

BAXTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Work Session
March 17, 2015

Mayor Darrel Olson called the City Council Work Session to order at 6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Darrel Olson and Council Members Steve Barrows, Todd Holman, and Mark Cross

MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Member Quinn Nystrom

STAFF PRESENT: Assistant City Administrator Kelly Steele, Community Development Director Josh Doty, Finance Director Jeremy Vacinek, and Public Works Director/City Engineer Trevor Walter

Review Draft Inglewood Feasibility Study

Kevin Wernberg, WSN, reviewed the feasibility study for reconstructing Inglewood Drive from TH 210 to Excelsior Road. The City has been considering this improvement for a few years based on the current long range transportation plan to relocate the TH 210 signalized intersection and BNSF railway crossing from Knollwood Drive to Inglewood Drive. Improvements to Inglewood Drive from TH 210 to Excelsior Road are necessary to set up the roadway for a future TH 210 signalized intersection and railway crossing.

In 2014, the Utilities Commission and the City Council identified the Inglewood Drive area as a potential project for 2015. On January 20, 2015, the City Council authorized WSN to complete a feasibility study of the project area.

Mr. Wernberg explained a separated 12' bituminous multimodal trail has been requested by the City from Fairview Road to Cherrywood Drive along with the 8' bike/pedestrian lanes on the roadway. The trail would be located along the west side of Inglewood Drive with a 4' or greater boulevard area between the trail and curb. The City would have to acquire additional right-of-way to accommodate the trail. The construction of the separated trail would significantly impact the adjacent wetlands. The roadway portion of the project may qualify for the Minnesota Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Project, but the trail improvements may not. To be eligible for this program, the City must demonstrate the improvements are necessary for the health and safety of the traveling public. Mr. Wernberg recommends moving forward with submitting the Minnesota Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Project with the trail included. Mr. Wernberg further explained various options to move the roadway or re-route the trail to eliminate impact to the wetland.

The estimated costs for the improvements are \$736,970. Benefitting property owners are proposed to be assessed only for the cost to mill and overlay the roadway, even though the project includes complete roadway reconstruction, stormwater improvements and trail improvements. This assessment method is recommended due to the City initiated the project based on a long range transportation objective; the roadway is considered a major collector, the adjacent zoning is R1, and costs associated with roadway width in excess of 26', storm sewer and trail are not assessable as per the City Assessment Policy. The roadway contains a significant amount of un-assessable frontage in the form of wetland, City property, and residential side and rear yard frontage. Therefore, it is being proposed that the City pick up an additional share of the project in the form of per foot assessments for the properties that would normally be assessed in accordance with the City's assessment policy.

Mr. Wernberg explained the improvements as proposed are feasible. The Council consensus was to move forward with the project and submitting the Minnesota Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Project, inclusive of the trail component.

Review Dellwood/Novotny Improvement Hearing

The City received two written responses from property owners questioning the assessment methodology presented at the March 5, 2015 improvement hearing. No property owners spoke out at the hearing regarding this issue and all correspondence was received by City staff after the improvement hearing proceedings had closed. Both property owners cited perceived flaws in the per foot assessment policy as it related to irregularly shaped parcels. Each property owner is comparing their assessments to neighboring properties for the same improvements. The property owners question discrepancies when comparing front footage assessments to lot area. Combined, parcels 14 and 15 contain 37% of the area of parcel 13 but the assessment is 17% more on a comparison basis. Parcel 12 is approximately one-half the area of parcel 8 but the assessment is 43% higher.

WSN recommends the Council review the assessment methodology before proceeding with ordering the improvement. The Council could order the improvement as late as April 21, 2015. WSN will review the assessment methodology and present findings to the Council. If the assessments change, the feasibility study may have to be updated and a new improvement hearing held. WSN estimates it will cost \$1,500 for this process.

Review Draft Comprehensive Plan

Community Development Director Josh Doty explained a meeting was held with the Baxter Main Street property owner, Jeff Sells, and Potlatch. Mr. Sells would like the ability to submit an application for a planned unit development to promote what he would like to see for future development and he would use this plan to market the property. Mr. Sells would like to complete the process prior to the adoption of the draft Comprehensive Plan. Potlatch has four property areas they would like to discuss. Staff will compile a report of the meeting for Council review. Community Development Director Doty explained Mr. Sells' request would delay the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Sells wants the opportunity to come back with a plan to allow a big box store on his property. Mr. Sells would like the Council to review a sketch and

if the Council indicates support, Mr. Sells would then complete the engineering and run through the process. Community Development Director Doty explained the Council cannot approve a sketch and his project needs to complete the review process with the other commissions.

The Council discussed that the purpose of the meeting with Mr. Sells and Potlatch was for them to present new information and this request seems contrary to that.

Community Development Director Doty explained there was not enough time for the property owners to respond to the proposed zoning change.

Potlatch is discussing new concepts that the City has not heard before. The Council consensus was to move the draft Comprehensive Plan back a meeting to allow staff time to review and property owners to consider the zoning change.

MOTION by Council Member Cross, seconded by Council Member Barrows to adjourn at 6:48 p.m. Motion carries unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Darrel Olson
Mayor

Kelly Steele
Assistant City Administrator/Clerk