

CITY OF ALBANY  
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
Council Chambers  
Monday, January 23, 2017  
4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sharon Konopa called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilors present: Mayor Sharon Konopa and Councilors Rich Kellum, Bill Coburn, Bessie Johnson, Ray Kopczynski, and Dick Olsen

Councilors absent: Councilor Mike Sykes (excused)

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ray Hilts, 2748 Foxglove Loop SE, referred to his previous comments regarding a potential City gas tax. He reviewed current gas prices in various locations, noting that the price per gallon is about 3 cents higher in Corvallis than in Albany. He participated in the OReGO program last year and his monthly fee was between \$8.50 and \$13.25. He encouraged Council to move forward with a local gas tax or usage program like OReGO to fund needed road improvements.

EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNAL AT ELLSWORTH & SIXTH AVENUE

City Engineer Staci Belcastro said that this item was discussed at the Central Albany Revitalization Area (CARA) Advisory Board meeting last week, after which staff was directed to bring it back to Council for further discussion. ODOT's position is that the current signal at Ellsworth & Sixth Avenue does not meet standards. An interim solution that involves a 12-inch flashing light on the existing pole and mast arm was approved with the understanding that a permanent solution would come with the downtown streetscape project. Options discussed at the CARA Advisory Board meeting include a sign bridge with flashing lights installed over the travel lane at a cost of about \$200,000, advance warning lights installed on the sidewalk at a cost of about \$50,000, and a fully actuated traffic signal at a cost of about \$350,000. Staff has discussed the first two options with ODOT but they have not discussed the idea of a full traffic signal. CARA approved \$540,000 for improvements associated with the Fire Station, of which about \$200,000 has been encumbered leaving about \$340,000 available for this project.

Fire Chief John Bradner said that the intersections at Ellsworth Street and Sixth Avenue, and Lyon Street and Sixth Avenue are concerns. When the project was started, he learned that ODOT would only allow a signal if it was a fully actuated signal that would control traffic from every direction. In discussions with ODOT, staff did not go down the path of a full signal due to the cost and because they were satisfied that the sign bridge over top would provide at least some notification for drivers. For Bradner, the intersection at Ellsworth Street and Sixth Avenue is the greater concern because an emergency vehicle would be getting up to speed at that location, visibility is obstructed by a building and parked cars, and traffic on Ellsworth Street may not be able to tell from which direction the sirens are coming.

Councilor Dick Olsen commented that, based on experience, the flashing light system on the First Avenue railroad overpass appears to be ineffective.

Councilor Rich Kellum asked whether there is an indication of when traffic on the highways will reach the point of the state requiring a fully functioning stop light. Transportation System Analyst Ron Irish said that is not likely to occur in the foreseeable future. He further described the sign bridge option, noting that the shape of the sign and the message would be similar to the warning sign placed for 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue Fire Station.

Konopa asked whether the sign bridge has been used successfully in other areas. Irish said that, as far as he knows, this would be the first in the State highway system.

Councilor Ray Kopczynski noted that the CARA funds identified would not quite cover the cost of a full traffic signal. Belcastro said that with that option, there would likely be savings with the curb extensions and other items.

Councilor Bill Coburn said his preference is to replicate what currently exists, if possible, since it has worked for many years. History shows that the yellow flashing lights on the First Avenue trestle do not work and something more is needed that will get driver's attention. He understands that a full signal would be most effective; but he thinks there could be unintended consequences with traffic backing up on Ellsworth Street even more than it does now. Irish noted that people going through the signals at First, Second and Third Avenues would likely get through the signal at Sixth Avenue and shouldn't slow highway traffic on Ellsworth Street; however, a similar situation on Lyon Street could result in backup since there are no upstream signals.

Kopczynski said that he supports a full traffic signal for safety reasons.

MOTION: Kopczynski moved to direct staff to bring back a resolution for a full traffic signal at Ellsworth Street and Sixth Avenue, subject to ODOT approval. Kellum seconded the motion.

In response to a question from Konopa, Belcastro said that the next step for staff would be to write a letter to the State Traffic Engineer that describes the full signal option and start that conversation.

VOTE: The motion failed 3-2 with Coburn and Sykes voting no.

Council directed staff to discuss options with ODOT and come back with a recommendation.

#### SOMERSET EXTENSION UPDATE

Public Works Engineering & Community Development Director Jeff Blaine referred to previous discussions regarding the Brandis properties and a potential agreement between the City and developer Myles Breadner related to road and utility improvements across a portion of City-owned property. Staff has since met with Breadner and Greater Albany Public Schools (GAPS) to further discuss ways to meet the objectives.

Blaine displayed and distributed three maps of the City-owned property and surrounding areas (see agenda file), and provided background information. The property was part of a larger annexation that occurred in 2002, following a public process and vote. Prior to annexation, the City negotiated an agreement that defined how the property would be developed. Soon after annexation, GAPS moved forward with constructing Timber Ridge School; but they didn't have enough funds to build all the required infrastructure and, after considering the options, the City settled on two local improvement districts (LID). In a LID process, the City constructs improvements and then assesses benefiting properties for those costs. In this case, the City used settlement funds that were targeted for economic development activity to construct the improvements and the properties were assessed \$3.1 million. As an effect of the recession, the property owners at the time decided to not pay their assessment and have the City take control of the property. The property has challenges with wetlands and only about 45 acres of the 75-acre site are estimated to be developable.

