

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: November 12, 2020, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Rasmussen, Larson, Wadinski; *by WebEx*: Ryan, Neal

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

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and received by the *Wausau Daily Herald* in the proper manner.

Approval of minutes of the October 8, 2020 meeting

Larson moved to approve the minutes of the October 8th meeting. Ryan seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on potential streets for CDBG funding

Wesolowski stated staff will apply for CDBG funding but it is not guaranteed money. Staff was originally thinking of 2nd Street from Short Street to Dekalb. He provided other options of McIntosh Street, Torney Ave, and Henrietta Street. The street has to be in a Low and Moderate Income (LMI) area. LMI percentages were provided on the map included in the packet. Staff tried to keep the suggested streets in the highest percentage area. The street is required to be in an area over 51% to qualify. Staff also tried to find streets where it made sense to complete a one block segment. Henrietta from 12th to 13th is in bad shape and is one of the worst as far as underground utilities. The next two blocks of Henrietta also need to be done so it would make more sense to have Henrietta as a reconstruction project and complete all three blocks at one time.

Rasmussen said this is a funding source where we have a window of time to spend down. Wesolowski said an unfortunate aspect of this funding is we do not get funding until May or June. Plans have to be ready to go. Stratz said with the availability of funding it always seems like we have to do streets later in the year because of waiting for funds. We have to put the application in early and then wait to see if we get the funding.

Rasmussen is happy to see 2nd Street was pushed down the list. Even though 2nd Street is in a LMI area, Economic Development had concerns because there is a planned development in the vicinity. The developer would be able to afford street assessments without help. We are looking to make an impact where people need it more. Wesolowski noted that the streets provided on the staff report are not in any order. Typically we are given between \$125,000 and \$150,000. Last year we received almost \$200,000 for 1st Street. This is pushing the upper limits on what we can expect to receive. The estimate does not include sewer and water. There would not be multiple funding of streets. There would only be one, if any.

Larson moved to go ahead with the projects. He drove McIntosh and Torney and they are real bad. Wesolowski noted he was asked to bring several options forward but only one street can be moved forward.

Larson moved to approve moving forward with McIntosh Street from Prospect Avenue to St. Paul Street. Motion failed due to lack of a second.

Neal feels 2nd Street should be off the table as the east side of the block is higher income. Torney Street seems to be the longest stretch with the most residents impacted. McIntosh Street would be a good street to choose although it is a shorter block. He may lean towards Torney as it would impact more residents.

Ryan mentioned streets where sewer lines have been cleaned and lined. If one of those streets were chosen there wouldn't be additional costs of upgrading the sewer. She also hopes a street with lead lines is picked. She asked if CDBG funding has to be used for street construction or if it could be curb and sidewalk replacement. Stratz indicated for streets it has to be a total replacement. We cannot do an overlay as it is considered maintenance. With sidewalks we cannot just replace squares here and there; it has to be a total block reconstruction. There are a lot of rules with the funding when it comes to sidewalk. We attempted to do sidewalk replacement twice and the

last time we were told we better not do it again. Ryan asked if there was another pot of money that can be used to target very low income neighborhoods. Stratz believes block grant is the only possibility for lower incomes to help ease assessments. Although Ryan knows it can be difficult when looking at limited money, she would like to see more streets throughout the city and not necessarily streets in one area. Rasmussen noted that the 2021 proposed budget is one of the first budgets where infrastructure hasn't been cut to keep the mill rate down. The budget includes a mix of streets around town versus three or four streets in a zone.

Wadinski asked about 2nd Street. Rasmussen said the proposed Blenker project of more townhomes is a private sector development. Those homes are sold at a higher price point. It seemed like the impact to benefit low income home owners would be lost on a private sector developer. Wadinski asked if Torney would be widened. Wesolowski stated because Torney is narrow we can get a longer section done. It would remain the same configuration as there is no room to expand. Wesolowski added that all streets listed have lead services. He feels Torney and McIntosh do make the most sense. Torney has the most LMI homes and McIntosh has more traffic.

Larson moved to approve moving forward with McIntosh Street from Prospect Avenue to St. Paul. Seconded by Wadinski and the motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on a Preliminary Resolution to vacate and discontinue Hilltop Road north of Forest Valley Road to termini

Wesolowski spoke with the land owner of 4602 Hilltop. This area is a big chunk of wetlands. The City had originally thought about extending Hilltop to the north but he believes the City no longer has any desire to. Wadinski questioned if the land owner was located within the city and Wesolowski confirmed.

