

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

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Date of Meeting: April 11, 2013, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Rasmussen, Gisselman, Kellbach, Mielke, Abitz

Also Present: Marquardt, Lenz, Wesolowski, Gehin

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 5:30 p.m. Chairperson Rasmussen called the meeting to order.

### **Approve minutes of the February 14, 2013, and March 14, 2013, meetings**

Mielke moved to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2013 and March 14, 2013 meetings. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

### **Discuss request for directional signage on Grand Avenue for the Wausau Curling Center and make recommendation**

Marquardt stated a request was received to place directional signage on Grand Avenue for the Wausau Curling Center. The City does have a policy for churches and non-profit organizations that are located off of main arterials. The Wausau Curling Center does not fit into that category; however, similar signs have been installed for the Woodson Art Museum and the Grand Theater. A blue sign would be installed that would be large enough so that once the soccer complex is completed it could be added to the sign. These would be temporary signs placed on Grand Avenue both north and south of East Kent Street until true way finding signage is installed.

Abitz questioned if a sign would also be installed on Townline Road. Marquardt replied it would not because the street does not go through at this time. Gisselman asked if there would be a temporary sign installed on Thomas Street for traffic coming from the west side and the highway. Marquardt stated that would be included when the true way finding signage is installed. The blue directional signage is mainly installed on arterial streets, so staff is looking to have these installed on Grand Avenue at Kent Street for both north and south bound traffic. Abitz questioned if signage could be provided in Rib Mountain and other areas. Marquardt replied the curling center does send out invitations and believes they provide directions. Abitz questioned if signage could be installed near local hotels. Marquardt stated if the City would do that for the Wausau Curling Center, other facilities would request the same. Rasmussen stated the curling center and the soccer complex eventually would be part of the Tourism and Visitor's guide provided in the hotels and believes the Wausau Curling Center is already in the current issue. She added that when the way finding signage is completed, it may provide signage at several locations so she does not know how much we want to spend on temporary signage.

Kellbach moved to approve the directional signage on Grand Avenue for the Wausau Curling Center. Mielke seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

### **2013 Street Construction Projects: Discuss 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue from Stewart Avenue to Elm Street and Clark Street from 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to the cul-de-sac and make recommendation**

Wesolowski stated there was a joint Finance and Economic Development Committee meeting where it was approved to complete a request for proposals (RFP) for a landscape architect/urban designer to provide plans for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Clark Street area. The timeline needed to prepare the RFP, send it out, receive proposals, interview consultants and selection of the consultant will not allow ample time to

complete the project this year. Rasmussen questioned if the RFP process could be completed by summer to allow time for planning of the 2014 budget. Wesolowski stated the proposal will have timelines so meetings can be held with the Main Street Group and he does not feel it will be an issue to get it completed for next year.

Gisselman questioned who would be involved in hiring the consultant. Wesolowski stated that has not been determined yet. Rasmussen suggested Dave Oberbeck may be interested in being involved since he has provided ideas on behalf of the Main Street Group in the past. Lenz stated staff has not put together the entire process yet and believes the RFP would get approval through the Economic Development Committee.

Mielke moved to postpone the 2013 street construction project of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue from Stewart Avenue to Elm Street and Clark Street from 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to the cul-de-sac until 2014. Gisselman seconded.

Gisselman asked if staff feels confident that the project will be ready for construction in 2014. Wesolowski confirmed. Rasmussen stated the stakeholders had suggested themes that they all seemed to gravitate towards and believes it will be easier for them to agree once there is a vision.

There being a motion and a second, motion to postpone the 2013 street construction project of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue from Stewart Avenue to Elm Street and Clark Street from 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to the cul-de-sac carried unanimously 5-0.

#### **Approval of projects for submittal to MPO for STP Urban funds**

Lenz explained the DOT is currently looking for projects for the STP Urban Program for the 2013-2018 cycle. The MPO collects local projects from the area municipalities, ranks the projects on a set of criteria, and sends a recommendation to the DOT. The amount awarded is typically around \$1 million for the entire metro area. Staff looked at projects that would qualify for the STP Urban funds. If it is a busy street, has regional significance and has bicycle/pedestrian accommodations it would rank better than others. The projects staff would like to submit include reconstruction of Townline Road from Grand Avenue to Northwestern Avenue, reconstruction of South 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue from Thomas Street to Stewart Avenue with bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, and Bridge Street realignment from Westwood Drive to 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The MPO will pay up to 50% of the construction costs. These three projects have different values and depending upon how they rank, the City may possibly get funding for two projects.

Rasmussen stated there was discussion on grant funding while discussing the Thomas Street project. It was stated that the City would be submitting alternate projects to receive the grant funding that is not available for Thomas Street. The City would have had to borrow for these three projects if the funding for Thomas Street was approved. Lenz stated these projects have been on the radar for a long time and will basically be submitted as substitutes for Thomas Street. Rasmussen noted that these projects will then fill the void of the funding not received for Thomas Street. Abitz asked if the \$1 million would cover all three projects. Lenz replied it depends on which project is ranked highest and how much funding is received from the MPO. For example, the Bridge Street realignment is estimated at \$2.5 million. Assuming Bridge Street ranked the highest and the City received \$1 million, the city would be responsible for the remaining costs over \$1 million. The Townline Road project is estimated at \$750,000, and 50% of that cost is \$375,000. The balance of the \$1 million would go to the next ranked project. Ultimately, it depends on how the projects rank.

