

MINUTES
SPECIAL BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS MEETING
March 16, 2004
New Berlin City Hall Common Council Chambers
3805 S Casper Drive

Please note: Minutes are unofficial until approved by the Board of Public Works at their next regular scheduled meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 A.M.

Members Present: City Engineer J.P. Walker, Alderman Chiovatero, Alderman Harenda, Alderman Ament and Mayor Wysocki

Staff Present: Greg Kessler, Director of Community Development, Ray Gryzs, Director of Streets and Utilities, Ron Schildt, Division Engineer, Tammy Simonson, Division Engineer

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 07-04 Design Issues for Cold Spring Road – (Deferred)

- Traffic calming techniques: stop signs vs. speed humps or speed tables; and
- 5-ft wide clear zone behind the curb vs. a lesser dimension

JP Walker: Stated that the staff has been looking at ways to control speed along Cold Spring Road. The safety committee has stated that stop signs are not effective in controlling speed; they only work for stopping and slowing vehicles at intersections.

Ron Schildt: Stated that he has researched speed humps, they are usually 12' – 15' long, spaced at regular intervals and would need several of them. Did a speed count on Cold Spring Road about two years ago when there was a request from the Safety Committee to lower the speed limit and found the speeds out there were not that much higher than the posted limit. Stop signs are not a good improvement; it would only help at the intersections.

JP Walker: Stated that in the research that he has done, Cold Spring Road is the type of roadway that would be conducive for these types of speed controls. Not concerned with how to mark them, we have the technique of putting the marking right into the pavement. We could show these cross walks in the intersections. Contractors have done this in the past. If people are driving the speed limit they won't feel the tables.

Mayor Wysocki: Questioned what the impact would be on snowplows and snow removal. Is there any concern with the efficiency and damage to the plows or pavement?

Ray Grzyz: Questioned if the raised areas in the road affect the curb and gutter, are those also raised with it? If the hump was there without raising the gutter area you could wind up with a plow going over some areas and leaving some of those areas untouched. It could lead to a slippery area and would have to be treated differently.

Ron Schildt: Replied that normally bike lanes are not raised, we could put it in and raise the whole gutter section up which would make it easier to plow, but that's not the usual practice for a bike lane.

Alderman Chiovatero: Commented that he is leaning towards the speed table in midsections. Residents agree something has to be done; their concern is with noise, not a lot of information on noise for speed tables. The mid-block speed table actually talks about controlling speed limits between 25 – 27 mph. Citizens are concerned about the actual speed bumps, like in parking lots, afraid they could damage vehicles. How many speed tables would be needed along here?

Ron Schildt: Would probably need 6 or 8 of them along the entire 1-mile stretch, between the intersections.

Alderman Chiovatero: Questioned if 4 would be enough and be effective?

Mayor Wysocki: Said that he looked at research, indicates 22' speed table with 6' ramp on each side and a center area with a 10' flat surface. It is estimated that you would go through that without any damage to vehicles or even anything even noticeable at 30 miles an hour. Hope that we would design these to a speed that is on that road. If we went with the design in the information that was provided, could someone comfortably and safely go through that area at 30 miles an hour?

Ron Schildt: The speed data they show is that 85 percentile of cars they measure going over those are between 25 and 30 miles an hour. The smaller ones are about 12-15 feet; believe that was lower because there is a narrower distance between them.

Mayor Wysocki: Want these to work with the speed limit that is along there, we don't want something that we have to slow down to 10-15 mph to go over

Ron Schildt: Hope that people slow down with these. People driving the normal speed will be comfortable with these. High School kids might think these are a challenge more than a speed control.

Mayor Wysocki: At 30 mph this will be OK. Make sure snow plowing isn't effected. Does this cause a damming effect?

Ron Schildt: We would install a catch basin upstream and before each speed table, so that the water would go into an inlet. We would take it all the way through the bike lane. I need to do more research on the best way.

Mayor Wysocki: Asked if the residents don't like these humps can they be easily removed, without major roadwork?

Ron Schildt: If the curb is not raised then it is easy to remove them, they would just be scraped off. However, if a curb is raised it would be more of a problem.

Mayor Wysocki: Need to make citizens aware that if nobody likes these things they could be removed.