Neal moved to approve. Seconded by Wadinski.

Neal asked if the property owner of 4530 has been talked to and if the abutting land would become their taxable property if vacated. Wesolowski explained the land would go to 4602. All abutting property owners would be notified of the public hearing. Wadinski asked if the property owner is requesting street access. Wesolowski indicated the owner wants to build a driveway. If he did want to develop the land in the future he may request the City build a road if not vacated.

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

Discussion and possible action on amending Section 10.01.025 Establishment of certain traffic limitations and rules

Rasmussen noted that the last couple of months the committee has had spirited discussions on traffic controls, stop signs and traffic volumes. When Parking and Traffic was dissolved the goal was to remove politics from the placement of traffic control. We are still asked to make decisions dependent upon Engineering's expertise. We are put in the middle between neighbors and engineers. We do not have the skill set to engineer anything. Some municipalities delegate the placement and modification of traffic signals to the City Engineer. The Council would still get a report on an annual basis on any adjustments made. We would still be able to amend parking regulations. Engineering has a set of standards to follow. When we deviate from those standards we can create liability for the City. She often feels the committee is pitted against one another or pitted against our engineers. We try to battle out decisions to try to solve a problem. If we employ the standards properly it can be taken care of by staff and we can leave the politics out. This would delegate authority to place traffic signals or adjust traffic signals to the City Engineer. He would evaluate, look at traffic data, look at the standards and make a decision. Every year he would report back on changes made during the year. As a committee it doesn't do anything for working relationships to brawl out these decisions.

Neal is not against this for the most part. He is concerned about close calls, such as 10th and Stark, and not being able to have a voice on behalf of constituents. He asked if the committee would come into play if there is a traffic count done and it is close. Rasmussen said the City Engineer would make a consistent decision that employs the

standards every time. He would have the traffic data and standards to back up the decision, which would eliminate the politics from it. The decision, based on the guidelines, would be outside of alder control. In the past Parking and Traffic created situations where we have signs where they do not belong. We cannot take one intersection that violates the standards and is knowingly wrong and use it as leverage to make another wrong decision. The placement of traffic controls is a scientific process based on traffic movements. The committee is not trained on that, yet the decision falls to us. We take the feedback from people who are trained. Depending on how much public sentiment surrounds an issue, we sometimes feel like we are obligated to throw that advice out. She feels like we need a consistent process where someone who is trained to do this is the one making the decision every time.

Ryan noted the intersection of 4th and Callon where visibility issues existed. Neighbors came together and brought it to Parking and Traffic where a four-way stop was approved. She feels in areas where there is a lot of pedestrian traffic the committee should make decisions on stop signs. Sometimes there may be other factors so she would still prefer to have alderpersons in the decision making.

Wadinski feels this is a great idea. These decisions should go to the people who know what they are doing and this committee can get on to other pertinent business. However, he questioned if there could be some alternative for Council to get involved if they need to. Such as possibly bringing an item to Council and requiring two-thirds vote or if over 50% of the residents in the area petition. Per Rasmussen, the trouble with Parking and Traffic was it became a stage for political decisions. Residents were told to petition for a change. It happened in her district and it did not solve anything. It created a situation where the neighbors were happy but it also created two new problems. She would like to leave the decision to the people who know the standards. MUTCD standards do require evaluation of vehicular and pedestrian conflict. Alders can always request for an area to be studied.

Wadinski stated that most of the time citizens want something done but do not realize how it will affect everyone else. Even if there is not an option for Council to override the decision, he still feels it is a great idea. Rasmussen feels it would allow the committee to focus on big issues and bigger decisions. Rasmussen would support a larger solution that addresses speeding traffic by possibly creating a traffic enforcement bureau whose focus is on problem solving speeding. She has contacted the Police Chief and Deputy Police Chief to consider the idea and provide feedback on feasibility and cost. They intend to meet next week and see where it goes.

