

CLOQUET CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, October 20, 2015, 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Present: Bjerkness, Kolodge, Langley, Rock, Wilkinson, Mayor Hallback

Absent: Maki

Staff: Fritsinger, Klassen, C. Peterson, J. Prusak, H. Butcher, A. Cottingham

Other: Jamie Lund, Pine Journal, Jon Penheiter, Shamrock Landfill

Highway 33 Landscape Review

Review and discussion of the Hwy 33 Landscape project based on the presentation by SEH at the last Council meeting.

- Mr. Prusak began by stating there is a lot of material to go through in the study, it can be difficult and confusing when looking at everything presented in the plan. He suggests reviewing the Summary Segment overview section, which gives an overall feel for the entire corridor. Items in the plan that will affect the outcome of the cost are the trails and lighting. Does the Council feel this plan fits with what their ideas for long range plans for landscaping along the highway? Some areas along the corridor have the potential to have initial work without having to wait for the future design elements associated with other with Hwy 33/Frontage Road improvements.
- Priority projects already targeted for next year include, Veteran's Park, Fauley Park and Skyline Blvd. Mr. Prusak sees those sections of the plan as being part of the park improvements project and doesn't feel more discussion is needed at this time on those.
- Mr. Bjerkness stated his feeling of being underwhelmed by the plan, and was surprised to see the main feature of the plan be trails, seeming to draw to the community with recreational trails and featuring the highway, questioned if that's the directions we want? Mr. Fritsinger responded that this developed more as the discussion went on, and that we needed to incorporate the aspects of the other recent studies completed by the City. As a result, landscaping broadened into trails, image, and landscaping.
- Discussion of ATV and snowmobile trails, making them safer and more defined, but very expensive. MNDOT has a voice in this because it's a highway. Mr. Langley brought up signage leading ATVs to the trail system instead of going through the city.
- Ms. Wilkinson noted that the section north of Doddridge is tied into the parks projects and dollars. There is more money to access when incorporating trails. How we move forward is going to depend on what is used to pay for it.
- Mr. Fritsinger reminded that the Council needs to look at the entire corridor project, not just the bushes and flowers. This plan gives the reality check if this is what the Council has been asking for and is this what it wants to do?
- Mr. Bjerkness asked if there are other ways to phase this other than what SEH has laid out? Mr. Prusak answered yes, it is. The plan shows good beginning and end points, but doesn't mean it can't be divided further. There are segments from Doddridge to Brenny Dahl Block that are for the most part complete. The west side of the highway between Pizza Hut and the Armory and the Frontage Road hold big question marks and

recommends not doing anything there until resolution are made on what to do. With or without the trails, improvements could still be scheduled without committing to trails. The existing trail is dirt and unattractive, do we plan to accommodate snowmobiles and ATVs? The Chamber wants trails to lead to hotels for snowmobiles. Is it enough justification in spending that money on trail development? If seeking federal dollars for that trail development there will be design issues between pedestrian, ATVs, and snowmobile trails. The different uses somehow need to be separated and this will be a challenge.

- Mr. Rock inquired if the trails can be separated by east side and west side? Mr. Prusak answered yes, it was something that was looked at. There are some design options but they come down to a space problem to accommodate everyone and traffic.
- Mr. Prusak stated there is plenty of opportunity for plantings along the corridor to be accomplished. Doing a phased approach using select plantings to see how it goes and how much detail is really needed. He recommends not focusing on the south side past Walmart as there's a long road ahead before those projects come together. He also doesn't see much changing between Wells Fargo and Doddridge Avenue. With some of the median proposals not much can be done. However, with or without any landscape improvements, the City needs to consider going back to mowing and maintaining MNDOT property along the highway, which would call for a new piece of equipment, or contract mowing.
- Mr. Fritsinger stated we don't want to fully invest until we see what MNDOT's project plan will be. The CIP includes the area around Wal Mart and Pinehurst. The numbers at that time were based on rough numbers and predated SEH's final. This is a long term project and haven't gone back to the final budget and CIP to verify how close we were to estimates.
- Mr. Fritsinger reminded that the 2016 CIP identifies Veterans and Fauley Parks. Dunlap Island is proposed in 2017, so that particular portion of the highway corridor is part of those projects. Skyline Blvd is also included in the budget for next year. The rest of the projects are future years.
- Mr. Prusak stated the Pinehurst pedestrian corridor needs to be discussed. We still want a sidewalk from Doddridge Ave intersection going through Pinehurst and then to Broadway. It's a dirt trail now, pave it and make it a formalized trail.
- Council discussion of whether it is a trail or sidewalk? How do we redirect ATV and snowmobiles from it? Consider it a pedestrian trail and not mark as a motorized trail. Put up signs rerouting ATVs and snowmobiles, possibly through Pine Valley.
- Mr. Prusak advised that MNDOT is currently soliciting applications for trail funding, focusing on pedestrian trails. Mr. Prusak would like to make a pre-application now showing the idea and trail concept. If the City isn't approved the first round, it'll keep coming back to where we ultimately get funding. MNDOT is placing more focus on pedestrian trails along the highway corridors. By applying, it gives a good chance to push that project forward, but doesn't commit us to anything; just it puts the project out there and at the same time, initiates discussion with MNDOT on accommodating pedestrians/ATVs on that section. The deadline for the application is 10/31/15. The Council supported the pre-application.
- Mr. Prusak would like the Council to discuss internally a few ideas on where to go. He would like to direct SEH, to put together planting plans from the section from Wells Fargo to Doddridge, don't spend a lot of money, and try to accommodate the snowmobile trail to Pine Valley. The Council did not authorize moving forward with design on this stretch of roadway.

- Discussion on signage. There's interest in having the Welcome to Cloquet sign on the corner of Taco Johns/Cloquet Ford redone.
- Mr. Prusak suggests pages to review in the plan, pages 36-37, 42-53 and 56-59.
- Mr. Fritsinger stated to keep in mind the magnitude of this project and be mindful on how to implement. There are sections that deserve more investment than others. There is a maintenance side to also be mindful of and discuss what the impact on each segment will be.
- The City Council indicated it is generally supportive of the concepts tied in the plan, but the City will need to carefully evaluate the timing and funding as a result of the probable cost.

Granite Street Safe Routes to School neighborhood meeting

- Mr. Prusak provided an update in regards to this neighborhood meeting. 10 people from the neighborhood attended. Overall feedback is the residents are not in favor even though they understand the talking points, but question if this is a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. Residents aren't opposed to visual cues being painted. The dilemma now is that there is 2-3 months of paperwork to get to the point of funding and would hate to get to bidding and then decide not to do the project. Federal money is committed. The next step is coming back to Council, where to go from here? Ms. Wilkinson suggested to revisit the Safe Routes to School concept and why has it been identified? Mr. Fritsinger will invite ARDC to and update Council. The money is slated for next year so we need to keep on track.

Shamrock Landfill Update

- Mr. Penheiter provided the Council with a quick update on changes at the landfill. A recent majority stock buy-out, the name is the same, key players the same, stock has changed hands. The city won't see a lot change.
- Recent host fee audit shows they've met the obligations and maintained the facility.

Upcoming Works Sessions

- Chief Stracek will be discussing the Police Officer hiring process.
- November 17th, further discussion of Landscape Study.
- Community visioning and goals – what does it mean and how do we accomplish?
- Slate Street sidewalk project.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Brian Fritsinger
City Administrator