

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

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Date of Meeting: March 9, 2023, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

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

Also Present: Mayor Katie Rosenberg, Eric Lindman, Allen Wesolowski, TJ Niksich, Tara Alfonso, Jill Kurtzhals, Tom Kilian, Dustin Kraege, Lori Wunsch

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.

### CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve minutes of the February 9, 2023 meeting
- B. Action on easement with RL 17<sup>th</sup> LLC at 109 South 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- C. Action on easement with MKB Wausau LLC at 110 South 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- D. Action on easement with Wisconsin Public Service Corporation at 919 South 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

Rasmussen moved to approve the consent agenda items. Henke seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

### **Discussion and possible action on parking restrictions on Sherman Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

Joan Baptist, owner of Floral Magic at 840 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, explained there is a parking issue with the neighbor across the road. He constantly has cars parked from the stop sign past his driveway. This makes it very difficult for them to get in and out of their back driveway. They have to take time pulling out to avoid parked vehicles while cars come around the corner fast. It is creating a hazard for everyone. If vehicles were not parked there, they could quickly back out and get out of the way of oncoming traffic.

At this time Diny entered the meeting.

Tom Kilian, Alder for District 3, received a citizen complaint about this parking matter a little over a year ago. The complaint was about visibility and safety, specifically it related to exiting the alley and the inability of drivers to see what was around the corner. It was his understanding that part of the challenge was due to parking signs not being complied with. This was brought up by others on multiple occasions at neighborhood meetings. Officer Carr agreed with the idea of bringing this to committee. It seems enforcement has been incapable of addressing the visibility and safety issues. He supports the appropriate measure to make sure there is improved visibility and safety.

Larson is disappointed by the way this is represented in the packet. Yesterday morning he received an email from Alder Kilian stating that this has been a problem since January 2022. The picture in the packet is from September of 2019 and it shows a vehicle in violation. It is clear this is an ongoing problem. He doesn't know why the email was not included in the packet. Law enforcement has had frustration with this. He is wondering why there are no police reports, citations, or testimonials from the Police Department in the packet. One can go by this corner at any given time and 99% of the time you will see a violation. Larson spoke with Chief Bliven and he would be in support of any change. From the packet Larson got the feeling of why bother as there are minimum conflicts. Why do we need minimum conflicts when we can have zero conflicts. The staff report indicated it would move parking from the south side of the street to the north side. There has been no parking on the north side of the street for as long as he can remember. Larson uses this corner on a regular basis. It is a busy corner. As of late, there is a snowmobile trailer on the street that is not hooked up to a vehicle. It is a black trailer and blends in with the street. He received a phone call yesterday saying someone almost hit the trailer. He has witnessed city buses coming around the corner and with ongoing traffic it is a real challenge. He feels city streets should not be used as private driveways. He has witnessed vehicles parked on the street for weeks at a time without moving. There are concerns about not obeying the parking signs. Many times vehicles have been parked 1' to 2' past the sign.

Rasmussen said when there is a conflict with buses usually there is also a conflict with snowplows and garbage trucks. She asked if the motorhome in the picture is sitting in the person's driveway. Larson indicated the photo is old and the motorhome is long gone. There is now a camper there. Rasmussen noted the camper is taking up space where the cars should be. If the driveway is being used for other things it is a choice. If there are visibility problems for the neighbors and there is trouble with access across the street, it would make sense to restrict parking east of the alley. Larson recommends no parking from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Rasmussen noted if parking restrictions are added, the Police Department will have to be vigilant.

Wesolowski stated parking on the north side is only restricted 65' back from the intersection. If the north side is posted no parking, it is not in ordinance. Discussion followed.

Henke asked if there was parking on both sides of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Rasmussen asked if we have heard from DPW or Metro Ride on their experiences. Larson has not; he's just going by what he has witnessed. Wesolowski said the signs are for no parking 65' back. When he personally drove it, the intersection was wide open and not a safety issue. Vehicles do seem to be parked right up to the no parking sign, but it still gives you 65' back from the intersection. It is not a safety issue with 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. The alley is low volume. There are hundreds of alleys in the city, and this could be any issue at any of them. He is concerned this would just push parking somewhere else. The complaint he read was concerning visibility coming out of the alley. That argument could be used at any alley where someone is parked. He did not see it as a safety concern because of the low volume from the alley. If parking restrictions are placed, it could open up a situation where anyone who wants no parking could come forward. This situation is extraordinary because it is a reoccurring problem and there are always cars there.