Alfonso explained that the Manual of Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is a document issued by the Federal Highway Administration of the United States Department of Transportation. It specifies the standards for traffic signs, surface markings, and signals; how they are designed, installed and used. In the US, all traffic control devices must substantially and legally conform to these standards. The Wisconsin MUTCD substantially conforms to the federal requirements. It is imposed upon us to follow by our state legislature. The manual is supported by a number of engineering and traffic organizations throughout the country. It is based on scientific and engineering studies that support the rules in the manual. Not following the rules can cause accidents. Some standards have things that can be interpreted one way or the other. Not following the manual where there is a clear statutory mandate does pose potential liability. She noted the traffic control lieutenant in 2014 spoke with the State Department of Transportation. They cautioned if a federally funded project goes against the MUTCD guidelines, the project may not be eligible for funding. On County Road N several years ago an advance warning sign was not properly placed and a judgement resulted against the township because of a crash.

Neal completely agrees with the intent and spirit of what Alfonso said. He supports being data driven but is concerned how the data is sometimes compiled. 10th and Stark showed similar traffic volumes during a short period of time, during a pandemic, during a time when schools were closed, and during a time when no football games were being played. All would impact traffic. Unless he know Engineering will take these kinds of things into play, he cannot support it. He knows 10th Street would have surpassed Stark Street in volume if it had not been for the temporary situation in society. He doesn't like relinquishing input and impact on something that is not clear cut.

Rasmussen said going forward the committee would delegate the authority to Wesolowski. That does not mean Alders cannot have a conversation with Wesolowski about what is going on in the neighborhood. Neighbors

offering feedback is often how problems get solved. There is nothing that says we cannot conduct multiple traffic studies should the need arise.

Per Neal, the first study done on Stark, only Stark Street traffic was measured and there was no comparison to 10th Street due to a breakdown in equipment. It was an incomplete report. He wants to make sure we have the ability to influence robust studies that reflect reality and not just a 6 day snapshot. Lindman said staff is happy to gather information anytime they want something looked at. The more information and data staff has makes it easier to make recommendations.

Larson has mixed feelings. In the situation at 8th and Bopf, the MUTCD numbers did not match but the speed study clearly showed the corner needs attention. Rasmussen said this is the trouble with not having a traffic bureau. Enforcement happens as the sector patrol has time. We complain to the PD but they can only do so much. In her experience, when tickets are issued the word gets out and behavior is modified. The presence sometimes is enough. If we can create a traffic focused resource unit within the Police Department, it may eliminate the requests for all of this. You may see less neighborhood groups asking for stop signs. The solution is not in sign placement but better enforcement.

Wadinski moved to approve. Seconded by Neal.

Ryan has attended different traffic meetings over the years and realizes it gets into details. Some Council members may not have interest in the level of details and may just rubber stamp. Wadinski feels Council members do their duty.

There being a motion and a second to approve, motion carried 3-2 with Larson and Ryan the dissenting votes.

Discussion and possible action on amending Section 10.52.020 Police administration, Section 10.52.040 Police to investigate accidents and receive accident reports, Section 10.52.050 Traffic division to keep and use a driver file; and repealing Section 10.52.070 Official traffic control devices, Section 10.52.080 Designating crosswalks, safety zones and traffic lanes, Section 10.52.090 Designating no left turns and methods of turns, Section 10.52.100 Zones of quiet and play streets, Section 10.52.110 Loading zones, Section 10.52.120 Designating public carrier stands, Section 10.52.130 Determining certain parking limitations, Section 10.52.140 Erection of official traffic signs and signals

Neal moved to approved. Seconded by Wadinski. Motion carried 4-1 with Ryan the dissenting vote.

Discussion and possible action on additional funding for multiuse trail along 72nd Avenue

Niksich passed out an updated estimate received from the consultant, Kapur. In 2018 we received a TAP grant that funds a trail from Packer Drive to a property just south of International Drive along 72nd Avenue. This is an 80-20 split with the City responsible for approximately \$160,000. The project is currently in design with 30% complete plans reviewed. Construction is slated for 2022. While moving along with the design, we have increased the scope and some additional costs have come into play. What was approved in the State/Municipal Agreement was the trail from Packer Drive to the property just south of International. This would line up with a proposed trail running east and west. We do not know when the east-west trail will be constructed so we thought it would be best to continue the trail to Industrial Drive, which is about 500'. This would increase the cost by \$75,000. During the initial conceptual design, the DOT said we needed additional lateral clearance from the roadway to this trail. To get the lateral clearance, Kapur gave two options, rural and urban. The rural option would manage water using ditches and gravel shoulders. The urban option would add curb and manage storm water through a piped network. Pros for the rural option include a decreased cost initially but leads to higher maintenance costs, potential for water to cross the path and ice, and additional real estate. The pros and cons for the urban option include a higher initial expense but the long term effects are better. Pushing the ditches out requires the purchase of real estate. Five TLE's and two PLE's are needed for the rural option. The urban option would require 5 TLE's. The refined estimate includes more realistic costs and different contingencies. There are three options to consider. Option A extends the trail to International Drive and includes the urban option. Option

B extends to International Drive with the rural option. Option C does not extend the trail and includes the rural option. Staff recommends Option A which would add \$275,000. Option B would add \$155,000, and Option C adds \$75,000.

