

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: August 13, 2020, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Rasmussen, Larson, Neal, Wadinski, Ryan (arrived at 5:30 due to WebEx issues)

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

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. Chairman Rasmussen called the meeting to order.

As part of public comment, Chuck Ghidorzi, representing WOZ, provided an overview on the area around the mall. He noted that it is not unusual that malls in downtown areas have served their useful life. We have an opportunity to be able to repurpose an area of the downtown. They are looking to create a mixed use development with a number of residential units, offices, retail, and entertainment. This will blend together for a more cohesive plan for the downtown. Ghidorzi indicated HOM Furniture, the Forest Street Ramp and parking underneath Penney's would stay where it is. There is an opportunity over the Penney's building to create some additional space. The Penney's site would be opened up so people can transition to the Riverfront. 4th Street would be opened up for a pedestrian walkway that would connect to the Sears Ramp and transition to the 400 Block area. They intend to continue to work with the tenants currently in the mall. Most leases are up the end of January and they will work with the tenants to find them homes.

Larson asked if there are any other designs. Ghidorzi indicated this is the design selected out of several. Selection was made by the WOZ team in conjunction with others. Larson would have liked citizen input and questioned how this would be paid for. Ghidorzi stated it will be a combination of the private sector and community. Rasmussen noted that Council will also receive a similar update with an opportunity for questions. CISM's only role is to imagine the street grid.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve minutes of the July 9, 2020 meeting**
- B. Action on Stormwater Maintenance Agreement for Kraft Heinz Company at 1309 and 1316 Curling Way**
- C. Action on Stormwater Maintenance Agreement for Evergreen Adventures LLC at 919 Evergreen Road**
- D. Action on final resolution to levy special assessments for 2020 Street Construction Projects**
- E. Action on final resolution to levy special assessments for 2020 Alley Paving Project**

Wadinski moved to approve the consent agenda items. Neal seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on sale of 1321 Curling Way

Wesolowski indicated Kraft offered \$1,000 to purchase the property. Kraft was the only bid received. They intend to build a parking lot with security fencing. This is on the south side of the road so their employees do not have to cross the road. Kraft would like to start building the parking lot as soon as possible.

Wadinski noted the parcel is small but there would be a small tax advantage the City would receive each year.

Larson moved to approve the sale of 1321 Curling Way to Kraft. Wadinski seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

Discussion and possible action on creating Section 10.01.055 Avoidance of Traffic Control Device Prohibited

Rasmussen noted this issue is most obvious at Walgreens at 17th and Stewart as people cut through their parking lot to avoid traffic lights. This has been a problem for Walgreens and their clients. The ordinance would allow

enforcement to take place.

Larson said this intersection is awkward with Walgreens, Panera, Toppers and others all using the little section of road. He questioned how this would be enforced. He noted a vacant building next to Walgreens was torn down and spoke about the City possibly acquiring that property to create a barrier.

At this time Ryan entered the meeting.

With construction on Thomas Street last year, Ryan stated people were using 4th Avenue as a short cut and then cut through the Trinity parking lot.

Rasmussen explained the creation of this ordinance would allow the Police Department to stop vehicles, have an educational discussion with them, and issue warnings or citations.

Ryan talked about the Walgreens on Bridge Street where people cut through Walgreens to get to Oak Street. Rasmussen said this would be a good thing for PD to have in their toolbox when the need arises.

Ryan moved to approve creating Section 10.01.055 Avoidance of Traffic Control Device Prohibited. Seconded by Wadinski.

Neal asked if there were signs stating No Thru Traffic. Rasmussen believes Walgreens on 17th Avenue does have signs. Neal asked about making it impossible to drive through by adding a barrier by the front door. Rasmussen feels that would be a problem as people entering from the south end would not be able to use the drive up.

Wadinski feels this will not alleviate the problem because the Police Department cannot be there all the time. He feels there should be other things associated with this, such as signage or speed bumps.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve creating Section 10.01.055 Avoidance of Traffic Control Device Prohibited carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on the preliminary plat and the final plat for Wausau River East Phase II Subdivision

Rasmussen indicated this is Phase II of the Blenker Townhomes. Ryan has concerns if this will be another big house on a small lot with a small yard. She does not feel they are attractive, look odd and have minimal parking. She has not heard anything good from a number of residents that live nearby. Rasmussen explained these are a mirror image of the townhomes on 3rd Street with garages to the rear. She had heard the properties are moving as fast as they can build them. Ryan understands there may be a solar tax credit that some investors like, but she has heard several people say they would never rent these. Rasmussen clarified that the solar tax units are on Thomas Street and this is regarding 2nd and Short Street.