Kurtzhals stated PD is aware of this issue and it has been an ongoing issue for some time. The Parking Specialist is aware of it and goes by frequently and cites vehicles.

Kilian said Wesolowski brought up an interesting point of global issues in the city. We could quantify and tabulate the frequency of complaints and use as a barometer in addition to the frequency of citations. A tabulation would be a good barometer of problem areas, so it is not used arbitrarily. In this case, it would probably hit the threshold had one existed. Larson asked if this should be tabled until we get reports and data from the Police Department and speak with bus drivers. Diny agrees and added that a trailer and a camper were there, and a RV is in the picture. He believes that is in violation of city ordinance. The large vehicles are potential restrictions to be able to see when coming out of the alley. His concern is making a change to parking when it is a specific case of other causes. He would be in favor of postponing to get more information.

Gisselman asked if the house on Sherman Street was a rental. The garage on the alley side seems to be for the house on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. He believes the case has been made that something needs to be done regarding the parking. The house on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue has a lot of cars that have to share the driveway on the alley side. This is a problem all over the city with rentals that need more parking. While he is not against delaying, it is obvious it needs to be corrected.

Rasmussen believes that if the plow driver, Metro Ride, or the garbage pickup crew were asked, any time there are less vehicles in their path their life is easier. If we have the mindset we want to address the situation as it is a habitual problem, she feels action could be taken.

Rasmussen moved to restrict parking on the south side of Sherman Street from 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Seconded by Gisselman.

Gisselman questioned going back to 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue instead of just to the alley. Rasmussen indicated the cars could move to the other side of the alley and inconvenience other neighbors. She believes it makes sense to do the entire block.

There being a motion and a second, motion to restrict parking on the south side of Sherman Street from 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue carried 4-1 with Diny the dissenting vote.

**Discussion and possible action on the sale of 123 West Thomas Street**

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This item was pulled from the agenda and will be brought back after it goes to Plan Commission.

**Discussion and possible action on accepting right-of-way for Washington Street from 14<sup>th</sup> Street to Kickbusch Street**

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Wesolowski reminded the committee this proposal was previously brought forward. They are looking to dedicate the right-of-way to extend Washington Street from 14<sup>th</sup> Street to Kickbusch Street.

Since the land would be dedicated from the school district and they are proposing to construct the road under the condition we maintain it, Rasmussen feels this makes sense. She added it should relieve some traffic pressure around the school.

Rasmussen moved to accept the right-of-way dedication. Seconded by Henke.

Gisselman asked if sidewalk was included in the design. Wesolowski said the CSM does not show the street design, just the right-of-way. The right-of-way would be the standard 60'. Final plans should be coming by the end of the month and can be brought back to CISM. It would be wide enough to construct a road and sidewalk.

There being a motion and a second, motion to accept the right-of-way dedication carried 5-0.

**Discussion and possible action on alternative options for the planter located on the northwest corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Jefferson Street**

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Lindman explained this came forward from downtown businesses, particularly Malarkey's. Last year Vogt approached staff regarding an outdoor venue with live music. He would like to expand and do more weekends. If the raised planter is removed and a flat space created, there would be more space for the outdoor venue. There is also a monument sign at this location. The planter has a couple of trees in it and is not well maintained.

Rasmussen agrees it is probably time for the planter to move on. It is more of a maintenance issue and is in the way. When the painted piano was located there the planter was in the way. If it was on a larger scale and a heightened level of design, she may be hesitant to remove. If this will enhance activity and the environment, she would agree with removal.

Rasmussen moved to approve staff to remove the planter and the monument sign if they locate a site to put it. Seconded by Henke.