Ryan does not see the benefit of extending the trail. Niksich explained this would extend the trail to an intersection rather than dead ending at the middle of a property. Additionally, it would extend to Eastbay for their staff to use.

Rasmussen said when the grant was applied for there were some concerns over semi traffic conflicting with pedestrian and bike traffic. As subdivisions develop, more people will be walking and biking as well as the workforce in the Business Campus. Creating this trail would serve the public better. Our portion of the trail was to come from the TIF because it served the greater public. Niksich spoke with Groat who believes that since this is 2 years away for construction the TIF will have funding to support the additional \$275,000.

Wadinski asked if the extension would be the sole financial responsibility of the City. Niksich said the additional \$330,000 would be solely on the City. The DOT will not continue to match anything above what was initially awarded or anything out of scope. The extension is out of scope. However, we would get a much better price doing the entire length at once versus extending it later and completing a shorter stretch in the future. Larson feels we should go ahead with the extension as anything short of completion is a half measure and will cost more in the long run.

Larson moved to accept Option A. Seconded by Ryan and the motion carried 5-0.

2020 Construction Projects Update

Wesolowski stated the street reconstruction projects are done. The lights on Fulton Street were turned on yesterday. The Riverwalk Trail on Thomas Street was getting paved this afternoon. We are waiting on the railing, which is scheduled to be delivered in two weeks. Regarding the siphon project, the parking lot was supposed to be paved today but the paver broken down so that will be done tomorrow. We are waiting for the railing and light bollards for the connector trail by the Dudley Tower; the trail is substantially complete. The Scott Street Signal project has had issues getting poles and lights but is expected to be done by the end of November. A 25' hole was dug for the emergency storm sewer repair on 3rd Avenue. The storm sewer has been repaired and they started concrete today. Concrete will be finished tomorrow and left to cure over the weekend. The road should be open Monday. TDS is an ongoing project. They will work until it freezes and then start up again next year.

Ryan received a call from Wayne Kleinschmidt, a former alder. He is concerned with the Bridge Street Bridge resurfacing and called Tom Hardinger with WisDOT. He feels the city didn't get what it paid for. Rasmussen and the Council President received similar concerns from Kleinschmidt. Rasmussen asked the Board of Public Works to hold payment until the quality of the pour is looked at. Niksich met with Hardinger this morning. He does think the ride quality on the south half of the bridge is not up to standards. On Monday Niksich will meet with two representatives from WisDOT, the contractor, and the consultant. They will use a 10' level provided by WisDOT, which they use to make sure the pour is within spec. They will check the south half and if any deviation is found they will move to the north half. Rasmussen asked if there is recourse in the contract and retainage held for a fix in the spring if the pour/concrete is found to be subpar. Niksich confirmed and said a deviation of 1/8" within a 10' stretch can be ground out. Any deviation over 1/2" will require complete replacement. When Wadinski drove over the first section he thought it didn't feel right. He thanked Ryan for bringing the complaint forward so this is investigated. Rasmussen added it is an expensive job to pay full price for if not right.

Ryan asked about the height of the railing along the Thomas Street Riverwalk Trail as she has heard of other areas where unintentional drownings have occurred. Wesolowski said the railing is ADA compliant and he believes it is 42" high. It will be hand railing height to keep people on the trail.

Wadinski asked if TDS is connected to any homes. TDS does not have any active services in the city yet, but there are a lot of people on a waiting list.

Future Agenda Items

Rasmussen said staff will be looking at a resident concern at the intersection of West Wausau and 28th Avenue. She believes this is a drainage issue that staff can work with the homeowner without committee action. If funding or modifications are needed it will come to committee.

Adjourn

Wadinski moved to adjourn the meeting. Ryan seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:30 p.m.