

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

July 1, 2024

Members: Meika Penta, Chair
Frank Stams, Vice Chair
Mr. DeRemer
Mr. James
Ms. Loza

Mrs. Penta called the meeting to order at 6:54 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the May 20, 2024 Public Improvements Committee meetings were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed:

Temp. Ord. A-59
Temp. Ord. A-60

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. A-59

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the South Front Streetscape, and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Mackenzie Kaser, Civil Engineer, presented Temporary Ordinance A-59 to Council. The Director of Public Service will be authorized to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the South Front Streetscape in the City of Cuyahoga Falls. The Director of Finance will be authorized to make payment for the same from the Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, Line Item Capital Outlay.

Ms. Kaser stated that this project was bid out a couple week ago. Kenmore Construction got the bid at \$6.4 million. Construction will start in August or September of this year and will wrap up September or October of 2025. They have been working on a website that would provide all communications and updates throughout the project. The project limits are from Broad Boulevard to Grant Street. The Streetscape items included tree planters, benches, trash cans, new sidewalks, bike racks throughout and new streetlights. A lot of the Streetscape items that are part of the North Front Street Streetscape project will continue to the south end. Electrical utilities will be moved underground and public wireless access will be available throughout the corridor of Front Street. They will be rebuilding the public lot that is across from the Hibachi restaurant and make sure that pavement and storm water systems are intact. They would provide parking in the upper public parking lot located there. There will be EV chargers in the parking lot. They will be adding meters to the street parking. They have conducted parking and traffic studies, and meters have been determined to be a good way to encourage turnover and makes it easier for more visitors to find parking. During construction, they have leased properties so there will be plenty of public parking during the construction period. Bike lanes are going to run from Grant Street to just up to the fire

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station. The Streetscape features two points of interest for South Front Street. One of those is the arch and two columns that will welcome people to South Front Street traveling from Broad Boulevard south. Those two columns will also be located at the far south side of Front Street. String lights will illuminate the arch. The other point of interest will be the pedal park that is going to be in the right-of-way area that is east of Weller Court, which is the public parking lot next to the fire station. That area will be redeveloped as an area where people can park their bikes. There will be electric bike chargers, solar umbrellas and benches, along with trash cans, water bottle filling stations and other amenities. This project will help improve a lot of the car parking in the area. They have engaged consultant Robert Gibbs to do a study to look at the overall parking on Front Street. He was engaged during the North Front Street-Downtown Revitalization Project and provided a lot of the recommendations that were incorporated into the project. They are going to continue to engage him, so they can add more parking and more places for visitor access and to provide a nice area to visit once the whole Front Street corridor is complete.

Mrs. Penta stated that a lot of thought went into this project so that it will blend well from one side to the other. Being a member of the Design Historical Review Board, she has seen some of the improvements with the Glens and how that is going to tie in. Parking has always been an issue. That is what happens when you have wonderful businesses and new places for people to go to. She is excited that EV charging stations were considered. Being a member of the Art Board, the Bicycle Pedal Park is another place where people can sit and reflect on that side of Front Street, and the stringing of the lights will make it visible and illuminate both sides for pedestrians.

Mr. Stams asked if there would be more detail and information coming to Council as far as its design and its public use. Ms. Kaser stated that all the RFP's and the drawings are located on the Engineering Department website, but if he stops in the office, she would be happy to show them to him.

Mr. Brillhart asked how many EV chargers there are going to be. Ms. Kaser stated that she does not know offhand if it is two or four. Mr. Brillhart asked what is going to happen with the current tree located there and are any of them going to be saved. Ms. Kaser stated that she does not believe those trees will be saved, but they are going to be replaced. They are doing the tree planters the length of the corridor.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes asked when the right-turn lane in front of the hotel is going to happen first. Ms. Kaser stated that they are anticipating that it will hopefully be done earlier in the project. They will select a qualified contractor and work with them on a schedule. Ideally, they would like that to be early in the project. Ms. Nichols-Rhodes asked if it would go to the Boardwalk Loop. Ms. Kaser stated that they have looked at both projects design-wise. For the Loop Project, they have to do a little bit of redesigning and go back to the drawing board. The goal is to have them flow together and tie together.

Mr. Balthis asked if they know how many parking spaces will be generated through the leases and how many parking spaces will be generated with the lot improvements. Ms. Kaser stated that it is

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kind of hard to quantify how many parking spots are in the public lot, because it is not striped and not used officially. She does not have the drawings at this time, but the number of spots in the lot and along Front Street are in her office, so she will follow-up. Mr. Balthis asked if there would be road closures or how long it would be completely closed or down to one way. Ms. Kaser stated that they are planning to maintain two-way traffic the entirety of the project. They are going to go side to side, so they will do the east side first and, once that is completely finished, will switch to the west side to maintain the traffic. The street is fairly wide, especially with the extra parking and bike lanes, so they have the space to maintain traffic the whole time.

Mr. DeRemer asked if they are adding any handicapped parking. Ms. Kaser stated that there will be four spots in the public parking lot across from the Hibachi restaurant, which are on the lower level. There would be an additional spot on the upper level. They have a ramp that will connect the two levels.

