

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2015

Members Present: Craig Kittel, Ron Volkert, and Jim Zajkowski

Others Present: Jeremiah Wendt and Mike Darrow

Jim Zajkowski called the meeting to order.

Ron Volkert moved to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Craig Kittel, and carried.

Craig Kittel moved to approve the minutes from the December 8, 2014 meeting, seconded by Ron Volkert, and carried.

Unfinished Business

Dakota Avenue Bike Path

Jeremiah Wendt gave a recap of the history of the bike path. The route settled upon in 2012 is currently marked with bike path signage from the Rail Bridge Trail at West 6th Street to the Willow River, south of the dam. The bike route shares the road with vehicles and the streets chosen were based upon volume of use. Discussion took place on the need to mark the streets as a designated “shared-use” trail to get people safely to the bridge and eventually up to Hatfield Park. There is also a need for additional markings on the northside (from the north end of the Doughboy Trail to Hatfield Park). Jeremiah will bring back a detailed plan showing the route, with shared-use signage, stenciling/markings at the head of each block, painted travel lanes, and markings when there is a change in direction. Once the detailed plan is approved, it was suggested that a Public Hearing take place informing the public of the new street layout.

Street Naming – Wall Street to 32nd Division Avenue

Discussion took place on changing a small segment of Wall Street to 32nd Division Avenue. This will affect four properties. Sarah Skinner, City Zoning Administrator, will draft a letter to the property owners inviting them to the February 9th City Council meeting giving them an opportunity to speak on this issue. Jim Zajkowski moved to rename a portion of Wall Street (north of STH 64) to 32nd Avenue, seconded by Craig Kittel, and carried.

New Business

Sidewalk Snow Removal Policy

Jeremiah reviewed the current Sidewalk Snow Removal Ordinance. He proposed notifying property owners with a one-time warning, using door hangers, rather than sending out certified letters. This would save time and money while still meeting the intent of the ordinance. The following suggestions were made to improve the language and usage of a door hanger:

- Add the date, time, and address
- Post the hanger on the most frequently used door
- Add language stating property owners are liable for the safety of pedestrians using the sidewalk
- Include a statement letting property owners know help may be available if they are unable to clear their sidewalk (CIP Program)

Jeremiah will implement the usage of hangers on Knowles Avenue and was directed to enforce the snow removal policy in residential areas if staff sees a problem.

CTH A Project/Ped Accommodations

St. Croix County has planned a project for 2015 that includes pulverizing and repaving CTH A west of the Willow River. Because they have received federal funding for the project, WI DOT requires them to consider bike and pedestrian accommodations as part of the project; however, no funding is available for the bike and pedestrian improvements. The county transportation committee has passed a "Finding of Absence of Need" for sidewalks as part of this project, and has asked the City to affirm this finding. Jeremiah explained this stretch of road is a candidate for a future off-street trail, but it does not fit well with the scope of the proposed project in 2015. Considering that local funds have not been allocated to this project, staff currently finds an absence of need for sidewalks at this location at the current time. Staff would like to reserve the right to pursue separate funding for an off-street trail at this location in the future. Discussion followed. Jeremiah presented a resolution in response to the County's request. (See memo dated January 15, 2015 attached). Craig Kittel moved to adopt the language from the memo as a resolution provided the last sentence is modified as follows: "However, we reserve the right to pursue separate funding in cooperation with the County for an off-street trail at this location in the future". Motion seconded by Jim Zajkowski, and carried.

Sidewalk Construction/Repair Policy

Our current sidewalk ordinance states property owners are responsible for the payment of new, reconstruction, and repair of sidewalks. Considerable discussion took place on the need for a new sidewalk policy. Mike Darrow suggested we research what other communities are doing, collect public input, get an estimate on design guidelines from SEH or Cedar Corp., and draft a policy with clear guidelines removing all ambiguity. Jeremiah will work with City attorney, Nick Vivian, to draft an ordinance addressing the following issues:

- Annual report of sidewalks and trails (gaps or missing sidewalks, repair or replacement)
- Ranking system for work to be done on sidewalks and trails
- Agreed upon Design Guidelines - classification of streets and placement
- Clarify who may do the work while still using City Specs - City, contractor, or property owner
- 50/50 cost-sharing
- Repayment schedule (interest?)
- Determine if maintenance of trails are treated the same as sidewalks

This policy could affect our Capital Improvement and Comprehensive Plan.

North Knowles Avenue Speed Limit

Currently the southbound and northbound lanes on the north 1,000 feet of Knowles Avenue have different speed limits. Northbound is 25 mph while the southbound is 35 mph. Before the City can make any changes an engineering study must be done. This study can be done in-house. Jim Zajkowski moved to proceed with the speed limit study, seconded by Craig Kittel, and carried.

Stormwater/Wastewater Coalition Update

Jeremiah reviewed Phase I of the Executive Summary. Phase I is a development plan explaining how the City can use funding the Coalition is receiving as part of the new STH 64 bridge project. They have identified a number of planning elements and funding sources that each community may pursue. The City of New Richmond is looking at using their share of the Coalition funds for Wastewater Facility Planning and Storm Water Planning. We currently have a Storm Water Planning Grant in place and Jeremiah has submitted a request that our share of the grant be funded with these dollars.

Communications and Miscellaneous - None

Craig Kittel moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ron Volkert, and carried.

Minutes submitted by Jeanne Bergman