

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: August 12, 2021, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Lisa Rasmussen, James Wadinski, Lou Larson, Tom Neal, Debra Ryan

Also Present: Eric Lindman, Allen Wesolowski, TJ Niksich, Tara Alfonso, Cord Buckner, Lori Wunsch; By WebEx: John Dempsey, Toole Design

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 Rasmussen called the meeting to order.

Director's Report on Public Works

Ryan asked about the testing at 1300 Cleveland and the Community Campus on Grand Avenue. She questioned if it would be residential DNR standards or commercial. The Grand Avenue site is private and Lindman does not have details. 1300 Cleveland is still under the investigation phase and the determination will be made by the DNR with the City weighing in.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve minutes of the July 8, 2021 meeting**
 - B. Action on final resolution to levy special assessments for 2021 Street Construction Projects**
 - C. Action on Stormwater Maintenance Agreement with Aspirus at 716 North 3rd Street**
 - D. Action on Utility Easement on airport property for WPS and Charter Communications**
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Larson moved to approve the consent agenda items. Ryan seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on street cross sections for Washington Street and extensions of 2nd Street, 3rd Street and Jackson Street (Wausau Center Street Design)

Rasmussen recalled that the committee started to look at this last month and asked for a different level of renderings and for addition information to help decide the appropriate amount of right-of-way.

John Dempsey, Toole Design, explained that last month typical cross sections were presented based on the mall redevelopment. There is a real benefit and opportunity to explore the streets in a pedestrian and holistic manner. Historically streets support a range of transportation functions which have evolved over time. Typically streets allow for mobility that range from walking, biking, transit, and personal vehicles. The initial design was a curbless street, essentially removing the curb for a majority of the roadway. This provides a holistic design and activity for the public realm. There would be a need for curb in certain areas. A flush street functions and operates similar to curb streets but provides a greater flexibility on how you can use the right-of-way. There are designated zones for pedestrians to walk and cars to drive. There is an opportunity for a furnishing space that can be maximized for stormwater infrastructure, café seating, retail spill out, etc. He provided imagery showing why they feel this design would be a nice fit for downtown.

Rasmussen asked if the design would be conducive for snow removal and proper drainage for runoff. Dempsey stated between on-street parking and the sidewalk there is a robust 10' furnishing zone, which would provide adequate storage for snow and melting procedures.

Ryan asked if the posts shown in the renderings would be filled with cement so it could not be knocked over. Lindman does not have the details on options at this time. Ryan asked if there is enough space between the posts for wheelchairs to get through. Lindman explained the pictures provided are just general renderings. Flush streets make it easily accessible for everyone. Ryan is concerned about having enough room for dropping off handicap individuals. Rasmussen noted that design elements will come back at a later date. Dempsey added this imagery was provided to get the committee thinking about the look and feel of a flush street.

Dempsey provided a layout of Washington Street showing a 74' right-of-way that includes 22' for two-way traffic, 8' of parking on both sides and a 10' furnishing landscaped area. This would be flexible space; a bonus space that appeals to pedestrians. There would be an 8' sidewalk with 2' for building frontage. A 78' right-of-way would give 2 more feet on each side of the sidewalk making a wider, more comfortable experience for pedestrians.

2nd Street would have a similar approach. The proposed development calls for a park/open space. On-street parking would be provided on the west side. The furnishing zone would be bumped out to make a connection to the open space; almost having the park spill out into the sidewalk. Everything else would remain the same. Ryan worries about having enough designated space for handicap drop off. Rasmussen would like to entertain the 74' or 78' right-of-way with having the amenities left out at this time. If a designated drop off area is wanted, it can be tailored into the design once a width is decided.

Dempsey explained 2nd Street, 3rd Street, and Jackson Street would have parking on one side of the street with the other side being maximized with a wide furnishing zone. Rasmussen asked if there were any drawbacks to one versus the other. Neal believes the only distinction between the two is the size of sidewalk. He is leaning towards the wider right-of-way as he is all about having public space. He asked if the wider right-of-way would work with the developer's plans. Lindman indicated Ghidorzi is open to either option.

Neal feels both options are good and if there is no reason to go with the narrower design, he would campaign for 78'. Rasmussen is also leaning towards the 78' right-of-way. If there is a little more right-of-way, we will have leeway if we need to change something. Ryan agrees as 3rd Street is currently narrow. The new area may bring triple the amount of traffic.

Larson moved to recommend a 78' right-of-way for all four streets. Wadinski seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

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

Rasmussen indicated the temporary timeline for the valet parking program is running out. This seems to be well received and she hasn't received any complaints. Initially Lindman received a few complaints but has not received any this summer. Neal stated before COVID the reports were very encouraging and he hasn't heard of any negatives.

Neal moved to approve permanent parking restrictions for the Valet Parking Program. Seconded by Larson.

Ryan heard that a lot of people in wheelchairs are losing access when handicap areas were changed. Lindman stated that was related to the parklets. Rasmussen added that a handicap space was moved over one. The parklet is narrow enough that there is a lane for people to get to the ramp without being near traffic.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve carried unanimously 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on parking restrictions at the intersection of Highland Park Boulevard and Highland Court

Wesolowski was contacted by Charles Plier requesting a no parking area on Highland Park Boulevard. Charles Plier stated parking has been a problem since the streets were redone several years ago. The streets are basically one-way with a boulevard in the middle. They are slightly over 16' wide, which allows for one driving lane and one parking spot. When big vehicles, such as garbage trucks, UPS, FedEx, are in the neighborhood, they have to drive on the boulevard to get by a parked vehicle. Highland Court is even worse. Plier provided pictures of the issue. Several weeks ago a garbage truck was driven over his lawn and ruined his sprinkler system. If vehicles are parked on both sides of the road, it leaves a 5' path for a vehicle to get through.