Abitz questioned if it would be possible to postpone Bridge Street for a year as it seems Bridge Street does not look like it is a dire need compared to the other two roads. Rasmussen believes there are urgency issues with straightening out Bridge Street due to traffic around the hospital and with the

proposed Medical School, traffic will only get worse. Marquardt stated the City has a consultant who is in the process of completing a 70% design of the Bridge Street realignment based upon a recommendation from CISM a number of years ago. He does agree with Abitz as to the condition of the streets; however, the timing of this is for 2013-2018 and construction does not have to take place on Bridge Street until 2018. It takes time to get plans developed and property acquisition. That is the reason a window of time is given. Rasmussen asked if the City could apply for another funding cycle and obtain another million for the same project. Lenz does not believe so as the cycle does not come out every year. He believes the DOT would frown upon splitting the street. He also stated since the pavement is not as bad as the other streets it may not rank as high.

Gisselman stated the bottleneck going west from Pine Ridge Boulevard needs to get straightened out. He feels it is a bad situation and the City should try to do something about it. Rasmussen stated it would also put the City in a better position if the County starts to work on County Road R.

Gisselman moved to approve submitting Townline Road from Grand Avenue to Northwestern Avenue; South 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue from Thomas Street to Stewart Avenue; and Bridge Street from Westwood Drive to 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the MPO for STP Urban funding. Mielke seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

#### **Discussion and possible action on Marathon County MPO Bicycle Route and Sign Plan Memorandum of Understanding**

Lenz stated staff is looking for approval on the draft of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Marathon County MPO Bicycle Route and Sign Plan with the ability to allow staff to recommend the final approval. The MPO has received grant money to develop a regional bicycle system as part of the health initiative the County is undertaking. MPO staff with staff from area municipalities formed a subcommittee and looked at connecting all municipalities together to make it easier to get around the metro area on a bicycle in terms of way finding. There is a 100 mile route system connecting the north side of Wausau to Mosinee. Grant funding has paid for 600 bike route signs that are colored coded and numbered. The idea is to facilitate more people to bike on the streets. The grant funding paid for all the signs, posts and needed equipment. The memorandum of understanding exists to provide some consistency between the different jurisdictions on how the signs are implemented, when they will be implemented and provides a basic level of understanding on how the signs will be maintained. Everything is essentially paid for except the labor to install. The City will be receiving \$13,000 worth of signs and equipment and only needs to install the signs and maintain them. This is a good initiative to help bring communities together and he sees the positive benefits.

Mielke moved to approve the draft of the Marathon County MPO Bicycle Route and Sign Plan Memorandum of Understanding and move forward with executing the agreement. Gisselman seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

#### **Approve petition for annexation – Higginbotham, 2221 Northwestern Avenue (082-2808-064-0995, 082-2808-071-0988 and 082-2808-071-0987, Town of Weston)**

Lenz stated the map included in the packet shows the parcels of land that Dan Higginbotham would like to annex to the City of Wausau. The area is north of the Eau Claire River. There is a boundary agreement south of the Eau Claire River but this area is not included in that agreement. Higginbotham is in the process of purchasing a significant amount of property in the area and plans to redevelop a portion of it. A petition has not been received at this time, but is expected in the near future.

Gisselman moved to approve the annexation for Higginbotham at 2221 Northwestern Avenue (Key Nos. 082-2808-064-0995, 082-2808-071-0988, and 082-2808-071-0987) from the Town of Weston subject to receipt of a petition. Mielke seconded.

Abitz questioned if the annexation and proposed development would affect the railroad. Lenz replied the railroad would continue to be used as it is now. Higginbotham may look to utilize the tracks in some fashion. It is just a spur of the railroad and not on the main line. It is basically used for storage of cars. Rasmussen asked if it would affect the railroad right-of-way and use. Lenz replied no. Abitz asked if Higginbotham is purchasing any property from the railroad. Lenz stated no and explained he is purchasing property on both sides of the railroad, but not the railroad right-of-way itself. Abitz asked if Higginbotham is planning to build on the northeast corner. Lenz stated not that he is aware of at this time. He is looking at developing the parcel to the north of that area, but there are no specific plans for that small corner.

Gisselman questioned what the property would be zoned as when it is annexed. He believes there are some access points for a proposed bicycle trail in the area. Lenz replied the zoning can be established when it is annexed. If zoning is not established at that time, it will be brought in zoned as R1. Higginbotham may look to rezone but it would not preclude a bicycle trail going through there. Gisselman stated it would depend on an easement to do that. He explained this abuts the Eau Claire conservancy, especially to the west. He would be hesitant to approve this because of future development. Lenz stated there have been preliminary discussions about getting an easement and Higginbotham is open to that. He did present an easement plan to the MPO showing it connecting underneath the railroad bridge at the far southwest corner of the property. Having the trail going under the bridge is more desirable so it would not have to cross the railroad. In preliminary discussions with Higginbotham, he would grant an easement that would not inhibit him to develop. Marquardt stated if the property is annexed, the City will have more influence on what can be done on the property. Gisselman is concerned about development in the area. The City has been working with the City of Schofield with regard to the nature conservancy and he is sensitive to that. Rasmussen stated with the experience the City had with trying to secure an easement through the Frank property, Gisselman's concern makes sense. However, Higginbotham is already receptive to such a plan and those discussions would continue much easier if the property is annexed.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve the annexation for Higginbotham at 2221 Northwestern Avenue (Key Nos. 082-2808-064-0995, 082-2808-071-0988, and 082-2808-071-0987, Town of Weston) subject to receipt of the petition carries unanimously 5-0.

### **Future agenda items for consideration**

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Rasmussen reminded the committee that the next CISM meeting has been rescheduled to Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. There were no agenda items offered for future consideration.

### **Adjourn**

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Mielke moved to adjourn the meeting. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:05 p.m.