Alderman Ament: If the attempt is to control speed, is this something we are going to be doing throughout the City? We haven't done this before; having several of these lined up seems like it's going to be uncomfortable to drive on. If we have another road where the speed is faster are they raised higher? Doesn't like the idea of these at all, can see them at a crosswalk or an intersection but just to control speed and potential problems we could have with the roadway where we have to go back and take them out. 1 or 2 in certain areas, but he was uncomfortable in having them on the entire stretch of road.

Alderman Chiovatero: Cold Spring Road is a unique situation where we have had a lot of problems with speed on this road. The only thing I am questioning is the amount of speed tables that we need to put in. I would like these in the mid-area between the 3 major intersections of Wilshire, Weatherstone and Victoria Circle, which would give us three or four of these. I feel that these would be a good test area for this type of speed control.

Alderman Harenda: Were these speed tables more or less used only on higher traveled roads instead of lower traveled?

Ron Schildt: No, usually called neighborhood traffic management devices. Really meant for a cut through, where commuters are taking a shortcut through a subdivision, or a main area of a subdivision. Wouldn't typically use this on a road that has a higher speed such as Moorland or National.

Alderman Harenda: If these don't work out then we will be looking at the cost to remove them. Think it's a good idea to try these.

Ray Grzys: Is the marking of these areas just basically in the hump areas or will there be signs that will be needed?

Ron Schildt: There will be markings on the ramp leading to and from the hump or the table itself, usually an upside down triangle in the direction of travel so they can see it as they are approaching it. There will also be a sign at the hump or table and then an advance sign before that. Probably four signs and pavement marking at each location.

Alderman Chiovero: Made a motion to engineer these speed tables into Cold Spring Road design project using Engineering guidelines with the least amount possible, will go towards the Engineering guidelines as the guide.

JP Walker: 2nd the motion

Mayor Wysocki: Would like you to look at the issue for the bikers, also would like to know if you could address the issue of the curbs being raised for snowplowing, take into consideration the plowing, make sure that the outlets will be placed so that we don't get sheets of ice as a result of these tables. This is the place to introduce this to the City and see how well it works. Assume that the speed limit is going to be 30 mph, beyond that speed I don't think these work that well. Want to make sure that at 30 mph they can be driven over comfortably and safely.

Upon voting, the motion passed with Alderman Ament opposing.

Alderman Chiovero: The second item under this issue is the 5' wide clear zone behind the curb vs. a lesser dimension.

JP Walker: This issue was brought up by 1 citizen. Does it need to be 5' wide? The reason she asked that is because one of our location requirements for fire hydrants is that they be located 4' behind the curb at minimum. In working with Staff we selected 5' because it felt right. Always looking at safety issues, obviously 5' clear zone, is better than a 4' clear zone, considering if a vehicle went out of control and left the pavement it would have 5' of clear zone before it would hit something that won't move, and also considered the trees.

Mayor Wysocki: There are so many driveways going onto Cold Spring Road along this section that the 5' clear zone is not a lot. I feel comfortable that 5" clear zone should be a minimum.

Alderman Harenda: Define the clear zone.

Ron Schildt: If you look at State guidelines, they have two criteria. They have a lateral clearance area, which is basically a comfort of driving the roadway. Then they have what they consider is a recoverable area if a vehicle goes off the road before they hit something that is not moveable. With the amount of space on Cold Spring Road we are being gracious with a 5' clear zone as a minimum. During construction we need that space.

Alderman Harenda: Then we wouldn't see any signs or trees or shrubbery planted in these areas?

Ron Schildt: Any signs that would be put in there would be on a break away basis.

Alderman Chiovero: Agree with Safety Commission discussion we are having, know that in discussions with the residents what they are very concerned with is the wide-open look. They always refer back to the Howard Avenue corridors being so wide, the fact that we are widening the road to standards, and then also adding bike lanes, their concern is that by adding another 5' section on each side would be making it another 10' wide. They are picturing this huge wide path. I drove down the street many times trying to picture it, in some areas it's already that wide and doesn't look that bad, some areas where it's close, yes it will change the appearance. Some of the residents feel that the bike path is going to give them a line of sight, even though they don't like the idea of the bike path. Explained to them that the bike path is another lane of traffic that has to be observed before entering into the roadway. I would like to minimize the clear zone in areas where we don't have a lot of grading problems to keep it to 4' or 5' area. Does the 5' area include some of the bigger trees or does it need more around those trees because of possible root damage?

