

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, March 20, 2012 at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Randy Backous
 Councilmember David Elvig
 Councilmember Colin McGlone

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis G. Ulrich
 Deputy City Administrator Heidi Nelson
 Public Works Director Brian Olson
 City Engineer Tim Himmer
 Street Supervisor Grant Reimer
 Park Supervisor Mark Riverblood
 Civil Engineer Leonard Linton
 City Attorney William Goodrich
 Mayor Bob Ramsey
 Councilmember Sarah Strommen
 Councilmember Jason Tossey
 Councilmember Jeff Wise
 Development Manager Darren Lazan

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Backous called the regular meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 5:00 p.m.

CITIZEN INPUT

There was none.

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember McGlone, seconded by Councilmember Elvig, to approve the agenda, as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Councilmembers McGlone and Elvig.
Voting No: None.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Councilmember McGlone, seconded by Councilmember Elvig, to approve the minutes from the February 21, 2012, Public Works Meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Councilmembers McGlone and Elvig. Voting No: None.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Case #1: Consider Storm Sewer Improvements on Sodium Street – A Continuation of Discussions Related to 2011 Flooding Concerns

City Engineer Himmer reviewed the staff report and described the proposed project to address drainage on the 16756 Sodium Street property.

Joel Kamrowski, 16756 Sodium Street, asked about the easement to put in a culvert to direct water to the pond and what will be done to prevent water from backing up farther into his yard.

City Engineer Himmer advised the City, along with the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization, will undertake a wetland mitigation project across the street that would remove the high ground to create wetlands, which will provide some relief. Also, the City cleaned the west side ditch so the water can drain to the County ditch on the south side of the park. City Engineer Himmer indicated he can't say Mr. Kamrowski's property will never experience high water but the downstream has been addressed and the wetland mitigation project will also help.

Mr. Kamrowski stated he installed rain tile and still his back yard is flooded this spring with no snow.

City Engineer Himmer explained that easements were not taken with older plats and if the City has to purchase those types of easements, it would be a large expenditure and require more discussion. He noted that until there is regional ponding, it is difficult to fix these situations but if the pond fills up there is relief downstream.

Mr. Kamrowski stated his foundation is cracked and the pad in front of his garage has settled and cracked.

City Engineer Himmer explained it may be the low area has ponded and is backing up or it may be water flowing to the pipe.

Mr. Kamrowski stated it appears most is coming from the north and working towards the south. He thought that once water is in the swamp, it stays there.

City Engineer Himmer indicated the proposed project will get water from the south property line and provide positive drainage.

Chairperson Backous asked if staff has addressed the easement issue with Mr. Kamrowski.

City Engineer Himmer stated staff has not yet talked with the property owner about the easement because staff was not sure this project would be supported by the Public Works Committee. He asked if this is a reasonable project, noting the project cost will be covered by the Storm Water Utility but does not include payment for an easement. He asked Mr. Kamrowski if he would be willing to give a 10-foot easement so the City can do the project, if approved by the City Council on April 10, 2012.

Mr. Kamrowski stated it sounds like a good start.

City Engineer Himmer stated the project proposal is included in the staff report

Councilmember Elvig asked if creating drainage will also create a wicking effect of surface water.

City Engineer Himmer stated the project does not include grading up to the house and will create positive drainage. However, if there is a dip in the elevation of the Kamrowski yard, they may have to fill it in.

Councilmember Elvig asked about drain tile.

City Engineer Himmer explained there would not be a hard pipe, just a culvert.

Ms. Kamrowski, 16756 Sodium Street, stated they already have water issues on the back side and she believes the pond overflows into the back yard, which has already wrecked their garage.

City Engineer Himmer stated he had asked if the water gets to the pond and backs up, or the water flowing to the pond is causing the problem. He clarified this project will not grade the Kamrowski property but will bring the water to the low side and the Kamrowskis could do some grading or filling upstream to force the water.

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Councilmember McGlone, to recommend that the City Council include the work at 16756 Sodium Street (Installing a culvert under Sodium Street, regrading the west ditch of Sodium Street, constructing a berm to keep the water in the ditch, and replacing the existing driveway culvert. The ditch would be graded to drain to the south and a culvert would be installed near the south property line to drain the water to the west.) in the proposed 2012 Sealcoating Program.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Councilmembers Elvig, and McGlone. Voting No: None.

Case #2: Consider Storm Sewer Improvements on 163rd Lane – A Continuation of Discussions Related to 2011 Flooding Concerns

City Engineer Himmer reviewed the staff report and described the proposed project to address drainage on 163rd Lane. He indicated the City has no easement for the outlet pipe for the property of impact and the estimated project cost is \$80,000. City Engineer Himmer requested

input, noting only \$75,000 had been budgeted. If supported, the project may be instituted in the fall and staff would contact the property owner to explain this project and address the crushed culvert.

