

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

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Date of Meeting: July 10, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Rasmussen, Gisselman, Kellbach, Mielke. (Abitz was excused.)

Also Present: Mayor Tipple, Lenz, Wesolowski, Gehin, Mohelnitzky.

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.

### **Public comment on matters appearing on the agenda**

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Boyd Gustke stated he is in attendance representing Connexus Credit Union. He attended CISM last month and asked for additional time to work with staff regarding the realignment of Bridge Street. He submitted a future expansion plan and indicated the problem is parking. They are a growing business and would like to stay in the area. However, where the road is proposed to be realigned it would cut across a significant portion of the property. If the proposed realignment goes through, Connexus would probably not remain at that location.

### **Approve minutes of the June 12, 2014 meeting**

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Mielke moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Gisselman seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

### **Discussion and possible action on Winter Street Maintenance Services in Home Sweet Home Addition and surrounding neighborhood in the Town of Weston**

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This item was taken out of agenda order.

Rasmussen stated the Village of Weston has asked for the City of Wausau to take over on plowing in the Home Sweet Home Addition as it is basically an island for them to plow.

Mohelnitzky stated when he first was approached regarding taking over plowing this area, he was worried about the City of Wausau residents as it could be several hours before they are plowed. During a typical snow event, plowing begins at 11:00 p.m. and it could be 8:00 a.m. or 9:00 a.m. the next morning before some areas are plowed. However, after thinking about it further, we have been trying to work towards shared services and it makes logistical sense to take on this area. It is not a large area, we currently plow in the area, and have the appropriate equipment. A job number could be created to capture staff and equipment time for reimbursement. An end loader would be the most efficient piece of equipment to use for the area and a sand truck would follow up. He recommends exploring the request. It could be reevaluated if it becomes an issue where service to City of Wausau residents is hindered.

Daniel Guild, Village Administrator, introduced Keith Donner, Village Public Works Director and Milt Olson, Town of Weston Chairman. Guild stated he appreciates any assistance and feels it is an inefficiency for them to plow this area. He feels the City of Wausau would plow the area as effectively and efficiently if not more so than the Village. Everyone is all about public service so he appreciates the consideration.

Gisselman moved to approve winter street maintenance services in the Home Sweet Home Addition. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

**Discussion and possible action on an easement for the unused portion of Grandview Drive**

Wesolowski stated Al Crooks is the owner of 327 Kent Street and 2313 Grandview Drive. Mr. Crooks operates a paintball facility within the City right-of-way on Grandview Drive. This came to light as the City is looking at installing a gravel road to service the area. If the City will allow Crooks to continue to use the right-of-way, an easement should be obtained.

Jacobson stated there would not be anything legally prohibiting that type of activity from taking place on City property. If the Council would allow that activity to occur on City property, her office would take the proper steps in preparing legal documents to protect the City's interest.

Al Crooks, owner of Grand Valley Adventures Paintball at 2313 Grandview Drive, stated when he built his building, he had the understanding that the City was abandoning a number of streets in the area. He thought that Grandview Drive was going to end at his building and the rest of Grandview Drive would revert back to Jerry Brickner when vacated. During discussions with Brad Marquardt regarding installing gravel to establish the roadway for Grandview Drive, it was found that Grandview was not vacated as Crooks thought.

Wesolowski stated the alternate option would be to vacate that portion of Grandview Drive where the paintball facility is operating. Rasmussen stated the easement could be approved contingent upon discussions with the Engineering Department and property owners and if at some point during negotiations it is decided that street vacation is the better alternative, this would not stop them from pursuing that.

Gisselman moved to approve an easement for the unused portion of Grandview Drive. Mielke seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

**Discussion and possible action on Amendment to the Official City Map to establish the new exterior lines of the realignment of Bridge Street from Westwood Drive to 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Pine Ridge Boulevard from Plaza Drive to Bridge Street. (This item was postponed from the May 8 and June 12, 2014 meetings.)**

Rasmussen stated this item has been postponed from the May 8 and June 12 meetings to allow Connexus time to work with staff. She reminded the committee that this has been on the radar since 2009. She added that the hospital area is only expanding with clinics and traffic. The planned roadway would be about 60 feet from the front of the building.

