

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

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Date of Meeting: January 12, 2023, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Lou Larson, Doug Diny, Chad Henke, Lisa Rasmussen, Gary Gisselman

Also Present: Eric Lindman, Allen Wesolowski, TJ Nicksich, Tara Alfonso, Cord Buckner, Jill Kurtzhals, Tom Kilian, Lori Wunsch, Norman Barrientos – Barrientos Design & Consulting

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 5:15 p.m. Chair Larson called the meeting to order.

### **Presentation and discussion on engineering site evaluation options at 1100 West Street, 710 South 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 712 South 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Iron Works property) for a new DPW Fleet Maintenance Facility**

The presentation given by Barrientos Design can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7avLF6J904>.

### **Discussion and possible action on site selection for a new DPW Fleet Maintenance Facility at 1100 West Street, 710 South 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 712 South 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Iron Works property)**

Rasmussen likes the site and feels it is a workable compromise. There has been spirited debate about what the site should be and that has stalled progress while the facility needs have not gone away. She believes Option 2 makes sense. She loves the reuse of the office building as it has great historical aesthetics. It would give a nod to the history of the site by preserving the front building. She feels it is a reasonable compromise and the direction we need to go even if we have to look at phased or staged construction. We know the immediate needs. If we would later come to own some of the parcels to the west, we could add things later. Starting with this with an eye toward potential expansion makes sense. She could care less if this plan does not dovetail with the County plan because their movement on that is incredibly slow. We cannot afford to wait for them. She feels we should go to the next design step and figure out the real viability of the site. That would set us on a path where we have forward momentum. We would be in a better spot if we at least go to the next phase with Option 2.

Gisselman agrees with Rasmussen. He questioned the timeline for development. Barrientos indicated the design could be finished the end of August and it would provide defined numbers. After the budget process, he would start on final design. He believes there would be about 9 months of design, which brings it to August of 2024 for final design. That would include a cost estimate and the project could probably be bid in December of 2024. There would be about a 14-month construction period.

Diny noted that there is a small lot across the street and a trucking facility. He questioned if there would be a different design if an opportunity came up across the street. Barrientos believes that would be an excellent opportunity for bulk storage, additional parking, or cold storage; it is a compatible use to put Public Works functions. The whole area has good potential use.

Kilian said this sounds encouraging. It has been a long process and he is hopeful it will proceed smoothly. In the realm of caution should we ever have to backstep and look at other alternatives that are in the work product, he noted that page 17 of the packet contains a scoring matrix that is similar to what has been in past packets. In the October 14, 2021 CISM packet there was a similar scoring matrix with a site redacted in black on page 33 and on page 35 there was a column removed. He has never seen anything redacted like that from work material. Barrientos believes that the Cleveland Ave site was taken out. Lindman mentioned that was done after Council had indicated no more action was to be taken on that site. He does not know if it was the appropriate way to handle that. Because we did investigate that site when this process was first started, Lindman believes the information should be included as the report gets amended. Since that Council action was taken, the site has not been further investigated. We have not gone back to update cost estimates or revisit the larger sites because the committee did not want us to spend our time on that. Redacting that information in Lindman's opinion was probably not the way to go. We should have the information documented as it was looked at at one time.

Kilian noted that was the first CISM meeting after the September 14, 2021 Common Council meeting where they took formal action to remove Cleveland Avenue from the feasibility study. The unredacted matrix in the packet gives cost estimates on various sites. The environmental row for Cleveland Avenue notes zero dollars for potential environmental costs. 1300 Cleveland Avenue is an open state ERP site with identified widespread soil contamination on the site. The DNR requested the City undergo PFAS groundwater testing. After the first round of testing, the Committee of the Whole met in February of 2021. The environmental consultant, GEI, provided cost estimates for remediation of the site. This was after the first round of testing and prior to the second. The second round of testing identified even more contamination. GEI's top end estimate was \$525,000, which would likely be much lower than we could anticipate today because of the results from the second round of testing. This presented confusion in the matrix, and he encouraged it to be updated.

