

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

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

Also Present: Mayor Diny, Eric Lindman, Allen Wesolowski, Jillian Kurtzhals, James Henderson, Anne Jacobson, Dustin Kraege, Vicki Tierney, 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.

Approval of minutes of the October 10, 2024 meeting

Neal moved to approve the minutes of the October 10th meeting. Seconded by Watson and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on closure of 28th Avenue between Madonna Drive and West Wausau Avenue, including detour route

Henke noted that two petitions were received and entered into public record.

Karen Signsheim, 5177 North 28th Avenue, Apartment 16, collected signatures, but did not get out like she had wanted to. After she turned the petition in, a lot of people said they wished they would have been asked to sign. There are so many people in favor of keeping 28th Avenue open. She knows the hill is steep, but people know not to go down the hill when there are slippery conditions. She wastes ¼ tank of gas in two weeks by going the extra route around every day. While using the detour, a couple of kids ran out in front of her. Another time she saw a dog that almost got hit. This is an ongoing problem when taking the route around. She does not like to take the other route with the curvy road because it is hard to see when turning off West Wausau Ave. Her only other alternative is to take the 10 block detour.

When George Mosher, 710 North 32nd Avenue, moved to this area, he did not anticipate traffic. He almost takes his life in his hands to cross the road to get his mail. He and his wife circulated the other petition, which has about 100 signatures from people in the area and from the Town of Stettin as they also use the road. The traffic is horrendous and is 10 fold from what it used to be.

Faye Mosher, 710 North 32nd Avenue, stated that if it is decided to continue to use 32nd Avenue, residents of 32nd Avenue will request the addition of at least two speed bumps because of the speed and amount of traffic.

Mike Witter, 2904 Maple Creek Drive, said the road is heavily used. He used to use it every day. Pretty much all of Wausau is a hill. If 28th Avenue is shut down because of the hill, Hilltop, Troy, and Franklin should be shut down because they are hills. The road was there before any of us were alive. It is a better way for tax paying people and for emergency vehicles to use. Going all the way around takes far more time and one never knows what will be there; dogs, children, people, etc. He asked for reconsideration and for the road to be reopened. If it is closed for the winter, he suggested closing at Maple Creek Drive so at least part of the road can be used.

Henke asked if the traffic reports were current. Wesolowski stated they were done in October. Henke asked if changes to stop sign placement would come to committee if the traffic flow has changed enough. Wesolowski indicated that is assigned to him as City Engineer. Counters were placed on 28th Avenue south of Madonna Drive and on 32nd Ave north of Madonna. 28th Ave traffic has decreased. In 2023, there were 1,700 to 1,900 cars a day according to DOT counts. Our counters came up with 739 cars a day on average. 32nd Avenue had average daily traffic of 1,300 cars. Unfortunately, 32nd Ave was not counted by the DOT in 2023 so we do not have a comparison. The average speed on 32nd Avenue was 26 MPH, which is well within acceptable range. Counters were also placed on 28th Avenue north of West Wausau Avenue and on West Wausau Avenue west of 28th Ave. In 2023, the DOT reported about 1,900 cars a day on 28th Avenue. We observed about 1,000 cars. We do not have 2023 data on West Wausau Ave, but our count was about 1,200 cars a day. There was not a big change found on Westwood Drive. In 2023 there were 886 cars a day and 840 cars a day in 2024.

Henke said there were discussions of adding a detour using Pine Ridge Boulevard and Bridge Street to Westwood. Wesolowski explained the current detour signage. When driving south on 28th Avenue approaching West Wausau there is a Road Closed Ahead sign, but the detour points either way to use West Wausau Avenue or Westwood Drive. If one takes West Wausau to the west, there is another detour sign sending you down 32nd Avenue. If one takes the other way, there are no detour signs on Westwood. We could continue to send people either way and better mark the detour. If you are heading north on 28th Avenue, the detour takes you up Madonna Drive to 32nd Ave to West Wausau. Henke would like to have better signage to get people to Westwood and make that the more prominent and visible route, even going north.

