

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

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

Members Present: Rasmussen, Gisselman, Kellbach, Mielke

Also Present: Marquardt, 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.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approve minutes of the June 13, 2013, meeting

B. Approve easement for installation of sidewalk at 390 Westwood Drive

C. Approve easement for installation of sidewalk at 400 Westwood Drive

D. Approve easement for installation of sidewalk at 2000 Westwood Drive

Gisselman moved to approve the consent agenda items. Mielke seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

PUBLIC HEARING: Petition to vacate 5th Street between East Wausau Avenue and East Union Avenue and PUBLIC HEARING: Petition to vacate the alley abutting 2213 North 5th Street and 504 East Wausau Avenue

Rasmussen stated agenda items two and three are regarding the same project and therefore will be discussed together. She invited those in attendance who wished to speak regarding either proposed vacation to come to the podium and give their name, address and comments.

Shannon Jaeger, 510 East Wausau Avenue, stated if a portion of the alley is vacated it will be extremely dangerous and difficult for people to be able to pull through with a camper or pontoon. She believes there should be an exit on each end of the alley. If the alley is vacated she would consider selling her property. It would be impossible to pull onto 6th Street with a camper. Additionally, there is a business at the 6th Street end of the alley where cars park to the sidewalk making visibility difficult. She feels as a home owner she bought the property with the knowledge of having two exits to utilize.

Vaclav Hauptman, 525 East Union Avenue, asked that an alternate exit to the alley be created. He stated exiting onto 6th Street is very hard to do, especially in the winter. Also, houses have garage doors that face 5th Street and it would be hard to turn into the garage. Kemp's Garage has a dumpster and the truck to empty the dumpster would have to go into his driveway to turn back to 6th Street and he is concerned that the truck will cause damage to his driveway or fence. 99% of the people in the area are in favor of having another exit.

Bill Duncanson, Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department, described the proposed layout of the block. He stated two residential properties were purchased by Mark MacDonald and donated to the City. The City has signed a development agreement to create a neighborhood park on these lots. On East Union Avenue there are six homes, five of which use the alley with some garages facing east and some facing west. On East Wausau Avenue there are four homes facing Wausau Avenue and three have driveways off of Wausau Avenue. Kemp's Service Center has access off of 6th Street, Wausau Avenue and the alley. The former barber shop location has a garage with a door on the north end of the east side. Off of Union Avenue five residents use the alley and off of Wausau Avenue, one resident is dependent upon the alley. Neither business in the area is fully dependent on the alley. If the alley is not vacated the

ability to develop the neighborhood park is significantly diminished. Duncanson noted that the two residents abutting the proposed alley vacation do not use the alley. This would allow space for the neighbors to back out and turn. Residents would have some inconvenience but it is not impossible and there are benefits by having the neighborhood park. The redesign of Athletic Park includes the rebuild of the grandstands and bleachers. The main entrance will be along what is currently 5th Street. There will be a paved plaza area for pregame activities. There will be a shelter and a paved area that can be rented for events. There will also be a playground and green space. Having this new entrance and exit is very important as it will allow people to exit more safely. Currently, attendees are coming out of the exits into traffic. There are 35 games a year and the other 330 days it will be open for the neighborhood park. A 15' turning radius would be needed to create another exit from the alley onto East Union Avenue or East Wausau Avenue. An iron fence is planned that would have to be moved into the park to do this. It is already planned to be set back 5' for snow storage. The impact would alter the amount of green space and the shelter would have to be relocated. People who work at Athletic Park have noticed traffic coming down the alley at good speeds exiting onto 5th Street apparently to beat the traffic light. It would benefit the neighborhood as the alley would be quieter.

Nancy Hauptman, 525 East Union Avenue, stated she would still like an exit to come out onto East Union Avenue. They are really happy about the proposed work at Athletic Park and appreciate the neighborhood park but at the same time it leaves the neighborhood in a bind, especially in the winter. She believes the back portion on one side of the park could be utilized to make an exit. The alley only allows one car to go through and if there is an oncoming car one car would have to pull into a driveway until the other car passes. They are just asking to use a portion of the park. It would not have to be wide and there could still be a park and exit from the alley. 6th Street traffic and traffic from Kwik Trip would make it extremely difficult to exit. She believes it will be an accident waiting to happen.