Wadinski moved to approve the preliminary plat and the final plat for Wausau River East Phase II Subdivision. Seconded by Neal.

Ryan questioned the number of units. Wesolowski replied there will be eight units with zero lot lines. The back side goes into the alley, there is a courtyard, and the garages are off the alley. These would mirror the units on 3rd Street. Rasmussen added they have a covered roof that goes between the back door of the unit and the garage. The area in between is fenced and has river rock. There is minimal upkeep so the target market is people who do not want to take care of a lawn. Ryan stated people can have that in an apartment and the apartment owner has a yard for children. Per Rasmussen, it is the private sector's responsibility to make it succeed or fail; this is to approve the subdivision. Whether people want to buy them or not is up to the developer and their marketing.

Wadinski feels the diversity in the community with many different kinds of housing provides a great opportunity. Some people do not want a big yard. These are selling great and it is good for the tax base.

Larson feels the document is not complete as no financial information is provided. He asked if this is another situation where the City is giving land away. Rasmussen said Economic Development already made that decision last year; this is only for approval of the plat. CISM does not go down the road of revenue. Larson questioned who would pay for the razing of the buildings. Rasmussen indicated the properties have already been razed.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve the preliminary plat and the final plat for Wausau River East Phase II Subdivision carried 3-2 with Larson and Ryan the dissenting votes.

Discussion and possible action on the allocation of parking stalls for the Church of the Resurrection Parish on 2nd Street between McClellan and Grant Streets

Rasmussen reminded the committee that this was talked about last month and 4 stalls were approved. Wesolowski explained that after CISM, the church contacted staff regarding an existing agreement. The ground lease indicates the landlord will give the tenant 12 stalls. This was when there was a parking lot contemplated. The City did not end up building a parking lot and moved the church stalls to the street. The church is happy with stalls on the street, but feel in accordance with the agreement they should get 12 stalls. They would like 6 stalls on each side of the handicap spots marked for church use.

Rasmussen questioned the number of stalls available and Wesolowski answered 16. Providing the church 12 stalls would leave two stalls on each end for public use along with two handicap spots. Rasmussen said it is a smaller expense to the cost of building a parking lot. There is an agreement already approved that obligates designation of 12 stalls and if there is no parking lot there is not much choice. Ryan stated there is a signed agreement and a need as the church is active and has lots of volunteers.

Ryan moved to approve. Seconded by Larson and the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on stop sign placement at the intersection of 10th Street and Stark Street

Rasmussen indicated that Neal has been working on this issue for approximately 5 years. The MUTCD standards are to place the stop sign on the street with less traffic. The traffic issue in this area is not getting better and the ask is to place the stop signs on the opposite corners.

Neal explained driving north on 10th Street dead ends near Kaiser Pool. Blocks between Bridge and DeKalb, and Stark and DeKalb are essentially two house blocks. If traveling on 10th Street and knowing there is a dead end ahead, one slows down. If traveling south on 10th Street from Bridge or DeKalb, one has essentially gone one block and has a stop sign. This does not allow one to speed up. Neal knows that stop signs are not meant to mitigate speed but at this intersection, the stop sign placement does not make sense. Going further south, one travels five blocks to McIndoe before seeing another stop sign. He understands the stop sign placement on 10th Street at McIndoe Street because of the hill and being unable to stop in the winter. This is not an issue on Stark Street as the area is flat. Driving west on Stark Street, one does not see a stop sign until 7th Street. This is over a mile and people use it as a thoroughfare. Neal has received numerous complaints and concerns, particularly from people who live on Stark Street between 7th and 10th Streets. Neal is proposing the stop signs on 10th Street be switched to Stark Street. They do not serve any purpose, but if on Stark Street they would serve a purpose by making people stop. He feels it is a small thing to switch the stop signs and the neighbors would be thankful. He cannot find a logical reason why this cannot be done aside from traffic standards. He could drive all over town and find situations where standards have been altered or ignored.

Rasmussen has talked to the resident at 10th and Stark at least ten times. He walks with a cane and has nearly been struck at 8th and Stark two to three times. Neal noted this resident is not the only person he has heard from. Rasmussen said targeted enforcement was tried many times, but traffic returns to the old behavior as soon as enforcement leaves. She is not a fan of using stop signs to control speed but at some point you almost feel like you have no choice.

