

MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MEETING
CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
OCTOBER 26, 2015 – 6:00PM

The Study Session meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council was called to order by Mayor Brickner at 6:00pm.

Council Members Present: Brickner, Bridges, Bruce, Knol, Lerner, Massey and Steckloff

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: Acting City Manager Boyer, City Clerk Smith, Assistant to the City Manager Geinzer, Directors Mekjian and Randle and City Attorney Joppich

DISCUSSION ON THE 13 MILE ROAD DIET PROJECT:

Public Services Director Gary Mekjian explained that federal funding was received by the City to rehabilitate 13 Mile Road from Farmington to Orchard Lake Roads. The project is estimated at \$2million with 80% of that cost being paid by federal aid. He noted that in reviewing the project and proposed safety improvements, staff suggested looking at taking the 4-lane cross-section to a 3-lane cross-section with a center turn lane that they feel would improve safety. Mr. Mekjian added that they are also planning to include sidewalks and bike lanes in the project to provide for multi-modal transportation.

Mark Saksewski, Traffic Engineer, explained that based on several projects and studies, it was noted that most 4-lane roads with an average of 25,000 vehicles per day or less in traffic could benefit from this type of road diet. He stated that Hubbell, Roth and Clark evaluated the project with the road diet as an option. This would exclude the Farmington and Orchard Lake Road cross-sections that will remain 4-lanes.

Mr. Saksewski mentioned the advantages of a road diet that include less crashes and less severe crashes, reduced travel speeds and conflict points and it would allow for bike paths. He stated that the disadvantage is that it would reduce the capacity of the roadway, but the engineering analysis showed that increased delays would be minimal and the safety benefits potentially outweigh any impact on capacity. He added that if it was determined that the road diet option was not working; the City could go back to the 4-lane cross-section roadway by restriping the roads at minimal costs.

Drawings of the proposed project were shown to Council.

Mr. Mekjian stated that based on the engineering analysis conducted by HRC, staff is recommending that the project is designed with the proposed 3-lane cross-section as described and shown to Council this evening.

Discussion was held on bike paths and sidewalks in the area and how those would transition to other areas. It was noted that there were bike paths proposed as part of other projects for different sections of 13 Mile Road and that the intent was to improve the bike path system little by little with future projects.

Mayor Pro-Tem Massey inquired if there is a plan to reduce to the speed along this section of 13 Mile Road.

Mr. Saksewski responded that they would complete the project and then conduct a speed study to determine if the speed needs to be reduced.

Discussion was held on the proposed drawings and some concern was expressed about traffic backing up onto 13 Mile Road from the High School and backing up during rush hour. Suggestions were also made to review the possibility of a dedicated right turn lane for both the Farmington and Orchard Lake Road intersections.

Mr. Saksewski stated that he believed the traffic study was done when school was in session, and the analysis showed peak traffic in the evening. He added that staff could review options to address the school entrance and model the project with some of the suggestions for the Farmington and Orchard Lake Road cross-sections to determine what would provide the best service.

It was the consensus of Council to have staff move forward with the project as proposed this evening and to consider the suggestions of Council.

GRAND RIVER CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY TRANSPORTATION DESIGN PROJECT AND OTHER UPDATES:

Assistant to the City Manager Geinzer explained that he and Traffic Engineer Mark Saksewski have been working closely for the past year with the Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) regarding the proposed road work along Grand River and wanted to brief Council on the status as an action item will be on their November 9, 2015 agenda for consideration.

Mr. Geinzer introduced Spencer Brown, Chair of the CIA and shared the vision for the Grand River Corridor that would provide for a balance of land uses that will reinvigorate and enhance both the business and residential areas. He noted that the biggest issue for economic development in this area is the road as it is large and complicated to maneuver and it is under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). Mr. Geinzer stated that they had to get MDOT involved in the process and were able to get them to commit to this road scoping along the Grand River Corridor. He emphasized that this is the first step in a very long process.

Mr. Geinzer explained that from the CIA's standpoint the biggest concern was the M-5 interchange as it is confusing and there is a problem with speeding. He stated that the goal is to slow down traffic speeds exiting M-5 and accommodate pedestrian and bike traffic along the corridor and bus transit along Grand River. He displayed photos and discussed the options to be explored per MDOT.

Mr. Geinzer stated that the next steps in the process are as follows:

- Council will be asked to confirm a contract award that the CIA approved at their October 14, 2015 meeting to award not more than \$50,000 to Hubbell, Roth & Clark and Clearzoning for consulting services for the Grand River Corridor Scoping Project.
- The team will:
 - Identify their top priorities and preferred solutions for the M5/Grand River to Eight Mile Road.
 - Study the road diet feasibility and obtain preliminary engineering and cost estimates
 - Identify funding opportunities
 - Package for the next steps

Mr. Geinzer pointed out that the M5/Grand River/Halsted project is outside of the CIA area and is considered a separate project. He stated that this is a very complex project that would require different skill sets. He discussed various solutions being reviewed by MDOT.

Councilmember Bridges inquired about role of Clearzoning and if any TIF money is being captured at this point.

Mr. Geinzer responded that Clearzoning is working as a subcontractor under Hubbell, Roth & Clark as staff felt a planning background was needed in conjunction with the engineering for this type of project. He noted that confirmation of the contract with HRC and Clearzoning will be coming before Council for consideration in an amount up to \$50,000. He stated that it would most likely be another year or so before any money is captured, but it is important to keep up the momentum for this project and keep MDOT involved.

Traffic Engineer Saksewski added that MDOT can do what they want to the road as it is under their jurisdiction so it is important for the City to demonstrate other options and show that they will work.

Mr. Geinzer also provided an update on the following projects:

Rouge River Project

An on-line survey was conducted that was led by 5 University of Michigan students. The group will be hosting a January workshop and February Open House.

Botsford

A \$25,000 grant was received from the USDA for a local food promotion program. Staff is working on a feasibility study to move this forward focusing on the general business and schematic layouts. The study should be complete by December and they will present that to Botsford/Beaumont staff.

Marketing Piece

Staff is working on a marketing piece to provide a brief summary of the efforts and opportunities along the Grand River Corridor that they hope to have that complete in November and distributed in December.

DISCUSSION ON CITY MANAGER AGREEMENT:

Attorney Joppich stated the final step in the selection of the City Manager is approval of his contract. He stated that per the direction of Council he drafted the contract as negotiated between himself, Mr. Boyer and the Mayor. A draft was provided to City Council for their review along with Attorney Joppich's memo outlining comparable positions and key factors in determining compensation.

Councilmember Bridges commented that he liked the addition of the annual employee evaluation.

Attorney Joppich responded that he included that based on Council comments and the fact that this was currently being done.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further discussion, Mayor Brickner adjourned the study session at 7:15pm

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela B. Smith, City Clerk