

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER 7:00 P.M.

2. ATTENDANCE

Present: Listopad, Curran, Hamilton, Isenhoff, Smith, Stein, House and Salisbury

Absent: Foster

Others present: Finance Director – Heath Kaplan, City Manager – Deb Nier, Mike Oezer and Jeff Hillemonds – Progressive AE.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Hamilton, support by Smith to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 16, 2007 with corrections. All voted yes to approve. Motion passed.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. PROPOSED LEASE WITH RHS COMPANY – PARKING LOT

City Manager, Deb Nier outlined the proposed agreement and informed the committee of the events leading up to current. One item highlighted was the expenses incurred by the DDA in the acquisition of the RHS Parking Lot. Member Salisbury inquired about the past agreement and why the change from \$1/month to the proposed agreement? Mrs. Nier indicated she was not aware of the circumstances leading up to the change in terms. Member Salisbury also inquired about the culpability of the legal expenses incurred and questioned if the City was responsible. Mrs. Nier indicated the City completed its due diligence with the required legal review and subsequent title search. Member Stein suggested one member of the committee accompany the City Manager to negotiate terms for the agreement to present at a future meeting. After further discussion, Member Smith volunteered to attend the meeting with the City Manager.

Motion by Hamilton, support by Listopad to table this business item until the issue is represented to the committee. All members voted yes. Motion passed.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. WEST SUPERIOR PROJECT – PROGRESSIVE AE

Mike Oezer and Jeff Hillemonds of Progressive AE outlined the progress to date on the West Superior Project. Mr. Hillemonds informed the committee of the results of the traffic counts and West Superior from 131 to Reno Drive were approximately 17,000 vehicles per day and the volume diminishes to 10,000 vehicles per day from Reno Drive toward Downtown. Mr. Hillemonds indicated the threshold for supporting three traffic lanes was 12 – 15,000 vehicles per day and for two traffic lanes, less than 12,000 per day.

The next item of review was proposed improvements:

- From 131 to Reno Drive (West Project) there are currently five uncompleted lanes of traffic and the first suggested improvement was to finish the corner of Reno Drive around the Chevrolet Dealership to complete the traffic layout. The traffic lanes narrow from five lanes to three between Reno Drive and the Railroad crossing. The suggestion for improvement was restriping. The traffic lanes narrow from three lanes to two at Uccello's Restaurant (informational).
- The next issue presented to the committee was driveway cuts and aprons. Mr. Hillegonds outlined the concerns with the driveways of McDonald's and Wayland Chevrolet. In regards to the Chevrolet Dealership, the amount of concrete will need to be diminished for definition and support of greenspace. Mrs. Nier indicated the City has the obligation to complete the sidewalks through this property in regards to the Sawmill Estate Development (MSHDA). The stripmall that houses Little Ceasers needs driveway improvements to provide efficiency in relationship to the surrounding commercial area. Member Salisbury indicated improvements are needed for this site to be more marketable. Burger King can be improved by utilizing the Clark St. driveway as an exit only. Jacksons Western Store would require definition as well (similar to Wayland Chevrolet) with greenspace complementing the site.
- From the Railroad to the Downtown (East Project) there are grading and residential driveways that will require improvements. If the City chooses to retain the two lane infrastructure, the road would either require elevation or the sidewalks and driveways will need to be constructed on a more level grade. If the City elects a three lane infrastructure, then the on street parking would cease and a turn lane added. Chairman Listopad inquired if the Bike Trail could be intergraded into the project. Progressive indicated they would add this area into the scheme for the project. Progressive indicated the City may need to eliminate vehicular traffic down the trail.
- The Railroad Crossing is a challenging issue for the project because of the involvement of the Railroad Company (Norfolk Southern). If the City moves forward with improvements to the road and request the railroad to evaluate the signals for efficiency, the City could be liable for the cost of upgrading the crossing equipment (\$150 - \$200,000). The tracks portion would be replaced or repaired at the expense of the Railroad Company.
- Progressive outlined the utility improvements recommended for the project. From the Bike Trail to the Railroad there is currently a 6" watermain – Progressive recommends upgrading the line to a 12" main. Also, there is a portion of main on the west side of the railroad tracks along Superior which may need to be upgraded to a 12" main as well depending on need (Railroad to Reno Dr.). Storm Sewers will be evaluated for improvements as well.
- Progressive has hired Honey Tree Nursery to evaluate the trees to identify trees to be protected or possibly removed. The report is expected soon.
- Progressive and City Staff met with Consumers Energy in regards to street lighting. Consumers Energy has some options available to the City for adding decorative lighting in the project area. The City can pay a fee per pole up front and then all of the maintenance is provided by Consumers Energy. This option is a lease-type arrangement that will require the City to pay a certain amount per month. Progressive AE indicated the City will need to identify types of poles they would like, so they could move forward with this portion of the project. Mrs. Nier suggested Progressive AE forward the catalog to the members for selection. Finance Director, Heath Kaplan, indicated to the committee that if the City elects to lease the poles, then the poles could not be capitalized as an asset under GASB 34. The consensus of the committee was to select poles that catered to pedestrians and similar to the current park lights. Member Salisbury suggested considering poles to upgrade the street signs as well.
- The Cost estimate for the West Project (131 – Railroad Crossing) is \$1.2 Million without Railroad improvements or Professional fees. This estimate is for construction only. The estimate for the East Project (Railroad – Downtown) is \$913,000. Mrs. Nier indicated to the committee that the City is line for ISTEAFunding from the County for \$560,000 for year 2009 and \$300,000 for year 2010. The MDOT Enhancement Grant will require at least a 34% match from the City to be considered a strong candidate for funding.

Progressive indicated they would like to follow up with the Committee in the next couple weeks in regards to elements in this project.

B. MDOT TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT GRANT

Motion by Stein, support by Salisbury to authorize the City Manager to work with MDOT in the preparation and submission of the MDOT Enhancement Grant Application. All members voted yes. Motion passed.

C. DOWNTOWN EVENTS – PUMPKIN DECORATING AND SCARECROW CONTEST

Motion by Stein, support by House to allocate \$500 to the Downtown Task Force in support of the upcoming Downtown Events. All members voted yes. Motion passed.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

7. COMMENTS FROM STAFF

Mr. Kaplan inquired if the committee would like him to prepare financial estimate on the West Superior Project. The committee consensus was yes.

8. COMMENTS FROM DDA

Member Smith indicated she was excited about the West Superior Project. Member Stein inquired to Member Smith why she abstained from voting in regards the Façade Improvement Grant Application submitted by Mr. Rodriquez. Member Smith indicated she was not comfortable voting with the information received. Member Stein also publicly recognized Member House for his contribution to the City Park. Member Listopad informed the committee of the events at the DDA Annual Conference in Traverse City, Michigan.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:21 P.M.