

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

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Chris Riley
 Councilmember Debra Musgrove
 Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Also Present: Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
 City Engineer Bruce Westby

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Riley called the regular meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

Councilmember Musgrove asked if there was a decision made to not hold Public Works Committee meetings virtually.

City Engineer Westby replied that the meeting was held virtually for a bit but has not been for about four or five months.

Chairperson Riley stated that typically staff would be aware if a resident had input to provide or an issue to discuss with the Committee. He stated that the meetings are open to the public and asked if Councilmember Musgrove had a concern.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she did not but stated that perhaps it would be helpful to have the option open to residents.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to approve the agenda, as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Musgrove and Woestehoff.
Voting No: None.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve July 20, 2021, Meeting Minutes

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to approve the following minutes:

Regular Meeting Minutes dated July 20, 2021

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Woestehoff and Musgrove. Voting No: None.

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

5.01: Consider Stop Sign Installation at Garnet St and 137th Lane

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed the staff report and recommendation to not install additional stop signs at this intersection, based on the traffic counts and accident history. Staff would recommend that the trees located in the ROW be trimmed back to improve visibility.

Matt Blanchard resident, stated that he did not see a need to trim the trees further and wondered what the City Code states related to the required distance from the corner needed to provide visibility. He stated that it would be better to place the stop sign north/south rather than east/west as most of the traffic speeds coming into the development, not leaving the development. He stated that there are children at the intersection riding their bikes as there is a little library at the corner. He believed it would be safer to place stop signs. He stated that there has been a lot of money put into deciding whether to place a stop sign when installing a stop sign would not have a large expense.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer estimated about 150 feet would be needed to provide visibility when traffic is moving at 30 mph.

Mr. Blanchard stated that those trees do not even start until 75 feet from the corner, and he has the trees trimmed to see the intersection at 137th Avenue. He stated that trimming the trees further would impede upon his privacy. He believed that it would be safer to place a stop sign. He noted that if the trees are trimmed there would still be an issue with vehicles traveling too fast and not stopping. He stated that he has lived in his home for nine years and the trees have been mature throughout that time. He noted that there have only been two accidents during that nine-year period.

Councilmember Musgrove clarified the locations proposed by the resident for stop signs, which would stop north and south traffic. She also asked for clarification on the location of the little library.

Mr. Blanchard identified the location of the little library, which is on private property.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if there has been any consideration for a yield sign rather than a stop sign, or a crosswalk.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer replied that there has not been consideration to a yield sign.

Mr. Blanchard stated that perhaps if there were a sign for a crosswalk, traffic would slow, but noted that there are not sidewalks in that location so he was unsure that would make sense. He believed that a stop sign would be best.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that people become dependent on a stop sign as traffic control, but people do not always pay attention to that. She stated that in rural sections intersections with no control seem to work best as everyone has to pay attention. She asked for staff input on a yield sign.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that he believes yield signs are ineffective. He noted that this is a urban section and therefore people should already be paying attention. He noted that stop signs would not be placed on Garnet because that is the larger road.

Mr. Blanchard stated that there is no control in place now. He stated that if there is a problem, that should be controlled with a stop sign rather than tree trimming. He commented on the high number of children riding bicycles in the neighborhood and stopping that traffic as it comes into the neighborhood would be helpful.

Chairperson Riley stated that he did not believe a yield sign would provide benefit.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked where the request was generated from.

Mr. Blanchard stated that he suggested the stop sign.

Chairperson Riley asked and received confirmation that the trees that would be trimmed are located in the right-of-way.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that his concern would be that if there were an accident it could be mentioned that the trees should have been trimmed for visibility.

Mr. Blanchard acknowledged the comment that people do not always stop at stop signs, but stated that if they do not stop, they would be breaking the law.

Chairperson Riley commented that the number of trips and traffic counts would not support a stop sign. He noted that the speed threshold was also not met. He stated that there is another threshold that takes into account different circumstances such as hills or accidents and that threshold is not met. He stated that the City receives many requests for stop signs, but most do not meet the criteria.