Ron Schildt: If there is a lot of grading in some areas there may be some problem with some of the trees. We are hoping to be able to grade around some of the bigger trees.

Alderman Chiovero: Asked if there is going to be an arborist marking the trees so the cutter will know which ones to cut down?

Ron Schildt: As part of the acquisition process, the people that are working with the property owners will mark the temporary grading limits, and will be marking the trees at the same time. The Engineer out in the field will also know which ones are to stay and which ones will have to go.

Alderman Chiovero: Stated that some of the residents feel that the City hasn't flexed at all in this matter. However he explained to them that the City has made many changes to this, we had a lot of issues concerning safety and the bike path, planning and everything else that had to be taken into account. Their biggest concern in regard to the bike path is the amount of trees that have to be cut down and that there will be the curb line and then a big area of nothing.

JP Walker: We have 2 members on Staff that are highly qualified to make decisions about the quality of trees. One is Greg Kessler, Director of Community Development and the other one is David Jeske, Department of Parks and Recreation.

Alderman Chiovero: I would be comfortable if we could commit to the least amount of trees being removed as possible

Mayor Wysocki: Made a motion to have in the design criteria that the clear zone behind the curb area be a minimum 5' wide, as planned by Staff.

JP Walker: 2nd the motion.

Upon voting, the motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 08-04 Reallocation of Design Funds from Grange Avenue and Coffee Road

JP Walker: Request to Common Council to approve the transfer of approved design funds from Coffee Road Account (4-252-570) and Grange Avenue Account (4-252-575) to the Calhoun Road Design Project. This will require the establishment of a new CIP Account Number.

Alderman Chiovero: There is a request for accountability for our CIP projects to try and figure out where our money is being move around. Have we received this information? I don't remember seeing it. It seems like the last couple of months we have been moving a lot of money between CIP accounts to help fill voids in other accounts. Getting concerned that we have money moved out of some projects that may need it later on.

Alderman Harenda: There has been a lot of discussion on roadway projects in the City the last couple of months. Went through notes to get idea of what we are dealing with. Calhoun is a road that needs some work on it. Now we have Greenfield coming into the picture, Cold Spring right now, looking at Racine Avenue and the I-43 area. Couples of other projects in District 4, Beres Road and Martin Road and those have been shifted in the CIP budget. Every year we are pushing them back. Now transferring the funds out of the Grange Avenue project is going to shift that project to whenever. Would like to get an accounting of what our plan of attack is for next year.

JP Walker: Our plan is to prepare that type of discussion to the Council once elections are over and the new Council members have taken their seat. We will be talking about changes, we will need to change our priorities on the roadway maintenance program and also how these changes are shifting things in our Roadway CIP 5-year plan. We are looking at a May presentation on that.

Mayor Wysocki: We actually started to talk about this year's CIP budget, which was adjusted when it came to the roadways, etc. in trying to even these things out. The reason we are recommending these shifts in project areas is because we do know now that the Grange Avenue project for instance will be impacted by development in Section 35. That Section is going to have significant development coming much earlier then what we had thought. Section 35 initially in the Master Plan had almost 1,100 residential homes in terms of development. As you know, Section 35 is bounded on the North by Grange Avenue and on the South by College Avenue. Under the current Master Plan guidelines, that number is probably going to be cut in half. The point of it is, we need to re-look at Grange Avenue and College Avenue, because they will become major arterials that we will have to support, not only the existing development that is there for 124th Street to Sunny Slope Road. What we are going to have to take into account is from Sunny Slope Road to Moorland Road, which is Section 35. We also believe that we are at a time in our policies and procedures that we can legitimately have the developers contribute a portion of the costs through

the impact that they will provide on traffic loads onto Grange Avenue, so that the full brunt of the project is not on the City with regards to the existing demands. We can realistically reallocate proportionately based on traffic impacts based on these developments, a legitimate costs to the developments themselves. This is the kind of thinking that is going on with regards to the presentation that Staff will be making in terms of linking much more closely our infrastructure to our development. I hear discussion on mixing between our operational budgets in terms of maintenance, which we have, as you know, increased this year as opposed to the capital projects themselves.

