

WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
April 13, 2015

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Present: Councilmembers Jim Barrow, Barbara Clark, Dick Morgan,
Chris Plucker, Allen Pomraning and Mayor Jerry Cummins

Absent: Councilmember Mary Lou Jenkins

City staff in attendance: City Manager Nabel Shawa, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Development Services Director Elizabeth Chamberlain, City Engineer Neal Chavre, Engineer Mike Laughery, Engineer Monte Puymon and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

2. ACTIVE AGENDA

- A. Alder Infrastructure Repair and Replacement Plan (IRRP)
Project – Traffic Signals.

City Manager Shawa reviewed the project and commended the engineers. Out of the 187 participants providing feedback on the City's "Open City Hall", the majority indicated a desire to see the traffic signal at Clinton and Alder Streets remain. Based on this public feedback, staff recommends the project include a replacement traffic signal at Clinton and Alder Streets.

Engineer Laughery provided an overview on:

- The scope of the project will reconstruct Alder Street between Merriam and Roosevelt Streets.
- The traffic analysis performed by DKS Engineers on the Alder Street IRRP project. A traffic signal at Alder and Division Streets is not warranted for another fifteen years. The traffic signal at Alder and Clinton Streets is not warranted for another thirty years.
- Roadway classifications and characteristics.
- Topic posted on the City's "Open City Hall" and results of the citizen feedback.
- Condition of the existing traffic signal at Clinton and Alder Street and the findings of the structural analysis reflecting the existing traffic signal cannot be retained and would need to be replaced if that is the direction Council chooses.

WORK SESSION MINUTES

APRIL 13, 2015

PAGE 2

- The school district would prefer a traffic signal be included at either one of the intersections and Valley Transit has no preference.
- The options are:
 1. No traffic signal at either intersection. Both intersections would have enhanced pedestrian safety crossing devices.
 2. An enhanced pedestrian safety crossing device at Clinton/Alder intersection and a traffic signal at Division/Alder intersection.
 3. An enhanced pedestrian safety crossing device at Division/Alder intersection and a replacement traffic signal at the Clinton/Alder intersection.

There was discussion on:

- The need to view improvements over a twenty year period.
- Feasibility of putting in four-way stop signs instead of a traffic signal. Staff explained the negative impact on the traffic flow along Alder Street if intersections were changed to four way stops.
- According to the traffic study, a traffic signal at Alder and Division Streets will be warranted before one at Alder and Clinton Streets.
- Impact an enhanced pedestrian crossing has on traffic and safety.
- Feasibility of installing a mini traffic circle at the intersections. Staff explained traffic circles are more typical as traffic calming devices on local streets, not major arterials.
- Traffic signals typically raise the number of rear-end accidents but reduce the number of turning accidents on higher volume streets.
- Installation of traffic signal conduit at intersections even if a traffic signal is not installed as part of the project.

Mayor Cummins invited public input.

Mary Lou Yocum, 660 Pleasant St, Walla Walla, suggested the traffic study may have been flawed if it did not look at the number of vehicles using alternative side streets to avoid congested intersections.

Alco Canfield, 30 S. Clinton, Walla Walla, (Odd Fellows Apartments) suggested traffic signals be installed at both the Alder/Clinton intersection and the Alder/Division intersection.

Joleen Ferguson, 129 W Chestnut, Walla Walla, asked if pedestrian counts were included in the traffic study; and advised the Council on the difficulty blind pedestrians have with roundabouts and traffic circles.

WORK SESSION MINUTES

APRIL 13, 2015

PAGE 3

Noah Leavitt, Whitman Street, Walla Walla, expressed his concern for public safety if the light at Clinton and Alder Streets is removed.

Jean Dolling, 208 Detour Road, Walla Walla, suggested educating drivers that the whole City is a residential neighborhood; clear line of sight is necessary at intersections; and the use of four-way yield signs may be a feasible alternative to traffic signals.

Barlow Corkrum, 206 Stanton Street, Walla Walla, suggested both the Alder/Clinton and Alder/Division intersections warranted traffic signals; and suggested the City apply to the Port of Walla Walla and Walla Walla County for a portion of local sales tax dollars for transportation infrastructure.

Kate Workman, 310 Myrtle Street, Apartment 6, Walla Walla, expressed appreciation for the light at the Alder/Clinton Street intersection.

Engineer Laughery clarified the following:

- There is a lack of funding for two traffic signals. It is anticipated the project will include the installation of conduit at the Alder/Division intersection for a future traffic signal.
- The report did not study the traffic entering Alder Street on the side streets.
- The pedestrian counts were included in the traffic analysis.
- Part of the high accident history on Alder Street is due to the number of residential driveways.