Neal cannot understand why the stop signs were placed on 10th Street as they do not provide a purpose. Rasmussen stated maybe 20 years ago an effort took place at PD to eliminate unmarked intersections. Every unmarked intersection in town received stop signs on the lesser traveled street. This may have been part of the effort.

Wesolowski stated the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices does state that unless there is an obstacle or some overwhelming reason, stop signs should be placed on the minor, less traveled street. In this case the less traveled street is 10th Street. Traffic counters were placed at this intersection for four days. Average daily traffic on Stark Street was 675 vehicles. Unfortunately the power went out on the counters on 10th Street. But general observation shows less traffic on 10th Street. Traffic counters also measure speed. The median speed was 25 MPH. The 85th percentile was 29 MPH. One car was measured at 39 MPH. 85% of traffic was under 29 MPH. In Wesolowski's opinion, the intersection is functioning as it should. Wesolowski stated if stop signs are placed on the major road, people tend to ignore them and there are more accidents. When considering a green society, this would be more people stopping, which is less efficient for vehicles. Also more people get mad and gun it at the stop sign.

Rasmussen feels if we want our areas to be more walkable and bike and pedestrian friendly, we need a community sensitive solution. She noted that 10th Street is the less traveled street sometimes, but is certainly not the less traveled street when Thom Field is in use or when Kaiser Pool is open.

Since the counters on 10th Street were not working, Alfonso believes it might be worth delaying a decision until the full picture can be obtained. State statute requires municipalities to follow the MUTCD. If you do not follow state standards and a personal liability accident occurs, the City can become involved in a law suit. To make sure we comply with the recommendation of the MUTCD and not open ourselves to potential liability, she recommends finishing the study. She added that the counter should be placed out when it makes sense. She mentioned the traffic observation that took place at Starbucks. Traffic was observed on a day when it did not back up. Traffic backup would have been observed on a Saturday or Sunday. Rasmussen said the normal traffic is not there as high school football will not be happening and Kaiser Pool is closed. We can do a traffic count but would have to recognize that the count is affected by these factors. She added if there is no legal way to remove the stop signs from 10th Street, the intersection could be made into a four-way stop. Larson is for fixing this even if it takes a four-way stop. Neal feels doing a traffic study during this extraordinary time is not indicative of normal lives. He is looking at years of complaints.

Wesolowski would not recommend a four-way stop. Four-way stops are meant if there is equal traffic in each direction. Rasmussen asked for an accurate count off of 10th Street for the next meeting, knowing we would have to statistically adjust for Thom Field and Kaiser Pool. She feels if there is similar traffic in both directions, there is no reason not to switch the signs. Discussion followed.

Larson moved to make this intersection a four-way stop and continue the study; if the study comes back and it is not needed, the signs could be removed. Rasmussen feels installing and removing signs is an issue for the traveling public and creates confusion.

Larson revised his motion and moved to make the intersection a four-way stop. Seconded by Neal.

Neal said it is one thing to have standards but it is another thing to get around standards that are causing trouble in certain areas. Neal supports the motion if we are legally empowered to do so. Alfonso explained that the law requires the City to follow the MUTCD. In order to know if we are following the MUTCD, we need to know that the traffic data is similar on both streets.

Rasmussen would like to have the 10th Street data to decide if we need a four-way stop or if it makes sense to switch the stop signs. Ryan suggested voting on this and if the study shows otherwise it could be pulled from the Council agenda. However, this would leave Alderman Neal without a solution.

Neal spoke about the intersection of 10th and McIndoe. The stop signs are on 10th Street. He cannot be convinced that traffic on McIndoe is heavier than 10th Street. 10th Street is a thoroughfare and a bus route. He suspects it was installed on 10th Street because of the hill on McIndoe. He noted the stop signs at 10th and Jefferson were installed because of accidents. We have responded to dangers, history of problems, or complaints from the neighborhood. He feels there is leeway.

All the training Wadinski has been to over the years and all the professionals he has talked with try to stick with the MUTCD as much as they can. He has been to many residences over the years regarding speeding and the problem was not as big as the resident had perceived. Wadinski would like to see more data, such as crash data, speed data, and pedestrian and bicycle traffic as he does not want to put the City into any liability.

Larson withdrew his motion and Neal agreed. This item will be brought back in September.

