



Approved: October 11, 2021

**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 20, 2021
5:00 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

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

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

Also present: City Administrator Dave Perrault, Interim Public Works Director David Swearingen, Deputy City Clerk Jolene Trauba, and Bolton & Menk Project Engineer Brad Fisher

1. AGENDA ITEMS

A. Snelling Avenue Improvements – Design Discussion

Mayor Grant asked if the three designs had been confirmed approved by the Rice Creek Watershed District and MSA.

Bolton & Menk Project Engineer Fisher replied they had been. There would be some future permit items for the watershed but permanent storm water management and meeting State Aid rules had been signed off on.

Mr. Fisher stated they would review the project background, the State Aid design standards and Rice Creek Watershed District requirements, three design options and the associated costs. The project is on Snelling Avenue North from Highway 51 to County Road E.

Mr. Fisher explained the design analysis; evaluation of alternative designs for the corridor, meetings with the MSA office, and possibility of variance approval.

Councilmember Scott asked if the road currently met the MSA standards.

Mr. Fisher replied that the existing roadway does meet MSA for rehabilitation but not for reconstruction.

Mr. Fisher explained the difference between rural and urban roadways, reconditioning versus replacement, and a walk versus a trail. This project area is currently considered rural with no curb and gutter, but they could reconstruct it as half rural and half urban. He reviewed the State Aid Design Standards for rural and urban roads, and shared use paths (trails).

Councilmember Holden asked if smaller lane width slows people down from speeding.

Mr. Fisher replied that was correct, but a road being physically narrower will have a greater impact than just striping the road narrower.

Mr. Fisher explained the requirements of the Rice Creek Watershed District. The project is not considered a reconstruction by their definition. Permits will be required for erosion/sediment control and wetland impacts.

Mr. Fisher discussed the three design options and objectives. He presented drawings of the options and explained each. Option 1 would be to leave the roadway as a Rural Typical Section that would match the existing corridor design. Option 2 would be a Rural/Urban Typical Section that provides on-road space for bicycles and an off-road concrete walk for pedestrians. Option 3 would be an Urban Typical Section providing an off-road shared use trail for bicycle and pedestrian users.

Councilmember McClung asked if Option 3 was best for traffic calming.

Mr. Fisher responded that it was the best option for traffic calming.

Mayor Grant asked if Option 3 offered future reconstruction options and ease of design.

Mr. Fisher said assuming rules don't change, there would be no reason why a similar technique on a future reconstruction using reclamation couldn't be done.

Councilmember Holmes felt Option 3 was the safest with the road being narrower for traffic calming, and pedestrians and bicyclists off the road.

Councilmember Scott asked if there was a minimum design speed on Option 3.

Mr. Fisher replied there was not.

Interim Public Works Director Swearingen added they had jurisdiction over the speed limit but they couldn't alter it because of MSA rules.

Mr. Fisher compared the costs of the three options which included estimated construction costs with a 15% contingency and estimated total project costs with Engineering design, administration and overhead.

Councilmember Holden asked what the tree removal fee would be for each option.

Mr. Fisher stated there would be no additional charge as they were planning to stick to the original 40-foot footprint, unless there were some utilities work that would require it.

Councilmember Holmes wondered if the public should be able to comment on all three designs.

Mayor Grant thought they should decide on a preferred design.

Councilmember Holmes felt Option 3 was the best design with the walkway on the east.

Councilmember Scott felt Option 3 with walk on the west.

Mayor Grant liked Option 3 but was undecided which side he preferred for the walkway.

Councilmember McClung also liked Option 3 with the walkway on the east due to fewer driveway crossings.

Councilmember Holden was agreeable to Option 2 or 3, but liked the west side for the walkway.

Mr. Fisher will coordinate a public meeting and present all three options for review and comment. Feedback received from the meeting will be presented to Council.

Councilmember Holden requested they provide artist rendering drawings at the public meeting in addition to the cross-section drawings.

B. State of the City Update

City Administrator Perrault stated that the State of the City is currently set as in in-person event at the Marsden Room in the Ramsey County Public Works building. He asked if Council would like to keep it as an in-person event.

Councilmember Scott said he would like to plan for in-person but be flexible.

Councilmember Holmes agreed to leave it live because of the date coming up soon.

Councilmember McClung said he was torn on which path to choose.

City Administrator Perrault noted there should discuss and assign topics and reviewed the current list.

Councilmember Holmes felt they only needed Arden Hills Foundation under City Points of Interest. She would like to add a section about trails; expense and how Council sets priorities. She felt they didn't need a litigation update, but they should talk about TCAAP.

Councilmember Scott asked if they'd talk about COVID affecting city finances and staffing issues.

City Administrator Perrault said they would talk about the small business relief grant and could add a note about staffing.

Dave McClung noted that he would probably not be at a live meeting.

Councilmember Holden couldn't guarantee that she could be there.

City Administrator Perrault suggested they consider a pre-recorded video now and a live event in the spring.

Councilmember Holmes agreed with that idea.

Councilmember McClung thought they could prepare as though everyone would be there in person or via Zoom. He would like to participate if possible.

Councilmember Scott said he would agree to a pre-recorded video now and a formal event in the spring.

After further discussion it was decided each Councilmember would take a section and pre-record it, to be compiled by NineNorth, and they could possibly have an in-person event in the spring. It was agreed the video release could be pushed back to late October or early November.

C. Lake Johanna Fire Department Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) Discussion

City Administrator Perrault reported that last year cities of Arden Hills, North Oaks and Shoreview entered into an agreement to facilitate purchasing the land for a new fire station. Setting up a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) now will allow authority and flexibility to pursue different funding options, such as issuing bonds. The JPA would be officially formed when the fire department transfers the land to the JPA and the voting structure would require 4/5ths for any action (the votes would be Shoreview 3 members, Arden Hills 1 member, and North Oaks 1 member). The approval of the JPA would ideally happen by all three cities prior to October 15, but they could extend to the end of the year if necessary.

