that half of Sherman Street is terrible, and the road is sinking at 8<sup>th</sup> and Sherman.

The committee agreed by consensus to move forward with the list as provided, with the exception of replacing Woodland Ridge with Quaw Street and Knox Street.

### **Update on 2025 Street Reconstruction Projects**

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Street Construction Project A consists of Cherry Street from West Wausau to Randolph Street and Randolph Street from Merrill Ave to Burek Ave. Next week the first phase, Cherry Street from West Wausau to Strowbridge Street, will be finished. Phase 2 is currently under way, which is Randolph Street from Merrill Ave to 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. They are working on the utilities. It is slow going, which was anticipated because of the amount of rock in the area. The utilities should be finished either next week or the following. Once that is finished, they will move to Phase 3.

The first phase of Street Construction Project B was 1<sup>st</sup> Street/River Drive and is 100% complete. The next phase is Fulton Street from 1<sup>st</sup> Street to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, which is about 90% complete. The contractor is currently working on utilities from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to 5<sup>th</sup> Street. The utilities are complete on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from Short Street to Dekalb Street, the road is built and curb installed. They are working on sidewalk and drive approaches. Pavement is expected the end of next week.

The 72nd Ave Trail South Extension is from Stewart Avenue to Packer Drive. It was paved yesterday, and they will be working on restoration. It should be 100% complete in about two weeks.

The downtown reconstruction of Washington Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, and Jackson Street is going well. The contractor is about 3 weeks ahead of schedule. All pavement is down on Washington Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> and Jackson. They are working on restoration, tree planting, electrical, and irrigation. The final step will be sidewalk and plantings between the back of curb and the Foundry building. Our contractor is on hold right now until the exterior of the Foundry is done.

Sidewalk replacement is taking place throughout the City. The contractor is about 70% complete. The Asphalt Overlay Project started this week on Stewart Ave from 52 Parkway to 48<sup>th</sup> Ave. The Concrete Pavement Repair Project is expected to start in August.

Henke asked when the Downtown Project is expected to be completed. The completion date is September 1<sup>st</sup>. Our contractor will be on time, but we may be targeting more towards the end of September for opening the roads. Washington Street is open for eastbound traffic from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> and westbound traffic from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **Discussion and possible action on preferred location of large parking lot for Athletic Park**

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Lynch noted there are two smaller parking lots we are getting ready to bid out and hopefully construct this year. One is on the north side of Boileau Field and will hold 30 spaces. Just to the east of Athletic Field is a small lot that will hold 7 ADA parking spots. This totals 37 spots. The development agreement requires that we construct 150 paved off-street parking spaces. We are left with providing 113 spaces. There are not a lot of good options in this area to provide 113 spaces. One option is the former Wausau Chemical site, which is now a temporary gravel parking lot. Another option is Nelson-Miller parcel. This parcel used to hold event parking, but that ended about 8 years ago. The property has since been sold. Lynch has tried to get a hold of the landlords, but his calls have not been returned. Lynch recommends using the temporary parking lot on the Wausau Chemical site, Option A. The City currently owns the land, and it is a short walking distance to Athletic Park. Current and future road infrastructure would allow car traffic to completely avoid the more dangerous zone for pedestrians, which is the area in front of the main gate. People walking out of the lot would come to Wausau Avenue and are not tempted to cut across the railroad tracks. Environmental cleanup of the Wausau Chemical site could take 7 to 10 years, so the area is less desirable for immediate development. Staff has checked with the EPA and as long as we are not invading the building area, we are fine.

Larson moved to accept Option A. Seconded by Neal and the motion passed 4-0.

## **Adjourn**

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Watson moved to adjourn the meeting. Neal seconded and the motion carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 p.m.