

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

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Chris Riley
 Councilmember Jill Johns
 Councilmember Melody Shryock

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
 Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
 Community Development Director Timothy Gladhill
 City Engineer Bruce Westby

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Riley called the regular meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

Cassandra and Frank Miske, 17421 Gibbons Street NW, requested to discuss their property and drainage issues with it. Ms. Miske noted they have been before this Committee several times in the past year. She acknowledged the City has been working with them, and she questioned what the City will do differently in the next 30 days that is different than the last 60 days. She explained a nearby property at 17540 Gibbons St. is in foreclosure and was sold on April 10. She expressed concern whether the drainage issues in that home were disclosed properly. She stated the basement in that home was destroyed with drainage issues. She questioned whether the intent of the new owner was to flip the house and sell it to unknowing people, as what happened to them.

City Engineer Westby explained the plan is to bring the case forward to the City Council on June 17. He said staff had hoped to have information ready at this meeting, but that wasn't possible. There is a lot to consider with their property, including reconstruction of streets, possible lift stations, culverts, storm water modeling and researching older records. Staff has not been able to conduct these activities due to the construction projects in the last two months. He said the intent is to work on this issue and present information at the June 17 Council meeting. In response to the question of information disclosure on the neighboring property, he stated he couldn't address that at this time.

Ms. Miske pointed out that property had more flooding than hers. The prior owners were an elderly couple and they could not keep up with the damage. They let it go into foreclosure. She

asked if there is a responsibility to the City to make sure this property isn't flipped without disclosing prior damage.

City Engineer Westby noted disclosure of flooding and water damage is required by state law.

Commissioner Shryock suggested it may be worth researching whether there is a statute of limitations once issues are discovered that should have been disclosed. She stated she would likely go talk to the new owners as a neighbor and make sure they are aware of prior damage. She noted it may not be in the City's jurisdiction to be involved in a sale in that manner.

Mr. Miske pointed out that on June 17, it will be one year that they have been seeking resolution to their case with the City.

Chairperson Riley noted the Civil Engineer would be the staff person that should make a site visit.

City Engineer Westby offered to be in touch with Mr. and Mrs. Miske to set up a site visit.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Johns, seconded by Councilmember Shryock to approve the agenda, as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Johns and Shryock. Voting No: None.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve March 31, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Councilmember Johns, seconded by Councilmember Shryock, to approve the following minutes:

Regular Meeting Minutes dated March 31, 2015

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Johns and Shryock. Voting No: None.

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

5.01: Consider Recommending Council Approval of draft Assessment Agreement for Ridgpoint Residential Development Public Improvements, Improvement Project 15-21

City Engineer Westby reviewed the staff report. He noted Randy Diers and Don Kveton were present to represent Village Bank. The property owner is Village Bank, and they are not able to

fund the improvements to the land directly. They have requested the City enter into an agreement with the bank and assess the improvements back to the bank. The City would conduct the improvements and the inspections. He stated the City has done this type of arrangement once before, with Legacy Christian Academy. However, he pointed out, that was a larger project. This project is little risk to the City. The City Attorney has noted the City is not obligated to approve this request, though his opinion is that this is an option if the City would like to allow it.

City Administrator Ulrich asked if Mr. Diers would give a history of this project.

Randy Diers, President of Village Bank, explained they have had this property for four years, and have tried to sell it for three years as it is currently zoned, which is commercial. There has not been interest. He said as they considered the property further, they started to envision residential lots, especially because of the proximity to the river. He stated they were aware of the soil issues that had to be considered. He noted the bank owns the property, but the bank is not a developer. He explained regulation is rather specific in this type of situation. One stipulation is the bank cannot be in speculation of real estate. In order to ready the property for development, the construction loan needed has been prohibitive to the developers that have shown interest thus far. He said the Bank had decided to ask the City for help in this issue and created the project to be of no risk to the City.

Don Kveton, Chairman of the Board of Village Bank, explained he has been living in Ramsey for 16 years. He is committed to follow through on the proposal. He noted that the real estate language in the banking law could be interpreted several ways. He stated he would like to keep this entire project as clean as possible to preserve both his and the Bank's reputations. He said he also wants to do what he can to keep taxes down. He reviewed some of the homes they have sold and areas he has developed. He commented this is a nice piece of land, and there will be nice homes. It is hard to show the land as it is; it needs to be cleaned up and made ready to show. He said he is not worried about selling the land; it just needs to be cleaned up.

