

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: October 12, 2023, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Lou Larson, Lisa Rasmussen, Gary Gisselman, Doug Diny, Chad Henke

Also Present: Allen Wesolowski, Tara Alfonso, Jill Kurtzhals, Andrew Lynch, Dustin Kraege, Solomon King, Lori Wunsch, Nathan Wincentsen – Riverside Land Surveying

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.

Approval of minutes of the September 14, 2023 meeting

Diny moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Gisselman seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

Update on Fleet Maintenance Facility Design and proposed property purchase

This item was taken out of agenda order.

Larson asked for this to be on the agenda as a monthly item in case there were any updates. Rasmussen said from this committee's standpoint we are in a bit of a holding pattern waiting to hear an outcome from Finance. There has been some back and forth about the site acquisition, but all of that is taking place in closed session until we come to an agreement or not. Diny added that there was a counteroffer; the owner is analyzing that but has not gotten back to us yet.

Gisselman asked what role this committee has and felt the committee should be involved in the purchase. He believes this committee, in closed session, should make the decision to purchase or not to purchase with negotiations to happen afterwards. Rasmussen stated this committee did the vetting of a host of sites and picked the one that is now in negotiation. Staff was directed to begin design with the assumption that that site or a similarly sized one would be the plan. Staff was directed to start the back and forth, and the money part all happens in Finance. Finance is having closed session meetings about that acquisition. The setting of the parameters of how much they are willing to spend or not is happening in Finance. Eventually there will be a recommendation to either accept, counter, or move on. If they are at an impasse and that decision is move on, it will come back to CISM to consider different sites. If the negotiations are fruitful, CISM is basically done as they have picked a plan and have seen a preliminary design.

Gisselman said it was in closed session on September 12th and there was no reporting from that meeting. We really do not know where negotiations are at. Rasmussen explained there was a proposed price. Staff was directed to go back and propose a counter. There has not yet been a response to that. This will continue to happen in Finance until there is an agreement or not. Gisselman thought at one point the owners were amenable to selling and thought we were on a good path. He wondered where things were at. Rasmussen stated we are in real negotiations with actual numbers. There will be at least one more closed session at Finance before we know anything.

Discussion and possible action on Connecting Highway Recission and Connecting Highway Designation regarding the rerouting of STH 52 and Business Hwy 51 in the City of Wausau

Wesolowski explained this is through the DOT. There is a document to rescind existing highway designations. A map was provided showing the areas on 52 Parkway, Stewart Avenue, 1st Street, Forest Street that would be rescinded. The second document shows the areas that would become state highways. Bridge Street would now be designated as a highway from 6th Street to Highway 51. Business Highway 51 would use 1st and 3rd Avenues to Thomas Street, Thomas Street to Grand Avenue.

The DOT did a traffic study and found that the associated traffic changes were minimal. The DOT was also looking to complete an environmental document; however, they decided not to complete this as the project does not involve any construction. The DOT requested that the City hold a public comment meeting, which took place at the last CISM meeting. The meeting did not yield any comments. The DOT felt comfortable with drafting the recission and designation documents. The City would collect about \$33,000 less in connecting highway aids. At one time the DOT was asking the City to contribute to the cost of the sign changes. They are bidding out a major sign project for the corridor and have agreed to add new signs and take down existing signs related to this project. They had estimated that cost to be \$130,000 that the DOT is now willing to pay for with no contribution from the City.

Rasmussen said when a connecting highway designation is accepted, it comes with a stream of road aid dollars. When those roads need work or rebuild, we can expect there would be sharing or help from the State. Wesolowski explained that connecting highway designation means we still maintain them. We get connecting highway aids to plow, patch, etc. If it needs to be reconstructed, the DOT pays for the reconstruction. This leads Rasmussen to believe this is a fantastic deal as the new route contains two bridges that are not new. If it comes to the point where these bridges need work or replacement, having them designated as a connecting highway should help us. Wesolowski explained that the bridges are different. The City is the maintaining authority on all the bridges. Now the connecting highway goes across the Stewart Ave/Scott Street bridges. If those needed to be reconstructed, they would be reconstructed by the DOT under their program. With this proposed change, those bridges would revert to a local bridge program. The bridges would be replaced by the City under the local bridge program. The local bridge program is very well funded and usually has an excess of funds. From what we have been told by the DOT, the bridges would probably get replaced quicker under the local bridge aid program. The Bridge Street Bridge would still be owned by the City but would fall under the DOT's program to replace and under the local bridge aid program. The Thomas Street Bridge is owned by the DOT. Under these agreements, the DOT has a commitment to rebuild the Thomas Street Bridge once and then turn it over to the City.