Discussion and possible action on No Turn on Red signage for northbound traffic at 17th Avenue and West Bridge Street

Rasmussen stated a number of years ago a No Turn on Red sign was installed on 17th and Bridge partly because of complaints from residents along Bridge Street that were having trouble exiting their driveways. The signage did not help. People do not obey it and the signage is small. Also, the houses along Bridge Street have changed hands. Staff has asked for consideration to remove the sign as it is not functional.

Wesolowski provided minutes from the last time this was discussed. At that time, staff did not recommend installing the sign because there was ample time for cars, especially because there is a left turn arrow for Bridge Street traffic. Letters were sent out to the first block east of 17th Avenue. Wesolowski received one call from a resident who would like it removed as no one obeys it. This resident indicated she is lucky because she has a wide driveway and can turn around before exiting onto Bridge Street. If she has a car there and is forced to back out, she does not trust people to obey the sign. If the sign does stay, the resident would request further enforcement so everyone obeys it.

Wadinski feels in this situation it is better there is no sign so people get out of her way and she can make that decision safely. Additionally, we are here for the big picture; does it help two to three people or are hundreds of people violating it.

Larson uses this intersection frequently and the sign is small. He does not have a problem either way. He did notice trees on the southwest corner, as you are looking west, need to be trimmed. The trees are so low that one cannot adequately see up the hill.

Ryan recalls there were a couple of elderly people that lived on the south side and were having difficulty finding any breaks. She noted the property on the north side has not sold and asked if a roundabout would be a solution. Rasmussen believes the property on the north has sold as there is a sign stating an office space is coming soon.

Wadinski moved to remove the No Turn on Red sign for northbound traffic at 17th Avenue and West Bridge Street. Seconded by Larson and the motion carried 4-1 with Ryan the dissenting vote.

Discussion and possible action on adding a No Turn on Red sign at the Pick ‘N Save exit on Bridge Street

Niksich indicated last year staff was studying this intersection and decided to install crosswalk enhancements and pedestrian features. There was also a request from the Bike/Ped Committee to add a No Turn on Red sign as vehicles exiting Pick ‘N Save are always pulled into the crosswalk. This happens for two reasons: the detection loops are in the crosswalk and vehicles have to encroach the crosswalk to trip the signal for a green light; the other issue is vehicles in the left lane block vision of oncoming traffic. With the pedestrian project, loops are being added behind the stop bar but there is still the issue of vehicles stacking in the left lane. With having a No Turn on Red sign, vehicles have no reason to pull into the crosswalk.

Rasmussen asked if signage can be installed that is noticeable enough for people to see and obey it. Niksich stated there is a pole in place in front of the stop bar where the sign can be placed.

Wadinski likes turning on red here, but he knows that he needs to stop at the stop line before creeping through the intersection and after yielding to bicycles, pedestrians, and other traffic. Since staff recommends this, he would agree with it. Larson feels this is a great idea, especially with the current bridge construction. Ryan stated there are a number of people who walk on Bridge Street. One gentleman is often walking on the road because the bridge is not shoveled. She feels this is a good improvement.

Wadinski moved to approve installation of a No Turn on Red sign at the Pick 'N Save exit on Bridge Street. Seconded by Larson and the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on a Five-Year Street Reconstruction Plan

Rasmussen explained we try to plan five years out but other things can affect the plan, such as road aid going up or down, budget cuts, and utilities failing. Lindman stated at the last meeting 2021 streets were approved. Engineering would like to start survey and field work on projects for future years. Based on streets Wesolowski proposed and comments from the committee last month, Lindman proposed projects for 2022-2025.

Rasmussen indicated that streets proposed for next year were changed because it felt like the focus had been in District 1 for too long and there were worse streets out there. The streets that were deferred come up again in 2023. This gives a couple of years to get ahead in other areas. She noted that the traffic flow on Bugbee Avenue is only from the people that live there. She suggested moving 10th Avenue from Bridge Street to West Wausau up the list. 10th Avenue is worse than Bugbee and has a lot of traffic when school is in session. She does not feel Bugbee is needed before 10th Avenue. She would like Bugbee moved to 2024 with 10th Avenue in 2022. Lindman noted that Bugbee will be torn up with the Water Plant project and staff was trying to time the road project with that. If not reconstructed in 2022, the road would be left until 2024. Rasmussen noted it could have a temporary repair with recycled asphalt to buy a couple of years. She feels with the flow the road gets a chip seal could be done to get by so we could get the worst roads done first. Even though Bugbee will be damaged for the plant project, 10th Avenue is much worse.

