

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

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, June 20, 2023, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

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

Also Present: City Engineer/Public Works Director Bruce Westby
 Assistant City Engineer Joe Feriancek

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

There was none.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve May 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Councilmember Musgrove noted that she would be abstaining as she was not at the meeting but advised that she did read the minutes in preparation of the meeting tonight.

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

Regular Meeting Minutes dated May 16, 2023

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

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

5.01: Consider Drainage Improvement Options at 17650 Argon Street NW

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby reviewed the staff report and welcomed input.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the resident living next door in figure three has a culvert under the driveway.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that driveway does not appear to have a culvert based on the pictures previously taken.

Councilmember Musgrove noted a statement she recalled which stated that other residents in the area have culverts under their driveways and asked if that is correct.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby was unsure. He noted that the property to the east is higher in elevation and may have a culvert.

Mr. Mytko replied that many of the neighbors have culverts under their driveways.

Councilmember Musgrove asked who placed those culverts, whether it would have been the builder or individual property owners.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that the City does not have records of that as this area was developed before the City was incorporated.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the City regularly grades the drainage ditch.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that the City does not regularly grade drainage ditches. He stated that if a ditch needed to be graded in order to restore drainage, the City could do that but noted that is rare. He commented that the City does regular maintenance such as mowing and clearing blockage/debris.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the cement driveway shown in figure three has less drainage issues than the other driveway.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that neither of the driveways have culverts and the driveway to the east is generally at a high point, so water runs away and the driveway on the west would benefit from a culvert. He identified the low point to where water drains and noted that without a culvert the water is trapped between the Mytko's driveways. He provided additional details on grading the property, confirming that there could be impacts to the trees.

Chairperson Riley invited the resident to speak.

Mr. Mytko commented that he would not want to lose trees, but the trees mentioned are in tough shape and therefore he does not have a firm attachment to those trees. He asked about redefining

the ditch as more of a rain garden which would hold the water closer to the street to absorb the groundwater. He confirmed that the water soaks into the ground much faster during the summer months. He commented that it would seem to be a good option if there were an identified area that could help water soak into the ground further away from his home.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby commented that he would not have any concerns in the summer with doing that but believed that water would still back up into the yard in the spring when the ground is frozen. He commented that the yard does have a bowl outside the ditch and the property also receives runoff from the neighboring property. He stated that if the goal is to solve the problem, the front yard should be regraded in addition to whatever work is done in the ditch.

Chairperson Riley acknowledged that there is a low point in the front yard and believed that to be an item to be addressed by the homeowner. He stated that he would be willing to assist with drainage improvement in the ditch.

Mr. Mytko commented that they understand that the front yard is relatively flat. He acknowledged that their first request was the culvert under the driveway and believed that would provide much needed assistance.

Chairperson Riley commented that it sounds like if the culvert were installed under the concrete driveway with some work in the ditch, that would sound like it would assist the problem.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby confirmed that would provide positive drainage for water in the ditch.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that it sounds like the ditch would be needed between the driveways, with the culvert, and grading around the corner to Cobalt Street, which sounds like a lot of work.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby confirmed that would be the scope of work and noted again that some trees may also need to be removed.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that would seem to create a steep slope in one area.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that the steepest slope the City would prefer would be a 1:4 (1-foot vertical to 4-foot horizontal) slope.

Mr. Mytko asked if a narrower channel could be used to minimize impacts to trees .

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that the City prefers to have a flat bottom within ditches for maintenance. He stated that staff can continue to look into these options and bring something more defined back for discussion.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she would have concerns with a V bottomed ditch. She agreed that the grading should extend around Cobalt Street if they are going to invest in the other improvements in order to ensure it functions properly.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked for a rough estimate on the cost for this type of project.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that this would be a bigger expense to remove and replace a portion of the driveway along with grading and turf establishment. He estimated that the ditch work and driveway repair could be around \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Chairperson Riley asked if the resident had plans to replace their driveway, as it does not appear to be in great shape.

Mr. Mytko replied that they did not have plans to replace the driveway, as their current plan is focused on protecting their home from flooding.

Chairperson Riley commented that they have been discussing a potential culvert and ditch work and asked if the Committee was comfortable moving forward in having staff provide more information.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that perhaps it would be helpful to know if the homeowner were willing to pay for a portion of the project. She acknowledged that this could be a project that would benefit the neighborhood because of the current drainage pattern. She commented that she would support getting better estimates of costs as discussed.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that he does not believe that this will impact the neighborhood as a whole as it only moves the water past this property and a neighboring property owner does not have a culvert. He commented that he does not see this as a City responsibility because the property is lower in the front yard. He agreed that it is unfortunate and if there are things that could be done, those could be done but would have a hard time justifying spending \$15,000 on one property when there are road repairs that could benefit from that funding.

