

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Public Improvements Committee Meeting
November 20, 2006

Members: Jerry James, Chair
Debbie Ritzinger
Terry Mader

Mr. James called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of November 6, 2006 were approved as submitted.

Legislation Considered:

Temp. Ord. A-142

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. A-142

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts with a firm or firms, according to law, to improve Chart Road from State Road to approximately 500' east of Keyser Parkway, including roadside ditches, catch basins, waterlines and storm sewers where required, and roadway asphalt, together with necessary appurtenances, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. James read A-142 (second reading). Mr. Demasi said this legislation will allow the City to enter into a contract for the first phase of Chart Road. The roadway will conform will current design standards. Estimated cost of the improvement is \$892,000.

Bill Fenchel Jr. (197 Chart Rd.) asked if there would be a light or turn lane at State Road. Mr. Demasi said that neither of these options were recommended by the consultant.

John Starvaggi (255 Hathaway Dr.) asked if the S-curve in the road would remain as a deterrent to speeding. Mr. Demasi said the curve would remain unchanged.

Fran Ciraldo (468 Chart Rd.) said she opposes the bike lanes and considers them a safety hazard. Mrs. Carr said the bike lanes are part of a regional plan that could benefit the entire community in the future.

Frank Tompkins (124 Chart Rd.) said he is disappointed with the way the project has been handled. He said that when residents met with the administration in 2001, the Mayor made a firm commitment that there would be no assessments to residents for curbs. During the meeting a

week ago, the administration presented an option with curbs which involves substantial assessments of \$16,000 to \$26,000. Residents voted down that option. The other option presented involves bike lanes. Mr. Tompkins is upset that the administration would commit to curbs without assessment, then go back on their promise. He is also concerned about drainage. Most of the drainage on Kellybrook goes under small 12" culverts along peoples driveways. He would like the City to address this situation.

Mr. Arrington said he attended the 2001 meeting. Because of the relative sparseness of homes along Chart Road, the administration was hopeful that residents would not have to be assessed for the improvement. Since then, the City has performed other major street reconstructions using Issue II money with the stipulation that residents be assessed. Since the Issue II funds obtained for Chart Road do not include curbs and storm sewers, no assessment is necessary. If curbs and storm sewers were included, the state would require assessments.

Ruth Eckert (576 Chart Rd.) said that after the 2001 meeting, there was no contact from the City until early this year. Her councilman said he would follow up, then left notices in mailboxes on November 10 regarding the November 14 meeting. The meeting was held at the urging of councilpersons-at-large, and she is grateful for their efforts. She said the project threatens to destroy the trees and landscaping in the area. She believes that Chart Road needs to be widened, but the bike paths are unnecessary and will devalue residents properties. The paltry sum paid for easements will not compensate for the loss. She would like the City to go back to the drawing board and eliminate the bike paths and widen the road with ditches.

Dominic DiLullo (1738 Valley Rd.) agreed with Mrs. Eckert. He said the Chestnut Boulevard project was a waste of money and believes the City should spend its money more wisely.

Mike Dougherty (392 Hathaway Dr.) said he is on the board of the Regent Park homeowners association. The board supports the bike paths, and he would like to see the project move forward for safety reasons.

Mr. Tompkins asked if residents might be forced to get curbs in the future. Mr. Arrington said it is the policy of the administration that no curbs or storm sewers can be installed without the approval of 60% of the property owners, but he can't guarantee the actions of future administrations.

Glenn Stoltz (3446 Kellybrook) asked about the swales to handle drainage. Mrs. Carr said the ditches will be properly installed to avoid storm water problems.

Mr. Mader said the City sent letters to residents in January 2006 regarding the project. He is always available to residents and willing to meet with them. He considers Chart Road a priority and believes the improvement will resolve safety issues. He believes that bike trails will improve the entire area. The road is more than just a residential street, it is a major thoroughfare used by many people in the community.

Mr. Gorbach said that since the majority of Chart Road residents appear to oppose the bike paths, he would likely oppose legislation requiring them. Safety is his primary concern, and he favors

the road improvement. Mrs. Hummel agreed.

Mrs. Pyke inquired about the impact of the bike lanes on road width. Mr. Demasi said the car pavement would be 22 feet, with an additional 5 feet on each side for the lanes. She asked how long the project would be delayed if the lanes were eliminated. Mr. Demasi said it would require re-designing the project and could take a couple of months. Construction might not begin until 2008.

Mr. Walters said that since there is no reference to bike lanes in the legislation, what dictates whether or not they will be installed? Mr. Arrington said that if the ordinance passes as is, the administration would have the option to include them. If Council wants the lanes removed, an amendment is required.

Mrs. Klinger said she is concerned that the 22-foot width may not accommodate school buses in the area. She is very concerned about road safety and would like to see the project move forward.

Mr. Mader read from a letter sent to Mr. Guerra from the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition supporting the bike trail as an integral part of the Summit County Trail and Greenway Plan.

Mr. Flinn said he would prefer that the bike trails be included but would support legislation excluding them. The entire community will benefit from the improvement. He commended Mr. Mader for his efforts to move the project forward.

Gary Whidden (3430 Kellybrook) spoke in support of project, including bike trails, as a way of drawing people to the area and improving the whole Northeast Ohio region.

Bill Fenchel (862 S. Lindley Ave.) said the road is a safety hazard and needs to be improved.

Michael Keener (3428 Creekside Tr.) said the loss of landscaping is secondary to the safety of children riding their bikes along Chart Road. Tom Sullivan (447 Tallmadge Rd.) agreed.

Mrs. Colavecchio asked for accident statistics on Chart Road in the last 5 years. Mrs. Carr said she would contact the Police Department. Mrs. Colavecchio asked if any alternative bike route exists from the east side to the valley. Mr. Demasi said Bath Road, Steels Corners or Portage Trail.

The committee recommended bringing out Temp. Ord. A-142 for approval.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