Councilmember McClung suggested they give each city one vote.

Councilmember Holden agreed.

Councilmember Scott also agreed but didn't have an issue with 3-1-1.

Councilmember McClung said he understands the reasoning of the 4/5 vote but felt a 1-1-1 vote would move the cities forward as a group.

City Administrator Perrault noted that North Oaks has authorized their City Administrator to enter in an agreement, Shoreview hadn't taken it to their Council. He discussed the pros and cons of the 3-1-1 voting proposal.

Councilmember McClung said he was looking for consensus and liked the 1-1-1 option better.

Mayor Grant mentioned that in a 3-1-1 model, if Shoreview wanted to veto something they could vote their 3 shares and the other two cities are outvoted. But an affirmative vote by Shoreview would be the same as 1-1-1. He felt it basically gives Shoreview veto power.

Discussion continued regarding the voting preference.

City Administrator Perrault stated he was hearing a 1-1-1 preference and would take that to Shoreview for consideration. He asked if they had a preference for or against an option for a non-voting board member for Shoreview that would potentially give them an extra voice in conversations instead of the 3-1-1 vote.

Councilmember Holmes suggested the Board have five members as presented but only one voting member from each city.

Councilmember Holden didn't like the idea of a non-voting member.

Councilmember McClung noted the non-voting member would still need to be an elected official.

Further discussion ensued.

Mayor Grant directed staff to go forward with 1-1-1.

Councilmember Holden thought it might look better for the legislative process to have a 1-1-1 vote.

Councilmember Holmes asked if the fire department was seeking a financial source for the new station.

City Administrator Perrault explained they are working with the three cities providing background and statistics. The JPA could seek bonds or the cities could individually, as agreed to by the board.

Councilmember Holden stated that if there was funding needed the board could decide how they would want to raise funds.

City Administrator Perrault said they could add "unless otherwise agreed upon".

Councilmember Holmes asked if there might be other cities that would want to join the JDA.

Councilmember McClung felt other local cities have their own departments and couldn't imagine any other city would want to join our district.

D. Work Session Discussion

Councilmember Holden wondered if the number of work session items could be balanced more from meeting to meeting. She would be open to more but shorter work sessions. She also suggested possibly not having the first regular meetings in January, February and March.

Mayor Grant commented that the organizational meeting in January could be combined with the second meeting.

Councilmember McClung said he was in favor of one regular meeting the first three months of the year.

Councilmember Holden said they used to do the organizational meeting in December.

Mayor Grant directed staff to combine the organizational meeting with December or January's second meeting, and staff could potentially cancel the first meetings in January, February and March.

E. Public Comments Discussion

Councilmember Holden said if they are voting on something with a deadline why would a resident want to stand up to speak to Council when they would assume Councilmember's minds would already be made up.

Councilmember McClung said he was in favor of constraining time for comments, possibly put public comments at the end of the meeting, but people should be able to talk.

Councilmember Holden suggested they do a test period.

Mayor Grant reported that he talked to the City Attorney and he acknowledged that other cities councils do public comments differently and they were free to change, but suggested field-testing changes for a period of time. It would be up to the Council to decide what parameters they'd like.

Councilmember Holden said she is in favor of the City Attorney suggesting parameters to be discussed. She suggested a six-month test run.

City Administrator Perrault said he will work with the City Attorney and Mayor to revise the agenda notation for public comments.

Mayor Grant suggested he send an email to Council with the changes and they can start the trial with the first meeting of October.

F. Council Tracker

Mayor Grant suggested the Council review the tracker on their own and report any changes or additions to Staff.

Roll call was taken to close the meeting for Item G.**G. Union Negotiations Update (Closed per M.S. 13D.03, Subd. 1(b) and 179A.01 to 179A.25)**

City Administrator Perrault gave the City Council an update regarding contract negotiations and asked for direction.

The meeting was reopened for Council and Staff Comments.**2. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS**

Councilmember Holmes remarked that there is a lightly marked crosswalk at Mounds View High School that shouldn't be used and wondered if staff was able to reach anyone regarding it.

City Administrator Perrault said it has been repainted but the color is slightly different from the asphalt so it still looks like a crosswalk.

Councilmember Holmes said there is another area to the east that is also being used.

Councilmember Scott noted there was a program run by the Metropolitan Council for water conservation that may be worthwhile to look into. He also thought the Council should consider modifying the ordinance that limits the number of drive-through restaurants.

Mayor Grant asked for an update on the EAB.

Interim Public Works Director Swearingen said the company may be able to get the trees treated next week.

Mayor Grant asked for an update on ICWC workers as they didn't show up the last time they were scheduled.

Interim Public Works Director Swearingen responded there was a last minute scheduling conflict so they are making a more formal agreement. There was an issue with the quality of workers earlier this summer that was reported to the group leader and they have cycled some workers out of the program.

Mayor Grant said he has received feedback regarding Ramsey County Parks possibly being left open 24/7. He asked staff to put a newsflash on the website regarding the issue.

ADJOURN

Mayor Grant adjourned the City Council Work Session at 8:01 p.m.

Jolene Trauba

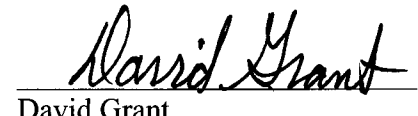
David Grant

ADJOURN

Mayor Grant adjourned the City Council Work Session at 8:01 p.m.



Jolene Trauba
Deputy City Clerk



David Grant
Mayor