

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: March 12, 2015, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

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

Also Present: J. Gehin, Duncanson, Lenz, Wesolowski

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 12, 2015 meeting

Mielke moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Abitz seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Evaluation of landscape maintenance contracts for Municipal Lot 9, the Highway 52 Median, and the Public Safety Block as to cost and scope of work, including analysis of cost and value of employees performing landscape maintenance vs. outsourced contracts and possible action thereon

Rasmussen stated last year this landscape contract was performed by Re-vi but the scope was not clear. Therefore, it was unknown what the contractor was to complete in terms of detail. Additionally, she received complaints that the timeline for submittal of proposals was short. Staff and the Park Department were asked to see if the work could be performed in-house at a cost savings, or if it needed to be outsourced, how the scope of work could be defined.

Abitz does not understand why the Public Safety building is included as she feels maintenance staff could do that work. Rasmussen said Re-vi maintained all three sites last year and before it is bid out again staff is looking further at the work to determine if it could be done in-house. Wesolowski stated if it does go out for bid in 2015, staff will work with the Park Department and Bartkowiak on revising the scope. Wesolowski agrees the scope of the work was vague and he would work to coordinate and further define the scope.

Duncanson had staff look at the sites and their initial reaction was the design is more high-end residential landscaping. There are a lot of different components along with a variety and density of material that would require skilled individuals to do the work. The facilities they currently maintain with specialized flower beds are done by the horticulturist. These sites would need skilled individuals and there are also concerns regarding the irrigation and fountain maintenance. Duncanson feels we are very fortunate 2014 was a wet summer without an irrigation system along the Highway 52 median. The City did have to water at times, which was an inefficient process. With the rock areas, the City could get by for a couple of years without much weed growth. However, the amount of sand put on the abutting roads will get plowed onto the median and create a bed for weeds to grow, which will require more herbicide over time. Therefore, the sites are more complex and this is not the kind of work for seasonal employees. Additionally, the contract needs to define items such as who would be responsible for replacement of irrigation controllers, stolen or vandalized irrigation heads, etc. The contract states plants to be replaced, which is too loose. Park Department staff is willing to work with Wesolowski to help write a better specification. However, the Park Department does not have the capability to take on these additional sites without growing the budget. Rasmussen agrees that clarifying the scope of work to be done is necessary, along with allowing a significant response time and a broad outreach to contractors.

Abitz questioned if last year's contract was within the normal range or if staff is trying to reduce the cost. She also questioned why the Police Department Block was higher than the other areas. Rasmussen responded the goal is always less if possible and a new contract may possibly come in less expensive. Abitz questioned if the contract would be brought back for review. Rasmussen explained the need to move this forward and she would like to see Wesolowski and Duncanson work out the contract. Duncanson noted that last season was a good growing season. Bartkowiak said Re-vi was very attentive at the Public Safety Building, which is the most complex site. It will be discussed with Bartkowiak what he thinks he can do and staff will write the contract accordingly.

Abitz questioned watering of the median site. Gehin indicated he is working with Wesolowski to move the installation of irrigation along the Highway 52 Parkway median along. He has sent an email to Re-vi to understand the needs of the sprinkler system. Gisselman questioned how much money is in the budget for maintenance. Wesolowski explained that Groat had pulled money out of the maintenance fund and the parking lot fund to cover these expenses.

Gisselman questioned if this needed to be high end as it is expensive to maintain, especially the Police Department block. Rasmussen is curious to see how the bids come in this year with a more defined scope and longer window to submit proposals. Gisselman believes making it less high end should be thought about as it is expensive to maintain.

Abitz moved to direct staff to write a new specification and move forward with outsourcing the landscape maintenance contracts for Municipal Lot 9, the Highway 52 Median, and the Public Safety Block. Mielke seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Make recommendation for the sale of City-owned property at 1001-1003 North 3rd Avenue

Wesolowski explained that no bids were received for the sale of the City-owned property at 1001-1003 North 3rd Avenue. The owner of the adjacent lot had requested the sale, but Wesolowski has been unsuccessful in reaching him to inquire if the minimum price was too high. Rasmussen feels the price was fair. Wesolowski noted that the adjacent lot was purchased through a delinquent tax deed from the County at \$3,000 and that lot is twice the size. This item will be brought back if staff does hear back from the property owner of the adjacent lot.