Wesolowski noted that we have some STP Urban projects coming up. 6th Street from Horseshoe Spring Road to Evergreen Road is slated for 2022, and Stewart Avenue from 48th Avenue to 72nd Avenue for 2024-2025.

Ryan said the state has an additional \$27 million in lead lateral funds for distribution. Lindman has to put a plan together for services proposed to do each year. They are anticipated the funding will be disbursed for 2 to 3 years. The application is due this fall. Ryan feels it would be advantageous to reconstruct older streets that still have lead lines. Rasmussen stated the streets proposed for 2021 are older and probably have lead laterals. 10th Avenue is also an older street that probably has lead.

Wadinski feels it is advantageous to not pay for road work more than once. He does not know how much of Bugbee will be tore up, but if we are going to put another \$40,000 to patch, maybe we should save the \$40,000 and just fix it. Rasmussen does not want to see 10th Avenue wait until 2024. Rasmussen asked the cost for a temporary repair on Bugbee. Lindman indicated it would be in the bid for the contract. There would be some cost in putting the road back in temporarily. Wesolowski stated the first two short blocks of Bugbee, Burek to the east, would be tore up with the Water Plant project; approximately 1/3 of the road.

Discussion followed on shifting 2023 and 2024 projects. Rasmussen indicated that the infrastructure projects proposed for 2021 have made it through the CIP process. Assuming the list survives Finance budget meetings and Council ratification, projects picked for 2021 will go forward.

Wadinski moved to switch the roads proposed for 2023 to 2024. Neal seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on an Easement for Wisconsin Public Service Corp., Charter Communications and Frontier North at 814 North 1st Street, 920 North 1st Street and 120 Franklin Street

Wesolowski stated there are large overhead lines that cross the new Fulton Street and along the back side of the lots. The plan is to remove the overhead lines and bury along 1st Street and River Drive. Rasmussen said we have been trying to move lines underground where we can so they are not subject to storm damage.

Neal moved to approve the easement. Seconded by Wadinski and the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on an Easement for Wisconsin Public Service Corp., Charter Communications and Frontier North at 146 East Thomas Street, 206 East Thomas Street, 212 East Thomas Street, 226 East Thomas Street, 230 East Thomas Street, and 242 East Thomas Street

Wesolowski explained this is north of Thomas Street on Emter Street where lines run down the alley and through back yards to the east and then along the river. The plan is to remove the overhead lines, bury down Emter Street and then down Thomas Street. WPS would work with homeowners to get other easements.

Rasmussen asked if this would be trenched or directionally bored. Wesolowski indicated they would dig their pits and then directionally bore. Lindman added that the topsoil in this area was stripped down 12" during the Thomas Street Project.

Neal moved to approve the easement. Seconded by Wadinski and the motion carried 5-0.

Future Agenda Items

Ryan drove Elm Street where the Mountain Lane apartments are being built. In the last day or so, the majority of construction workers are parking in the Plaza southern lot. She feels it would be a good idea to limit or not allow parking on the south side of Elm Street. There seems to be a blind intersection when you come up the hill and people are trying to make a left hand turn at 14th Avenue. Rasmussen noted that Lt. Buckner is working on this and has reached out to Metro Ride to see what kind of struggles they have. He also has been monitoring the area for where the construction workers are parking. Wesolowski added that the builder was contacted and has agreed to keep their workers off the north side of the street and only park on one side of the road.

Ryan spoke of a resident who lives in the area of Maple and 7th. The resident has limited sight, uses a scooter, and has a therapy dog. Going west on Maple and up the hill is another blind intersection and people may not be slowing down. She questioned if there is signage to let people know there is a blind person in the area. Rasmussen believes there is signage that identifies there is a visibly impaired person; she believes there is one at 6th and Grant. Wesolowski will look into the recommendations for this type of signage.

Ryan stated there is a resident who has difficulties with balance and lives off Callon Street. The boulevard needs to be smooth for him to cut the grass. Wesolowski asked Ryan to email the address and staff will look into this.

For the next agenda, Rasmussen has requested consideration of parking restrictions on Stowbridge Street between 1st Avenue and Cherry Street and parking restrictions on one side of Stowbridge Street between 1st and 3rd Avenues. These areas are narrow and have snow removal issues. Neal wondered if Public Works would put together a wish list of problem streets where they cannot consistently clear snow. Rasmussen noted that Stowbridge was requested by Public Works and the committee would be interested to hear if they have others.

Adjourn

Larson moved to adjourn the meeting. Neal seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 p.m.