

**MINUTES**  
**PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT/TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**SEPTEMBER 17, 2024**  
**3:30 PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Craig Schafer, James Lozinski, John Alcorn

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jason Anderson, Director of Public Works/City Engineer;  
Eric Hanson, Assistant City Engineer;  
Geoff Stelter, Senior Engineering Specialist;  
E.J. Moberg, Director of Administrative Services

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Pamela Whitmore-City Attorney-Kennedy & Graven, Chartered (via Zoom)

**Call to Order**

Schafer called the meeting to order at 3:34 pm.

**1. Consider Approval of the Minutes**

MOTION MADE BY LOZINSKI to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2024 meeting as presented, SECOND BY ALCORN. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. THE MOTION PASSED 3:0.

**2. MERIT Center/Industrial Park Drainage Discussion**

On September 11, 2024, City staff met with Fairview Township staff regarding a damaged culvert crossing at a private ditch crossing at 300<sup>th</sup> Street, just north of the MERIT Center. The Township has requested City participation in the replacement of the culvert crossing at this location. Roughly 468 acres of industrial park area drain through the MERIT ponds and into this private ditch. There have been numerous conversations between staff, PI/T Committee, and landowners that receive benefit from this private drainageway. The City has continually expressed a willingness to be a partner in this drainageway. The current culvert crossing consists of a 36" RCP pipe in addition to a 24" CMP pipe. The 24" CMP pipe has been damaged, and no longer will pass water beneath 300<sup>th</sup> Street. The Township would like to replace the crossing with one pipe instead of replacing only the damaged pipe. The options to replace with similar pipe area would be a 42" or 48" culvert size. City staff recommended a 48" pipe crossing to the township, but the landowners were not in support of this due to the increase in pipe size possibly causing downstream flooding of cropland. City staff indicated at the township meeting that we would offer cost estimating for the culvert crossing as a 42" or 48" pipe size and that staff would discuss City participation with the City Council.

City staff would propose to participate in the culvert crossing and can present some different options for our level of participation. Staff believes that our participation should be contingent upon landowner easements being signed for our 30" MERIT pipe outlet into the private ditch and perhaps consideration of a basic waiver of liability regarding the City's involvement with the replacement of the township's culvert crossing.

Anderson met with Township earlier this month. Only one functioning culvert instead of two. Drone spraying of ditch was discussed by other property owners present at the Fairview Township meeting. Other participation items: straightening hook, crossing across TH 59. Schafer inquired about location that puts TH 59 under water. Anderson will check with MnDOT on that item. Lozinski inquired why D&G is not responsible for the damage. Anderson stated that liability for damage was a Township issue to resolve, but there is a hydraulic benefit to the City to have one culvert crossing instead of two smaller pipes. Anderson explained pipe size variables and costs. City is about 22% of the watershed area and in a 2-year rain event might be 39% of peak flow. For larger rain events, such as 10 and 25 year rain events, the City becomes a much smaller contributor to peak flow at the culvert crossing. Anderson indicated City does not have easements on the properties. Schafer commented on participation options regarding maintenance of area. Value of easements were discussed. Lozinski indicated our best interest to become a documented participant and get an easement on the property. Anderson indicated option of petitioning for the private ditch to become a

County ditch with looming bigger impacts and upcoming 2027 legislation. Alcorn inquired on if the City is required to pay for easements. Whitmore commented and discussed prescriptive easements.

LOZINSKI MADE A MOTION, SECOND BY ALCORN to offer to pay up to 50% cost share on the culvert replacement on the Township road, contingent upon signed easements being acquired at the location of the 30" city outlet into the private ditch, offer to continue with an additional \$600 payment to Bossuyt for an easement and to the other affected landowners also, and to agree with the Township to reimburse them for drone spraying of the cattails in the region ditch. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. MOTION PASSED 3:0.

At end of meeting, Moberg added MERIT property was purchased in 2010. Schafer added the track was purchased later than the original MERIT Center building.

At 4:07 pm, City Attorney Whitmore departed virtually from the meeting.

### **3. Traffic Control Review – ST-012-2024 S Whitney Street Reconstruction**

At the public informational meeting for the S Whitney Reconstruction Project, numerous residents requested review of the intersection of S Whitney and W Marshall Street. City staff recommends 4-way stop control at the intersection of S Whitney and W Marshall Street. In addition, staff recommends replacement of the yield signs at Church/A Street and Church/S Whitney with stop signs. The packet included a memo from Assistant City Engineer regarding concerns for speed and traffic safety in the area.

Anderson discussed the item and existing traffic control in the area and proposed installations in the area and reasonable justification for the installations. Lozinski indicated his support of his neighborhood. Lozinski indicated that

LOZINSKI MADE A MOTION, SECOND BY ALCORN for 4-way stop control at the intersection of S Whitney and W Marshall Street. In addition, staff recommends replacement of the yield signs at Church/A Street and Church/S Whitney with stop signs. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. MOTION PASSED 3:0.