Gustke stated the primary concern for Connexus is both parking and building expansion. Rasmussen believes that creating parking in that area would be difficult due to the topography. Gustke stated there is an opportunity to expand parking there. The expansion plan he provided showed a three level expansion for 9,000 sq. ft. of building space with 30 to 40 additional parking stalls. They want to work with the City on this and they like their current location, but they need time and guidance to see what the possibilities are. Rasmussen questioned where they are at with their timeline for the proposed expansion of either parking or building space. Gustke stated expansion is further out as they are working with short term needs right now. Any type of addition will take 18 to 24 months. They would like to have as many employees at this location as possible.

Rasmussen asked where they are at with negotiations with Liberty Mutual to acquire this land as it did not sound like Liberty Mutual was opposed to the proposed realignment. Gustke stated they are approaching Liberty Mutual for the acquisition of the land, but there is nothing definitive at this time. Rasmussen stated the alternative for the City is to shift the road to the south; however, the topography would impact already established parking areas at Wausau Hospital. The preferred alternative is to the north which projected across the southern most edge of the front lawn of Connexus. She knows the road will not be built this year, but believes we should be ready with plans to connect the road to County R, if granting opportunities come up, or if the traffic situation worsens. This area is heavily walked by all employees in the area. The new road would

contain walk on both sides. Mielke added that the committee has already given two extensions and this needs to get done. Gustke stated it was his understanding that this was not an urgency. They are not necessarily opposed to the road but just asking for assistance into other alternatives. Rasmussen questioned if Connexus would have enough room for compromise if sidewalk would be installed on only one side. Gustke stated they need the ability to add 30 to 40 parking stalls in order to accommodate the building expansion. Wesolowski said he would not recommend removing sidewalk from one side as there is a lot of pedestrian traffic in the area.

Mayor Tipple questioned if Surgical Associates had weighed in on the realignment. Wesolowski replied no and stated that they are really not affected by the alignment. One option discussed with Gustke was working with Aspirus to acquire land for an upper parking lot. However, that would not be ideal due to the elevation. Gustke believes there could be other alternatives, but it takes time to find them. They need the space and are growing at a record pace, but if the alignment is approved it will have an impact on whether they occupy that building for the long term. Rasmussen stated the options for the site are limited due to the topography. Connexus has also acquired a number of credit unions, all of which came with real estate. The organization needs to decide which facilities they will keep, but from an infrastructure standpoint the City needs to look at the growth of the community and the medical campus and be able to accommodate traffic. The options for Connexus are limited whether the road is realigned or not because it sits at the top of the hill and is surrounded by rock. Rasmussen is disappointed that there is not a definitive plan or timeline. At some point when the County decides to go ahead with County Road R, the City needs to have this in place or ready to go with them. Mayor Tipple questioned if this was time sensitive and added that County Road R may never be built. Wesolowski stated a private architect or engineer could provide some alternatives for Connexus. Any more work for the City's consultant will add to the cost. If the road is shifted to the south, Aspirus would lose parking stalls. Rasmussen stated this cannot be engineered for the credit union and we cannot engineer their parking lot for them. Gisselman asked if Connexus was ready to engage in professional assistance. Gustke stated their intension is not to have the City shift the road. They would just like to see if there are other alternatives.

Mielke moved to defer action until the September meeting. Gisselman seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

#### **Discussion and possible action on the request for funding to purchase bicycle racks and/or additional signage for downtown**

Lenz stated Aaron Ruff is the Chair of the Bike/Ped Committee. That committee spends a lot of time talking about a variety of issues. The downtown area comes up often in terms of how to get people around safely. They want to encourage people to walk and bike downtown but not interfere with the activities downtown. This request is to look at some ways to increase safety, particularly on 3rd Street and the 400 Block area. They have talked with the Police Department in terms of enforcement but also look at the other side in terms of encouraging positive behavior and how to get people to comply without necessarily giving them a ticket. The Bike/Ped Committee has discussed a campaign for downtown for bicyclists and skateboarders to promote positive use of alternative transportation.

Rasmussen stated the bicycle racks placed downtown have received nothing but positive feedback. She has received comments on how much the bike-friendly atmosphere downtown has improved. Lenz stated part of this discussion started with skateboarding downtown. There is an area where skateboarding is prohibited in the downtown, but the awareness is not out there. Ruff prepared materials in terms of signage and handouts to use to get the word out on the proper behavior.

