

WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
February 9, 2015

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Present: Councilmembers Jim Barrow, Barbara Clark, Mary Lou Jenkins, Dick Morgan, Chris Plucker, Allen Pomraning and Mayor Jerry Cummins. (Councilmember Plucker arrived at 4:45 p.m.)

Absent: Councilmember Jim Barrow.

City staff in attendance: Deputy City Manager Tim McCarty, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Finance Director Jean Teasdale, Public Library Director Beth Hudson, City Engineer Neal Chavre, Engineer Michael Laughery, Engineer Joel Petty, Stormwater Coordinator Brad Daly, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

2. ACTIVE AGENDA

A. The Willow (Charter) School of Walla Walla.

Dan Calzaretta, Executive Director, provided an overview of the vision and process to establish The Willow as a new charter school in Walla Walla. This would serve as an alternative middle-school for students and also serve the disadvantaged student population. Mr. Calzaretta requested a letter of support for the establishment of this charter school from the City Council.

There was discussion on:

- The governing authority over charter schools within Washington.
- Accountability of a non-profit governing board through statutes prescribed by the State.
- The Selection of students will be through a lottery if there are more students than the number the school can serve.
- Efforts to identify and recruit underserved students.
- Engagement with representatives of the Walla Walla Public School District in the concept of developing middle school alternatives.

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- B. 2016 Alder Street IRRP project – discussion of traffic improvements at the Alder/Clinton and Alder/Division intersections.

Engineer Laughery reviewed the project boundaries of the 2016 Alder Street infrastructure repair and replacement project from Merriam to Roosevelt Street. DKS Associates performed a traffic analysis. This analysis determined that the Alder/Division intersection would not meet traffic warrants for a signal until the year 2029. The Alder/Clinton intersection would not meet warrants for a traffic signal until 2045. Staff recommends removing the existing traffic signal at the Alder/Clinton intersection; and installation of bulb-outs and a flashing pedestrian beacon at the Alder/Division intersection.

There was discussion on:

- Results of the traffic analysis and potential impact on the elimination of the traffic signal at Alder and Clinton Streets.
- Feasibility of replacing the existing traffic signal with bulb-outs and a flashing pedestrian beacon.
- Installation of fiber optic conduit for future connectivity.
- The cost of a traffic signal is estimated at \$250,000 versus flashing pedestrian beacons at an estimated cost of \$20,000. Funds saved by not replacing the traffic signal could be used on other known street repairs/improvements.
- Removal of the traffic signal will likely increase traffic speed on Alder Street and require greater enforcement.

Councilmember Plucker arrived at 4:45 p.m.

Mayor Cummins invited public input.

Ed Teal, resident on the corner of Clinton and Whitman Streets, spoke in opposition to the removal of the traffic signal at Clinton and Alder Streets.

Jane Kreitzberg, 928 Pleasant Street, Walla Walla, asked that the traffic signal be replaced, not removed entirely.

Public Works Director Bealey commented there are many factors that need to be considered, such as the possibility of relocating a traffic signal to the Alder/Division Streets intersection.

Mr. Teal indicated he had a personal interest in having a light at Alder and Clinton Streets.

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Ms. Kreitzberg had no preference for which intersection would have a traffic signal, but asked the City to consider the least costly option for a traffic signal.

Nancy Jacobsen, 813 S. Division Street, Walla Walla, spoke regarding her difficulty in making left turns on Alder Street. A traffic signal at one of the intersections is her preferred solution.

There was additional discussion on:

- Alternative designs to facilitate pedestrian safety without a traffic signal.
- Problems at both intersections are compounded by the street classifications of residential to arterials.
- Adequate right-of-way for a traffic signal at Alder and Division Streets.
- Measuring the impact to changes in traffic patterns.
- Using Peak Democracy to gauge additional public opinion on elimination or replacement of a traffic signal.
- Restricting traffic movements such as eliminating left turns from Division Street onto Alder Street.

Staff indicated further review would be done and additional public input gathered on the options. Council concurred with this approach.

C. Cottonwood Annexation – Stormwater Facilities.

Public Works Director Bealey introduced the staff members responsible for drafting the stormwater facility study in the newly-annexed “pipeline” area: Stormwater Coordinator Brad Daly, Engineer Joel Petty, and City Engineer Neal Chavre. Public Works Director Bealey reviewed:

- The need for a policy for handling existing private stormwater facilities serving public rights-of-way.
- Existing development in the pipeline annexation and condition of their stormwater facilities.
- Alternatives:
 1. The City could proceed in a manner consistent with the County where privately owned facilities are to be maintained by the development’s Homeowner’s Association.
 2. The City could seek access easements or deed transfers for the City to provide for full operation and maintenance of stormwater facilities.

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3. The City could work with the facility owners/Homeowners Associations to establish maintenance easements and a maintenance agreement to jointly maintain the facilities in a manner similar to the rest of the City. This is the recommended alternative.
- Conditions if alternative 3 is selected:
 - All weather access easement for the purposes of inspection and maintenance of the privately-owned stormwater facilities with the understanding the City will only maintain the piped stormwater infrastructure and catch basin/inlet/outlet structures. The City will not provide mowing or weed control for the facilities or any aesthetic treatments.
 - Private owners must provide maintenance of these facilities in accordance with the guidelines specified in the Eastern Washington Stormwater Management Manual for the particular type of facility.
 - The City will negotiate maintenance agreements to clearly delineate areas of responsibility for the City and facility owners.
 - Financial impact of this policy change is estimated at an additional \$14,000 per year.

Tom Hildreth, 128 Whistling Duck Road, Walla Walla, representing the Homeowners Associations, indicated they are hoping to gain a clear definition of their responsibilities and financial impact. The City's recommended solution is acceptable. The development agreement with Walla Walla County does not address storm drainage. The only real access issue is the easement for the Tract H stormwater facility.

There was brief discussion on arriving at an equitable solution; all storm basins are currently functional with the exception of Tract A; and all new developments will be under the City's planning.

Mayor Cummins invited public input.

Steve Milistefr, 257 Austin, Walla Walla, Vice President of Triple Creek Homeowner's Association, asked if the City could provide drawings of how the stormwater facilities are supposed to function; and the need to know what the stormwater facility maintenance costs are to establish an adequate budget.

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Brian Ponti, homeowner living downstream of the Tract A stormwater facility, wants to ensure the storm basin is working properly and asked for clarification about the maintenance requirements of the homeowner's association.

Steve Milistefr commented that he does not feel cleaning debris, such as fallen trees, from the creek is the responsibility of the Homeowner's Association.

There was additional discussion on the division of responsibilities between the City and the homeowners associations.

It was the consensus of a majority of Council to move forward with alternative 3. Staff indicated it will take several months to work out maintenance agreements and easements.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

Public Works Director Bealey reported the downtown Alder Street construction starts February 10.

There are three engineering contracts for different projects on the Council agenda for consideration on February 11.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.