Update on the Thomas Street project

Bruce Gerland, AECOM, provided a detailed schedule regarding the Thomas Street Project. This follows the schedule outlined at the June 2014 CISM meeting. It will take approximately six months to get to the plat process. A detailed conceptual alternative was provided to CISM at the last meeting. The next step is to take that horizontal concept and turn it into a preliminary plan. They are looking at the outside sidewalk and terrace width as they are trying to keep five feet between any building and the back edge of the sidewalk. There are areas where some buildings are closer so a three foot terrace would be better than a six foot terrace. They are going through this process on a block by block basis and fine tuning the alignment. The next step is making sure turning movements work at intersections. He will plan on attending CISM every month to provide an update. By next month there will be more of a plan of the block by block analysis. After that, a vertical profile will be started to tie into the cross sections. The cross sections will define the right-of-way impacts and temporary limited easements. At June CISM he intends to review the preliminary plan and impacts so the plat process can begin. The plat process should be done by the end of July and the plat could then be approved in August. Within the next month, he will work with staff to develop a RFP to retain a consultant to start acquiring property. Once a cross section is

approved, that consultant can start market studies and appraisals in advance of the plat approval. Abitz asked if this meant the purchasing of homes would not begin until September. Gerland believes market studies and ordering of appraisals could begin as early as July. Gerland noted that the impact to each property will be known when the preliminary plans are done in June. The exact square footage that each property is impacted by will be known when the plat is approved in August. Then shortly after, appraisals stakings will be placed so the impacts can be seen in the field. In August or September definitive answers can be given to property owners. Abitz knows of five properties that are waiting anxiously to be purchased. One owner is in jeopardy of losing his job because he cannot move. Gerland noted that the impacts will not be known until mid-May and early acquisitions should be discussed with the City Attorney.

Review and possible action on the Master Landscape Plan for the Near West Side

Rasmussen reminded the committee that they have approved the projects of 2nd Avenue and Clark Street. However, Council was reluctant to approve holding a public hearing because this landscape plan had not been received yet.

Lenz stated the Near West Side Master Plan was adopted in 2007, which has been a guiding plan for that area. A TIF district was approved in 2012. Main Street has been working hard regarding this area for several years. A design charrette was held at UWMC with a variety of stakeholders and now GRAEF has brought their expertise to combine what has been discussed for many years. A summary of charrettes was included in the packet, which did a good job of summarizing what GRAEF was looking at regarding public improvements. The overall idea is to improve the Near West side to make it more walkable, bicycle friendly and livable so people can enjoy the area and attract outside development. He noted the plan adds different treatments of pavement and grass boulevards rather than the current sea of asphalt. The area will have features that connect the Near West Side to the riverfront trail, such as a kiosk or a landmark. The trail is proposed to be extended to the railroad crossing and a connection to Barker Stewart Island. Wesolowski noted that the extension of the trail has been designed but easements need to be obtained. Lenz explained that the remainder of the plan follows the same design theme of 2nd Avenue and Clark Street but with its own unique identity. GRAEF has suggested using more natural elements and local materials, which should keep the costs down.

Rasmussen questioned if decorative lighting is included as part of the project. Lenz confirmed and stated staff will look at similar lighting to the downtown, but it may not be the exact style. Lenz summarized the plan stating pavers and different colors of brick and concrete are proposed. Additionally, the use of bump outs at intersections would provide more pedestrian friendly crossings and defining the parking area. A gateway or monument would add a welcoming feature.

Mielke questioned if the EPA and/or the DNR have cleared the former dry cleaning site. Wesolowski replied the drilling has been completed, but results have not been received yet. If there is contamination in the street, it will have to be cleaned up during the project. This should be known before the project is let for bid. Gisselman questioned funding for contamination removal. Wesolowski indicated that the DERF fund is cleaning up the private site. Rasmussen added that the fund is tapped for cash and it is a competitive process. Abitz questioned the pedestrian crossings on Stewart Avenue and 2nd Avenue. Wesolowski pointed out the crossings that will be marked as part of the DOT overlay project on Stewart Avenue and that the crosswalk at Stewart Avenue and 2nd Avenue will also be marked. Rasmussen noted that pedestrian heads will be installed at 1st and 3rd Avenues and from a design standpoint the City has done everything it can to ensure safe crossing as people are creatures of habit and we cannot modify their behavior. Lenz added that since signals will be placed at 1st and 3rd Avenues and the DOT will not install one at 2nd Avenue. Hopefully the landscaping and other improvements will help calm traffic and it may

be easier for pedestrians to cross. Abitz questioned the moving of a utility pole. Wesolowski stated that the utilities will be placed underground as part of the project.

Rasmussen explained that this plan will be discussed at the next Council meeting and then the street project will be voted on. If there is further delay it will jeopardize the project for this year. Gisselman questioned the cul-de-sac design and if there would be opposition from the neighborhood group. Rasmussen stated the majority of the stakeholders agree with the plan and want the project done sooner than later. The residential neighbor to neighbor group that opposed the project at Council is located blocks away from the project. They will be users of the services but they are not abutting property owners. Rasmussen added that the plan also serves the weekend market that was held last year in the plaza area.

Gisselman questioned the table top intersections. Lenz explained that the street would go up slightly in this area so that when pedestrians are crossing the street, they do not have to step down off the curb. This will be the first of its kind in Wausau and the designers have assured staff that this concept is appropriate for this climate and snow plowing.

The committee agreed by consensus to move the projects of 2nd Avenue and Clark Street to Council.

Future agenda items for consideration

Abitz questioned the status of Pardee Street. Gehin stated that DPW will look at installing temporary drains.

Adjourn

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