



DRAFT

Approved: November 12, 2019

**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
OCTOBER 21, 2019
5:00 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Mayor David Grant called to order the City Council Work Session at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor David Grant, Councilmembers Brenda Holden, Dave McClung, Fran Holmes, and Steve Scott

Absent: None

Also present: City Administrator Dave Perrault, Finance Director Gayle Bauman, Community Development Manager/City Planner Mike Mroska, Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Todd Blomstrom, Senior Engineering Technician David Swearingen, Associate Planner Joe Hartmann, Deputy Clerk Jolene Trauba, O’Meara Construction’s Brendan O’Meara and Barry O’Meara, and Ramsey County Public Works Project Manager Rachel Broughton

1. AGENDA ITEMS

A. 3246 New Brighton Road Redevelopment

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mroska stated that the applicants are looking for feedback on the potential of creating four lots on the subject parcel. He noted there have been other proposals for the property. One proposal was for four lots and was denied, but three lots were approved. The property has gone into voluntary foreclosure and is in the redemption period. The applicant would like the Council’s input on creating four lots with a width of 81.75 feet, City Ordinance requires a minimum lot width of 85 feet.

Mr. Brendan O’Meara said they are seeking a variance or PUD to allow a slightly skinnier lot width to fit four lots onto the property. They have had two neighborhood meetings to get feedback. Most concerns have been addressed; for example, the proposed plan has staggered front setbacks. Another concern was making sure the homes were in keeping the neighborhood. Materials, products and style of home in the neighborhood are no longer being used or built, but they can build similar size. They need to decide on acquiring the property.

Councilmember Holmes asked if the amount of square footage could be restricted by a PUD.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosla responded that they would find criteria that would work across all parcels in relation to size and footprint. An analysis would be done of the buildable area.

Councilmember Holmes noted that current homeowners don't want huge houses sitting next to their modest homes.

Mr. Brendan O'Meara said that going to a four lot development has a natural effect of smaller homes. Three lots would require them to build larger homes to make the project economically feasible.

Councilmember Holden said several neighbors are against splitting the property into four lots because of concerns of the side variances. Current homes in the neighborhood are set further than 15 feet apart.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosla indicated that the proposed lots would meet all required setbacks except they are requesting a smaller front yard minimum width. Location of the homes within the lot can be adjusted and garage locations (right or left) can be changed. They would look for criteria they could apply to all lots so they weren't restricting just one lot.

Mr. Barry O'Meara asked if rambler style homes would be desirable by the Council.

Mayor Grant asked if there is flexibility to structure a PUD across four lots.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosla responded yes, but they can put some restrictions on a PUD regarding building ramblers.

Councilmember Holmes felt the builders should have as much flexibility as possible. She is fine with four lots but would like to see a square footage restriction.

Councilmember Scott supports a 30 inch waiver on minimum lot size so they can put four lots on the property.

Councilmember Holden would like three lots.

Councilmember McClung said he felt residents had concerns with four lots and so would say no to four at this point.

Mayor Grant thought the property could be put to reasonable use with four lots, it's not a large variance and with a PUD they can customize and agree on types and sizes of homes, and with varying the setbacks he would support four lots. He noted there is a 3-2 split on Councilmember opinions so staff should talk to the applicant about what that means going forward.

B. Old Snelling Avenue and County Road E Improvements Update

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom stated that he wanted to give a status update on the study that is underway for Old Snelling Avenue and County Road E. The project is on the City's Capital Improvement Plan with an estimated cost of \$2,850,000 for the roadway improvements and the City's share of the proposed roundabout. The roundabout is also on the Ramsey County Transportation Improvement Plan, estimated at \$1.5 million in County funds and \$375,000 in City funds.

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said that at the September PTRC meeting the committee identified a trail on Old Snelling Avenue from Highway 51 to Highway 96 as a top priority, focusing on County Road E to Highway 51.

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said the water mains that are in the corridor are cast iron, much of it over 50 years old and brittle. It is located either in the roadway or directly adjacent to the roadway. He reviewed a map identifying segments of water main proposed to be replaced along with the project. All the water mains could be replaced if the Council wished to expand the project. Much of the sanitary sewer is outside the roadway corridor. There is a segment that needs to be replaced with the project. Much of the storm sewer would need to be reconfigured if the roundabout goes forward. There is considerable deterioration on the northern section and Ramsey County has identified the need for rehab or replacement.

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom noted there are wetlands along the corridor. SEH has prepared a summary report and submitted it to the Rice Creek Watershed. The report is still under review.

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom explained two schematic options were developed for the intersection. The first is centered at the existing intersection, the second option is shifted to the east. Final design may bring the roundabout somewhere in the middle of the two options.

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom discussed the roadway design options. The first option is to replace the road as it is today, not add a trail, and maintain the eight foot shoulders. Other alternatives include narrowing the road to two 12-foot lanes with two six-foot shoulders and having a separate trail. Another option is to add curb and gutter with a trail separated from the curb, or expand the trail to 10-feet wide directly adjacent to the west curb line.