Rasmussen asked if we are better off in this scenario in terms of replacement, repair, or reconstruction. If not on the local bridge aid program, she asked if it would be a situation where the DOT would let the bridge decay to a point where it is unsafe and failing testing before they will do anything. We have seen them let other bridges go way past their useful life, such as in Brokaw. Wesolowski said the DOT has indicated the bridges would probably get replaced quicker on the local bridge aid program versus under the DOT program. Discussion followed.

Wesolowski indicated the incentive to the DOT is that they would have less highway miles through the City. The advantage to the City is removing the highway designations from the downtown. A portion of Grand Avenue, 5th Street, and 6th Street will now be the City's responsibility to reconstruct, but that would open up other funding sources, such as the STP Urban Fund and LRIP Funding.

Henke asked what the GTA payments are used for now. Wesolowski feels that may be a better question for Groat but it is used for maintenance, plowing, and reconstruction. The General Transportation Aids are used for transportation purposes. It is part of the money that pays for our transportation system.

Henke moved to approve. Rasmussen seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on Preliminary Plat for Vistas at Greenwood Hills First Addition

Wesolowski explained there are concerns with the plat. The plat would go from Osswald Road to Green Vistas Drive, which is a private road at this point but under consideration to turn public. Typically, a plat would not be approved this way; it would need a cul-de-sac on the end for a turnaround. If Green Vistas Drive does become public right-of-way, this issue would go away. Another way to get around it would be to grant an easement on Green Vistas Drive to get to Osswald or an easement is given around the existing roundabout so that plow trucks could get around. This would have to be addressed in the final plat. This area is also currently zoned as UDD. The request is to rezone to a SR3. The zoning change would have to go through as part of this plat. Park Land Dedication would have to be reviewed as part of the Developer Agreement. Trails were put in that are requested to be moved. Park Land Dedication fees may or may not apply. This should be reviewed by the Park Director.

Rasmussen feels that developers want private driveways and private roads until it is time to rebuild them. When it comes time to rebuild, there is a fight if it is theirs or ours. We want future building lots and to build up tax base, but the Plan Commission will have to address the cul-de-sac issue. She feels an easement is not enough. If our trucks are allowed through, when it comes time to rebuild the road they could claim our plow trucks caused the wear and tear. If this is approved, a direction needs to be sent to the Plan Commission to push a cul-de-sac.

For clarification, Wesolowski said Reserve Drive would be public right-of-way. The concern is that on the east end you would dead end into a private roadway at this point. Turning the private roadway into public is currently with the Attorney's Office.

Nathan Wincentsen, Riverside Land Surveying, is representing Jim Wanserski as he is out of town. Wanserski's attorney and the City Attorney are working through things. As far as the rezoning, they are only looking to rezone 6 lots on the north end. Those lots were originally set up to be condos, but the Greenwood Vistas Development Group has decided to make them single-family residential lots like they are along the golf course. The golf course single-family lots are zoned SR3 and the request is to do the same for the 6 lots. The remaining would stay UDD. All the infrastructure is in place other than the road is not built.

Diny asked if the process would be hindered if this is approved with the condition that the access issue is resolved. Wincentsen said a temporary cul-de-sac may be an option with the temporary going away once the private/public issue is resolved. He added that the existing roundabout could be used as a turn around. He does not know if it would make sense to build a turnaround with the roundabout 200' away.

Rasmussen is concerned about getting our equipment in and out and turned around without complication. She referred to a previous development with a similar private/public situation. They wanted to drive around with golf carts and did not want anyone else on the road except them. When the road started to decay, half of the people involved had a different recollection of the discussion. She does not want us in a similar pickle. If we need a cul-de-sac to get our equipment turned around, it should be demanded up front.

Wesolowski explained that Green Vistas Drive is currently a private drive. They have requested it to be public, which is currently being handled by the Attorney's Office. This plat dead ends into a private street. The infrastructure is there for development. Discussion followed.

Wesolowski noted that this is a preliminary plat. The final plat would come back to committee. Wincentsen stated they would address any recommendations or concerns.

Rasmussen moved to approve contingent upon resolution of all the concerns voiced by the Engineering Department, including the issue of the cul-de-sac and the end point emptying into a private road. Seconded by Diny.

Henke asked if this could be pushed back. Wesolowski noted that by ordinance the City has 90 days to review the plat. If the plat was held another month it would be up against the 90 days.

Diny asked if there would be an issue with dumping snow as presumably we could be dumping on private property. Wesolowski said that is one of the concerns. If approved the way it is now, plow trucks would have to back up and have no place to push the snow. That will have to be resolved on the final plat. Wincentsen said that is something they can have conversations on.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve contingent upon resolution of all the concerns voiced by the Engineering Department, including the issue of the cul-de-sac and the end point emptying into a private road carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on approving Northcentral Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition Cooperative Agreement

The City has been part of this organization with surrounding communities for 20 to 25 years. This is part of the

MS4 WDNR permit. It is mainly a collaboration effort with all the communities for public outreach and education. Approval is recommended so we can keep working with surrounding communities and avoid duplication of efforts.