Neal mentioned the people that signed the petitions and people have spoken that they want 28th Avenue open. The petition is to repave 28th Ave. He asked Lindman what would need to be done to reopen 28th Ave and the financial impact. Lindman said it would be a full reconstruction as there are a lot of issues with the road and drainage. Whatever is decided, it is slated to be done in 2026. The rains and water we had this year caused undermining of the pavement and the pavement buckled. It is not safe to drive. To open the roadway temporarily would be a significant cost. Wesolowski will have estimates for the December meeting on keeping the road closed and making cul-de-sacs, an estimate for the County's 2-lane version to 30th, and an estimate for reconstructing as it is. Henke is having a community meeting on December 9th at Grace United Church and he would like the estimates for that meeting.

Neal said opening up the road completely is the overwhelming desire but there was some public opinion in favor of Option 2. He asked if Option 2 would still be a 2026 project and if the detour routes would stay in place. Lindman confirmed. Wesolowski stated that until a final resolution is made and the work done, a detour will have to be maintained. Neal is concerned that there is no staff recommendation in the packet as he respects and relies on staff's opinion. We have to deal with realities, what can and can't be legally done, and certain degrees thereof. He likes to see recommendations as it makes it easier to weigh things out.

Lindman said there is a safety concern on the hillside. It is extremely steep and does not meet federal highway guidelines for design. There is no way to flatten the area out. This hill is significantly steeper than the other hills in the city. It is a huge challenge to keep open in the winter. It is dangerous for the plow trucks going down during inclement weather and cars slide down. Neal noted that in the Rockies they close passes in the winter and open them back up in the spring. He asked if it would be possible to do some patching of the road and then close during the winter and reopen during more clement months. Lindman has received requests from the plow drivers to close in the winter as they can't plow it going up. They start from the top and by the time they get to the bottom they are going 45-50 MPH. With two plow blades down, it gets hairy. That type of closure could possibly be an option; however, Lindman does not know what it would look like (would it be gated, lighted arms, etc.). Neal feels it is a reasonable option and asked if there was a feeling for what kind of non-winter patch work would need to be done to get it passible and safe. Lindman said we would have to reconstruct the road. There is not a scenario where we can continue to patch what is there. Unless we want to put a significant amount of money into a temporary repair next year, the detour is proposed to stay until 2026.

Neal feels we should do what we can as far as improved signage for the detour to make it more traffic friendly. He noted the high speed recorded on 32nd Ave and asked if there are steps to take, such as additional stop signs or speed bumps, to calm the traffic. Lindman stated that stop signs are not an option for traffic calming. Speed bumps are not an option because of the winter season, plowing, and maintenance. We could look at purchasing signs that show speed. Helke has talked with Kurtzhals about increasing enforcement. Kurtzhals will work with Wesolowski to see what hours enforcement is needed.

Henke moved to make the Westwood side of the detour more visible signage wise. Seconded by Neal and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on parking restrictions on the south side of Oak Street at North 5th Avenue

Watson received the requests of Oak and Quaw from a resident who works as a crossing guard for the schools. Parking too close to the crosswalks by the schools makes it hard to see children. No parking here to corner would

help to make it safer for kids crossing. There was also an ask on 6th Avenue to see how fast people are going. When school lets out some go 40 MPH.

Previously when we have talked about parking restrictions, Henke noted we discussed street size and other practices. Wesolowski feels this request makes sense and agrees with no parking here to corner as shown on the map in the packet. He noted that on other streets near schools we have included no parking during school hours of 7:00 am to 4:00 pm. To be consistent, he recommended including the school hours. Watson indicated there is still a lot of debate on what the school structure will look like, but in the meantime this is a cheap option.

Watson moved to restrict parking on the south side of Oak Street at North 5th Ave here to corner from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm. Seconded by Larson and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on parking restrictions on the east side of North 6th Avenue at Quaw Street

Watson explained this is north of Bridge Street, by another school. During school hours would be perfect to make sure kids are visible.

