



PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MINUTES

4:15 PM July 10, 2019

City Hall 2nd Floor Large Conference Room

1. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Councilors Gary Bode, Ron De Valois and Jerry Kuiken

Staff Present: City Administrator Mike Martin; Public Works Director Steve Banham; Programs Manager Mark Sandal; and Sr. Admin. Assistant Heather Sytsma

Public Present: Blake Starkenburg, Pat Schoening, Marc Simons, Gary Vis

2. ACTION ITEMS

A. No Minutes to Approve as June 5th Meeting became a Special City Council Meeting Approved by the Full City Council on June 17th.

B. Request for Parking Agreement and Parking Permit System for 7th Street Parking Lot – Ron and Alida Hanson & Tim and Christine Keiper – Draft Agreement for Downtown Shared Parking

Banham explained that since the new owners of 610 Front Street are remodeling the building (Mural Building) to provide six units of housing, they have a requirement to provide one off-street parking space per residential unit within 300 feet of the building. The owners would like to enter into a parking agreement with the City, as their remodeled building will only have garage space for three vehicles. They are seeking permitted parking for any additional parking that is needed by the tenants. These permits would allow the tenants to park in any lot downtown, except the Community Center lot, without the two-hour time restriction.

Banham stated that this agreement is being handled by the Planning Department and that this agreement will also be reviewed by the Community Development Committee.

Action

The Public Works Committee concurred that the parking agreement and permit system are an acceptable means for this building to achieve the required number of parking units.

C. Request for Temporary Construction Easement and Restrictive Covenant for No-Build Zone at 7th Street Parking Lot Mural Wall

Banham presented a Temporary Construction Easement for the owners of 610 Front Street (Hanson & Keiper) to utilize the 7th Street parking lot during construction.

Banham also presented a Restrictive Covenant for No-Build Zone at the 7th Street parking lot mural. This covenant prohibits the owners of the building from removing the mural unless it is replaced with a City-approved mural.

Action

The Public Works Committee expressed their support of both the Temporary Construction Easement and the Restrictive Covenant for No-Build Zone at the 7th Street parking lot wall mural.

D. Pepin ER Emergency Response Plan and Response to Public Comments

Banham stated that there was a good turnout at the public meeting, although no comments were received from the public. He stated that staff mailed out more information after the fact. The Emergency Response Plan will be implemented, which means the City will extend the ditch so any overflow is directed to Main Street. Depending on future flood events, portions of Main Street will be closed due to drainage. Staff is currently looking at other ways to redirect the stormwater.

Action

The Public Works Committee concurred with staff finalizing the plan and working with the FHWA-ER funding to complete the emergency intercept ditch.

E. Amendment to Septic to Sewer Code Section 13.12 to Require Utility Easements

Banham presented copies of the ordinance amending the septic to sewer code. The revision preserves the residential waiver but adds conditions for non-single-family septic to sewer conversions. With larger parcels wanting to connect, the City needs to be able to consider service to other surrounding properties. This might require a utility easement in exchange for the waiver. Also the amount of the fees waived is much larger and could have an adverse impact on the sewer utility. The City may want to consider outside water quality funding to supplement the revenue lost to the sewer utility.

Action

The Public Works Committee concurred to recommend approval to City Council of the Amendment to the Septic to Sewer Code Section 13.12 to require utility easements and discretion by Public Works on the benefits of waiving the connection fees for non-single-family connections.

3. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Erdmann Property Purchase Update

Banham stated that he is interested in purchasing the Erdmann properties at 1625 Main Street, which was recently listed at \$225,000, using the low-interest loan from the Department of Ecology for the development of Pepin Creek. The two parcels are located next to the City-owned property at 1633 Main Street (Martin property). He explained that the purchase of this property would provide an opportunity for downstream shoreline stabilization and restoration, elongating the slope of the stream to provide for shallower cuts upstream which will reduce construction costs.

Martin stated he is ambivalent about this right now: it is not something that needs to be purchased just because the City has the funds. Martin stated there are a lot of unknowns with this project, so not having a piece of property that the City isn't even sure they might need is ok with him.

After some discussion, the Committee decided that purchasing this property is not necessary at this time and that the City should progress the design further to determine the benefit of City ownership. However, this option should be re-visited every 6-12 months.

B. New Downtown Bike Racks – Downtown Lynden Business Association Letter

Banham stated that the Downtown Business Association (DBA) has purchased additional bike racks for the downtown core and would like the Public Works department to install them. Vis cautioned staff about placement of the bike racks, noting that there are already tables, chairs, large planters and hanging baskets impeding pedestrian flow on the sidewalk. Bode stated that restaurants that want bike racks will have to choose between a bike rack or outside dining.

Sandal did state that one location for a bike rack is near a corner bulb away from the sidewalk and that the intent of the placement is to not impede pedestrian traffic.

Banham stated that staff is working with the DBA on locations and being sensitive to pedestrian walkways. The Committee expressed concern about sidewalk mobility and asked staff to work closely with the DBA to ensure that placement does not adversely impact pedestrian mobility and that the locations are closely coordinated with outdoor seating.

C. WSDOT Replacement of Double Ditch Culverts

Banham stated staff will request that the City attorney draft a letter to send to WSDOT addressing City concerns about the increased water flow into town with the up-sizing of these culverts possibly overwhelming the existing ditch system and causing flooding.