Chairperson Riley commented that the ditch does not function, and he would be interested in hearing what could be done in that realm, including the option for a culvert.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if it would be allowed for the homeowner to regrade between the driveways to create a pond.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that he was unsure what exists in the right-of-way in terms of utilities. He noted that it is typically not allowed.

Mr. Mytko commented that their utilities come into the property through the back. He commented that it seems that if the City decided not to pursue something, he would not be allowed to do anything either.

Chairperson Riley commented that is not correct. He stated that they are going to look into options and what could be done in the easement. He noted that the resident could regrade their own property out of the easement. He commented that he would prefer to see the water move rather than be captured in that location.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that they want to ensure that something works well for the typical rain events but also the higher intensity events as well.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby commented that if the ditch was graded and a culvert was installed under the west driveway that should help to move water along, with the understanding that the low point in the yard will hold some water.

Mr. Mytko commented that there are some pine trees along Cobalt that he would like to see protected.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to direct City staff investigate the cost for a culvert and ditch work along Argon and Cobalt Streets for the purpose of providing positive drainage for runoff within City right-of-way along the property at 17650 Argon Street and to also investigate the option of a rain garden or other method of water retention.

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

5.02: Consider Recommending City Council Approving Plans and Specifications and Authorizing Advertisement for Bids for 2023 MSA Pavement Overlay Improvements, Improvement Project #23-06

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek reviewed the staff report and recommendation to recommend City Council approval of plans and specifications and authorizing advertisements for bids for 2023 MSA Pavement Overlay Improvements, Improvement Project #23-06.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to recommend City Council approval of plans and specifications and authorizing advertisement for bids for 2023 MSA Pavement Overlay Improvements, Improvement Project #23-06.

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

5.03: Consider Recommending City Council Approving Plans and Specifications and Authorizing Advertisement for Bids for Whispering Pines Estates Plat 3 Street Reconstructions, Improvement Project #23-10

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek reviewed the staff report and recommendation to recommend City Council approval of plans and specifications and authorizing advertisements for bids for Whispering Pines Estates Plat 3 Street Reconstructions; Improvement Project #23-10.

Chairperson Riley stated that the reconstruction light seemed to be a good fit for Autumn Heights and asked if that has worked out well so far.

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek replied that they had to do a few patches to address drainage but believe they have addressed that in the approach moving forward.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she is glad to see that they are able to come in under the original costs.

Chairperson Riley commented that he agrees with not adding driveway culverts everywhere. He commented that if there are some spots that should be addressed, he would like that to be done, but does not want to add them just to add them.

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek commented that during the design process staff inspects project areas during rain events and the spring thaw to identify potential issues with drainage. He stated that they did not notice any issues with drainage in this area.

Chairperson Riley commented that the residents will be happy to have these streets repaired.

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to recommend City Council approval of plans and specifications and authorizing advertisements for bids for Whispering Pines Estates Plat 3 Street Reconstructions, Improvement Project #23-10.

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

5.04: Recommendation for Spending Remaining 2023 Budgeted Pavement Maintenance Funds

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek reviewed the staff report and options available for the use of the remaining 2023 budgeted crack seal funds noting that they could be directed to Improvement Project #23-09 Pavement Rejuvenation Improvements or towards 2023 temporary pavement repair projects.

Councilmember Musgrove used the scenario that the funds are not spent and asked if that would carry over to the next year or be transferred to the general fund.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that an excess balance is carried over to the next year and would continue to be earmarked for this purpose.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she would prefer to use the funds as there are a lot of potholes to fill this year.

Chairperson Riley agreed that he would apply this balance to the pothole budget.

Chairperson Riley confirmed the consensus direction of the Committee for the funds to be used towards potholes.

6. COMMITTEE / STAFF INPUT

6.01: Staff Updates on Improvement Projects, Studies, and Items of Interest

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby provided an update on current and proposed City, County and MnDOT improvement projects and studies, and on other items of interest to the Committee.

Chairperson Riley asked for an update on the 161st Avenue reconstruction project.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that the project is moving along.

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek provided a more detailed update on the project details and plans for the next few weeks.

Chairperson Riley noted that many of the planted trees along Puma Street in the Lennar development are dead again and asked the process to address that.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that once the trees are fully planted throughout the development, they are counted and inventoried and then the two-year landscape guarantee begins. He acknowledged that many of the trees have died and will need to be replaced and noted that Lennar is aware of that.

6.02: Review Future Topics Calendar

Councilmember Woestehoff referenced the Sunwood Drive roundabout landscaping and noted that he recently noticed a nice monument sign installed in Otsego in a roundabout.

Councilmember Musgrove agreed, noting that some of the landscaping is fairly intense in that area.

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 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Westby
City Engineer/Public Works Director

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.