Neal moved to approve. Seconded by Larson and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on parking restrictions on the west side of North 7th Street at Washington Street

Wesolowski explained that when heading east on Washington Street approaching 7th Street it is tough to see north and south traffic. 7th Street is a heavily traveled street and is a wider street. He recommended adding no parking 15' back to corner. He would not put a time limit in this area as it is not near a school.

Martens travels 7th Street a lot to avoid some of the traffic on 6th Street. This intersection does get crowded, especially in the afternoon. He believes a lot of Red Eye employees will park on 7th Street to save the spots in front of the establishment for customers. He feels adding this restriction makes sense.

It is a minor bug of Neal that throughout the city parking is allowed adjacent to the corner. The last photo is facing north and one has to inch out to see oncoming traffic. It is the same problem as one has to the right. Wesolowski stated parking restrictions are proposed for both sides of the intersection.

Henke asked what the rule is for how far one can park from an intersection if not posted. Kurtzhals stated it is 4 feet.

Neal moved to approve the parking restrictions on North 7th Street at Washington Street. Larson seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on Final Plat for Green Tree Meadows

Staff has worked with the developer and Vreeland and Associates. The plat has gone through Parks, Inspections, the City Attorney, and the City Surveyor. All departments have worked to develop the plat and we are comfortable moving ahead.

Vicki Tierney, Aldermanic District 9, has gotten questions from residents of the Morgan Creek Subdivision, which abuts the proposed subdivision. The wetland area is a concern and what will happen as the area gets developed. Looking at the plat, some lots have limited buildable space because of wetlands. Some Morgan Creek residents are using 2 sump pumps to keep their basements dry and they are worried about water coming over to their side. Wesolowski said the developer has minimized wetland disturbance and believes they are under 10,000 square feet of wetland disturbance. As far as constructability, that will be up to the builders. They will have to stay out of the wetlands. Once roads are built, the water will be directed to the stormwater detention facilities.

Tierney said that while they are under construction, water will be an issue. Even in dry weather, it is wet. During the process of construction, they will disturb some of that water. There is no way to avoid it with the type of water table. She feels the residents' concerns are justified. They are using sump pumps now and are worried about additional water during the construction process.

Wesolowski said there are no wetlands delineated on the lots that abut Morgan Creek. With building any home they have to use construction erosion control and the Inspection Department will monitor this. The main area of wetlands is near 72nd Avenue. Almost every lot has some wetland area, except the lots along Arborvitae Drive. He noted that along Arborvitae Drive there is a tree preservation easement where they cannot cut the trees on the back 10' of the lot to keep a tree barrier between the new homes and the existing homes.

Tierney indicated that the Morgan Creek neighborhood has a lot of families. Road traffic is a concern. The residents are asking if there could be a stop sign placed at 68th Avenue and Sarissa Drive. There are already people going over the speed limit. With another subdivision, it will be a bigger issue. She asked if a stop sign could be considered to try to keep the traffic under control. Wesolowski will look into stop signs after the development goes in. He noted there is a second way out of the subdivision by using Cherrywood Drive to 72nd Ave. The developer plans to build Honey Locust Court first, which exits onto 72nd Ave. The second phase will be the lots along Arborvitae Drive. Before they get into Chestnut Oak Drive, Olive Tree Drive, or Tulip Drive, they have to construct Cherrywood Drive to 72nd Avenue. They are trying to avoid having all that traffic on 68th Ave.

Tierney knows that is a hope but the chances of that happening are not fantastic. When talking about another 300 homes in the area, she does not feel a stop sign is a big ask. Wesolowski will evaluate stop sign based on criteria and the amount of traffic. Stop signs are used to control the intersection, but not used for speed control. Stop signs are typically placed on the street with less traffic. Discussion followed.