### **Other Business**

**4<sup>th</sup> Street Fencing** -- Quotes to be received 9/26/2024 for the one location on South 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The other location will be discussed after College Drive. State Aid money to be utilized as we've already advanced State Aid money for the bike trail project that won't get built this year by ALDI because the permitting issues. Design has been approved. It will be black vinyl-coated fence, and not green as previously discussed as it is a higher cost item, and black is becoming the standard. Hanson indicated Stensrud has replacement parts on hand if needed. Project will be on both sides of 4<sup>th</sup> with two 10-ft gates (one on each side). Information only. No voting on this item.

**2025 College Drive Reconstruction** -- Anderson indicated no assessments are anticipated for local costs except for sanitary sewer service lines per current Special Assessment Policy. The only other cost that we could potentially consider would be parking lanes. MnDOT covers 90% of parking lanes, and the City is responsible for 10% of parking lanes. However, federal RAISE grant and the federal road and bridge grant dollars cover 80% of the City's 10%. Lozinski commented he did not believe we assessed for any of the parking lots in downtown. Anderson indicated proposing not assessing for the parking lanes. Schafer inquired on the sanitary sewer connection footages on College Drive and is it from center of the street. Anderson said we could review and do something similar to Whitney St., which is the offset homes that have the longer run and comp them to a normal size. Schafer agreed the need to be equitable and use a similar adjustment. Lozinski commented to check with City Attorney regarding those on the short side couldn't pay for the ones on the long side and it would need to come out of ad valorem. Anderson concurred and that there will be a feasibility report to Council sometime in the future that identifies what we're assessing and you guys will start that. Anderson discussed timeline of project with the bid opening on December 6 and construction beginning Spring 2025. Information only. No voting on this item.

**No Parking on Corner of Minnesota and Charles** – Anderson indicated the current property owner on corner of Minnesota Street and Charles Avenue inquired on removing the no parking restrictions. Anderson notified property owner this was made no parking because narrow right-of way and so plows could get around in the area. Anderson commented he does have parking on the one side of his property and also alley parking. Anderson did indicate the history of complaints of the hospital parking there on breaks. Lozinski indicated that is what will happen again if it is removed, and the problem will resurface. Schafer suggested new property owner contact hospital administration if he needs overflow parking and just use the hospital's parking lot. Schafer also suggested to explain to him that we did that for good reason as streets are a little narrow and snow removal, and if the no parking signage is removed, because of the business schedules in the hospital, all the hospital staff will park there. Anderson also stated that on the weekend, if owner is entertaining, the hospital is quiet and the parking lots are wide open and could most likely park there. Lozinski agreed to have signage remain as existing. Historical parking lot surfacing was discussed, as well as instances during Covid where parking lot was not used as complaints were already occurring in this area. Information only. No voting on this item.

**50/50 Alley Cost Split** -- Anderson indicated the need to more formally discuss with a presentation and motion regarding the 50/50 alley cost split/participation in both PI/T and Ways & Means. Information only. No voting on this item.

**Skunk Hollow Road** -- Anderson gave a brief presentation on Skunk Hollow Road and options including de-annex the land, cut the road off, turn it back over. There are constant complaints about traffic and dust. Options briefly discussed. Anderson indicated openness to send out letters and get feedback from the property owners. Information only. No voting on this item.

**Downtown/Main Street** -- Anderson has heard favorable comments from Main Street business owners regarding the N 3<sup>rd</sup> Street/W Lyon project, specifically the planting zones, and they like how they're all flush/at grade planting zones. Other comments include Main Street planter boxes that are falling apart, and some of the Main Street sidewalk has settled and Anderson is receiving inquiries about when is the next downtown project. Anderson replies with the investment the Council has just recently made and limited potential for a project of that magnitude in the near future. Schafer indicated the City does have a participation formula that we would be willing to talk about if there is interest to have those sidewalks slab-jacked because some of them are very deteriorated. Lozinski indicated that if it's coordinated, you can pump a lot of sidewalk for a reasonable amount of money. Schafer indicated we could do a survey. Anderson indicated complaints are about the planter boxes and their deterioration. Main Street planter box installation boxes was discussed. Schafer commented on entertaining a test project of picking two or three of the worst planters and determine if a City project, what would it take to “deplanter” certain areas of the sidewalk and what would all be involved. Schafer also commented on conversations about N 3rd St. Plaza and then also the Terrace 1872 and the investment and focus on downtown.

### **Adjourn**

Being no further business, MOTION BY LOZINSKI, SECOND BY ALCORN to adjourn. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. MOTION PASSED 3:0. Meeting adjourned at 4:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lona Rae Konold, Administrative Assistant