D. Line Road School Crosswalk Flashing Lights

Sandal stated that during construction and the opening of Line Road, Lynden School District Superintendent Jim Frey asked about lighted, enhanced signage for school zones. One option would be lighted “school zone” signs with solar panels and LED flashers around the border. Sandal stated he can bring an example to a future Public Works Committee meeting.

E. Small Works Roster Paving Work – Liberty, 3rd, 6th & 7th Streets and Birch Bay Lynden Road – DeKoster Excavating Inc. Request for Paving

Sandal stated that Ryan Spoelstra of DeKoster Excavating submitted a request for the City’s participation in replacing pavement in front of First Reformed Church where they are reconfiguring parking and removing trees and tree roots on Liberty Street. Because the roots extend half-way across the roadway, they requested that city assist in paving where the roots were removed, as the street is old. Banham stated that there is money in the budget for this type of roadway improvement, so the crew will be working with DeKoster Excavating on scheduling.

Sandal stated that the City crew will be grinding out the wheel ruts on Birch Bay Lynden Road and placing asphalt to smooth the roadway. The Committee agreed these would be good projects for this summer.

F. Projects:

1. 7th Street Project – Front Street Sitting-Wall / Planter Finishing Material and Project Schedule

Banham distributed the Planning Director's sketch of the proposed intersection of Front and 7th Streets with a planter bulb large enough for the annual downtown Christmas tree. The planter will be close to ground level on the parking lot side, and approximately two feet high on the street side.

2. Wastewater Treatment Plant Outfall

Banham stated the next progress meeting is this Friday and the fish window begins on July 15th. Strider has been busy with material and workplan submittals.

3. Old Elevated Water Tank (Old Middle School Property) Soil Remediation – Small Works Roster Project – No Bids Received – Re-bid 6-28-19

Sandal stated that no bids were received for the re-bid, even though the work schedule window was extended. Sandal explained that the City will be allowed to negotiate with a contractor to perform the work as staff cannot perform the work because the labor is too time-intensive. The work needs to be done by the end of 2019.

4. West Front EDI Grant / Loan Application

Banham stated that the Mayor advised him that there was a County EDI meeting today. The County was asking if the City was planning on applying for any funding. Staff is trying to work on an application to get an EDI grant/loan to build West Front Street to Tromp Road (all-weather full-width street). The City has recently been successful in getting commitments from property owners on the south side to dedicate the needed right-of-way.

5. Water System Plan Update

Banham stated that he is working on this. The City still needs to provide a service area update to Whatcom County and at the request of DOH will show that the City is willing to take on any nitrate-affected water systems if annual water right issues are resolved.

G. Bedlington Hydrant Meter Granted for 2019 to Irrigate Potatoes

Banham informed the Committee that Bedlington Farms is using a hydrant meter to irrigate their field at the corner of Main Street and Guide Meridian.

4. ITEMS ADDED:

A. 17th Street Extension Concerns

Two members of the community (Marc Simons and Pat Schoening) attended the meeting with questions about 17th Street. Bode asked about the notices that were sent out regarding moving an easement eight feet to the west. Banham explained the methodology of the easement and the design process for the street extension, noting that staff is hoping to advertise and award a construction contract before end of 2019. Construction may continue into 2020.

Marc Simons asked about placement of stop signs and speed bumps along 17th Street to discourage speed since it will now be a thru-street. He is hoping for stop signs at Village Drive and south-bound on 17th Street. Sandal said it gets too confusing at a T-intersection if only two lanes of traffic have stop signs. He said the engineers are looking at various types of traffic calming, and there will be a slight curve at the north end of 17th Street as it reaches Main Street, so this should slow vehicle speeds. Banham added that stop signs aren't supposed to be installed just to reduce speed, they're for vehicle and

pedestrian safety. Additionally, stop signs tend to increase traffic noises associated with acceleration and braking. Banham stated that, since the trail has been completed on the east side of 17th Street, the City is researching methods for continuing the trail further to the west across the street, and possibly include a pedestrian refuge or accommodating a future pedestrian-actuated crossing light.

Pat Schoening asked whether the project will include sidewalks on 17th Street. Banham noted that 17th Street does have some gaps in the sidewalks, especially going north from the Fishtrap Way, that staff would like to see eliminated. He stated that on the east side there is a difficulty with the grade of the properties and making sidewalk and driveways fit with the road. Staff has their engineer researching this issue.

Bode asked if staff can place traffic counters on 17th Street and/or Village Drive to determine when people are exceeding the speed limit in the area. Banham requested that Sandal have traffic counters installed to get current volumes and speeds on Village Drive and 17th Street.

De Valois asked what street width is planned. Banham stated a standard 36-foot street is planned, which allows for parking on both sides of the street.

Banham noted that staff will bring this back to Committee and plan to hold a neighborhood meeting as soon as more design details are ready.

B. School Zone Crossing Lights

Bode asked if school zone radar speed sign can be placed in more effective areas than the current locations on 14th Street at Fisher Elementary. Sandal said he has had some discussions with the school district about adding crossing zone lights in other areas. Sandal said he will research the possibility of relocating the radar portions of these signs.

C. Barriers for Festivals

Vis asked whether sturdier barriers could be used for festival events downtown, particularly at Front street when it is closed and traffic detoured onto 7th. Banham stated that he has seen other agencies use water-filled jersey barriers. He stated that staff can research the cost of these, as the City does not currently own any.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.