Finally, what's happening is this opportunity for Calhoun Road, as Alderman Chiovatero pointed out, some of these projects have been on the books for sometime. Calhoun Road has been on the books for years and years and finally we are at a point where if you prioritize in terms of capital projects on roadwork, Calhoun Road is definitely one that is needed. It also is one that as we are working through our economic development issues with regards to revitalizing our industrial park. It's painfully evident to anybody that the Western side of the industrial park needs work on Calhoun Road. Yes, the priorities are there, as it turns out and explained in the rationale, WisDOT indicated to us that we are still listed on an alternative list. However, they've had experiences where projects that have been approved are not ready to go within the biennium identified, and as a result they go to the alternative list and they go on the list and ask "are you ready to actually construct the project?" The assumption being that you already have your design and your land acquisition in place and you literally are at the point of construction. We are not at that point yet with Calhoun Road. With the reallocation of these funds we can complete the necessary designs and land acquisition services to be ready in the event that the 2005-2006 period WisDOT comes to us and says "the money is available, are you ready to go with your construction project?"

The prioritization again of these capital projects has been redefined. It has been redefined because of issues like knowing that Section 35 will be changing in the near future. The recognition that our polices are one where we are trying to generally get greater contribution from these new developments in these major infrastructure costs that we have. For example, roadwork. As you know when you review your Plan Commission documents very often we have traffic impact. All too often the traffic impact is one where it's literally too late to put the whole impact on a particular project. Planning ahead as we are trying to do here, acknowledging and recognizing that there will be developments of a substantial nature in that area we can legitimately begin to look at and say when that development comes on board, X percent of cost as result of traffic impact requires you to make this contribution to this project. That is exactly what we said with regards to our idea of infrastructure planning especially comes to our transportation network that we need to do this kind of work and a better job of trying to go through that process. We are certainly not avoiding the Grange Avenue project. We are recognizing, however, that the Grange Avenue project is going to have to take into consideration the significance of the development pressures from Section 35, which is not that far away. We also recognize in terms of our infrastructure plan that Calhoun Road from Greenfield Avenue south of Cleveland Avenue has to be done as soon as possible for a whole host of reasons, not the least of which are safety issues, better transportation flows, that's really needed. The presentation that we will be making in May or June will have as a background for Council recognition of how we are truly trying to strategically plan our infrastructure improvements, capital wise as well as a presentation to you in terms of the issues of maintaining our roads through our operational budgets.

Alderman Ament: South of Cleveland?

Mayor Wysocki: It would extend south of Cleveland to Victor.

Alderman Ament: You're basically talking North of Cleveland?

Mayor Wysocki: I'm sorry, from Greenfield Avenue all the way down to Victor Road, the industrial corridor.

Alderman Ament: JP had mentioned the timing and waiting until at least two new aldermen, maybe three are on Board. Would it be wise to table this or put this conversation off until that presentation?

Alderman Harenda: I agree with a lot of the Mayor's points. My concern is we are shifting money between these two accounts and we're not sure what's going to come back to these in the future without looking at the big picture. I just feel uncomfortable with making motions and approving transfers of funds to other projects even though it is a benefit. What are we planning to do in the next two to five years? That is what I would like to see. I can't justify this without more information.

Alderman Chiovatero: My concern is that the current CIP budget that has been approved with the current Council. I have concerns that the current alderman who are up for election have worked three years. They have had say so in the CIP budgets and the road projects and other capital projects up to this point. I know we are moving a lot of monies around, it always seems to make sense. Just getting uncomfortable without seeing the whole picture at once as to where it's affecting everything else that we have planned over the last few years. It was my understanding that today we would have at least an accounting of some of the funds that have been moved around and what is left in certain projects, as far as the Grange Avenue project to date. Would still like to see in black and white, just where are we moving funds from and where are they going to and how do they affect the projects that the money currently or initially was destined for.

