



**Parks and Public Works Committee
Regular Meeting**

June 25, 2024 – 10:00 am

*This is an in-person meeting at Saugatuck City Hall, 102 Butler St, Saugatuck, MI 49453.
The meeting will also be available live, virtually on Zoom.*

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Regular Meeting – May 28, 2024

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS/TODAY'S AGENDA TOPICS ONLY (LIMIT 3 MINUTES) *Use the “raise hand” button in the participant’s screen found in the Zoom interface or enter *9 if calling in by phone to raise hand.*

6. REVIEW/DISCUSSION:

A. Department of Public Works Updates

B. Study Group and Other Staff Updates

1. Invasive Species.

2. Airport Property.

3. Blue Star Multimodal Path (Lake Street).

4. Village Square & Playground.

5. Park Street, Mt. Baldhead Improvements, & AT&T status.

6. Maple Street.

C. Update on Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area

D. Michigan Green Communities

E. Recycling Bin Pilot

F. Oval Beach

7. REVIEW NEXT STEPS

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS (LIMIT 3 MINUTES) *Use the “raise hand” button in the participant’s screen found in the Zoom interface or enter *9 if calling in by phone to raise hand.*

9. CORRESPONDENCE

10. MEMBER CLOSING COMMENTS

11. ADJOURN

NOTICE:

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**(312) 626-6799 -or-
(646) 518-9805**

Then enter “Meeting ID”:
2698572603

Please send questions or comments regarding meeting agenda items prior to meeting to:
rcummins@saugatuckcity.com

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PARKS AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

May 28, 2024

The Parks and Public Works Committee met for a Committee Meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Saugatuck City Hall

102 Butler St., Saugatuck, MI 49453.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Baldwin at 10:00 a.m.

Attendance:

Present: Chair Baldwin, Committee members Charak (10:05am), Kimble, Hoffman, Johnson.

Absent: Committee member Roche.

Others Present: Interim City Manager Cummins, DPW Superintendent Herbert, Deputy Clerk Williams.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Johnson, second by Kimble, to approve the agenda for May 28, 2024. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Roche, second by Hoffman to approve the April 23, 2024, regular meeting minutes as presented. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0.

Public Comments (agenda items only):

- Chris Peterson (742 Pleasant) – She praised the committee for park improvements and expressed concerns about conservation easements and their potential impact on property rights.

Review/Discussion:

A. Department of Public Works Updates:

- Staff have been preparing the city for Memorial Day.
- New manager out at Oval Beach this year. They just had their first successful weekend with no safety concerns. He is doing a great job and that is reflected in how the beach looks and the way staff performs.
- City is operating the Oval Concessions this year. They hope to push out a new RFP towards the end of summer in hopes of generating more interest.

- Herbert informed the Committee that they are going in a different direction than the renderings that he previously presented to them for the City Hall landscaping. He said that they will still use the renderings and scale it back a little. They took out the retaining wall that was in front of the building as they received feedback that the front was a little busy with landscaping and they thought it took away character from the building. They will be contracting out the irrigation, and then Public Works will complete the rest of the work.
- Brush & leaf collection citywide
- Staff completed Memorial Day preparations for the City and Oval Beach.
- Most of the street painting has been completed for the season.
- DPW is still doing quite a bit of asphalt patching on Maple Street as they have been getting constant complaints from residents. Herbert noted that they are aware and doing all that they can to keep the road passable.

Study Group Updates:

1. Invasive Species:

Committee member Chark highlighted biodiversity at the airport property, including bird migration and invasive species. He says that the state has done a lot of work on the Hemlock trees trying to save them by tagging them and treating them with two different programs. Charak said that he will put the reports together and send them.

Chair Baldwin discussed the lack of a working board for the Saugatuck Harbor Natural area, and the need to get back into compliance to and then they can access around \$195,000 in funding for invasive species removal. Interim City Manager Cummins said that Milfoil treatment is going to be on June 11 and July 16 and the city will be pushing out a notice to the public on that.

