

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Public Improvements Committee Meeting
November 19, 2007

Members: Jerry James, Chair
Debbie Ritzinger
Terry Mader

Mr. James called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. Mrs. Ritzinger was absent.

Legislation Considered

Temp. Ord. B-150
Temp. Ord. B-151
Temp. Ord. B-152

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. B-150

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts with URS Corporation to provide professional engineering services for the Federal Emergency Management Agency Mitigation Project on 6th and 7th Streets, between Silver Lake Avenue and Lincoln Avenue, and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Carr stated they are asking for the funds to have URS provide a final design and engineering for a rain garden. So far they've done three improvements: (1) the Jennings sewer upgrade; (2) Project Partner Storm Water Inspection Program; and (3) the application for mitigation funds through FEMA which has enabled them to purchase four homes that will be demolished and made into an area to help eliminate flooding. A rain garden is a new concept in the State of Ohio. This area will be used to educate the public because it is something than can be done in one's own backyard. They successfully tested the concept with a small area at Lions Park.

Mrs. Carr added that the public meeting they held went well. She is working with homeowners whose properties touch the proposed rain garden boundaries. She then introduced Kari Mackinbaugh of URS who gave a presentation.

Mrs. Colavecchio asked whether the basements would leave holes in the ground after demolition. Mrs. Carr stated they will be re-grading and re-contouring everything as well as amending the soil so there will be no holes left. Ms. Mackinbaugh added that they did not want to just fill in basements and then come back later to dig them out. They have asked that everything be removed, including the walls. Mrs. Carr stated that this will be Phase II of the project, and that there needs to be some surveying done before they get into construction.

Mr. Walters asked if the design was sufficient to withstand a heavy storm. Mrs. Carr stated it would hold a one to two year storm event. The mechanism will be in place to make sure homes would not be flooded. There will be a pipe installed that would take-over if water levels reach a certain point and would direct that overflow into the City's infrastructure. Ms. Mackinbaugh added that the design would make sure there would be minimal standing water which would attract mosquitoes.

Tom Sullivan, Tallmadge Road, asked if the rain garden would need to be watered if the area was in a drought condition. Ms. Mackinbaugh stated they would be using native plants and that maintenance crews may need to water the area the first year but thereafter, there should be no watering necessary.

Native species are very tolerant. Mr. Sullivan asked if precautions would be put into place so the area wouldn't become another skate park. Mrs. Carr stated they have already talked with the police and that a safe environment will be maintained.

The Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Ord. B-150 for approval.

Temp. Ord. B-151

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, with the Ohio Department of Transportation to proceed in the upgrading and replacement of signage on State Route 8 in the City of Cuyahoga Falls, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Demasi stated ODOT will be replacing signs on Route 8, such as speed limit, hospitals, wrong-way, etc. Mr. James asked if a more attractive "Welcome to Cuyahoga Falls" sign could be placed on Route 8. Mr. Demasi stated if the City wanted something different, they could present it to the State but that you need to be careful so as to not cause a hazard should a car strike the sign (i.e., no concrete posts). The current signs are designed so if someone hits them, it does not do major damage. The old signs will be replaced with a new Type G which are more effective as far as reflections coming right back to the driver vs. reflecting off to the side.

Mrs. Klinger asked if it was in the 2008 capital plan. Mr. Brodzinski stated it was but the cost for any additional signs would be higher so for now, the City is going this route.

Mr. Gorbach asked what the restrictions were for a "welcome to city" signs. Mr. Demasi stated he would check.

The Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Ord. B-151 for approval.

Temp. Ord. B-152

An ordinance proposing to cooperate and authorizing the Director of the Ohio Department of Transportation to proceed in the construction and system integration of a freeway management system on State Route 8 in the City of Cuyahoga Falls, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Demasi stated that in 2008, the State wants to install an intelligent transportation system, which includes closed-circuit television, dynamic signs, highway advisories and traffic flow alerts. Right now, they want to install the closed circuit t.v. and traffic flow detection for the City. This should not cost the City anything.

On another subject, Mrs. Klinger asked if any awards were made with regard to Issue 1 funding. Mr. Demasi stated he just received that this morning. The 6th - 9th Street sanitary project will be funded. The Purdue contingency project may also be funded but its funding depends on how other projects close and how much money is returned to Issue 1. It does not appear that Chart Road will be funded right now. Mrs. Carr added that they have tried to see if there would be any reconsideration on that project but the scores were so low that it just wouldn't make the list. Mrs. Klinger asked if there was any chance the City would ever get funding for that project if the scores were so low. Mrs. Carr stated things can change and that sometimes projects drop out. If that happens and Chart Road bumps up, they will give us a call.

Mr. Gorbach thanked Mrs. Carr for copying Council on her letter regarding Timbercreek Estates. He has also talked with homeowners. It was quite a mess the way Lockhart handled the matter and he thought Mrs. Carr's letter explained the situation very well.

The Committee recommended bringing out Temp. Ord. B-152 for approval.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.