Diny asked if the original intent of the planter was for security or safety. He also asked if there was a place to relocate the planter and reuse it. Lindman said the products could be kept. The fencing needs to be recoated; if it is still adequate, we can store it. The planter was for decoration. Opening up areas for more visibility and more interaction seems to be the way the downtown is going. Removal of the planter would help with that. Diny asked if the city would do this. Lindman confirmed it would be done inhouse.

There being a motion and second, motion to approve staff to remove the planter and the monument sign if they locate a site to put it carried unanimously 5-0.

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

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Niksich brought the State/Municipal Agreement (SMA) forward in January. The original grant for the SMA was applied for prior to finding out the impact of inflation on construction costs. The grant was well short of what the construction costs would be. Niksich then brought forward options and CISM agreed to apply for a change management request for the section of trail from 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The change management request has been approved, which will be an addendum to the original SMA.

Rasmussen moved to approve the State/Municipal Agreement with the revision. Seconded by Gisselman and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

**Discussion and possible action on approving Governmental Responsibility Resolution for Application of an Urban Nonpoint Source (UNPS) and Stormwater Management Construction Grant**

In December Niksich presented on a possible Stormwater Utility and grant. The grant would be a planning grant to help update our stormwater management plan, complete leaf credit analysis to help meet our total phosphorus reduction goals, and complete a feasibility study for a stormwater utility. To apply for the grant, a resolution is required by the DNR to give staff the ability to act on behalf of the city.

Rasmussen moved to approve. Seconded by Diny and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

**Discussion and possible action on amending Section 10.20.040 – No parking during snow removal**

Larson stated this came from Alder McElhaney. The city has older homes that have been turned into duplexes and residents have no place to park vehicles during a snow emergency. The Police Department has written over 300 snow emergency tickets. It was suggested that we could allow parking in the ramps as they are not consistently used a lot. We could offer a 24-to-48-hour grace period after a snow emergency.

Rasmussen indicated that some ramps have monthly permits for people to park for work. If McElhaney wishes to offer the ramps for free parking, we would have to have the number of daily parking for permit holders. If a snow emergency happens during the week, free parking would have to come in after the business day and out of the ramp before the next business day starts. Folks in the northeast district would have to take their vehicle downtown, leave it locked in a ramp and find a way home. She does not know how many people would use that option. She believes it may be within the authority of management to open up the ramp for public use. Lindman does not think so but added that people can park for free in the ramps at night. He believes the ask was if a snow emergency carries over for 18 to 24 hours, people would not be cited for parking in the ramps. We would have to look what levels of the ramps could be open to this as permitted parkers would have priority.

Rasmussen feels it is an odd ask. Snow emergencies are not declared very often. In general, this happens 2 to 3 days a winter. She thinks the \$100 tickets are just and need to happen. Of the 300 tickets issued, those were not all people that did not have somewhere to park. She believes a lot of it is people do not pay attention and do not think they will be caught. She added that if there are certain ramp levels that are underutilized, she would not be opposed to opening them up.

Alfonso noted that Chapter 10.48 sets forth a lot of ordinances about utilization of the ramps and the times of day one does not have to pay. Eventually if changes are made, we may not only need to make changes to the snow emergency ordinance, but also to Chapter 10.48. Discussion followed.

Diny thinks this is a good idea. It may not necessarily be just cars from the Riverview neighborhood. He owns 3 vehicles and has uncovered parking. He would potentially take advantage of this so he would not have to dig out 3 cars. We do need to look and see how much space is available. It could save some people \$100. He questioned how much someone is charged when they overstay in the ramp. Lindman noted that during the night parking is free. The first ticket is forgiven for the year. The next ticket would be \$5. People can register at the kiosk and pay anything beyond 2 hours.

Gisselman asked if the thought is to amend the snow emergency ordinance. He believes the authority we currently have for a snow emergency is finely crafted. A lot of cars find a way to other spots during a snow emergency. He hopes the snow emergency ordinance does not change because it works well.

The committee agreed by consensus to defer this until next month.

## **Adjourn**

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Henke moved to adjourn the meeting. Diny seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:10 p.m.