Rasmussen moved to approve. Gisselman seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on authorizing downtown snow/ice removal

This is yearly authorization to complete snow removal in the downtown area and assess the business owners.

Gisselman moved to approve. Seconded by Henke and the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on preliminary resolution levying special assessments for 2024 Street Construction Projects

This is the preliminary resolution to levy special assessments for next year's projects. Eau Claire Boulevard, Emerson Street, Mount View Boulevard, Pied Piper Lane, and Short Street are proposed for the 2024 budget. The preliminary resolution includes dates on billing assessments. What has been happening is people are getting bills now with a due date of October 31. If not paid by then, it goes on the tax bill. Payment is then due with the first installment, which is January 31. For instance, today is October 12th and we are sending out letters saying assessments are due by October 31st. This is a reoccurring theme over the years. People are not happy about getting a bill mid-October that is due by October 31st, even though this is not their first notice. Notices go out ahead of time and we have special assessment hearings, but we cannot send out the bills until the projects are done. Wesolowski spoke with Groat about billings for future years. It is proposed that billings for roads built next summer would not be sent out until the following spring and due October of 2025. Groat was supportive of this proposal. This would leave a one-year lag as no special assessment would be sent out next year. These projects push up against October deadlines. Sometimes we are sending bills out and the street are not even done yet. This puts us in a tough spot. This would also give residents a little longer to pay the bill. Wesolowski also noted that people can pay over 5 years. We never know how quickly people will pay their assessment as they can pay over 5 years. Sending out bills the following spring after construction would make things cleaner in the Engineering Department. We will have all the final driveway measurements and people would not be getting their bill as the project is ending.

Larson is in favor of anything that makes it less painful and less of a surprise for people involved. Rasmussen agrees and feels it is fair, especially with projects that wrap up late. It's not uncommon for us to have a project end this time of the year. For someone to get a bill even though they know one is coming, and then tell them they have three weeks to pay does not seem fair.

Rasmussen moved to approve amending the resolution to adjust the payment date to November 1, 2025 and pursue the same strategy thereafter. Seconded by Henke.

Gisselman noted that in 2024 the amount of money that is typically expected to come in, will not. This will have to be configured into the budget. Wesolowski confirmed and said there would be less revenue as assessments would be shifted to the following year. Rasmussen said Finance would either cover that spread with cash on hand surplus or project savings. She does not feel it would present a hardship as there is usually enough wiggly room in those funds to cover and then pay the fund back the following year.

There being a motion and second to approve amending the resolution to adjust the payment date to November 1, 2025 and pursue the same strategy thereafter carried 5-0.

Discussion on WISLR Road Ratings

It was requested to look at how pavement ratings changed from 2021 to 2023. Wesolowski provided a memo showing the ratings. The lower the rating the worse the street is. Staff considers anything 4 and under for reconstruction.

Rasmussen said when this discussion started we had talked about a plan of attack. Ordinarily we would not do a mill and overlay or short-term intervention on 2 and 3 rated streets. We discussed asking for \$600,000 in the 2024 budget. Assuming that makes it through the budget process, one strategy would be to attack the 2 and 3 rated roads to buy time. Typically, we would not have done this, but we get enough complaints that we may have to shift our thinking to get out of the hole.

Wesolowski said most streets rated 2 and 3 are going to be part of the lead service replacement program. We want to wait until the lead services are replaced, which will be an aggressive program over the next 5 years. The last thing he wants to do is overlay a street only to have it ripped up.

Gisselman asked about the correlation with overlay and lead pipe needs. Wesolowski indicated majority of streets rated 2, 3 and 4 do have lead service laterals. Larson asked if roads rated 2 and 3 are bumped up on the priority list for lead service lines. Staff is still working on this, but the first year we are trying to concentrate on streets where the laterals on the City side have been replaced. That way we do not have to go into the street and will be able to do more as we will only need to replace a portion of the line. Rasmussen feels it makes sense to go back to these neighborhoods. It is possible a lot of homeowners opted out of lateral replacement at the time of street construction if they could not afford it. It sounds like this new program will take care of the costs for the owners and should be well-received for these neighborhoods.

Henke asked how long a new road stays rated as 10. Wesolowski said it takes preventative maintenance on the top end and traffic is a factor. A typical mill and overlay should last 15 years. A concrete road with joint repair should last 30 years before needing a major rehab.

Diny asked if the budget request for 2024 was adjusted to \$600,000. Wesolowski confirmed and also noted that \$60,000 was added for real estate services related to the West Wausau Avenue project. We were not originally anticipating these costs in 2024 but the consultants schedule has this starting in 2024. The infrastructure budget for 2024 is higher than 2023 and will need support.

Adjourn

Henke moved to adjourn the meeting. Diny seconded and the motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.