JP Walker: In the decision making process that Staff has been going through looking at the reallocation requirements, one of the things that became obvious to us is to look at Moorland Road, south of the border. It was recently reconstructed and it's all torn up from the development construction equipment. Our fear is that if we reconstruct Grange Avenue before Section 35 development starts, we are going to be up against the same issue. To us it makes more sense to reprioritize and use maintenance funds for this year to resurface Grange Avenue as part of our roadway maintenance project. Including taking down a portion of the top part of the hill that has a line of sight issue that has to be dealt with. We believe that we can do that as our roadway maintenance project this year and still have the capabilities to leave the previously planned resurfacing projects and move them back just one year. We feel that there would be advantages to that because one of the areas would be Inez Drive. That's also a location of a major storm sewer project and that's in Alderman Harendra's district, which he is aware of. The timing of that project would make sense that it be resurfaced next year. It was originally scheduled to be done this year prior to the knowledge that there is a major drainage issue requiring storm sewer work. There is a lot of detail that Staff has looked at allowing us to come forth with our recommendations. It's not on paper and it wasn't clear to me that it was to be put on paper. It is coming forth as a discussion item. The decision was made that we should do it with the new Council on board.

Mayor Wysocki: Two of the things that have to be done with this funding are the design and the real estate acquisitions. These take a long time. There are negotiations, appraisals, and time lines. The reason that I brought this up at this point is because that component is probably the biggest part of what's left with regards to the Calhoun Road area. This is just a time factor. As indicated, the surface transportation program grant funds that we are looking for are for the years 2005 – 2006. When WisDOT goes through that grant biennium they very quickly in early 2005 determine what projects are ready to go. If in the event the original list of projects that they have approved for funding in that first three to six month period of 2005 are determined that could not be included in biennium, that's when they start going to the alternative list. Their major point is "are you ready for construction" if not, then they go to the next one on the alternative list, because the funding has to be in the biennium of 2005 – 2006. Bringing it to you now is because we just got the word that WisDOT put us the alternative list and we knew that as I talked to both WisDOT and SEWRPC they indicated to me that if you have this project ready to go there is a possibility through the alternative list that the funding will be there. Do you know what that number is?

Ron Schildt: It is an 80% - 20% split.

Mayor Wysocki: They pay 80% and we pay 20%. That's how important it is to pull the trigger on this. If we don't go through with this, I am concerned that we are going to lose an opportunity for the Calhoun Road project for which we would not be ready for. I understand your concerns. Please review the 2004 capital budget and review the 5-year plan. In there we stipulated an alert that there was going to be some substantial shifting of priorities. We are prepared and working on the full presentation of capital recommendations, road maintenance recommendations, and policy contributions by future developments.

Alderman Chiovatero: Said that he agreed that pushing up the presentation wouldn't help. Just want to personally look at it to see where we are.

JP Walker: Questioned if it would be OK to include that information in the Council packet, if the Board decides to send this on to the Council?

Mayor Wysocki: Stated that It is the responsibility of this Board to make the recommendations so I'm asking you JP, if we held this off until next month's meeting, could Staff have that general overview report for the BPW with regards to our vision of capital projects? Perhaps by that time we will have our operational plan in place.

JP Walker: Said that they will make it a priority.

Mayor Wysocki: Asked if it would be OK with the Board to table this till our next meeting, and asked that the Board seriously consider action at that time? Time is of the essence, if we are notified in early 2005 by WisDOT that funds are available we need to be ready to construct. I want to be able to say that we are ready to go.

Alderman Harenda: Replied that yes that would be OK. Would just like to get some kind of detailed information.

Ron Schildt: Stated that there are so many things that are intertwined. One decision can affect several other projects.

JP Walker: Discussion with the WisDOT on the procedure that we should follow if we go forth with the Calhoun Road design and land acquisition services. They said that in order to remain grant eligible we would have to follow the WisDOT guidelines in our RFP process. That means we do not ask for a cost proposal. It's a qualifications basis selection process. The city selects a priority of consultants. We negotiate with consultant #1. If we are not able to agree then we go onto #2 and so forth. This could take a considerable amount of time.

Alderman Chiovatero: I've lost track of where we are with all these projects. Just want to see a quick accounting of where we are.

Mayor Wysocki: We will keep this on the table and next month have an overview. Staff would show Capital projects that were done over the last 5 years so we have a clear view of what has been done. We will get the documentation to you as soon as possible and request that you look at it and would really like some answer at the next meeting.

Mayor Wysocki: Made a motion to table this item until next months meeting on April 5th.

Alderman Harenda: 2nd the motion.

Upon voting the motion passed unanimously.

Alderman Chiovatero: Made a motion to adjourn.

Mayor Wysocki: 2nd the motion

Meeting adjourned at 9:16AM