Rasmussen asked about plowing when cars are parked on the street. Plier stated they put a lot of the snow on the boulevard. They cannot plow when cars are on the street.

Plier wanted it noted that he is not asking to eliminate parking on Highland Court. Discussion followed.

Neal moved to approve the parking restriction as proposed on the map. Seconded by Larson.

Wadinski referred to wording of the signs and does not want too much signage installed that would block the view of the house. Rasmussen said the parking restriction could be approved and DPW can determine what signs to place as they know the standards. Rasmussen added that we can keep in communication and if this does not solve the problem we can take another look at it.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve carried unanimously 5-0.

Stewart Avenue (72nd Avenue to 48th Avenue) public involvement results and design considerations

Wesolowski stated a public involvement meeting (PIM) was held on July 14. Comments received are included in the packet. The design includes 2 travel lanes, on-street bicycle accommodations, and a sidewalk or a 10' multi use trail. With the residential area on the north side of Stewart Avenue, it makes more sense for a sidewalk or multi use trail on the north side. There seemed to be support for the 10' multi use trail and a letter of support was received from the MPO. Overall, the PIM comments were positive. Plans included in the packet are preliminary. EMCS will move to 60% plans and hold another PIM this fall. At this point, we are looking for a recommendation to move ahead with the multi-use path on the north side with 2 travel lanes and on-street bicycle accommodations.

Rasmussen said most comments were regarding having good communication and access during the project. She feels a multi-use trail would function better than just sidewalk. Neal likes the idea of a multi-use path as this is almost a rural road where traffic gets speedy. An element of separation from traffic on a dedicated multi-use path is the safest.

Neal moved to approve the 10' multi-use trail and project as proposed. Seconded by Ryan and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Construction update for 2021 projects

North 3rd Avenue continues to be a nemesis for Rasmussen. The block between Randolph and Clayton has started and restricts access to Thomas Jefferson Elementary. The area is beyond a mess and she hopes it is passable before school starts. Niksich received an updated schedule from the contractor with a completion date of September 3rd with final asphalt. This is an extremely aggressive schedule and any hiccups can delay the project further. Rasmussen noted that the contract allows for liquidated damages. Between Memorial Day and mid-summer, the contractor took a lot of time off and the weather was good. She wants full liquidated damages assessed. Residents have indicated an ambulance or fire truck would not be able to get in. Vehicles have gotten stuck and the City had to haul in gravel. There was no soil barrier and mud went into driveways and landscaping. The contractor has been less than responsive to Niksich. Wadinski is concerned with the contract date and completion dates being so far apart. He would like to make sure the contract is followed.

Niksich stated South 5th Avenue has been ready for paving for a couple of weeks but we wanted to get the mid-block street lighting installed. That has been bored in and paving should take place Monday or Tuesday next week. Concrete was completed on Rosecrans today and paving should take place next week. The first course of asphalt will be placed, followed by landscaping and then the final course. McIntosh Street is scheduled to start on Monday.

The final lane of the overlay was completed today on the WisDOT Bridge Project. With the current configuration, the north bound lane will be closed for 3 more weeks so painting on the underside of the bridge can be accomplished.

The sidewalk replacement project is still going on and might go into September. The Concrete Pavement Repair Project will start after Labor Day. This includes joint repair on 1st Avenue north of Bridge Street and on 1st Street downtown.

In the wake of heavy wind related storms and trees going down, Neal wants to make sure extra care is taken to avoid cutting tree roots for sidewalk replacement. He has seen several places where sidewalk was skirted around a tree rather than cutting the roots. Rasmussen feels it is worth repeating that neighborhoods love mature trees and it makes sense to protect them. Niksich explained the process used along 5th Avenue this year where tree root barriers were placed. A barrier was placed that extends 18” down. As the tree matures, the barrier causes roots to dive down and shouldn’t interfere with sidewalk. This was a pilot program but staff plans to do this on future reconstruction projects.

The 12th Avenue Sidewalk Project from Merrill Avenue to Randolph Street will start to bid next week. It is bidding late due to issues at the intersection of Merrill Ave. There wasn’t enough right-of-way to construct a pedestrian handicap ramp. Staff pursued an easement but that did not progress. The plan is to remove curb and make a sweeping radius to give room to build the ramp.

Ryan asked if any more overlays were planned. Wesolowski said the asphalt contract is completed; however, DPW continues to work on streets with patching and shallow depth overlays. Discussion followed on possible federal money.

Future Agenda Items

Larson mentioned Thomas Street from Grand Avenue to Prospect needs attention and is caving in by Seymour Street. This is a truck route and used by emergency vehicles. Lindman indicated staff will look at it and see if there is something we can do. Larson would like to obtain traffic counts. Wesolowski may have this information already and if not, he’ll have it for the next meeting. Lindman will include an update in the next Director’s Report.

At some point Ryan will be bringing forward a vacation request for the alley between 7th and 8th Ave and Elm and Callon.

Ryan asked if it was time to work with the Water Commission regarding lead lateral replacement and lining of sewer lines. Rasmussen said the Water Commission can work with Finance if they need to. This does not need to come before CISM.

Ryan asked about obtaining more portable speed trailers as she does not think two are sufficient. Rasmussen said there are now better devices than the trailers and stated a discussion can be had with Buckner on this.

Adjourn

Larson moved to adjourn the meeting. Neal seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:20 p.m.