Barrientos asked if the committee would like the environmental costs updated. Larson does not want any more money spent on that site since it is not on the table. Rasmussen thought it was zero because an assumption was made the cleanup would already be done by the time this project took flight. As the committee they have agreed by consensus that 1300 Cleveland Avenue has become irrelevant. Even though there is a premium with some of the elements of the West Street site, the timing gives us time to plan for borrowing. As adjacent TID districts close, particularly TID 6, Finance could look to see if we could reclaim that extra year of increment. It may be possible to capture some dollars based on the timing.

Rasmussen moved to select this site and configure it as proposed Option 2 preliminary design and move to the next phase of design. Gisselman seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approve minutes of the December 8, 2022 meeting**
- B. Action on preliminary resolution to set a public hearing to vacate right-of-way located east of 1610 Meadowview Road, 1615 Meadowview Road, and 1612 Evergreen Road, which abuts the boundary of Parcels 080-2908-074-0992 and 156001 Forest Valley Road in the Town of Wausau**
- C. Action on preliminary resolution to set a public hearing to vacate a portion of the alley abutting 300 West Knox Street, 1110 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, 1114 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, and 1111 North 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue**
- D. Action on easement with Kolbe & Kolbe Properties, Inc., at 1111 McCleary Street**

Henke moved to approve the consent agenda items. Diny seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

#### **Discussion and possible action authorizing the sale of 1515 Curling Way**

Rasmussen moved to approve the sale of 1515 Curling Way as recommended. Gisselman seconded.

Gisselman asked how the City acquired this piece. Wesolowski explained the parcel to the south is owned by the Railroad. They have been using 1515 Curling Way as a parking lot. A parking lot would be their intended use. To the north the City owns another lot, but the Railroad is not interested. On the furthest north parcel is a small detention pond owned by the City, which we would not sell. The Railroad has expressed interest in purchasing 1515 Curling Way.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve the sale of 1515 Curling Way carried unanimously 5-0.

#### **Discussion and possible action on the first revision to the State/Municipal Agreement for North 18<sup>th</sup> Street from STH 52 to Sell Street**

The initial agreement was a \$218,000 cost share. The agreement has been revised to the City's benefit and reduces the cost share to \$148,816. The project has been bid with construction expected this spring.

Henke moved to approve. Diny seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

## **Discussion and possible action on the State/Municipal Agreement for Business Campus Trail E/W Connector, Innovation Way to 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue**

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Niksich explained this would be another trail in the Industrial Park. It would connect to the 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue trail to be constructed this year and then run to Innovation Way. Staff applied for funding about a year ago before we saw the increase cost for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue trail. The estimated cost is about \$1.2 million, which we were granted. However, seeing the bid for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue trail, we reran the costs. The trail would be upwards of \$4 million, making the grant less favorable. Through discussions with the DOT, there are options they may be willing to entertain. The first option would be to have the trail run from 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The second option is from 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The third option is 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Innovation Way. The options are still above the original projected cost, but we would still receive a considerable amount of grant money towards improving our trail network in the Industrial Park.

One other option would be to finish the portion of 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Trail that was removed this year because of the cost increase. We would possibly apply for a scope change to construct the portion of trail from Stewart Avenue to Packer Drive into Sunnyvale Park. The DOT was cautious in saying that would be approved as it would have to go to the Federal Highway Administration. That would cost about \$700,000 including design.

Rasmussen noted that our portion is expected to be funded with tax increment dollars. This area presents challenges; there is conflict between heavy trucks, vehicles, pedestrians, and bikes. We favor trails in this area to eliminate that conflict and make the area safer. She feels it makes sense to continue with the trail even if the trail needs to be built in segments. If we started with 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave to 84<sup>th</sup>, in future years we could apply for additional grant segments. The need for the trail is not going away. She believes the best option would be to get the first leg done, 72<sup>nd</sup> to 84<sup>th</sup>, and push forward from there. That would allow us to leverage the maximum amount of the grant dollars.