There was discussion on:

- The impact on pedestrian safety through the installation of pedestrian activated crossing devices. Ninety-two percent of vehicles will stop when flashers are activated. The devices have a major impact on compliance versus regular signage.
- Staff recommendation is to put a new traffic signal at the Alder/Clinton Street intersection, with an enhanced pedestrian crossing at the Alder/Division Street intersection.
- Installation of traffic signal conduit at the Alder/Division Street intersection to meet future traffic warrants.

There being no consensus by a majority of Council, staff was directed to bring the issue to the April 22 Council meeting for a vote.

- B. Isaacs Avenue Corridor Study – Conceptual Design Alternatives.

WORK SESSION MINUTES

APRIL 13, 2015

PAGE 4

Scott Mansur, DKS Associates, reviewed the conceptual designs and alternatives for the Isaacs Avenue corridor. The major considerations are safety and corridor operation in evaluating the alternatives.

There was discussion on:

- Addressing placement of utility poles when a conceptual design is selected.
- Stormwater improvements and low impact development is also considered as part of scoring project alternatives.
- The City's comprehensive plan calls for a complete street. This also increases the project's competitiveness for grant funding. The project must improve safety and address multi-modal transportation. There is also a need for ADA improvements at intersections.
- The cost of the project will depend on the alternative selected.
- The changes made to the street and implications of affecting driveways along the corridor.
- Improvements on private property.

Mayor Cummins invited public input.

Andy Pryor, PO Box 87, Dixie, asked why there was no option for a protected bike lane.

Joleen Ferguson, 129 W Chestnut, Walla Walla, requested further clarification on the placement of medians as pedestrian refuges and turning lanes.

Vivian Conger, 1519 Whitman Street, Walla Walla, expressed concerns with medians for sight-impaired pedestrians.

Greg Knowles, Bicycle Barn, spoke in support of any concept that is geared towards improving safety along the corridor.

Don Ashley, 1128 SW Bade, College Place, commented on medians, turn lanes, and pedestrian cut-outs in medians.

Scott Mansur, DKS Associates, reported that protected bicycle lanes are not feasible because of the limited right-of-way; medians with turn lanes will primarily be located at "T" intersections; and all options will look at pedestrian safety opportunities.

WORK SESSION MINUTES

APRIL 13, 2015

PAGE 5

C. Potential Highland Road Local Improvement District (LID).

City Manager Shawa reported the Municipal Code requires full City improvements, such as sidewalks, curbs, and gutters, as part of street projects. The residents of Highland Road have expressed an interest in having their street fixed but there hasn't been interest in a complete street. One of the key considerations in determining whether a LID is feasible is cost.

There was discussion on:

- Residents appear to be concerned only with fixing the condition of the street and not a fully-improved street.
- Whether there is any support among the Highland Road residents for a LID.
- Financing for a LID.
- Precedent being established for use of Transportation Benefit District funds that would primarily benefit only a single neighborhood.
- Whether a change in street standards should be considered and impact on other residential streets.
- Need to discern whether there is an interest in a LID before any additional work is done by staff.

Mayor Cummins invited public input.

Don Ashley, 1128 SW Bade, College Place, felt that tax dollars should be used in areas that need better health and that these funds should not be unfairly shifted to a neighborhood that is likely already healthy.

Jean Dolling, 208 Detour Road, Walla Walla, suggested the roadway be considered a county road and repaired to this standard.

Andy Prior, PO Box 87, Dixie, commented that the road is a disaster but there are not any specific safety issues.

There was additional discussion on:

- Addressing the larger policy issue.
- A local improvement district is a solution that property owners within the City can use to repair their local street. Funds for these improvements should not be provided by the Transportation Benefit District.

WORK SESSION MINUTES

APRIL 13, 2015

PAGE 6

There was consensus by a majority of the City Council to offer property owners on Highland Road information on formation of a LID without any financial contribution from the Transportation Benefit District.

D. Sudbury Business Park Rezone.

City Manager Shawa reviewed the history of a request by the Port of Walla Walla for additional property within the City zoned light industrial. Staff is seeking authorization to submit a Comprehensive plan amendment application and rezone for fifty acres at the Sudbury Road landfill property that was split off for the new Highway 12 construction.

There was brief discussion on:

- Heavy and light industrial zone designations.
- Use of biosolids on landfill property.

Mayor Cummins invited public input. No one in the audience chose to address the City Council on this item.

It was a consensus of a majority of Council to allow the City Manager to submit a Comprehensive Plan amendment application on behalf of the City.

E. East Isaacs Avenue Late Comers Agreements.

Item E was tabled.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Work Session adjourned at 6:20 p.m.