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom reported there are complicating factors. Fifteen soil borings were taken along the corridor, drilled to a depth of about 15 feet. Lab results have not been received. Hydrocarbon odors were detected by human smell in ten borings at variable depths. Staff recommends testing for hydrocarbons and potential contaminants. The roadway borings also had irregular base and pavement sections.

Discussion ensued regarding preliminary cost estimates and potential special assessments.

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said next steps include receiving the soil boring lab tests, completing the pavement section design, conducting an environmental

investigation, completing the wetland delineation, receiving the roundabout design from Ramsey County, and updating cost estimates, project schedules, and funding.

Mayor Grant recessed the Work Session to a Closed Session at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Grant called the Work Session back to order at 7:05 p.m.

Further discussion ensued regarding possible traffic backups if a roundabout were built at Old Snelling Avenue and County Road E.

C. Old Snelling Trail and Watermain Improvements Project

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom stated that the project was awarded to Sunram Construction in 2018. There have been five change orders approved. Sunram has unresolved change order claims for the project. Representatives from Sunram and WSB have met and tried to negotiate a resolution. A change order for \$31,255.57 was agreed on and a draft change order was prepared. Sunram believes there is another \$89,000 of additional change orders. WSB doesn't believe that amount is due or justifiable. The next step may be non-binding mediation with the contractor.

Mayor Grant asked about credits due to the city from WSB and asked staff to look further into the situation.

D. CIP Discussion

Finance Director Bauman indicated the Council had looked at the CIP in July and based on Council direction some things were updated. One of the biggest changes is two trail projects added in 2024.

Councilmember Holden requested those two projects be taken off the CIP.

Discussion ensued regarding 2020 Projects.

Councilmember Holden asked to have Hazelnut Park parking lot removed.

After discussion Council asked to have the cost for the Hazelnut Park improvements total to \$75,000.

Councilmember Holmes said Parks & Rec should show the Council why the playground equipment in Arden Oaks and Arden Manor parks should be replaced, and if it's not necessary they could come off the CIP.

Mayor Grant asked if there was any kind of spray that could be used to seal the Hamline Avenue retaining walls.

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said there are sealants but when the wall has been integrated with salt it probably won't work. He has asked Ramsey County for a copy of the agreement for the walls, but hasn't received it yet.

Councilmember Holden asked if they could take out the word “assessments” and label the funding source as “other”.

Discussion ensued regarding moving the Old Snelling Avenue roundabout project to 2022, and the Glenpaul item to 2021. Council requested a letter be sent to affected residents explaining Ramsey County pushed the Lexington Avenue project to 2021 which in turn pushed Old Snelling Avenue to 2022.

Councilmember McClung suggested putting the sewer fund money as a place holder in 2020 to have further discussion next year.

Discussion ensued regarding the Karth Lake wall, pump and panel. Mayor Grant will attend the Karth Lake District meeting on October 22.

Mayor Grant asked if Council would be willing to front the Karth Lake District the money for repairs. Consensus was positive.

Mayor Grant felt the Karth Lake District should establish an ongoing fund from its members for future repairs.

Finance Director Bauman noted there are still ongoing issues with the PIR Fund and Public Safety Capital Fund. The Capital Improvement Project Fund is continuing to drop, right now there isn't a long term solution.

Councilmember Holden asked for Recreation numbers, stating the City gets in 1/3 but subsidizes 2/3 of the costs.

Councilmember Holmes asked in regard to the PIR Fund and the suggested study for 20 years, who would do the study and how much would it cost?

Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said the study would be approximately \$20,000 and be done by an engineering firm.

Finance Director Bauman said she would also like to put together a similar schedule for equipment replacement.

Councilmember McClung said the old City Hall land could be used to generate revenue.

Finance Director Bauman discussed additional revenue sources for funding future projects.

Council agreed to continue the meeting past 8:00 p.m.

E. Council Chambers Additional Monitors

City Administrator Perrault stated there was a suggestion to place other monitors in the Council chambers for the audience to see the slideshow.

Councilmember Holden said the projector is blurry and asked if it could be made clearer.

Mayor Grant suggested putting a monitor on the north wall.

F. Council Tracker

After discussion there were no changes made to the tracker.

2. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS

Councilmember McClung noted that he will not be at the first two meetings in December.

Councilmember Holden asked if City vehicles would be parked at the Public Works facility.

City Administrator Perrault said he would be concerned about not enough space for three additional vehicles at that facility. City vehicles are now being left in the middle lot with better lighting and camera visibility.

Councilmember Holmes commented that she would like to see the Council get as much done in November as possible due to one Councilmember being out for part of December and that the second meeting is usually cancelled.

ADJOURN

Mayor Grant adjourned the City Council Work Session at 8:38 p.m.

David Grant
Mayor

Jolene Trauba
Deputy Clerk