



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

City Council Work Session Virtual Meeting held via WebEx

May 26, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Regan Gonzalez at 5:45 p.m. held via WebEx.

Council Members Present: Maria Regan Gonzalez, Mayor; Mary Supple; Simon Trautmann; Ben Whalen; and Edwina Garcia.

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Melissa Poehlman, Assistant Community Development Director; Kristin Asher, Public Works Director; Jack Broz, Transportation Engineer; Joe Powers, Assistant City Engineer; Blanca Martinez Gavina, Executive Analyst; and Kelly Wynn, Senior Office Assistant

ITEM #1	<p>UPDATE ON RECENT AND UPCOMING PERMIT APPLICATIONS, PERMIT APPROVALS, AND CONSTRUCTION OF SMALL CELL WIRELESS INSTALLATIONS THROUGHOUT THE CITY.</p> <p>PROPOSAL TO AMEND SECTION 802.21 OF THE RICHFIELD CITY CODE, WHICH GOVERNS AESTHETIC AND SPACING REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL CELL WIRELESS INSTALLATIONS, AND TO REMOVE THE CURRENT CITY REQUIREMENT THAT SMALL CELL INSTALLATIONS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT.</p>
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City Manager Rodriguez introduced the agenda item and Joe Powers, Assistant City Engineer.

Assistant City Engineer Powers gave a background on small cell wireless project along with the two companies, Verizon and AT&T, which have applied for permits in Richfield. He then provided a small cell status for both companies. In 2019, AT&T had 10 permits approved and Verizon had 17 permits submitted. He went on to discuss the small cell outlook and how COVID-19 is impacting that outlook. Council was provided a map, which available online under work session material, for visualization.

Assistant Community Development Director Poehlman discussed the current city code and proposed modifications. She also commented on how little staff is able to do regarding these installations if residents do not want them. She proceeded with listing proposed regulations for the installations.

Council Member Supple requested clarification on how visual the warning signs will be on the installations.

Assistant Community Development Director Poehlman explained they don't want large glowing warning signs but rather have signage legible but not having the poles wrapped entirely.

Council Member Whalen requested small signage at a reasonable height for residents if possible. He also showed support for having at least 300 feet between installations. He then asked for clarification on the current CUP set up.

Assistant Community Development Director Poehlman explained there are no valid reasons to deny a permit.

Council Member Trautmann agreed residents should have access to a map of the installations and provide contact information.

Assistant City Engineer Powers commented on how he plans to have a page set up on the Richfield website with information for residents along with contact information.

Council Member Supple thanked staff for advocating for residents.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez also would like a map and information available for residents. She echoed her support in spacing the installations out as far as possible.

Council Member Supple supported the modifications to get rid of the CUP. Council Member Trautmann agreed as well in being as transparent as possible to residents. Council Member Whalen also expressed support and believes the front facing website page will provide notifications to residents. Council Member Garcia and Mayor Regan Gonzalez also agreed to remove the CUP process.

ITEM #2	UPDATE ON THE PRELIMINARY DESIGN FOR THE 65TH STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT BETWEEN 66TH STREET/RAE DRIVE AND NICOLLET AVENUE, INCLUDING THE LYNDALE AVENUE PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS BETWEEN 64TH STREET AND 66TH STREET.
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Transportation Engineer Broz gave a brief timeframe on the 65th Street Reconstruction. He supplied goals, plans, policies and an overview of what has been previously discussed. He proceeded to discuss flood mitigation improvements around the HUB and a pipe from the HUB area to Richfield Lake. He also gave a brief summary of resident feedback. He then walked through the reconstruction plan including paint, bike lanes, trail system, on street parking, lane configuration and sidewalks. Transportation Engineer Broz then spoke of the Wendy’s current parking lot and potential issues.

Council Member Supple asked for clarification on parking near 64th and Lyndale.

Transportation Engineer Broz explained how they will be adding as many spots as possible.

Council Member Supple also asked about helping trails to prevent flooding.

Transportation Engineer Broz discussed how more research needs to be done on the flood mitigation project. It will be part of the plan.

Director Asher added they are looking at the system as a whole.

Council Member Whalen asked about widening trails in certain areas where there is a lack of on street bike lanes.

Transportation Engineer Broz stated he isn’t prepared to commit to yes or no because they will have to assess areas to see if wider paths will fit.

Council Member Whalen questioned about connections for pedestrians and possible changes to bus stops.

Transportation Engineer Broz stated there are some connections in the plans but no changes are in the plan for bus stops.

Council Member Whalen also questioned how this project will be compatible with the HUB reconstruction.

Transportation Engineer Broz spoke of how there was early collaboration with people and will serve the needs of the HUB.

Council Member Whalen questioned the three entrances at the Wendy's restaurant.

Transportation Engineer Broz explained how the current corner layout they is challenging. Closing one entrance can create more movement in the parking lot and can also cost the city a lot of money to alter.

Council Member Trautmann thanked staff and members of the Transportation Commission. He also commented on how residents in nearby housing currently have to walk out of their way to get where they are going and this will be a huge convenience for them. He then applauded Transportation Engineer Broz for all his work.

Council Member Garcia commented on what a challenging area this has been and is looking forward to the changes.

Transportation Engineer Broz discussed how equity matters and how it applies to transportation and this project.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez applauded the concrete idea of being able to include items such as equity in all departments and projects. She also spoke of things such as these are why the Public Works Department receives so many compliments.

Director Asher stated how the department is not afraid to have difficult discussions. She then spoke of how reconstruction is set for 2022. The preliminary design will be brought to the council in June.

Council Member Whalen believes the project is on track and would like to make sure all ideas and community feedback is shared and communicated.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez thanked everyone for their questions and comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:55 p.m.

Date Approved: June 9, 2020

Maria Regan Gonzalez
Mayor

Kelly Wynn
Senior Office Assistant

Katie Rodriguez
City Manager