

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

Date of Meeting: February 8, 2016, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Members Present: Lindman, Jacobson, Groat.

Also Present: 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.

PUBLIC HEARING: 2016 Street Improvement Project
Ashland Avenue from Evergreen Road to Meadowview Road
Meadowview Road from Ashland Avenue to the cul-de-sac

PUBLIC HEARING: 2016 Street Reconstruction Project
Kent Street from Grand Avenue to Zimmerman Street

Lindman explained in accordance with state statutes the Board of Public Works is required to hold a public hearing for proposed projects involving special assessments and take testimony from property owners who are affected. The testimony is forwarded to the Capital Improvements and Street Maintenance Committee which will meet February 11, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. and will approve, disapprove or modify the plans or assessments for the project and forward a recommendation to the Common Council. It is anticipated the Common Council will take action at the February 23, 2016 meeting. There were no objections to dispense with the reading of the official hearing notice.

Lindman stated staff from the Engineering Department will be available after the public hearing if there are specific questions about individual properties or the work to be done under the project.

Gehin explained that Kent Street from Zimmerman Street to Grand Avenue is proposed to be reconstructed this summer. A public information meeting was held at a Neighborhood Group meeting. At one point, curb bump outs were proposed along with narrowing the road. However, after comments were received from the residents, it was elected not to pursue the bump outs nor narrow the road. The existing roadway will be matched, which is 37' from back of curb to back of curb from Zimmerman Street to Emerson Street and 33' from Emerson Street to Grand Avenue. In addition to replacement of pavement and curb and gutter, the storm sewer, sewer and water will be replaced. The project is anticipated to take the entire construction season and is anticipated to begin the end of May, weather permitting, and extend into October. The road will be closed to thru traffic, but open to residents. During the day, residents may have to park on a side street. At night one lane of traffic will be maintained for access. Residents will place garbage containers out for collection as usual. The contractor will move the containers to a side street for collection and return to the property after collection.

Gehin stated Ashland Avenue is proposed to be reconstructed from Evergreen Road to Meadowview Road and Meadowview Road from Ashland Avenue to the dead end. The utilities were installed on Ashland Avenue and Meadowview Road in the 1980's and will not be replaced. The existing pavement will be replaced and curb and gutter will be installed. This project is likely to take two months to complete. The roads will be closed during construction with access to properties to be maintained in the

evening. Residents will place garbage containers out for collection as usual. The contractor will move the containers to the intersection for collection and return to the property after collection.

Lindman asked for persons in attendance who wished to speak regarding special assessments to come to the podium and give their name, address and comments.

Ashland Avenue from Evergreen Road to Meadowview Road and Meadowview Road from Ashland Avenue to the cul-de-sac

Mario Guerrero, 4405 Ashland Avenue, stated he is opposed to the work. He does not feel it will provide his property value or increase in appearance and will not improve any safety issues. He questioned how the rate of \$42 could be determined when bids have not been received.

John Kordus, owner of 1606 Meadowview Road, stated the north side of the street has a steep grade. If drive approaches are installed with a sidewalk section, most cars will drag their bottom. Houses on the north side need every inch of space from the road to their garage for the slope. He is totally against the project. He also owns property on River Street, which is also a one block long street. Two years ago a 1" layer of blacktop was installed on River Street and this road is fine. He feels if anything needs to be done to Ashland or Meadowview; a 1" layer of blacktop would last for 10 to 12 years and is also cheaper. If it can be done on River Street he feels it can be done on Meadowview Road. Other streets need reconstruction, such as the 600 block of Fulton Street which is like driving on a cow pasture. Kordus is totally against the assessments and feels the project will not increase the values of the homes.

Dave Noha, 1605 Meadowview Road, feels the project is a complete waste of money. There are about 10 cars a day that use the street. He feels there is no reason to completely rip up the neighborhood for the summer as the street is fine. Other streets downtown are worse. He added that part of the appeal of the street is not having curb. He feels curb would ruin the street as it is nice seeing kids play football in the yard and take bikes out. The street is in great shape compared to most streets of the City. The assessment rate last year was \$22.80 and has almost doubled. He again stated it is a waste of money and not needed. He hopes the committee listens to the people who live on the street.

Meredith Benson, 1604 Meadowview Road, indicated she opposes the improvements on Meadowview. In addition to the reasons already stated by others, she has a home based business. Having the road closed for two months with construction would not help her home based business with people coming and going from her office. Additionally, she has a number of children of driving age. With the encroachment of the driveway and sidewalk, she would lose about two parking spaces in her driveway. Her son has already received a parking ticket for parking on the street overnight. Her property assessment just increased \$25,000 and taxes will increase. She does not have an extra \$5,000 for something that is not needed. The road is a dead end and there is no need for sidewalk. She just re-landscaped her yard and has rock walls that would be destroyed with sidewalk. Her neighbor also recently installed three retaining walls that would be ruined.

Scott Buchberger, 1609 Meadowview Road, opposes the project for similar reasons. He feels the road is in good shape compared to other roads in Wausau. There are not many potholes and the City is good to come and repair if there was one. There is minimal traffic on the road. Kids play in his yard and can play using the road because of the minimal traffic. Having curbs would take away from that aspect.