Blaine said the objectives are to have streets, water, and sewer infrastructure to meet short and long-term needs of the area; identify mutually beneficial alternatives for removing obstacles for Breadner's development; accommodate space requirements for a new school of about 10 acres; accommodate space requirements for a City park of two or three acres; identify approaches that facilitate school construction; and be on track to recover the City's \$3.1 million initial investment. With Breadner's development constructing most of these improvements, the City and future developers are benefiting.

Blaine reviewed a proposed agreement whereby Breadner would purchase 8.5 acres in the northwest corner of the City-owned property for \$400,000 and construct all the public improvements along that area in conjunction with his development to the north. This would result in construction of needed infrastructure and \$400,000 toward reimbursing the City's initial investment.

Blaine reviewed discussions with GAPS regarding improvements associated with the school site. The total acreage for the area identified for a school and a park is 17 acres, 12 acres of which is assumed to be developable. Based on an appraisal, developable single family residential land encumbered with wetlands is worth \$37,500 an acre. Staff proposes to sell 10 acres to GAPS for \$375,000 and to partner with them to get the remaining road and utility improvements through. The Engineer's estimate for the remaining improvements is \$2.2 million, of which GAPS would contribute \$950,000; Water Utility and Sewer Utility would pay for extensions; and there would be a \$500,000 gap which Council could choose to fill with available Transportation SDCs without impacting other projects in the Capital Improvement Program. If Council moves forward with the agreements as proposed and the City is able to sell the remaining property for appraised value, the City would be on track to recover the initial investment. Staff requested direction as to whether Council would like staff to move forward with the approaches laid out and come back with development agreements and additional information. Discussion followed.

MOTION: Coburn moved to direct staff to proceed as proposed (Agreement and property sale to Myles Breadner for \$400,000 and property sale to GAPS for \$375,000. Funding agreement with GAPS for required public infrastructure estimated at \$2.2M, paid through \$950,000 contribution from GAPS and \$1,250,000 in City contributions from various funds). Kopczynski seconded the motion, and it passed 5-0.

#### STREET CONDITIONS ASSESSMENTS

Blaine referred to previous discussions regarding transportation funding and Council's request that staff present information on pavement management strategies and alternative funding sources to meet community goals. This is the first of what staff believes will be a series of meetings on this topic. The goal today is to provide basic information regarding pavement asset management with the idea that staff will provide additional information and request direction for next steps at a future meeting.

Engineering Manager/Assistant City Engineer Guy Graham gave a presentation on Pavement Asset Management (see agenda file). He said that pavement management attributes include optimized decision making, making the right investment at the right time, ensuring the lowest life cycle costs to meet defined level of service requirements, and providing transparency and accountability. He reviewed the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) and a graph showing the deterioration curve of pavements. He showed examples of Albany streets at various ratings on the PCI. He explained pavement treatment options including crack sealing, fog sealing, slurry sealing, chip sealing, micro-surfacing, thin overlay, thick overlay, full-depth reclamation, and traditional reconstruction, and the relative cost of each as shown in the presentation, noting that it makes sense to keep up with pavement maintenance to avoid larger costs in the future. He reviewed the current pavement investment strategy which typically focuses on collectors and arterials. He said that staff will come back next month with additional information, including the current state of Albany roads according the PCI, current funding sources and the anticipated gap to meet standards, and a discussion of next steps.

Coburn said that it will be important to have a clear plan and budget for street improvements that can be communicated to the citizens prior to proposing any gas tax or bond measure. Blaine said that staff could bring back a discussion on various funding options for meeting the defined level of service goals; there may be more than one solution or a mix of alternatives that get us where we want to go.

Konopa said she that she would like the analysis of funding options to consider overall fairness to the Albany consumer. She noted that a bond or fee would be paid only by Albany residents whereas a gas tax would also be paid by people from outlying communities who buy gas here and benefit from the City streets.

In response to a question from Konopa, Public Works Operations Director Chris Bailey gave an update on discussions at the legislature related to transportation revenue. While legislators seem to agree that there needs to be additional revenue for a transportation package, it is unknown how they will find that revenue. Also, when the State talks about raising gas taxes, they are mostly discussing how that would help ODOT infrastructure. All the transportation networks need investment but the funding has not been figured out.

This item will come back to Council on February 6, 2017.

#### BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL

Belcastro said that staff had approached her with the need to hire a professional to provide design and constructability services for decorative lighting improvements associated with the downtown streetscape project. She suggested that they contact Coburn because his consulting business provides this service. Since Coburn sits on Council, staff wanted to disclose this relationship and see if there were any concerns. Staff has checked with the City Attorney and the State Ethics Commission and no concerns were identified. Council expressed no concerns.

In response to a question from Kopczynski, Belcastro reviewed efforts to coordinate the construction schedule for the downtown streetscape project with construction of the Carousel. She will have an update at the Council meeting on Wednesday.

Olsen asked whether the City could regulate the size/weight of vehicles such as school buses and garbage trucks to reduce their effect on streets. Blaine said that staff can check but he is not aware of any way that the City could regulate or enforce that.

Konopa expressed concern about circulation at the intersection of Albany Avenue and Airport Road, and she asked staff to consider whether a green arrow would be helpful.

Konopa said she is working on a couple of items that will likely be brought to Council – she wants to move forward with getting something done with the Main Street Church and begin a process to consider whether it's possible that the Post Office could be moved to a better location.

#### CITY MANAGER REPORT

None.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Teresa Nix  
Recorder

Wes Hare  
City Manager