Commissioner Shryock stated it was good to hear their opinions on this project. She noted having these partnerships is beneficial. This development is in need of their expertise.

Commissioner Johns stated she is in favor of this agreement as well. The City has put everything in place, and has endorsed this to be developed from the beginning. Since the City has worked with the Bank before, we know they are a good partner and they will follow through. She said this will be a good development, and agreed that it is very low risk.

Chairperson Riley questioned if the Legacy Christian Academy assessment has been repaid to the City.

City Administrator Ulrich explained that assessment was to be paid over a 15 to 20 year period. He stated the Academy has been current on their taxes, and thereby current on their assessment.

Mr. Kveton pointed out when the lots sell, the City will get money back. Every time a lot is closed on, he said the funds go to the City for the assessments. He said he hoped his bank was out of this project in the next year.

Mr. Diers stated he did not want to hang onto this for the next few years, either. He noted the market is strengthening. He also pointed out this is not a development that would interest many developers as it is only seven homes.

Chairperson Riley asked where in the agreement it states the City would be paid as lots are sold. He said he only noted where it said the City would be paid twice a year; in October and May. He asked if the language could be added relating to payment as the lots are sold.

City Administrator Ulrich answered that language could be added. He explained the agreement is that the percentage that each lot is assessed would define the amount that is paid when the lot is sold.

Chairperson Riley questioned whether the City was the Bank's only viable source of financing.

Mr. Diers responded that is was. He said they cannot take out a loan from another bank and they cannot self-loan. He added that the assessments must be clear to deliver the title.

Councilmember Shryock asked if there are any repairs that need to be done in the adjacent existing neighborhood and if they would be done as this development is in progress.

Public Works Superintendent Reimer explained this development should not have much of an affect on the existing neighborhood. The roads in that neighborhood have recently been sealcoated, and the drainage is good.

Chairperson Riley noted the assessments will average to \$85,000 per lot. The allocation varies. He inquired if the amounts made sense with the anticipated selling price.

Mr. Diers responded the higher value is placed on Lot 1, which has better access and view of the river. He stated he would like to see someone take interest in lot 7, so they could put up a model. The property would show better. He explained they are planning to add berming, and trees to create a buffer from the industrial area. This will add to the value of the homes, and ultimately to the tax base.

City Administrator Ulrich commented this has been a patient developer. He said this may not have been developed if were in the private sector. He noted there have been many issues with this property over the years. There have been several potential uses for it. This plan capitalizes on the river, as well as the trail. The development will hopefully raise the level of the homes in the area. This unique project with the bank backing it makes it less of a precedent-setting development for the City. This project is relatively small, which means the bank can do it as a project and get it done in 3 years. The Finance Director approves of the financial situation. The City will get its return back, with 3.5% interest, which is more than with other investments. He noted the language to clarify the timing of paying assessments will be added to the agreement.

Motion by Councilmember Johns, seconded by Councilmember Shryock to recommend that the City Council approve the draft Assessment Agreement for Ridgepoint residential development

public improvements, Improvement Project 15-21 with the amendment of adding language that clarifies the City will be paid upon the sale of each lot.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Johns and Shryock. Voting No: None.

Mr. Kveton and Mr. Diers expressed gratitude for the staff's countless hours on this project and the staff's patience.

6. COMMITTEE / STAFF INPUT

6.01 Review of Trail Maintenance Policy Framework

City Engineer Westby reviewed the staff report. He noted staff would like to develop the draft policy and come back with a cost forecast with what it may cost to develop such a plan. He said he was looking for input.

Commissioner Johns said this plan should be done. She noted the trails are getting to the point that they cannot be maintained simultaneously. She said she prefers the PASER system since it is familiar to everyone.

Commissioner Shryock stated she appreciates this policy framework. It is needed. She added she is particularly interested in making routes as ADA accommodating as possible. She recommended developing some sort of priority rating that would take into account not only the condition of the pavement, but also the area. She suggested the trails by schools or major thoroughfares could be considered to be on a priority list.

Chairperson Riley agreed with using the PASER rating. He asked if there was another system that could be used as measurement.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer responded there are several systems that could be used, but the only difference is the meaning of the numbers change. He suggested it is better to follow a system that is familiar to all.

Chairperson Riley stated he would prefer to look at other seal-coating options. He said if there is something else that maintains integrity and smoothness, it should be considered.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer noted sand is sometimes used instead of rock.

