

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Public & Industrial Improvements Committee

July 24, 2017

Members: Jeff Iula, Chair
Adam Miller
Mary Nichols-Rhodes

Mr. Iula called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the May 1, 2017 and June 5, 2017 Public Improvements Committee meetings were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed:

Temp. Ord. B-57

Temp. Ord. B-58

Temp. Ord. B-59

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. B-57

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to apply for and accept financial assistance in the form of a grant from the Federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Funds programmed by the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) for the improvement of West Portage Trail, from State Road to Albertson Parkway, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Iula stated that this ordinance is about widening Portage Trail from State Road all the way past Cedar Hill and Valley Road down to Albertson Parkway. There has been a lot of congestion exiting the Get-Go gas station. There have been a lot of calls about trying to pull out of Cedar Hill. Hopefully, this will alleviate some of it.

Mr. Tony Demasi, City Engineer, stated that this portion of Portage Trail carries 1,800 cars a day, which is a lot for a two-lane road without turn lanes. The proposed project will add a center turn lane in the area to make it safe and more efficient. In addition, a sidewalk will be added to aid pedestrians to the business district. Mr. Iula asked when the project will start if passed. Mr. Demasi stated that every two years, AMATS solicits projects for funding. This is a statewide project, so the City will be competing against projects statewide. The money, if it's available and if it's awarded, would be available for construction in 2023 to 2024, so 6 to 7 years away.

Mr. Pallotta asked if the widening will occur on both sides, the south and the north. Mr. Demasi stated that they will try to make it symmetrical. There are some limitations with the grade. Mrs. Pyke asked if there is a left-turn signal for traffic at Valley Road and Portage Trail. Mr. Demasi stated that there are left-turn lanes. Mrs. Pyke asked if a left-turn signal would help now. Mr. Demasi stated that he doesn't know if the volume of left-turn traffic at that signal justifies delaying the thrust. That has been studied in the past. Because of the left-turn lanes, there is not much

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congestion at that intersection. Cedar Hill, the daycare center and Albertson Parkway do not have turn lanes.

Mr. Miller moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-57 with a favorable recommendation, second by Ms. Nichols-Rhodes. Motion passed (3-0).

Temp. Ord. B-58

An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to apply for and accept financial assistance in the form of a grant from the Federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Funds Programmed by the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) for the improvement of Barney's Busy Corners, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Iula stated that this ordinance is like the last ordinance, but is a much bigger project, from \$5 million to \$11 million. This intersection could eventually go from the six streets down to four. It is the second-most dangerous intersection in Summit County.

Mr. Demasi stated that this intersection carries 30,000 cars a day, which is 13,000 less than Main Street and Howe Road. The reason it doesn't carry as many cars is it is not as efficient as Main Street and Howe Road. If it was more efficient, it would carry more cars through. The City has been working with Mayor Klein of Tallmadge. He's very interested and vested in the project, as well. The proposal is to change this six-way intersection into a four-way intersection and make it look much like every other intersection in the city. One way to do that is to eliminate Northwest Avenue at the intersection and take it directly into Howe Avenue, about a thousand feet to the east of the intersection, so it lines up directly with Buckingham Gate. That will be a four-way intersection. It would go through some vacant property that Tallmadge already owns. There have some long-range strategies to work on this project. The other proposal would be to eliminate either Tallmadge Road or Bailey Road from the intersection. One of those two roads would be connected maybe a thousand or so feet away from the intersection. Preliminary engineering would have to be done to determine which one of those two roads would be eliminated. If this project is successful, this intersection will be more efficient, have less congestion and less emissions if cars are not idling at an intersection. There would be improved safety, business travel and freight travel. Mr. Iula asked if there could be a circle located there. Mr. Demasi stated that, many years ago, the City looked at a roundabout or some sort of circle, but, because of the grade difference there, it wouldn't work.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes asked if the likelihood of Cuyahoga Falls being awarded this grant would be greater because Barney's Busy Corners includes part of Akron and Tallmadge. Mr. Demasi stated that they are competing with some major projects in the Cincinnati, Dayton and Cleveland area. He believes there may be a good shot. Tallmadge is on board. Akron is on board. Multijurisdictional projects do score well. Mrs. Pyke asked who responds to accidents in that area. Police Chief Davis stated that most of the intersection is in Cuyahoga Falls, so they would respond.

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Ms. Nichols-Rhodes moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-58 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Miller. Motion passed (3-0).

Temp. Ord. B-59

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, with Peterson Contractors Inc., without competitive bidding, for the stabilization of West Steels Corners Road in the City of Cuyahoga Falls, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Iula stated that this ordinance is in the budget. It is in the amount of approximately \$210,000 and will help the stability of West Steels Corner Road.

Mr. Demasi stated that, for a couple years, the City has been monitoring the slope failure on West Steels Corners, about 1,000 feet from Akron Peninsula Road. The failure is some old fill that was used to build Steels Corners Road many years ago. It is causing the ground along the side of the roadway to move excessively. They have looked at different options for repair to this, including completely shutting down the road and removing the pavement and old fill soils, but felt that was too costly and too destructive to traffic. During their research, they found a company that has had success in these soil repairs using a patented system of soil reinforcing. This system consists of steel tension rods that restrict and hold the wedge of soil back. They strategically place these at certain depths and widths. This system has recently been used by ODOT in Wyandott County, so they are comfortable with this type of system.

Mr. Iula asked when the project would start and how long it would take to complete. Mr. Demasi stated that they want to wait until Blossom has completed their concert series, so they may start in the September-October timeframe. They are going to keep the road open during construction, but it may be reduced to one lane. Mrs. Pyke asked if there was slope damage on Northampton Road, past the back entrance to Blossom Music Center. Mr. Demasi stated that he was not aware of that. Mrs. Pyke asked if they would be looking at other companies to repair slope damage. Mr. Demasi stated that there is no cookie-cutter solution to slope failures. Each one needs to be investigated.

Mr. Miller moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-59 with a favorable recommendation, second by Ms. Nichols-Rhodes. Motion passed (3-0).

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.