Tierney would like to see a town hall meeting as the residents want questions answered. This is a big change and she would like the residents to have the opportunity to ask questions now that the plat is finalized. She feels having a town hall meeting is a reasonable ask. Henke recommended getting in contact with the developer and said Engineering could help with getting mailers out. Wesolowski indicated the plat is online and he is happy to talk to people about it. Tierney feels answering questions in a group setting would be advantageous as everyone hears the same thing at the same time. The committee agreed by consensus to have Tierney and Wesolowski work with the developer on scheduling a meeting.

Henke asked if Arborvitae Drive would dead end for now. Wesolowski confirmed but it could eventually connect to another subdivision.

Martens moved to approve the Final Plat for Green Tree Meadows. Larson seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on Development Agreement with Green Tree Construction, Inc. for Green Tree Meadows Subdivision

According to the agreement, the developer does the design and the City will do inspections. The developer has reviewed the agreement and is in general agreement with it. There may be some tweaking of the agreement before it goes to Council. Dustin Vreeland appeared for the developer and indicated they are very happy with the agreement and are pleased with how much the City is willing to help make this subdivision work.

Neal moved to approve. Seconded by Larson and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on Stormwater Maintenance Agreement with Kolbe Apartments, LLC at 706 Flieth Street, 1371 S. 8th Ave, 1363 S. 8th Ave, 1361 S. 8th Ave, 1355 S. 8th Ave, 1341 S. 8th Ave, 1337 S. 8th Ave, 1333 S. 8th Ave, 1331 S. 8th Ave, and 1327 S. 8th Ave

Kolbe Apartments LLC will build and maintain two infiltration basins and one bioretention basin. The agreement gives the City the right to inspect the basins. If the basins are not kept up, the City can order the owner to maintain them.

Larson moved to approve the Stormwater Maintenance Agreement. Seconded by Neal and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on Security Door Policy

Henke stated that this started in HR. There were concerns with the policy and those concerns have been answered. There were discussions on taking this back to HR or to Public Health and Safety. Since this is part of facility control, it was brought here. Henke thinks of this as a first draft. If there is a need to make changes, at least we have a backbone to start with.

Larson moved to approve the Security Door Policy. Seconded by Watson and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on request for limited use of 1300 Cleveland Avenue for a training area

1300 Cleveland Avenue is City-owned and is being used for storage. DPW would like to create an area for operators to train on excavation. When they have to dig in the street, whether it is around storm sewers, gas lines, electric, etc., the only good way to get training is in a machine and start digging. This would give an area where DPW could set up infrastructure, bury it and give operators a chance to practice digging it out without taking the chance of damaging infrastructure. The site has a large concrete pad and a couple of old loading docks. DPW would block off the ends of the loading dock. They would then have an area totally incased in concrete where they could fill it with dirt and the operators could train. The site is known to have some contamination. The concrete will prevent them from digging in the soils. The soils will not be disturbed. If that site would ever have a development proposed, it would be simple to move out. They would not be changing anything on the site.

Larson asked if there will be digging or if dirt would be put on the concrete. If there is digging of the soil, we do not know what would be going into the air. Kraege indicated that DPW would take coffin blocks to close the back end of the loading dock. The entire dig site would be incased in concrete and there is no chance for them to dig into any of the soils underneath.

Neal asked if equipment will ever be on the soil outside of the enclosure. Kraege explained the equipment will be on top of concrete pads.

Neal moved to approve. Seconded by Watson and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on amending Section 10.01.080 Penalty regarding overtime parking or permit meter violations

Kurtzhals stated this was brought forward as part of the budget process as a proposed revenue generator. Several years ago when we went away from parking meters, we switched the first violation to a warning. This was meant to be an educational piece to the public. They are not looking to get rid of all first warning violations, just specifically the time expired, overtime parking, and no permit. With the parking system they are using, a fee of \$1.45 has to be paid to the company for every warning that is issued. Henke stated this went through Finance and other communities have a similar fine structure.

Neal moved to approve. Watson seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Adjourn

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