Commissioner Johns asked what the life expectancy is of the trails.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer explained it varies due to the base that is used for the trail. Some trails have been around 25 years. He said some trails are a base of sand and are basically constructed as roads so that heavy equipment for snowblowing can be used on them. He further explained trails are made with different depths depending on proximity to tree roots and land conditions.

Commissioner Shryock noted impervious coating was used in a park recently and asked if that would be feasible.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer responded it is not known to be durable. It may not be feasible for trails.

Chairperson Riley advised staff keep in mind the cost of maintenance of trails in 10 years, as more are added.

Chairperson Riley stated he studied the trail map and tried to identify any gaps in trails. He said it seems it should be a priority to connect trails. He pointed out the trail on Hwy 47 needs to be connected. He inquired if this could be a focus as the new plan is developed.

Development Services Manager Gladhill advised a trail map analysis had been done with a grant, and it identified gaps. He offered to forward it to Chairperson Riley and the Commission.

City Engineer Westby noted the CIP includes working on some of the gaps.

Commissioner Shryock suggested staff consider the cost and process of acquiring property if needed. The ownership of the road can be an issue in connecting trails. She also suggested considering the width of shoulders on roads and the traffic on the roads when discussing closing gaps in trails. She noted the current trails need to be maintained before adding more.

City Engineer Westby announced there have been many discussions with the local businesses in regard to the construction on Armstrong Boulevard. Some businesses have been erecting white sheet metal signs with black lettering. The signs list individual businesses names. This was to augment the local business signage on both sides of Hwy 10. He noted the City has added generic signs with larger lettering so the signs can be seen easier while driving. He pointed out staff has been hard at work trying to meet the concerns of the businesses, while treating all businesses fairly. He also advised staff has been in discussions with Armstrong Kennel. The owner is working with the County to put in his own signs. The owner went to the Transportation meeting earlier in the week. He will be putting up Game Fair parking signs on both Alpine and Puma. He said it seems residents and businesses are starting to settle in as the first week of construction ends.

Commissioner Johns asked if the generic signs work.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer answered the generic signs do seem to work.

City Engineer Westby noted the lane closures on Highway 10 will be removed later in the week. There will be intermittent lane closures, though that will happen on off hours. He said restricted lanes will not be the norm for the duration of this project.

City Administrator Ulrich pointed out Police has been monitoring the traffic during the project and there have not been issues. They will also be monitoring the side streets.

Chairperson Riley pointed out the past minutes indicated the crosswalk at Hwy 47 and CSAH 5 is being studied. He questioned how long the study will take place.

City Engineer Westby answered this has been a challenging process. There is now MnDOT direction. He explained last fall MnDOT wanted to review the area in the spring and look for gaps in the trail system and crosswalk areas. The "trail closed" sign was erected until such time as it would be studied in the spring. However, there is new staff in MnDOT and therefore, different ideas of what needs to be done. MnDOT would like to see a plan with certain constraints. Staff has had issues with the City's survey equipment and this has delayed the land survey and subsequently, a plan draft. If the equipment is not repaired this week, an outside company will be enlisted to conduct the survey. The plans can then be developed over the next two weeks and sent to MnDOT for further consideration.

City Engineer Westby raised the issue of the potential ramp at Stoney River, and explained their contractor was going to build the ramp on the west side. Since the last discussion, there has been an agreement for the developer to provide a lump sum amount. Staff can add the curbing for the area as it is needed.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated staff has reached out to the developer to see if they would handle the landscaping. However, if the woods is not overhanging a trail, it is not a priority. He also noted there have been discussions with the developer regarding clean up of buckthorn and other brush. The developers have responded they did not have the funds to complete the clean up.

City Administrator Ulrich advised the black mold on the bottom of the water tower on Dysprosium will begin to be cleaned in four to six weeks. It will be cleaned with biodegradable materials. This cleaning will be incorporated into regular maintenance from this point.

Chairperson Riley questioned if some type of anti-mold substance will be applied.

City Administrator Ulrich said the invoice stated there would be an anti fungal application.

Chairperson Riley inquired if a drip edge would be needed to conduct long-term repair, and whether that is cost-prohibitive.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer responded that would be expensive. He said that could be done if the entire tower was stripped for repainting, but that is not needed for many years.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Johns, seconded by Councilmember Shryock to adjourn the Public Works Committee meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Grant Riemer
Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Chris Moksnes
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.