

Ad Hoc Street Committee
Tuesday, September 7, 2010
Council Chambers
611 E. Grand River
Howell, Michigan 48843
517-546-3502

The Special Meeting of the Ad Hoc Street Committee was conveyed at 7:00 pm by Mayor Pro-Tem Manor.

Council Members Present: Scott Patton, Steven L. Manor and Scott Niblock.

Also Present: City Manager Shea Charles, Deputy City Manager Terry Wilson, Nancy Faught Project Engineer HRC, Erin Perdu, ENP Associates, Police Chief Basar, Randy Crawford, Judy Nash, Elizabeth Garvey, Holly Lamb, Alice Stritsinger, Juanita Little, Tom Little, Denise O'Brien, Denise Bochinski, Jane Thierfeldt, Glenda Hair, Barbara Latreille, Al Schlittler, Jacob Schlitter, Doug Heins, Kathy Goetsch, Bob Vogt, Vicky Hertrich, Pat Malafouris, Julie Bensinger, Geri McKeon-Anderson.

Mayor Pro-Tem Manor began the meeting and introduced Erin Perdu, ENP Associates.

Erin Perdu presented concepts/options that staff and engineers created based on comments from the previous committee meetings. Ms. Perdu confirmed that the options were conceptual, do not take into account the unique circumstances of each street segment, and not all concepts will be feasible on each street segment. Ms. Perdu informed the group that if the street widening option is chosen, there will be tree removal and the storm water drainage would be affected. It was also stated that the optional concepts would be a cost in addition to the \$3.6 million already spent on Howell Multi Year 1.

Ms. Perdu highlighted all the options which included with Options 1- 4 widening the streets to 34' to allow for traffic lanes and parking, Option 1-2 include 8' parking on both sides, curb/gutter in Option1, and wing curb in Option 2. In these options all existing swales would be eliminated, and the costs do not include storm water management down the streets, and would have to have all driveways reconstructed. Option 4 would be an 8' gravel parking lane. With options 5-7 widening the streets to 20' and adding curb/gutter, wing curb, or shelf for getting out of car. These options do not make any additional on street parking, but does give more maneuvering, and driveway reconstruction. Option 8 will leave the streets as they have been reconstruction, fill in the swales with dirt, and plant grass, which would represent what they looked like before the construction. The owners then could put gravel down for a flat surface, and no trees would be removed because they would not be widening the streets.

The group discussed the option of parking bays, including the fact that they would not be available in front of every house, and they would be public parking, not reserved for the resident at the house. With the parking bays the street width would stay the same, and where there are parking bays the swales would be removed, which would cause for water to be trapped.

Erin Perdu, ENP Associates referenced her memo of September 3 which broke down the options in a ranking system in terms of storm water, road integrity, parking, and cost.

Robert Vogt, 222 Summit stated that long term integrity, reflects "wearing out" of road, so the City would have to pave and repair the streets more often.

Mayor Pro-Tem Manor asked if the total cost would allow the opportunity to take some of the optional designs and carry over into the next phases. Ms. Perdu confirmed that the costs presented reflect Howell Multi Year 1 only.

Robert Vogt, 222 Summit, asked which options would allow 2' loading/unloading. Erin Perdu, ENP Associates stated that Options 5-7 offers no street width change but a 2' grass shelf being added. Nancy Faught, HRC Engineers, stated that currently the Inverness area has 10' lanes and 2' grass shelf, and was also done in Year One Phase Three. Ms. Faught confirmed that the presented Option 7 is something that Council had already decided on for all phases forward.

Judy Nash, 303 N Court asked if the driveways would be reconstructed from where they currently are, and also for an explanation of "storm water management downstream". Erin Perdu, ENP Associates confirmed that the driveways would be reconstruction from the existing point, and defined storm water downstream is where the water will flow downhill, and potentially have more flooding.

Robert Vogt, 222 Summit, asked if the grass shelf could be done without widening street, and if the cost per lineal feet stays the same. Ms. Perdu stated that the option is being done in the future phases. Nancy Faught, HRC confirmed that Option 7 mimics what is being done in Howell Multi Year 2. Robert Vogt then asked if the swales can be made shallow instead of eliminated. Ms. Faught confirmed the change would impact the swales, there would still be swales and will be more effective than two years ago. Some swales cannot be shallower without causing problems down the street; it will be a case by case option.

Judy Nash, 303 N Court, asked what the current roads under construction were getting. Erin Perdu, ENP Associates stated (2) 10' wide driving lanes, 2' grass shelf on each side, and one side on-street parking. Ms. Perdu then defined a "grass shelf".

Randy Crawford, 808 Alger formally thanked staff for their assistance, and asked for confirmation that there will now be parking on Alger. Terry Wilson, DCM/Special Projects stated that there will be parking only on one side.

Julie Bensinger, 801 Alger, asked for clarification on the changes. Mr. Wilson continued by stating it will be designated one side only parking with 20' section of pavement, curb/gutter, and a yield condition.

Patricia Malafouris, 504 State asked what options they would have. Erin Perdu referenced the presentation boards representing Options 1-4 which had a concept for more parking.

