

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mike Geisel, City Administrator

FROM: James Eckrich, Director of Public Works/City Engineer 

SUBJECT: Planning & Public Works Committee **Virtual** Meeting
Summary Thursday, October 8, 2020



A meeting of the Planning and Public Works Committee of the Chesterfield City Council was held virtually via Zoom on Thursday, October 8, 2020.

In attendance were: **Chair Dan Hurt**, (Ward III), **Councilmember Mary Monachella** (Ward I), **Councilmember Mary Ann Mastorakos** (Ward II). and **Councilmember Tom DeCampi**, proxy for Councilmember Michelle Ohley (Ward IV).

Also in attendance were: Mayor Bob Nation; Planning Commission Chair Merrell Hansen; Jim Eckrich, Director of Public Works/City Engineer; and Kathy Juergens, Recording Secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY

A. Approval of the September 24, 2020 Committee Meeting Summary

Councilmember Mastorakos made a motion to approve the Meeting Summary of **September 24, 2020**. The motion was seconded by **Councilmember Monachella** and **passed** by a voice vote of 3-0 (Councilmember DeCampi abstained).

II. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Wilson Avenue

STAFF PRESENTATION

Jim Eckrich, Director of Public Works/City Engineer, displayed a PowerPoint presentation depicting the present condition of Wilson Avenue. He stated that Wilson Avenue is a collector road that extends from Clarkson Road to Wild Horse Creek Road. Over time, the City has made incremental improvements to Wilson Avenue; however, portions of the road, specifically the northern section near Wild Horse Creek Road, contain multiple safety and maintenance deficiencies such as:

- Steep hills
- Sharp curves
- Narrow lanes
- No shoulders
- No roadside drainage
- Dangerous intersection at Wild Horse Creek Road

In the 1990s, the City proposed a complete reconstruction of Wilson Avenue. That project, which would have been partially funded through a federal grant, would have addressed all of the safety deficiencies. However, the project was not favored by a majority of area residents because the proposed design would have changed the character of Wilson Avenue. Therefore, that project was abandoned and the grant funding was forfeited. The Public Works Staff currently maintains the road the best that it can. Incremental improvements have been made such as the replacement of the one-lane culvert; however, Staff has been reluctant to pursue other improvements due to previous Council direction.

The City recently received a letter from the Walnut Hill subdivision trustees requesting that the deficiencies on Wilson Avenue be addressed; specifically, the section of Wilson Avenue from Wild Horse Creek Road to the newly constructed culvert.

Wilson Avenue is classified as a major collector and is eligible for Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding. It is estimated that the project will likely cost between 4 and 5 million dollars – not including the steep hill. TIP funding could pay as much as 80% of the cost of reconstruction. The actual reimbursement percentage will be determined as part of the grant submittal. The higher the City's percentage, the more likely we will successfully obtain the grant.

Staff is requesting direction from Council as to whether the City should pursue a TIP grant to reconstruct Wilson Avenue. If Staff were to pursue such a grant, Staff recommends soliciting input from area residents before submitting an application. The Walnut Hill subdivision trustees have offered to assist in obtaining resident input.

Discussion

Chair Hurt inquired as to whether the City has received any opposition from a residential group. Mr. Eckrich, replied that every year he receives a few calls from residents asking why the City has not addressed Wilson Avenue so there appears to be some support to substantiate improvements.

Councilmember DeCampi made a motion to direct Staff to pursue a TIP grant for the reconstruction of the northern portion of Wilson Avenue. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Monachella.

Discussion after the Motion

In response to Councilmember Mastorakos' questions, Mr. Eckrich pointed out the specific area of the proposed improvements, including the straightening of the "S" curve. Mr. Eckrich explained that the entrance to Walnut Hill Farm will need to be reconstructed as part of that re-alignment. Chair Hurt questioned whether Walnut Hill Farm is public or private. Mr. Eckrich stated it is private. Chair Hurt stated that this may be problematic as the City cannot take over maintenance of that private road and bridge. Mr. Eckrich explained that the crossing/bridge could be reconstructed as part of the project and then returned to the subdivision via a temporary easement, similar to the manner in which we treat driveways. Planning Commission Chair Merrell Hansen further explained the problems associated with the low water crossing and changes which have occurred associated with the City's reconstruction of the upstream culvert.

Councilmember Mastorakos questioned what impact this project would have to other planned projects due to the financial allocation. Mr. Eckrich stated that TIP grants typically have a three-year cycle. The first year is engineering design; the second year is right of way acquisition; the third year is construction. Accordingly, there is no way construction would occur prior to 2024 under the grant cycle. Mr. Eckrich further explained that a simple asphalt overlay, which would

not correct any of these deficiencies, will be needed in the near future and is estimated to cost \$500,000. Therefore, if a grant is obtained for a reconstruction, the City allocation will not be substantially more than our maintenance allocation. However, if a grant cannot be obtained, funding this project will be problematic.

Three residents from Walnut Hill, Tim Schoen, John Hammond, and Lauren Strutman spoke in favor of the project.

Discussion was held regarding the connection to Baxter Crossing Lane, formerly known as the Wilson Spur. The consensus of the Committee and the residents in attendance was that this connection should be pursued. Mr. Eckrich stated that this item will be brought up as part of the public outreach. Councilmembers Monachella and Mastorakos asked which residents would be asked to provide input. Ms. Hansen and Mr. Eckrich stated that input would be requested from all subdivisions connecting to Wilson Avenue.

There was also brief discussion regarding the ultimate road configuration and whether safe pedestrian and bicycle components will be included. Mr. Eckrich stated that he expected the project to remain a two-lane road with shoulders and pedestrian/bike accommodations, possibly through an adjacent trail. Chair Hurt requested that this information, as well as the composition of shoulders, be included in the information requested of the residents.

The above motion passed by a voice vote of 4-0.

IV. OTHER

Merrell Hansen and Mayor Nation talked about the recently approved Comprehensive Plan and complimented Justin Wyse on his presentation of the Plan.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.