Rasmussen stated a petition was received asking for an outlet from the alley. However, it should be noted that a number of the signatures are not of residents in the area. Nancy Hauptman clarified signatures were received from Kemp's customers, customers of the herbal store, and visitors who use the alley.

There were no further comments offered and the public hearing was closed at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Gisselman stated these concerns were also expressed at the open forum which was held to discuss the proposed project. He does not feel it is a good thing to have to bother your neighbor by using their driveway to turn around. Also, it will be very inconvenient for those property owners with garages facing Athletic Park. He inquired if there was anything the City can do to eliminate the inconvenience to the property owners. Mielke stated he would also like to see little as possible inconvenience to the property owners.

Rasmussen stated the paved travel portion of the alley is 8' wide, but the actual width of the alley is 16'. Marquardt confirmed stating the right-of-way is 16' and typically alleys are paved 8' to 9' wide. Rasmussen stated the situation is not ideal, but navigable. She asked if the space could be increased by the trimming of trees. Marquardt stated staff can look into having all possible obstacles removed to clear the full 16' of right-of-way.

Rasmussen stated there is a safety issue if staff at Athletic Park is noticing issues with the speed of traffic down the alley. Whether or not closing the alley is an accident waiting to happen, there is already a safety issue. She believes the only way to create an access point onto East Union is to acquire property or easements behind the park.

Nancy Hauptman stated Jerry Reynolds, 505 East Union Avenue, is not opposed to having the alley exit alongside his property. He enjoys the activity of the park.

Gehin stated staff could look into a turnaround at the end of the alley, such as a hammerhead or small cul-de-sac. Duncanson stated that was looked at but to accomplish it with a 15' turning radius it would take up space nearly all the way to 5th Street. Duncanson stated there are three garages that face west out of a total of eight. One appears to have vegetation in the yard that reduces turning movements. It is navigable but not convenient. Rasmussen stated staff can explore the issue of easements or acquiring property as it becomes available and also mitigate overgrown vegetation. She believes the vacation will reduce traffic flow and increase safety for the park and neighbors. Gisselman stated the neighbors are enthusiastic about the neighborhood park and the plans for Athletic Park. The garages and access are issues that staff should continue to work on.

Kellbach moved to approve the vacation of 5th Street between East Wausau Avenue and East Union Avenue and the vacation of the alley abutting 2213 North 5th Street and 504 East Wausau Avenue with the understanding that staff will mitigate overgrown vegetation and look at options to improve access. Mielke seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

Approve initial resolution to vacate the alley abutting 223 East Thomas Street and 225 East Thomas Street

Marquardt stated this alley has been utilized as a driveway for several years and the property owner is requesting the vacation.

Mielke moved to approve the initial resolution to vacate the alley abutting 223 East Thomas Street and 225 East Thomas Street. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

Accept dedication of right-of-way on Talon Lane

Marquardt explained Eckert owns land outside of the City abutting the Eagle Valley subdivision, where he has been platting off two to three acre lots. He would like to dedicate a portion of the right-of-way so if someone offers to buy a lot he does not have to hurry to get the right-of-way annexed. When the property to the south was built and annexed, there was an agreement made that 30' of the property would be dedicated to the City for right-of-way when Eckert dedicated his property. The intention was that the property on the south would be dedicated when all of Eckert's property is dedicated. If the committee would prefer, Eckert would be open to dedicating all of the property for right-of-way at this time. Sewer and water is already in the corridor. Eckert has concerns where the road would go to serve a future subdivision, but with sewer and water already in the east/west corridor, it makes sense that a road would go there to utilize the utilities. Dedicating Eckert's entire portion would initialize the agreement that Paul Schlindwein signed to dedicate his portion to right-of-way.

Mielke moved to accept the entire dedication of right-of-way. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

Future agenda items for consideration

There were no items offered for future consideration.

Adjourn

Mielke moved to adjourn the meeting. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.