Gisselman agrees but also likes the segment from Packer Drive into Sunnyvale. There are a lot of walkers and bikers in the area. That segment would create loops and opens up more recreation destinations. He questioned how the trail would be under the highway as the area is tight. Niksich said the design was completed as part of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Trail. This would pick up where we left off. We would have to build a retaining wall underneath the highway overpass. Wesolowski stated there are always grant funding cycles. We could apply in the future to finish that portion. He believes it would score high because it is a connection to existing trails.

Rasmussen feels a scope change on an existing application is a gamble. She does also favor finishing the 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue leg to Sunnyvale but believes if submitted as a separate project the chances of success are higher. 72<sup>nd</sup> to 84<sup>th</sup> is a longer segment and would maximum grant dollars in this cycle. If we try to dial down the grant received or try to transfer it, we may not fair well. Larson agrees.

Diny noted that the calculations were off primarily by the consultant and asked if that consulting firm would be involved moving forward. Niksich said the consultant was part of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Trail. The east/west connection would go out for RFP. Diny asked what the recommended section of 72<sup>nd</sup> to 84<sup>th</sup> would cost. Niksich replied roughly \$1.2 million. Diny added another option would be to postpone it entirely.

Rasmussen asked if the primary concern is the amount of our share. If we are looking to reduce our share but yet maximize grant dollars, the leg from 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave to Innovation Way shortens up our contribution while still getting a segment completed. Discussion followed.

Gisselman asked if there was a road between Innovation Way and 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Per Niksich it is all wooded. Gisselman asked if there was a plan or if we were waiting for development. He asked if it would be better to have a trail attached to a road. Larson asked if the trail could be attached to the street from 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave to 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue as a bike lane. Niksich indicated there are ditches and no curb and gutter. Those are all costs that would have to be implemented. There is also limited right-of-way so there would be right-of-way acquisitions. The proposed project is projected to be all on City property. Wesolowski added that the trail from 84<sup>th</sup> to Innovation Way follows a utility corridor and is already cleared. The trail would be over the sewer and water corridor. There was some design for Innovation Way to continue to Development Court. There is a 40-acre parcel at the end of the

cul-de-sac on Innovation Way that Community Development is marketing. If that parcel is sold to one user, Innovation Way would not continue through.

As a pedestrian, Henke would vote for Innovation Way to 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It would provide a nice walk or bike ride through the woods. If worried about cost, he does like the option of 72<sup>nd</sup> to 84<sup>th</sup>. As long as we do something and take advantage of the grant, Rasmussen is on board.

Henke moved to approve Nicksich's recommendation of 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Rasmussen seconded and the motion passed 4-1 with Diny the dissenting vote.

**Discussion and possible action on the State/Municipal Agreement for West Wausau Avenue from Stevens Drive to North 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

Staff applied for funding to reconstruct West Wausau Avenue from Stevens Drive to 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This was a competitive process through Wausau Area MPO. Funding has been received with the City obligated for \$649,000, which is primarily for utilities. This is an 80/20 cost share. The project is likely to be constructed in 2026.

Rasmussen is glad this was awarded as the road is terrible and not a candidate for overlay.

Rasmussen moved to approve the State/Municipal Agreement for West Wausau Avenue. Henke seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

**Discussion and possible action on the renaming of the east/west segment of South 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue between South 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue and South 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

Wesolowski explained this is an odd situation where 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue intersects to 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The area is in the midst of redevelopment, and it would be good to clean it up. The Lindell family has owned most of the surrounding property for some time. This is where Crossroads Cinema was located and Crossroads County Market. The Lindell family suggested naming this portion of roadway to Crossroads Way. Staff did check with the County, and there is not a road within the County named Crossroads.

Rasmussen likes this idea as it gives a nod to the first developments. A lot of things were marketed out there as Crossroads because of the intersection of Hwy 51 and 29. This would clear up the 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue conundrum.

Rasmussen moved to approve. Gisselman seconded.