Last year his estimated assessment was \$2,700 and now it would be over \$3,600. He cannot see how it changed in a year's time. If the project has not been bid, he does not understand where the increase in assessment came from.

Dan Quinn stated he lives with Benson at 1604 Meadowview. This is a small street. There are 8 homes and the committee has heard from several residents on a Monday at 4:00 p.m. If this meeting was held during non-business hours, he feels the committee would have heard from the rest of the neighborhood all voicing concerns over the waste of time and project money. There is zero need for sidewalk. He also works out of the house and during the week he sees maybe one to two people walking down the middle of the street because there is no traffic. To have to pay for curb and gutter makes no sense. There are no potholes and no signs of distress.

Mary Noha, 1605 Meadowview Road, also works from her home and is opposed to curb and gutter. Currently, the road is not plowed right away and the road is not wide. The plows would not plow all the way to the curb, which would make the road narrower. She does not feel curb and gutter is needed and feels grass to the road looks more appealing.

There were no further comments offered regarding Ashland and Meadowview and the public hearing was closed.

Kent Street from Grand Avenue to Zimmerman Street

Lindman asked for persons in attendance who wished to speak regarding special assessments to come to the podium and give their name, address and comments.

Randy Haupt, 824 Kent Street, said he travels Kent Street every day. The road needs to be replaced; however, he is concerned with the increase of the assessment rate. In 2015 the rate was \$22.80 per foot and now it is \$42. He also noted that the drive approach rate was \$2.50 in 2015 and now it is \$5. Haupt again stated the road does have to be reconstructed but is concerned with the increase.

Kathy Hupy, 131 Kent Street, is concerned about the assessment rate and feels she was misled. In the letter sent July 9, it stated the 2015 rate was \$22.80 and in the letter sent in January the rate was increased to \$42. She read the minutes from the September 10th CISM meeting where staff recommended the street improvement and street reconstruction rates be the same where in the past the rates were different. She feels this is an arbitrary rate set and approved by Council. She feels it is misleading and not representing the residents.

Angela Uhl, 511 Kent Street, stated ways to control speeding were talked about at the Southeast Neighborhood meeting. Now that the bump outs have been removed from the project, she questioned if something else would be done to control speed.

Mary Dominski, 132 Kent Street, is concerned how the project will affect her personally. She is concerned about her lateral. She would like to replace her lateral at this time as it would be more financially difficult after the street is reconstructed. She wants detailed information with substantial pricing. She does not think this was done fairly and resents finding out her assessment would be over \$40,000. This process has made a clouded picture for the residents on Kent Street.

Barry Brissman, 406 Kent Street, stated in light of comments given today, he would like to have an explanation of how the assessment rate was determined. He would feel better about the rate if he knew how it was arrived at and not by some sort of arbitrary thing as some suggested. Naturally, he would prefer the City would reconstruct the road for free and pointed out that Kent Street is not used by just the people who live there. Ambulances use Kent Street to get to the Health Care Center and it is a bus route.

There were no further comments offered regarding Kent Street and the public hearing was closed.

Wesolowski explained that assessment rates are set on a yearly basis. A recommendation from the CISM committee is forwarded to Council for approval. The rate represents 60% of the cost to reconstruct the street. It has been a policy of the City to try to assess 60% of the cost of the project back to the abutting property. This changes from year to year and is an estimate. Staff looks at previous projects and adjusts the rate based upon the bids from the previous year. 40% of the cost is covered by the general fund. The street improvement rate last year was \$38 per foot. In previous years the street reconstruction rate was 60% of the street improvement rate, which was \$22.80 per foot in 2015. Last year the City Council approved assessing the full rate for street reconstruction projects, which increased from \$38 to \$42. Therefore, everyone pays the same rate. The rate is not exactly 60% of the construction cost, but is staff's best estimate of what it would cost for a typical street reconstruction. Beginning in 2016, the assessment rate is not differentiated between streets with curb and gutter (street reconstruction projects) and streets without curb and gutter (street improvement projects).

Wesolowski indicated the reconstruction of Ashland Avenue and Meadowview Road is proposed because when the area was developed, the developer installed sewer and water and a temporary street with the intension that permanent pavement would be installed when the area was fully developed. The street never received permanent pavement and consists of chipseal. Also, a resident had petitioned to have the street reconstructed. Wesolowski and Gehin will speak to residents after the meeting regarding drive approaches. Wesolowski noted that new sidewalk is not proposed to be installed along Ashland and Meadowview. From back of curb to back of curb would be 34' and the existing roadway is 24'. Without including measurements of the curb and gutter the street width would be 28'.

Wesolowski stated that traffic calming measures are not being proposed for Kent Street at this time. Due to residents' concerns, CISM recommended reconstructing the road as is.

Lindman explained that the water laterals on Kent Street are lead and the City will be replacing them from the main line to the curb stop. This year, Wausau Water Works has implemented a no interest loan program for homeowners who would like to replace the line from their house to the curb stop.

Lindman moved to adjourn the meeting. Jacobson seconded and the motion passed.