2. Airport Property:

Interim City Manager Cummins said that City Council approved the Outdoor Discovery Center's proposal for the airport property contingent upon receiving donated funds. You may recall, there is a donor that came forward, willing to fund the \$130,000 proposal, which involved a conservation easement, treating invasives, formalizing some rustic trails, and creating a trailhead parking area. After Council approved the proposal, Cummins reached out to the donors, and they were thrilled to hear that Council approved moving forward with the proposal. He said that he received an email that the different family members were submitting those donations, the treasurer may already have the funds. The donor family recognized that one of the things that didn't receive funding was the Overlook, so they are sending an additional \$30,000 to pay for the Overlook option to be part of that project. Once they receive the funds, they will be working with Outdoor Discovery Center on the next steps as far as parking and formalizing the trails which could take until the fall or early next spring before they are able to get that work started and finished. The conservation easement is something that they can start sooner. Cummins said that they involved Council and showed them some mapping where the ODC was thinking as far as the location of the conservation easements that

included some ravine like areas, watershed areas, and areas that would have been difficult to develop anyway. They will start preparing the conservation easement documents for staff and legal counsel to review. Then they will have some further discussions about what types of limitations would go in the conservation easement, and the City Council will have to look at the final documents and ultimately make a final decision on that. On this part, he will be able to start a little bit sooner rather than some of the other pieces that will take some time.

3. Blue Star Multimodal Path (Lake Street):

Interim City Manager Cummins said that Council approved moving forward with the intersection improvements that they had reviewed and recommended. It involves moving the pallet sign 4.8 feet based on the site plan that they reviewed last time, constructing a traffic signal consistent with the renderings that Fleis and VandenBrink previously prepared. They also approved moving forward with applying for grant dollars to pay for the cost of the traffic signal. As far as next steps, based on the council's approval of the preliminary plans, then finalizing design on the intersection improvements. They are planning to review that at the Historic District Commission meeting on June 6 because the palette sign and intersection are located in the Historic District and is subject to their purview, review, and approval. CTE is doing the engineering work on this project, and they are working on getting that application in by the June deadline, as well for the grant opportunity. The next steps will be to finalize the entire trail design, and they meet tomorrow with the stakeholders to bring them up to speed on where they are at with the overall engineering design for the trail and finalizing where they are at with the budget construction estimates. The design for the bridge separator hasn't been finalized as of yet. So, they will regroup with the stakeholders tomorrow and then go from there.

4. Village Square:

DPW Superintendent Herbert said that the community build on the new playground at Village Square Park has been completed. Two weeks after the community build, Sinclair had their professional installation team come back in the finish the install which was completed last week. They had mulch blown into the park, and then they have to either repair or replace because it will need quite a bit of adjustment. There are also a couple pieces of broken concrete along the south side of the park that they will need to replace, which is common for construction projects. He feels that they are ready to start thinking about when to have the ribbon cutting & grand opening ceremony. Chair Baldwin asked about the two trees that Sinclair was going to replace due to another tree needing to be removed, Herbert said that will more than likely happen in the fall due to better root growth in colder weather.

5. Park Street & Mount Baldhead Improvements & AT&T Status:

Interim City Manager Cummins said that at the last meeting they reviewed the engineering proposal from Fleis & VandenBrink as far as next steps and what would be needed to evaluate Park Street. At this point, they are all waiting for City Council to approve next year's

budget. The last touchpoint that they had with council was their work session on the budget and they wanted the Park Street project and engineering added to next year's budget to look further at making it more pedestrian friendly along Park Street. So, assuming the Council keeps it in the budget when they approve it, it would be a next fiscal year related proposal to sign off on and have council approve.

The City Council did approve moving forward with doing the engineering work to replace the bathrooms as well as the upper platform at Mount Baldhead and that work is underway. Cummins said that ideally, this would be the last season for the bathrooms unless they come in priced dramatically higher as far as costs or something like that. The engineering work for the upper platform is taking place as well.

AT&T continues to work to bring cellular to the radome. He met with them last week to go over the State Historic Preservation Office, as well as some of the consulting tribes had, and some further questions on the alternative analysis that AT&T had submitted. He met with them to go over some responses to those particular questions and continuing that dialogue with the State Historic Preservation Office and the tribes to hopefully get to the point where they're willing to approve some sort of agreement moving forward with the project, he is still working on it.