Mike Dealing, 6310 163rd Avenue, stated he has a drainage easement and when the water goes over, it goes into his drain field. The water is not yet up to the house, but very close. Mr. Dealing stated the easement is not a problem and asked if the water will be moved via gravity or pump.

City Engineer Himmer stated it will be moved via gravity. The properties behind Mr. Dealing's property have dedicated easements along the common lot lines, platted easements. He explained staff looked at the distance between the ponding easement and existing easement and the project would directional bore to lessen impact to the trees.

Mr. Dealing asked if the project would start from the back.

City Engineer Himmer answered in the affirmative and stated the project would then go due south.

Mr. Dealing explained that in the spring the ground is frozen so the pond doesn't work. He asked if the pipe will be below the frost line.

Public Works Director Olson explained the problem with freezing is experienced at the end portions at the entry/exit, so it still has to thaw. However, if there was an issue creating an emergency situation, or jeopardizing the septic system, equipment can be brought in to thaw the pipe.

City Engineer Himmer explained the project would not keep the pond drained; there will still be water and infiltration but not to exceed the easement.

Mr. Dealing indicated when the pond was installed 20-25 years ago, they did a good job because in two to three days water seeps into the ground during the summer. He stated staff's proposed project is a good plan.

Chairperson Backous asked how many homes are impacted.

Civil Engineer Linton noted that on the north side of the road, it is the same elevation so water goes through the culvert.

Mr. Dealing stated when the culvert is fixed, it will probably flood toward his house and basement.

Councilmember Elvig asked staff to assure the project timing so fixing the culvert does not flood Mr. Dealing's property.

Public Works Director Olson noted the budget is \$75,000 yet the balance in the Storm Drainage Utility is in the hundreds of thousands so exceeding by \$10-\$15,000 may not be a concern. He clarified the staff recommendation is to delay until the Council looks at the 2015 CIP but would recommend moving forward and creating a plan set to re-identify cost estimates.

Tom Heifort, 6311 163rd Lane NW, stated he met with staff to determine how the system is to work; however, it is not working now so his yard is taking a lot of water before it gets to Mr. Dealing's property. He indicated that last summer, he had to cut grass in water and hopes the project is done right so it fixes all the problems.

Chairperson Backous agreed it has to be done right so water doesn't impact a different property.

City Engineer Himmer noted staff's report identified six different locations and asked how the projects should be addressed, as they come forward or to select two projects.

Councilmember McGlone stated he knows of three projects, those who show up.

Chairperson Backous stated the Public Works Committee counts on staff to prioritize the projects based on the factors involved.

City Engineer Himmer stated there are two more projects on 148th and 149th and the final two projects are the Obermaiers and the golf course, which can wait since the short-term issues are solved. He explained the two projects being discussed tonight were prioritized because both involve road projects. City Engineer Himmer stated the two projects approved last year will be packaged with the two projects discussed tonight, if approved.

Public Works Director Olson explained the intent is to handle the projects under one contract to capitalize on economies of scale.

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Councilmember McGlone, to recommend that the City Council add this project to the list to be evaluated when the Capital Improvement Program is updated.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Councilmembers Elvig, and McGlone. Voting No: None.

Case #3: Consider Revisions to the City's Minnesota State Aid (MSA) Street System

City Engineer Himmer reviewed the staff report and recommendation to adjust and reconfigure some Minnesota State Aid (MSA) street designations to better align with stated transportation goals and planned development activities.

Public Works Director Olson indicated the new MSA standards will be based on traffic points, not road segments.

City Engineer Himmer stated MSA will be upgrading its software and consider basing needs solely on traffic volumes so non-existing segments would only get minimal dollars. There will still be a requirement to connect a State Aid road with a State Aid road.

Councilmember Elvig asked how the system of “ghosting” State Aid roads is changing.

City Engineer Himmer explained the City cannot designate as State Aid, build the road, and then remove the designation because the City is collecting needs for 20 years. If the City removes the designation, it has to repay the State Aid.

Councilmember Elvig asked how that changes “ghosting” streets.

City Engineer Himmer answered it does not change the system the City has now, except it won't get as much funding for ghost streets. He stated he looked at the traffic counts and considered which streets may not be constructed and could be removed from the MSA designation. Staff would recommend keeping open the local flyover for Highway 10, potential River crossing, and also factored in the realignment of Sunwood Drive.

Councilmember McGlone asked how the change in the system will affect the City moving forward or affect people who own property on a State Aid road and want it improved.

Public Works Director Olson explained it will not change anything with existing State Aid streets and as the City's roadway system continues to grow, the City can designate 20% of its existing mileage to State Aid. He noted the recommended changes are minor and are roads that will not impact residential properties.