Geri McKeon-Andersen, 304 Higgins voiced her concern with how unsafe the streets in Piety Hill are.

Elizabeth Garvey, 403 Lake asked for clarification on why gravel on the sides of the road would significantly impact storm water. Erin Perdu, ENP Associates stated that to install the gravel, the swales will have to be leveled, and once gravel is established, the parking and impact on it will create a surface that will not be permeable. Mayor Pro-Tem Manor stated it will also infiltrate water under the pavement, and cause the pavement to heave.

Judy Nash, 303 N Court stated she has resided there for 20 years, never witnessed the street redone, and spoke in favor of gravel. Nancy Faught, HRC confirmed that over time gravel will compact, and is not impervious as a grassy area. Mayor Pro-Tem Manor stated that Court had been done once, however needed to be done more often.

Barbara Latrielle, 409 N Court, spoke in favor of gravel and curbs.

Geri McKeon-Anderson, 304 Higgins voiced concern with maneuvering out of the driveways.

Doug Heins, 212 Prospect asked for clarification on how the recent reconstructed 18' streets would be modified. Nancy Faught, HRC confirmed it would not be easy, but based on the location of the street the 2' could go on one side. This would be on a case by case basis, and less tree removal would be evaluated. The addition of material would be sealed at the joint.

Geri McKeon-Andersen, 304 Higgins asked if trees would be at risk. Erin Perdu, ENP Associates stated that any options that increase the road will have tree removal.

Barbara Latrielle, 409 N Court stated that wing curbs seem to add almost an additional 18" on one side, spoke in favor of the wing curb as an option to guide the drivers to not park in the swales.

Council Member Patton stated to the group that during the design discussions at various council meetings, the number one topic was cost, and the other item was what the total cost over the life span of the streets, whether 30 years, longer or shorter. Mr. Patton asked staff for the life of the roads. Terry Wilson, DCM/SP stated that they are built for 30 years, with a substantial base. With gravel shoulders and if the swales would fill in for water to sit, it would be 10 years. Mr. Wilson outlined that with a substantial base, any future maintenance would be a simply mill and fill, similar to the N Michigan Avenue project of 2009.

Robert Vogt, 222 Summit, asked for details on how the sub grade is damaged. Terry Wilson, DCM/SP used prior construction State St. and Court St. as examples, where water has sat on the roads, goes under the roads, softens and deteriorates. The new roads are constructed to resolve the issue of standing water on the roads.

Council Member Niblock asked for a show of hands from everyone present who would be interested in the public parking bay option, with no curb. Secretary witness roughly 8 people raise their hands. Mayor Pro-Tem Manor reminded the residents that the bays would not be for their private use.

Geri McKeon-Anderson, 304 Higgins spoke in opposition of the bays, stating pavement is not aesthetically appealing.

Erin Perdu, ENP Associates, reiterated to the group that Option 8 is the closest option to what the streets looked like before. This would be filling in the swales, and gravel parking.

Denise O'Brien 310 Summit, asked for assurance on parking on the gravel area. It was confirmed.

Council Member Niblock stated his opposition to Option 8, and could not recommend to Council, stating it would be irresponsible.

Shea Charles, City Manager outlined for the group the area of E. Washington, east of the Church has shallow swales because of the sand ground material. The area has no deeper than 1' swales to manage water, 2' grass shelf, 20' road, no parking lane, or parking in swales, and drainage structures that are no closer than 10' from the driveway where possible. This is Option 7. The Burns and Inverness area has more of clay ground material so they are putting pipe under the swales, adding sand, etc.

Council Member Niblock stated that there is no drainage solution to handle the water, but he does not want to bring in fill and let the water go under the streets.

Geri Mckeon-Andersen, 304 Higgins spoke in opposition to the ground material in the swales.

Nancy Faught, HRC defined the design of the swales to hold back water in some way, to slow down the water flow to the properties downstream until their water can drain.

Consensus of the group was that they all have issues with top soil in the swales.

Barbara Latrielle, 409 N Court, spoke in opposition to the swales and did not see flooding before.

Erin Perdu, ENP Associates stated that storm water was a prime objective, along with the infrastructure, and storm could be designed with curb and gutter, but cost was also a main factor.

Mayor Pro-Tem Manor stated that there are areas in Piety Hill that have swales that don't empty fast, but are designed that way, to empty gradually over days. If the council chose curb and gutter, they would have to create the curb and gutter to direct the water to go somewhere, and cost again would be a factor.

Geri McKeon-Andersen, 304 Higgins asked which towns, if any, Council visited for feed back before their decision on the design. Council Member Niblock and Mayor Pro-Tem Manor stated none and that the design seemed logical, Council Member Patton stated he grew up on the west side of the state and was familiar with them, visited Troy, and during his time of election spoke to residents who stated this what they stated. Mr. Patton continued by stating that if curb and gutter was installed in Piety Hill, it would be so costly that the rest of the City could not have been addressed, and so the cost was the primary decision.