Cummins said that speaking of invasives, the Oriental Bittersweet that was treated on Mount Baldhead, there is an area that has been a concern as far as erosion goes. A couple of weeks ago, a staffer from EGLE's Michigan Coastal Management grant program came and did a presentation for the Planning Commission. One of the things that their grant program covers is vegetation and restoration and that sort of thing. Cummins said that he put that on the Commissions radar, and some emails along with other things that they are hoping they may be able to go into consider providing some grant dollars for. He thinks that there are probably other grant opportunities they can pursue as well. He just wanted the PPW Committee to know that they are working on it, it is on their radar too. People have continued to raise it as a concern, and it has been an ongoing issue and concern for several years. The grant application period isn't open until the fall so they do have to wait, and then it would still be awhile after their funding period, but they are working on it.

6. Maple Street:

This is a new topic that Cummins added to the agenda and will be an ongoing item to update you on the project as it progresses. Maple Street was already in poor condition and DPW has been working hard to do what they can as far as filling potholes but from his conversations with DPW Superintendent Herbert, even the base layer is in pretty rough shape, and it is kind of like whack-a-mole right now where they fill one and then it bubbles up and causes an issue elsewhere. They have an engineering proposal from Fleis & VandenBrink to get started on the engineering needed to replace the road as well as the watermain underneath has had several breaks the last couple of years to the point where it is also end of life. It will be a two and a half million-dollar project, that will take several months to complete and will be funded through a combination of sources.

DPW Superintendent Herbert highlighted the upcoming watermain extent replacement project, which will take place from spring to fall and may cause disruptions. Committee member Kimble asked about funding for the project, and Cummins explained that the City gets state dollars for maintenance, not replacement. Cummins also said that the Township is not obligated to help with the placement of the road, but he said that he has spoke with Daniel DeFranco and they are in early discussions about funding for at least the cost of replacing the watermain in some way but not for the road itself.

Review Next Steps: Chair Baldwin requested to remove this item from the agenda.

Public Comments (Limit 3 mins):

- Chris Peterson (747 Pleasant) – She read through PPW committee meeting minutes, City Council meeting and workshop minutes and said it was hard to find anything that mentioned the words “conservation easement”, especially in the newspapers. She said that the most misleading comments is that there are no strings attached to this and a conservation easement has strings attached to it as you’re giving authority from City property away. She believes that over half of the property is scheduled to be put in a conservation easement and she doesn’t think that the public is aware of it. She also doesn’t believe that there has been due diligence to find out what the value of the property is and thinks this is a huge step to take without having this be a little more public open mindedness.

Member Closing Comments:

- Committee Member Hoffman – Hoffman said he will speak to Charak about invasives.
- Committee Member Johnson – Johnson said that the Committee has a lot on its plate and there is a lot going on. She thinks that everyone is doing a great job. She says that they definitely need to work on the conservation easement and make it transparent for everyone and that the Committee will do that. She loves the park and thinks it looks fabulous.
- Committee Member Charak – Charak said that he got to work with the fire chief for a few days when they volunteered for the playground project and said that the chief is stoked about the AT&T cellular project at Mount Baldhead. He hopes that the project will save lives and cut down on the long-awaited response time. He said that he will have the bird report forthcoming on the airport property and explains that that is one of the reasons that the conservation easement is so important. There have been reports of a couple of dens of red foxes that live around the ravine system. He thinks the bike path is amazing and says that once the Saugatuck portion is done, you will be able to ride from Holland to the edge of Douglas.
- Committee Member Kimble – Kimble said that she was happy the agenda was light because she thinks that it shows that they’ve made really good progress on a lot of things, and she is thrilled. She walked by the new playground over the weekend with her grandkids and they

were stoked. She also wanted to plug the idea of a Maple Street sidewalk or a combination of a bike trail. There are kids that live on Maple and need to get to school, it wasn't safe before the traffic and it's really not safe now.

- Chair Baldwin – Baldwin thanked volunteers that helped build the new Village Square Park playground. She thought things went well, had a great time, and looks forward to the grand opening. She thanked DPW staff and said that the City looks beautiful and that they have done a great job.

Adjournment:

Motion by Charak, second by Hoffman, to approve adjournment of the meeting. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0. Chair Baldwin adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Williams, City Deputy Clerk & DPW Administrative Assistant