Mr. Blanchard commented that a stop sign would make the neighborhood safer. He stated that a stop sign was placed at the next intersection, and he was told that decision was political and therefore seems to be a situation of who you know.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that his job is to provide the recommendation based on the criteria.

Mr. Blanchard stated that his opinion is that a stop sign would be safer than trimming his trees.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that placing stop signs at these type of intersections often provides a false sense of security for pedestrians which is why the criteria were developed. He stated that he went through a similar situation when he requested a stop sign at Variolite and 161st because the criteria were not met. He stated that if the stop signs were placed, they would be placed on 137th and not Garnet and therefore the trees would still need to be trimmed and that would not solve that issue.

Chairperson Riley commented that the City has the responsibility to keep the right-of-way clean and if it is determined trees will need to be trimmed, that will be done to the minimal amount possible. He stated that in the issue of the stop sign, he does not believe it is warranted. He stated that the trees would still need to be trimmed within the right-of-way.

Mr. Blanchard continued to provide examples of visibility from his property. He was unsure why his trees would need to be trimmed when you can see to the corner.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to accept the staff recommendation to not install additional stop signs at 137th Lane/Garnet St. based on the traffic counts and accident history and that trees located in the ROW be trimmed as little as possible to improve visibility.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Musgrove and Woestehoff.
Voting No: None.

5.02: Update on Street Light Request for Bear Park

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed the staff report and recommendation to install a streetlight at 15500 Roanoke St (Bear Park) as requested by the residents in that area.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she believes this is a good idea and was glad to see some responses were received back from residents.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to accept the staff recommendation and move forward with installation of a streetlight at 15500 Roanoke Street (Bear Park).

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Musgrove and Woestehoff.
Voting No: None.

6. COMMITTEE / STAFF INPUT

6.01: Staff Updates on Improvement Projects and Items of Interest

City Engineer Westby provided an update on current and proposed City improvement projects.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer provided an update on the water treatment plant process.

Chairperson Riley asked when the City would be looking at the road overlays proposed for 2022.

City Engineer Westby stated that staff is working on those preparations in order to tee up the proposed projects. He noted that cases will go before the City Council in the near future, assuming there would be funding. He stated that staff is also working on the updated CIP to bring before the Council and advised that those actions would come forward in similar timing.

Chairperson Riley stated that the CIP is smart and provided the best information at that time but also recognized that some streets have deteriorated faster than others and may need to move forward in a faster schedule.

City Engineer Westby asked if the Public Works Committee would like to review the draft CIP before the Council considered approving it.

Chairperson Riley stated that he did not see that as necessary and noted that staff has the information in order to make the best decision on the order of road repairs. He asked if the website tool showing when streets will be repaired will be updated when the CIP is updated.

City Engineer Westby confirmed that tool would be updated once the CIP is updated and adopted.

Chairperson Riley suggested that tool be placed in a more prominent location on the website.

City Engineer Westby provided an update on current and proposed County and MnDOT improvement projects and studies, and other items of interest.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she would like to add a sound wall to the list of studies at the corner of Hwy 47 and CR 5. She stated that the residents in that area do not feel that the existing sound wall is helpful and did not meet the intent.

Chairperson Riley clarified that Councilmember Musgrove is stating that the wall was put in, but it is inadequate.

City Engineer Westby provided background information noting that the wall was constructed as proposed within the approved plans.

6.02: Review Future Topics Calendar

Chairperson Riley referenced the first item, Sunfish Lake sedimentation basin, which has been on the list for about the past six years.

City Engineer Westby stated that the intent was to get that going this year but there has not been contact from that resident and that was pushed down as there is not a great sense of urgency as compared to other items staff are working on. He noted that wetland mitigation would be required and therefore staff wanted to present costs to determine whether it would be a worthwhile project.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if that is a project that could be added to the watershed implementation plan list.

City Engineer Westby provided background information on the request and what that project would entail. He noted that the project would not provide water quality benefit.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to adjourn the Public Works Committee meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Grant Riemer
Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.