Judy Nash, 303 N Court asked if the material made a difference on street life. Terry Wilson, DCM/SP stated that asphalt is standard, the freeze/thaw in Michigan is a factor, and the City chooses not to use concrete, because all utilities are under the road, and would cause for more repair, and damage to the road if the utilities under the road had to be worked on.

Doug Heins, 212 Prospect, stated that there was not enough time to evaluate all the options, and pointed to the engineers as the group responsible for the design which Council should now hold accountable. Mr. Heins then referenced a report from the city website which offers information on federal and state guidelines on round-about. Mr. Heins requested the round-about be removed and replaced with concrete per his referenced federal standards. Mr. Heins concluded by stating that his request to Council was to give the residents their enjoyment back.

Erin Perdu, ENP Associates reminded the Committee that the closest option to what the streets used to look like before reconstruction was the presented Option 8, then asked each Committee Member what they were considering.

Mayor Pro-Tem Manor outlined his suggestions which included re-evaluating some swales and making some shallower which will sacrifice some retention, create berm areas on Lake Street between Barnard and Court on the north side, add parking at the corner of State and Higgins (parking bays), and as previously agreed to retrofit to the dome covers, and widen the driveway flairs. Mr. Manor stated he would like to hold the work at-bay until a decision has been made as to what to do to all the other streets that have not been touched yet. Year 3 has not been committed to yet due to money, but possibly makes a decision within the next year. Mr. Manor stated his vision would be to provide streets to everyone, then go back and look at the areas. Mr. Manor then added that not all swale areas seem to have difficulty growing grass, so not all swale areas have clay that need replacing.

Council Member Niblock agreed with Mayor Pro-Tem Manor, as in recommending to Council to shallow up some swales, where there is no grass replace the top soil, recommend paved parking bays where citizens want them, and do the retrofit dome options.

Julie Bensinger, 801 Alger asked if the areas currently under construction will be part of the discussed amendments. City Manager Shea Charles stated that that area is already having wider approaches. Mayor Pro-Tem Manor stated that there will not be parking bays incorporated in those areas. Ms. Bensinger reiterated that during the construction phase is the opportunity to put in the parking bays.

Council Member Niblock stated that the Committee still has to make recommendations to Council, and then Council will have to make their final decision, but nothing can be done until City Council approves something.

Julie Bensinger, 801 Alger asked if the City would pay for the parking bays. Council Member Niblock stated that he would believe that the City would pay.

Elizabeth Garvey, 403 Lake spoke in opposition to the parking bays if they were to be public not for private use by the residents they sit in front of, parking bays will make the street look chopped up, and believed that the residents are only given 2 options

Council Member Niblock stated that the Committee has continually heard from the residents that they want parking on the street, but the City cannot afford to put in 10' parking on the side of every street, the parking bays would solve the concerns of the residents.

Al Schlittler, 1028 Burns stated his belief that the swales on each side of the road are doing more damage to the roads, addressed issues of standing water at his residence, suggested gravel or dry wells. Mr. Schlittler did commend Council on their fore thought to look towards the future.

Kathleen Goetsch, 224 Inverness, spoke in favor of the project, stating it is going to be a positive improvement. Ms. Goetsch commended Council on their perspective, and clarified that on street parking has always been a problem, but the reconstruction was a positive step forward, and sees that resale is not going to be an issue.

Council Member Patton stated that the Committee will have a difficult decision to pick an option that will not require eliminating work on all the streets. Cost is a factor, and would not want to take money from the funds to make amendments to year one which could delay the future plans. Mr. Patton stated he would like to wait 1-2 years before considering options. Mr. Patton did agree there are low cost options to consider such as widening drive approaches, making some swales shallower, continue with the dome cap retrofit option, and evaluate the replacement of some of the areas in need of top soil and grass.

The Committee agreed would consider evaluating contractors, unless the contractors are still liable under their contract.

Doug Heins, 212 Prospect, referenced a memo from HRC Engineers dated January 14, 2010 citing the design changes to Year 2, including grass shelf, fixing of driveways, fixing mulch blankets and swale depths. Mr. Heins asked the Committee if they would make a recommendation to follow the same HRC recommendation for year 2.

The Committee spoke briefly about the changes, including the grass shelf option of widening the road basin for the shelf area.

Doug Heins, 212 Prospect stated he did not want details of construction; he wanted the mistakes to be fixed.

Mayor Pro Tem Manor and Council Member Patton both stated that their recommendation would not have new parking areas in it.

Mayor Pro Tem Manor stated that Option 8 is not acceptable, and other parking options have a cost he is not willing to pay for, and the parking bay option he would consider after all the streets in the project are completed.

Tom Little, 345 Inverness voiced a concern with the proposed trees removal on Bower, and asked if they would be replaced in the same area, suggesting they place them on the property owner side of the sidewalk.

Mayor Pro Tem Manor stated he will ask the question to the appropriate people. Council Member Niblock stated his disappointment in the process.

Erin Perdu acknowledged the residents for their attendance and input, and stated that the Ad -Hoc Committee plans to make recommendations to City Council at the September 13, 2010 meeting.

ADJOURN

The Committee meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary