



PARKS AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

April 23, 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 Kimble, Hoffman, & Roche.

Absent: Committee member Charak & Johnson.

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

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Kimble, second by Roche, to approve the agenda for April 23, 2024. Via voice vote, motion carried 3-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Roche, second by Hoffman to approve the March 15, 2024-Special, and the March 26, 2024-Regular meeting minutes as presented. Via voice vote, motion carried 3-0.

Public Comments (agenda items only): None.

Review/Discussion:

A. Pallet Sign Design and Traffic Signal at Lake Street/Blue Star Highway for Blue Star Multimodal Path:

Interim Manager Ryan Cummins said that the Public Works Committee has been reviewing potential pallet sign design options for the Lake Street and Blue Star intersection and the new multimodal path that is planned for the area. The Committee reviewed the pallet sign design options for the new trail. Cummins explained the dimensional detail that the Committee requested in the previous meeting with the updated intersection design, including the relocation of the pallet sign and changes to the traffic signal placement. Jared Secor clarified the shift of the pallet sign and the impact on the trail, with DPW Superintendent Herbert adding that there would be no potential issues with plowing and truck turning onto Water Street.

Committee member Kimble questioned where the traffic signal would be placed and if the center lane would still remain in the plans as the fire department requested to keep the center lane for fire trucks. She clarified the lane configuration at the intersection, including the merge lane and through lane. Secor explained that the intersection details need to be finalized before the subconsultant can start working on the plans for the traffic signal. He also said that the bike lane remains unchanged, with minimal modifications made at the bridge and intersection. He said that they had discussed putting in a raised curb with a decorative wave delineator which would be located between the traffic lane and the bike lane.

Kimble asked about the cost of relocating the pallet sign and other details in the plan and Secor confirmed that everything is included under the grant funds with the only exception being the traffic signal. Cummins discussed a grant opportunity that Committee member Roche brought to his attention that would help to cover the cost of the traffic signal work. Secor attended a webinar last week to learn about the opportunity and he thinks that Saugatuck would be a good candidate, and that the application is due June 7, and they would receive an answer within 90 days on eligibility. Cummins said that he presented a budget to Council last week that included a request to pay for the traffic signal. He says it is really consistent with the recommendation of two different engineering studies indicating that there is a need for a signal at this intersection, especially with adding a trail to the area.

Motion by Roche, second by Kimble, to recommend that City Council approve the Blue Start intersection improvements, including Pallet sign movement and landscaping consistent with the designs and installation of a traffic signal consistent with the renderings. Upon roll call vote, motion carried 3-0.

B. Park Street Planning & Conceptual Design Proposal for Engineering & Landscape Architectural Services:

Interim City Manager Cummins said that City Council is looking to add some Park Street improvements to the budget for the upcoming year. This work will focus on an area between the chain ferry to Mount Baldhead because there is some retaining wall work that is needed there. The Committee supports a more walkable Park Street, prioritizing safety, and access to nearby gems like Oval Beach and Mount Baldhead. They all agree on the need for a holistic landscape architecture design approach, considering near misses and summer traffic. Roche added that in the past they tried to address little bits and pieces of it, trying to make small improvements along the way and she thinks it has proven that it is not the way to move forward with this project. She says that it would be more helpful if they look at it on a larger scale and then see how it lands in terms of timing. Baldwin spoke regarding the possibility of working with Douglas to combine the work needed on Park Street and include Center Street, mentioning that this could be a catalyst to get some movement in that area.

C. Landscaping for City Hall:

DPW Superintendent Herbert discussed landscaping improvements at City Hall, including gutter and catch basin installation, concrete replacement, and irrigation replacement. He showed the Committee renderings of concept designs for irrigation system improvement, with underground conduit and heads located near the sidewalk and street curb. He talked about landscaping plans focused on classic colonial-style plantings. He said they will be eliminating costs by removing the retaining wall from the plan. Roche and Kimble discuss the need for drought-resistant native plant in the landscaping improvements. Herbert hopes that the project will be complete in June.

D. Study Group Updates:

1. Invasive Species:

Interim City Manager Cummins advised the Committee that City Council approved another round of milfoil treatment for this summer. Roche requested better communication from the company who is doing the work regarding chemical treatment dates and notices.

2. Airport Property:

At a previous meeting, the PPW Committee moved along a recommendation to City Council to take a look at the Outdoor Discover Center proposal for the airport property with a potential donor that is interested in funding that work. Interim City Manager Cummins said that Council was open to continuing those conversations and had some follow-up questions for the donor & the ODC. He and the mayor have met with the donors who still have interest in funding the ODC proposal with a focus on conservation. Cummins met with David Nitray from the ODC to discuss the proposal in more detail and answer any questions that Council had. They are planning on Nitray attending the May 8 City Council workshop meeting to walk through the proposal in a little more detail, answer questions that Council may have on conservation easements, and what the invasive treatment looks like. If Council is comfortable with the proposal and the responses that they provide, they will probably have it up for a vote the following regular meeting.

3. Blue Star Multimodal Path (Lake Street):

Committee member Kimble was excited to announce that they got a new board member for the Friends of Blue Star Trail. She said that he joined the board because he was inspired by her when she spoke at a public meeting about how they couldn't get board members anymore due to all of the short-term rentals. Interim City Manager Cummins updated the committee on the construction timeline for the Blue Star Trail and said that it is scheduled to begin next year. He explained that there could be a delay if the Pallet sign and traffic signal pieces are delayed much more. Right now, they are working on environmental and archaeological reviews that were necessary. He said that he will provide monthly updates in their packets in the future.

4. Village Square:

Interim City Manager Cummins said that the committee had their community build planned and a few days before the work was set to begin, the City was sued but has since been settled. As part of the agreement, the City can move forward with building the main features, essentially, any of the features that were predominantly within the footprint of the prior playground. The agreement calls for any additional features, or the features that were outside of the footprint, to be returned to the Historic District Commission for approval. The agreement also required them to stake the prior footprint, as well as where those main features are going to go. That work was done but the neighboring property owner had some concerns about the staking and now they are asking for some engineer level staking and the City is working on getting that scheduled. DPW Superintendent Herbert spoke with Sinclair Design, and they have May 6-8 locked in for rescheduling the community build but the staking issue needs to be resolved before they are able to do that which he hopes to have finished by the end of the week. He said he is really hoping that given all of the circumstances with the short turnaround will still sign up and they can have a good strong community build. Cummins said that they are working through the issues, but that City Council unanimously approved the application returning to the Historic District Commission, with the same plans that this committee has previously approved. Nothing has changed except the canoes moved a bit south and west to avoid any impact on trees, otherwise, all of the features are the exact same.

DPW Superintendent Herbert said one of the unfortunate aspects of this is that the rescheduling of the community build is during DPW's annual Junk Collection week which means that DPW will be minimally involved in the community build other than providing an equipment operator that can run the skid steer with the auger attachment to set the posts.

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

Interim City Manager Cummins explained that AT&T are still trying to work through those State Historic Preservation Office approvals. SHPO recently responded with another letter back with some additional questions and things that they wanted AT&T to consider so there is still dialogue going back & forth. Cummins said that it is not an immediate process, from the feedback that he has received, he thinks it is still going to take awhile to work through.

Committee member Roche inquired about whether they have had council look at the motions that were made in their last meeting regarding Mount Baldhead's upper deck and bathroom replacement. Cummins said that he did put it in the budget for the upcoming year for a half a million dollars for the bathroom replacement, upper deck work, and the retaining wall work, as the PPW Committee recommended. He has not received any pushback from Council, and they understand too, that some of the work that they are proposing this next fiscal year would involve them using some cash reserves and fund balance to fund some of those projects. He said that they are still working through the budget process. If Council approves the budget for that project, then they will work on bringing forth the engineering proposals from Fleis & VandenBrink to move that forward and start the engineering work that is necessary to make it happen.

Review Next Steps: None.

Public Comments (Limit 3 mins): None.

Member Closing Comments:

- Committee Member Kimble – Kimble said that she is happy that they have made great progress on the trail as well as all of the other projects.
- Committee Member Roche – Roche said that she is really happy to see the progress on the Blue Star Trail items. She is glad to see them be able to have some consensus and move that forward and happy that other projects are moving forward as well.
- Committee Member Hoffman – Hoffman said that he is happy to be there. He said that he sat and watched to kind of see how it all works and didn't contribute much this time. He thinks there is some pretty exciting stuff that they need to do.
- Chair Baldwin – Baldwin welcomed Bryan Hoffman to the PPW Committee and encourages members to reach out to Brian to get to know him. She says he has a background in design and the Committee is very lucky to have him. She is excited about the stuff they have that is moving forward and thanked everyone for their time and efforts as volunteers.

Adjournment:

Motion by Roche, second by Hoffman, to approve adjournment of the meeting. Via voice vote, motion carried 3-0. Chair Baldwin adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Williams, City Deputy Clerk & DPW Administrative Assistant