Ruff stated education, enforcement and encouragement play a big role. The goal is to keep expanding to increase the education regarding bicycling and skateboarding downtown. Downtown businesses have stated there needs to be better and positive signs downtown, especially for bicyclists. Currently there are brown signs on each corner of the 400 Block and a couple of other places that say no skateboarding and rollerblading,

but those signs do not include bikes. Bicycles on the sidewalk has been one of the biggest issues. The new signage would encourage people to walk their bikes and skateboards on the sidewalk, and would still indicate persons would be subject to a fine. They are trying to spin the positive message.

Rasmussen asked if these signs would replace the brown signs that people have become desensitized to. Ruff believes it is the committee's intent to replace the brown signs. The other part of this is the request for additional funding for bicycle racks. There are areas that have been identified that could use more bicycle racks, such as Athletic Park and River Edge Trail. Rasmussen asked if another rack contest could be held if funding is approved. Pat Peckham provided background on the first bicycle rack contest. He does not know if the schools would be interested in having it again. Rasmussen asked if someone would contact the schools to see if the interest is there. The creative outcome from the project was positive. Lenz stated before the contest was approved there was a set budget. Less than half was spent of what would have been paid if ordered from a professional fabricator. Part of the campaign is also using money from Aspirus for publication of materials. The Park Department purchased temporary racks as well. Peckham added that one of the things that worked out nicely was NTC contributed the metal for their racks. They won the \$1,000 1st prize and are using that toward a scholarship.

Mielke moved to approve the request for funding to purchase bicycle racks and additional signage. Kellbach seconded.

Gisselman stated there are a lot of public areas that attract bicyclists and questioned if this is a sufficient amount of money. Ruff stated this would be a good start. Lenz indicated these racks would be placed in locations where we are not already planning other things, such as 2nd Avenue.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve the request for funding to purchase bicycle racks and additional signage carried unanimously 4-0.

#### **Discussion and possible action on Thomas Street regarding which half to construct first and the width of driving lanes, bicycle lanes, medians, boulevards and sidewalks**

Based upon the results of Tuesday's Council meeting, Rasmussen pulled this item from the agenda until direction is received from the Coordinating Committee.

#### **Discussion and possible action regarding drainage at Maple Hill Road and River Hills Circle. (This item was postponed from the June 12, 2014 meeting.)**

Wesolowski met with Terry Mathie of 1215 Maple Hill Road and Gary Klingbeil of 1225 Maple Hill Road. There was not an acceptance of installing an inlet as neither neighbor wanted one in their yard. Therefore, he is reluctant to do anything at this time. It has been an issue for a long time and if we cannot get buy-in from the property owners he does not want to spend the money. Rasmussen stated the subject of buy-in might be different when the situation is active in spring.

The committee agreed by consensus to hold off regarding the drainage at this time and staff will revisit it in spring.

#### **Discussion and possible action on the sale of 541 Evergreen Road**

Rasmussen stated that 541 Evergreen was advertised for bids. Only one bid was received and it was below the minimum price set by CISM. This could be re-bid with a lower minimum or we could hold on to the property and the City would continue to maintain it.

Gisselman moved to re-advertise with the minimum bid of \$15,500. Mielke seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

**Discussion and possible action on an easement for WPS at 1701 North River Drive**

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Lenz stated WPS needs this easement for work that they are doing to cross the river to the west side and remove lines from the east side. It should not affect the current River Drive as the pole would be located in the same location as an existing pole.

Mielke moved to approve the easement for WPS at 1701 North River Drive. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

**Future agenda items for consideration**

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Mielke would like the snow ordinance reviewed before winter. Rasmussen stated the City Attorney has been asked to look into creating an ordinance that would prohibit the placement of snow against another person's dwelling, driveway, and sidewalk.

Mielke received phone calls from residents in the 300 and 400 blocks of South 10th Avenue. There has been criminal activity in the area and the residents are wondering what could be done regarding lighting in the area.

Mielke thanked DPW and the Water Department for the repair of Callon Street.

Mohelnitzky noted the progress of the Thomas Street repair. They had estimated the project to take 8 days, but it was completed in 3½. It is a band aid on cancer, but it will hold for a few years. He thanked the committee for allowing them to do the repair as safety of the workers was a concern during patching the road.

**Adjourn**

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Mielke moved to adjourn the meeting. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 4-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:35 p.m.