Gisselman asked if the area west of 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a public street. Wesolowski explained the right-of-way ends there and west of 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue is private.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve carried unanimously 5-0.

**Presentation by DPW staff on snow plowing operations**

Kraege stated there have been 14 events so far this year. He acknowledged his staff who have been working hard to get the streets clear. The way they respond to snow events is progressive. There is no magic formula; it is based upon the weather.

There are 3 facets with the first being plowing. Several routes are identified as priority. When it comes to plowing, the priority streets are maintained, and staff tries to keep them open throughout the storm. Maps of priority routes are on the website. The purpose of the routes is to make sure people can get where they need to go and to keep businesses functioning. People typically only have to travel 3 blocks to get to a plowed street.

The next portion is treatment of the streets. There are salt routes, which are routes identified as high traffic areas, school zones, and hospital areas. Any street not identified as a salt route is a sand route. Salt is not applied to

these streets, only sand with the purpose to maintain traction and allow people to navigate the streets safely. Sidewalk routes are another route where sand is used. They do not like to use salt on sidewalks as it kills lawns, and we would be dealing with dead grass. There are sand barrels located throughout the City for residents to use. A stockpile is also kept at the DPW facility.

The last phase is snow storage. As winter continues crews scrape away and haul to the snow dump to let Mother Nature melt it off.

Kraege invited alders to take a ride with a plow driver. It is impressive to watch the crew members.

Diny said there are a lot of odd lots and asked how DPW manages sidewalk snow removal. Kraege said skid steers with multiple attachments are sent out to clear sidewalks and City parking lots.

Larson understands the importance of keeping the main streets open. He noted his street has been glare ice. There are no sidewalks and people cannot walk their dogs. It is hazardous for the mailman and deliveries. He asked if there was any plan to better take care of the side streets. Besides killing grass, Kraege said there is an environmental concern with using salt. When it comes to side streets, their goal is to work with Mother Nature. As we get warmer weather, we will send equipment back out to scrape and let the sun take care of it. Larson lives off Stewart Avenue on 22<sup>nd</sup> Place. There are some City-owned sidewalks that have yet to be maintained since the last snowstorm. Kraege will check on the specific locations and noted there was some equipment down. Wesolowski mentioned that Engineering does keep track of sidewalk complaints. If anyone has a concern of a walk that is not clear, they can contact Engineering.

Rasmussen indicated there is a marked difference this year than in past years. We have had a seasonal shift with thawing and refreezing. Residents are usually realistic with expectations, but they do expect that we adequately sand curves, corners, hills, and intersections. Some side streets are like glass with some having as much as 4” of buildup. Mail carriers and delivery drivers have fallen in areas where they have to walk. She feels this year there is a different level of application of sand. The weighted sand burns through and lays there; it is now underneath the buildup. She noted that a couple of snow events came on the weekend, and they were not high-volume snow events. Crews were not brought in which contributed to some of the buildup as cars drove over it for 2½ days. Even if there is a low volume snow event on the weekend, she does not think we can afford to wait until Monday as it creates issues. We have a situation now where a lot of streets feel like logging roads due to the buildup. Residents have asked how we can enforce residents to clear sidewalks when the streets are ice rinks. She understands we want to use best practices and apply less material, but we have to have a balance. Kraege said the weather hit hard. Typically, on snow events with little amounts, they only bring in the salt crews to hit the mains, but he can look at changing directive. Rasmussen said we budget for that; what we save in a good year, we spend in a bad. We cannot afford to risk safety.

Larson agrees and also commended the department for the job done. He often refers to his forgotten neighborhood, but it has not been forgotten this year.

Gisselman asked how staff deals with snow from Granite Peak. He is concerned that there will be more snow coming off the mountain. Sometimes more than an inch can accumulate. Kraege said they take it as it comes. In the past Lindman has had conversation with Granite Peak and they have been responsive in shutting machines down until the wind shifts.

## **Adjourn**

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Diny moved to adjourn the meeting. Henke seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:55 p.m.