

Adopted Minutes Special Council Meeting January 3, 2012

Deputy Mayor Bildsoe called a Special Meeting of the Plymouth City Council to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Medicine Lake Room, 3400 Plymouth Boulevard, on January 3, 2012.

COUNCIL PRESENT: Deputy Mayor Bildsoe, Councilmembers Black, Willis, Stein, Wosje, and Johnson. Mayor Slavik arrived at 6:25 p.m.

ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Ahrens, Public Works Director Cote, Parks Director Evans, City Engineer Moberg, and City Clerk Engdahl.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Representatives from SRF Consulting Group and WSB and Associates, and two residents, Vernon Peterson and Steven Roell.

Proposals for the Peony Lane/Lawndale Extension Project

Public Works Director Cote stated the Council considered proposals received from two consulting engineers at the December 13, 2011 Council meeting, related to alignment selection, environmental documentation, design engineering, and acquisition of right-of-way for the Peony Lane/Lawndale Lane corridor from Schmidt Lake Road to the northern City limits. This roadway project and installation of trunk watermain is identified in the Capital Improvements Program for construction in 2014. Because the two engineering proposals are very different in process, scope of work, and outcome, the Council should provide direction to staff on the desired process for the project. He stated staff desires direction on the following questions:

1. Does the Council wish to select an alignment or eliminate one or more of the four alignments currently identified?
2. Does the Council support the roadway type recommended in the technical memorandum?
3. Does the Council wish to revisit the greenway plan in order to assist in making the alignment decision (staff would consider alternative layouts for the trailhead site to better consider the easterly alignment)?
4. Does the Council wish to consider whether to do an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW)?
5. Does the Council want staff to proceed with the geotechnical work (soil borings) now?

He stated the options before the Council is to select one of the consulting engineer proposals or reject both proposals (reissue a request for proposal (RFP), proceed with the EAW, select an alignment and issue an RFP for design, or do nothing).

He then explained the four alignments that have been considered. Alternatives 1 and 3 are variations of the same alignment and it basically comes down to tradeoffs between impacts to the City-owned property versus impacts to the property located at 5705 Lawndale Lane. The fourth alternative originated out of the neighborhood's suggestion to run the proposed alignment more in line with the existing MCES Interceptor Line and its associated easements. A request by the neighborhood to align the road further east of Alternative 4 was not pursued due to the major impacts to the large wetland complex which would not be acceptable to the wetland permitting agencies due to other alternatives being available.

Councilmember Willis asked if there is any data on the soil tests when the MCES Interceptor line was constructed. City Engineer Moberg replied there is data that shows the soil borings and logs for that project which is closest to Alternative 4.

By request of the Council, City Engineer Moberg addressed each of the four alignments. All alignments would have a speed limit of 45 mph. He stated that Alternative 2 is the most expensive alignment as there is more length to it.

Councilmember Johnson asked what the engineering firms could do to assist the Council with this process and to narrow down the alternatives in order to get the most efficient alignment. Public Works Director Cote replied if it's the Council's desire to lean towards more of an easterly route, the focus of the RFP could be narrowed and the soil borings could be taken.

Councilmember Black asked if it's envisioned for a trail on the roadway for bikers. City Engineer Moberg replied the CIP contains trails along the Peony Lane corridor (three lanes with trail). However, the trail could be removed if the road is expanded to four lanes in the future.

Councilmembers Black and Willis stated they could support Alternatives 1 or 3. Councilmember Willis further stated that Alternative 4 is very close to the wetland and could damage the potential of a trailhead off the Northwest Greenway. The entire Council stated they don't support Alternative 2.

Resident Steven Roell, who resides off County Road 47, asked if the City has undertaken a study on the people who travel east on County Road 47 to Vicksburg Lane to Highway 55 as the traffic and congestion is terrible in the mornings. Mayor Slavik stated the focus of this evening's discussion is on the selection of a consultant for this project to traffic issues on County Road 47. Therefore, she requested any questions be directed on that aspect.

Resident Vern Peterson asked who petitioned for this road. Councilmember Bildsoe replied nobody petitioned for the extension of this roadway. This project has been in the City's Comprehensive Plan since 1971.

The Council requested the consultants to provide comments related to their proposals. They noted that SRF Consulting Group's proposal was \$480,550 and WSB and Associates' proposal was \$390,068 for a difference of \$90,482.

Representative from WSB and Associates stated if the Council narrowed the RFP to a couple designs, the cost of their proposal would essentially be the same. The only things that change are the alternatives that are looked at, whether an EAW is prepared, and the number of parcels that would be impacted with the right-of-way. A lot of preliminary evaluation was done without the fieldwork. They feel their proposal responded to the City's RFP, and they're comfortable proceeding.

Representative from SRF Consulting Group stressed the need for a thorough transparent process for residents which is what their proposal contained. He also spoke of projects that they have worked with the City previously near this area, so they have data they are able to utilize and are very comfortable with this type of project. There would be a lot of impact with the wetland on Alternative 4 which would be difficult. They also agree that Alternative 2 wouldn't be the best alignment, and Alternatives 1 and 3 are the best alignments. He noted that other considerations have to be considered with the alternatives such as protecting the wetland and the trailhead off the Northwest Greenway. In addition, there is value in their firm having the data and resources from similar projects in the City.

Councilmember Stein questioned the difference in price between the two proposals and what that could be attributed to. One item was the cost of the title work for the acquisition of property for right-of-way. WSB and Associates didn't include that cost in their proposal as their experience has been allowing cities to work with their city attorneys while SRF Consulting Group would take care of the title work and assume those costs.

Public Works Director Cote went through the five questions noted above with the Council in order to receive direction. Below are the answers to the questions:

1. Eliminate Alternative 2.
2. Yes.
3. No, not really, but input is needed from the Parks Department. It's not a problem with Alternatives 1 or 3, but it is with Alternative 4.
4. Yes.
5. Yes.

The Council raised the question with their answers above and the discussion held this evening, how does that affect the consultants' proposals.

Public Works Director Cote recommended that the consultants respond in writing how the discussion on the five questions affect their proposals. Councilmember Stein also requested the attorneys' costs for the title work of land acquisition.

Councilmember Johnson stated that she feels both firms can do this project. She noted that SRF Consulting Group has done other projects in relation to this project and that's value. However, if the City is looking for that value, how can other firms compete? Why were the RFPs sent to more than one firm.

Mayor Slavik stated another big difference in the cost in the proposals is the public process. A transparent, public process is what the Council strives for with every project and SRF Consulting Group has included that type of process in their proposal.

As recommended by Public Works Director Cote, the Council requested the consultants to respond in writing how the discussion on the five questions affect their proposals as well as Councilmember Stein's request for the attorneys' costs for the title work of land acquisition. This item would be on the January 24 agenda.

Future Study Sessions

The Council moved the fire study item from the February 21 study session at 6:00 p.m. to March 20 at 6:00 p.m. The Council scheduled the following items for the February 21 study session:

1. Parkers Lake Cemetery.
2. Streamlining street lighting rates.
3. Noise Ordinance.
4. City Manager update.

Adjournment

Mayor Slavik adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.



Sandra R. Engdahl, City Clerk