Mr. Tom Sullivan, 447 Tallmadge Road, Cuyahoga Falls, asked if there would be any handicapped parking on the street. Ms. Kaser stated that she does not think they have any that are identified on the street.

Mrs. Spinner asked when they will have the results from the parking study. Ms. Diana Colavecchio, Community Development Director, stated that she would expect Mr. Gibbs to be here in the month of September for four or five days. Once he has been here for that four-or-five-day visit, he will tell them what he sees and what his visions are and commit it to writing, so they will know by the end of September.

Mr. Siegfert asked if there are going to be mechanisms in place for the City to monitor the usage on the EV chargers as they progress, so there might be other areas of the cities where they can be used. Ms. Kaser stated that she does not know how those units function. They are the same models as those installed in the Summit DD parking lot, so if those have that ability these would have the same.

Ms. Ella George, 2562 Third Street, Cuyahoga Falls, expressed to Council her concerns about the proposed bike racks located on the sidewalk and how they might interfere with pedestrian traffic. Ms. Kaser stated that Peddle Park is designed to maintain all ADA accessible widths between the bike walk and for pedestrian flow. The main goal of Pedal Park as well as Paddle Park is to embrace art as well as functional design.

Ms. George asked if they would be willing to remove the invasive trees that are already in the spaces. Ms. Kaser stated that most of the plant design is based on native plant species. Ms. George asked what kind of parking meters these are going to be. Ms. Kaser stated that they are similar to the ones on North Front Street.

Ms. Miranda Imperi, 2401 Grant Street, Cuyahoga Falls, expressed her concern about lack of parking for the businesses located on South Front Street. She asked for a rough estimation of how

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many parking spaces they are going to end up with. She also asked if they are ripping up the good sidewalks and what the plan is for notifying businesses as the construction gets into their area. Ms. Kaser stated that, as far as number of parking spaces is concerned, she will go through the drawings and count them. They are not going to rip up the sidewalks in the newer areas in front of the Watermark and the River Walk because they are already new and in good condition. As far as the streetlights that they need to tie into the new systems, they may pop those off and pop them back so they all match. They have spent a lot of time making sure they have a website to provide public communication. They have engaged somebody to be a liaison so they can do the best they can to notify the business owners when they may be impacted. It is construction and there are emergencies that they do not know are going to happen, but they will do their best to address those as those come up. Ms. Imperi stated that there are a lot of spray painted areas on their patio that look like utility markings. They are an eyesore on the sidewalk and right in front of their building. Ms. Kaser stated that, because it is a new building, the utilities are already underground so they would not have to address that block. They will not be removing that spray paint as part of this project.

Mrs. Penta stated that the website will be helpful. Most of the trees are going to be on the other side. Having more lines and designated parking spaces in the parking lot will be nice and beneficial. The meters will continue on from what they have on one side of Front Street. Regarding the Pedal Park, it is going to be pushed out a little bit so it is not going to be right there as people are walking down. They are trying to introduce more art throughout the street.

Mr. Stams moved to bring out Temp. Ord. A-59 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. DeRemer . Motion passed (5-0).

Temp. Ord. A-60

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the improvements to State Road, Seasons Road and Wyoga Lake Road at The Triangle, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Tony Demasi, City Engineer, presented Temporary Ordinance A-60 to Council. The Director of Public Service will be authorized to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the improvements to State Road, Seasons Road and Wyoga Lake Road in the City of Cuyahoga Falls. The Director of Finance will be authorized to make payment for the same from the Capital Projects Fund, Line Item Capital Outlay.

Mr. Demasi stated that, as part of some recent improvements that have occurred in the northern part of the city, in particular where State Road, Seasons Road and Wyoga Lake Road all come together collectively into what they call the triangle, a traffic study was conducted. The study was completed in July of 2021 and found that 26 total crashes occurred in the study area during the study period. Twenty percent involved injuries. The design was completed this year and the and was bid on June 20th. There will be new traffic signals at the State Road and Seasons Road intersection and Wyoga Lake Road and Seasons Road intersections, right-turn lanes to facilitate

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traffic and new sidewalks and share-use paths to help alleviate congestion. Tri Mor out of Twinsburg got the bid. The paving of the project was completed in April. Utility relocations have been ongoing and should be wrapped up in a month or so. Tri Mor is anticipated to begin the road work in mid-August of this year and all work should be done by the fall of next year. One thing to remember is that, due to the foresight that Council and the Administration had to enter into a TIF agreement with the development, this project is being funded through the TIF that was generated with the development going on there, so they are, in fact, paying for this.

Mr. Ashton asked if they anticipate going down to one lane at any time during the construction and, if so, do they know when. His main concern is during the school year because it gets congested. Mr. Demasi stated that the plan is to keep one lane of traffic in each direction. There will be a time when the whole section of State Road and Wyoga Lake Road will be closed during the second phase of the project. During that time, the Wyoga Lake Road part of that triangle would not be open and traffic would be able to go up around that. They have already reached out to some of the businesses that are tractor-trailer heavy on their commerce. They are aware of the project and they know what they need to do when that is happening is to continue north to Route 303 and pick up Route 8 there.

Mr. Stams moved to bring out Temp. Ord. A-60 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. DeRemer . Motion passed (5-0).

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.