City Engineer Himmer stated the City ultimately decides how to spend State Aid dollars and if they approve the revision, and the City will still receive about \$1 million.

Motion by Chairperson Backous, seconded by Councilmember McGlone, to recommend that the City Council approve the staff requested revision to the City's MSA street system.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Councilmembers McGlone and Elvig. Voting No: None.

Case #4: Consider Project Scope for Phase 2 of the Alpine Drive Overlay Project

City Engineer Himmer reviewed the staff report and requested input on the trail and alternate treatments. He then described each of the three trail segments, existing conditions, potential impacts, and estimated costs, noting there are also grant opportunities.

Park Supervisor Riverblood indicated moving ahead with Segment 1 would meet the Council's strategic goals and inform staff where to focus the City's resources because there are millions of dollars of trail needs. He believed Riverdale Drive made sense because it would be consistent with street reconstruction and the Mississippi River Trail.

Councilmember McGlone asked if staff is suggesting to hold off on the project.

Park Supervisor Riverblood suggested the Public Works Committee consider not moving forward with Segments 2 and 3 and consider Segment 1, noting it provides community connectivity along Alpine Drive up to the Sweet Bay boardwalk and trail. Park Supervisor Riverblood advised staff has submitted two grant applications for larger projects and once priorities are known, staff can break out funding priority.

Councilmember Elvig asked about submitting additional trail grants.

Park Supervisor Riverblood stated there is a small concern staff may be successful in two grants and the City will need funds for the match. He noted, however, if the agency is awarding \$9 million in projects, one community would typically not be awarded two grants.

Councilmember Elvig stated the Met Council is pushing trails.

Public Works Director Olson indicated the TED program looks geographically at where they put money and take pride in assuring it is geographically spread round the State.

Chairperson Backous asked if \$33,000 from the MSA Fund would be used for the trail.

City Engineer Himmer answered in the affirmative.

Chairperson Backous stated his position that trails need to wait if the City does not have the money. He noted the City has been waiting to build at Elmcrest for many years and the City needs to balance out the projects.

Park Supervisor Riverblood stated staff has not approached it recently but could also ask Anoka County, as part of the prioritization process, if they want to be co-applicant next year for a DNR trail grant for reasons of public safety.

City Engineer Himmer explained that once constructed, staff will apply on the City's behalf for reimbursement from the Metropolitan Council.

Councilmember Elvig stated support to proceed with Segment 1.

City Engineer Himmer stated funding would come from State Aid and this segment can be added to the plans and bid as an alternate. The City can then decide once the bids are received. He noted that Segments 2 and 3 involve the need for delineation and acquisition.

Councilmember McGlone stated funding is always a factor but an equal factor is working to take advantage of economies of scale. He believed there was a definite potential for savings with Segment 1 and doing it now would inconvenience the public only once. Councilmember McGlone stated he would argue for trails where the City is already doing a roadway project. He supported Segment 1 and asked if there were any other trail segments to consider, noting the City will be paving Sunfish Lake Boulevard.

Chairperson Backous agreed unless it involved right-of-way acquisition.

Councilmember Elvig noted the problem with Segment 2 is the need for acquisitions.

City Engineer Himmer stated the road is not platted or dedicated, it is prescriptive rights.

Councilmember Elvig asked if this could also be part of a bid alternate.

City Engineer Himmer stated it could but requires delineations, watershed permitting, banking, and design. Segment 1 doesn't need that extra work.

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Councilmember McGlone, to recommend that the City Council eliminate the alternative road base technologies on this project but, rather, include that investigation and analysis with the future Riverdale Drive/MRT project, and to include Segment 1 as an add alternate within the scope of the 2012 Alpine Drive overlay.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Councilmembers Elvig, and McGlone. Voting No: None.

COMMITTEE INPUT

City Engineer Himmer stated the Bunker Lake Boulevard project has started and Anoka County will install signs for closures. Staff is working to assure it is properly signed and enforceable.

Public Works Director Olson indicated staff is evaluating the Sunwood Drive realignment project and working with the Police and Fire Departments to decide whether it should be constructed under traffic or closed during construction.

City Engineer Himmer explained if closed, three to four weeks could be removed from the schedule and there would be a savings of close to \$100,000 in material since bypass lanes would not be needed, liability reduction, traffic staging, and mobilization, equaling up to \$150,000 in savings. City Engineer Himmer advised Anoka County said they will entertain this option if there is no objection by the City relating to public safety and the business community. Staff recommends closing since it involves a limited closure, there are not many businesses that would be impacted, and a detour could be used to access those properties. If approved, staff will draft a letter to Anoka County and the business community, then develop a project under closure.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Chairperson Backous, seconded by Councilmember McGlone, to adjourn the Public Works meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Olson
Public Works Director

Drafted by Carla Wirth
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.