

PUBLIC WORKS & FACILITIES COMMITTEE
MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING
Zoom Webinar
February 1, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM.

Members Present: Ms. Hale, Ms. Triem, Ms. Woll, Ms. Hughes-Skandijs and Paul Voelckers, Planning Commission Liaison. Mayor Weldon and Assembly Members Loren Jones and Greg Smith were also in attendance.

Staff Members Present: Katie Koester, Janet Sanbei, Lori Sowa, Irene Gallion, Jill Maclean, Rorie Watt, John Bohan, Alexandra Pierce, Greg Smith, Jeff Rogers, Alan Steffert, Carl Uchytel, Erich Schaal, John nelson, Joshua Midgett, Keri Williamson, Dan Bleidorn, Jeanne Rynne, and Michael Eich.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 11, 2021 – Regular Virtual Meeting

Ms. Hale submitted her changes prior to the meeting.

Minutes Approved.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

IV. ITEMS FOR ACTION

A. 2021 Legislative Priority List

Ms. Koester gave a brief summary as to the purpose of the list.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Hughes-Skandijs moved to hold in Committee for further review and discussion; and forward to the Planning Commission with direction to suggest projects from neighborhood plans.

No objection, motion passed.

B. CIP transfers and Closeouts

Ms. Koester stated there are several projects which have completed or are not being constructed for various reasons. The funds from these projects are before the Committee to request these funds being transferred to the projects listed in the memo from Mr. Bohan.

Ms. Woll moved forward to the full assembly for approval the transfers and closeouts contained in the memo and asked for unanimous consent.

No objections. Motion passed.

C. Recommendations for the 1% Sales Tax in the FY21 CIP

Ms. Koester gave brief update on the plan of addressing and responding to anticipated Sales Tax and Hotel-Motel Tax shortfalls due to the pandemic. She stated the voters approved a \$7 Million bond for work on Centennial Hall. There is also a voter approved \$4.5 Million use of Hotel-Motel Tax for additional work on Centennial Hall. The plan is to move the \$4.5 Million to the Bond and remove the \$7 Million Bond off the CIP for the time being.

Discussion ensued regarding the funds for Centennial Hall.

The Augustus Brown Renovation was put on hold in the spring of 2020 until the FY21 fiscal year. The Augustus Brown Renovations are included in the FY22 CIP document going to the Assembly during the budget process this year.

Ms. Triem moved the Committee forward the Manager's recommendation on the 1% CIP to the Finance Committee and asked for unanimous consent.

D. Calhoun Avenue Reconstruction

Ms. Koester gave the Committee background on the Planning Commission decision to ask the Assembly to deny the project. They also requested a traffic study be conducted for this corridor. They did not address the waiver of AASHTO standards for a narrower lane. There has been a lot of public comment on this project. There have been several public meetings available for design comment on this project. Traffic calming measures have been taken, including narrowing lanes, raising sidewalks, and adding curb and gutter.

Mr. Watt gave an explanation of his memo included in the packet, stating he is not in the habit of encouraging the Assembly to reject the Planning Commission's recommendation. He stated doing a traffic study or something different than what has been planned for the reconstruction at this time is costly and takes time. He feels a One Way road would not last. He feels if it were put in, later on it would be removed again. His advice for the best course of action is to take the One Way idea off the table, send it back to the Planning Commission, and then the question becomes..."What is the best we can do within the footprint of this road, given we have a lot of limitations?".

Public Comment

Ms. Frances Leach, 925 Calhoun Ave. She is right at the start of this project at the corner of Goldbelt and Calhoun, just up from Cope Park. She also works at 410 Calhoun Ave. She and her children walk this corridor to work and the bus stop regularly. She stated in 2018 she wrote City Manager Watt an email expressing her concerns for the safety of pedestrians after seeing a man nearly struck by a vehicle. She also stated she and her children have had some very close calls while walking on the sidewalk as vehicles drive by very closely. The side view mirrors of vehicles hang over the sidewalk, which means pedestrians need to be alert of traffic on the street. She put in the email she is very concerned for the safety of her family and others. Mr. Watt reassured her stating the good news is the road and sidewalk

are already in the planning stages for being upgraded. She feels his recommendation to reject the Planning Commission's decision to do a traffic study is a blatant disrespect of the concerns from citizens of the neighborhood. She doesn't feel 40 inches is big enough for a sidewalk. She stated if passing another pedestrian one would need to step in the street to get by. She asked staff to take a walk down Calhoun Ave. to see the concerns the neighborhood is expressing.

Ms. Emily Ferry, 836 Calhoun Ave. She agrees the improvements to the road and utilities are important, but pedestrian and bicycle safety is also very important. She would really like to engage with the City in what the One Way would really look like and the issues that may preclude it from happening. She said this hasn't happened yet. She would like to see from this project a way for children to bike to school safely. Currently, and the way the project is designed at this time, that can't happen. She would also like pedestrians to be able to walk on the sidewalk without police officers stopping to tell them it isn't safe to walk on the sidewalk. This design doesn't allow for safe walking within the corridor. She would like the City to "Walk the Talk" about making the community a pedestrian friendly community. There are so many plans that speak to that. She would love to see the City take the opportunity to make this happen in this very important corridor. It is a very important corridor because it is 1 of only 3 corridors in and out of downtown Juneau. (At this time Ms. Ferry's phone stopped transmitting her comments. Ms. Hale stated her time was up and asked her to send in a letter.)

Peter Metcalf, 354 Distin Ave. He stated they access Calhoun both on foot and by vehicle. They access Calhoun on W. 8th St. This is a very dangerous intersection. It has blind corners from both directions. People frequently speed around those blind corners. He concurred with others, saying there have been several accidents because of the dangers in this corridor. He said he doesn't feel Staff has been receptive of the comments made. He feels they have been dismissed and not recognized as important. He would like to see Staff take the comments seriously and comment accordingly. The neighborhood is disgruntled. He would like the City to go forward with the Planning Commission recommendation and complete a study. He doesn't feel it needs to be extravagant, but something that will give information. He just asks that Staff listen to the neighborhood.

Mr. Mark Choate, 230 W. 8th St. He stated he has 2 issues to address. The first, is safety. His stone wall has been hit 3 times since he purchased the property. The most recent did an extensive amount of damage and sideswiped a pedestrian. He said the City has a liability for dangerous conditions and this location is dangerous. He feels the City has done nothing to resolve the danger. The second issue is he feels the process has been more than dismal. The City has been providing lip service with comments such as "We have this under control, don't worry about it.", but there has been a lot of push back from Staff. There has been no opportunity to participate in any meaningful manner. He feels he knows the area quite well, as he has lived in this location for more than 30 years. He paid to install a fire hydrant on his property. He feels he knows the water system and he has had no problems with the water at his location. He has spent 6 years as a School Board Member and understands the process of public participation. He asks that the City not move forward and let the neighborhood respond. It is an active group and they will respond quickly. He feels the Engineering Department and the project is at a D- in terms of its responsiveness to the community.

Ms. Marilyn Holmes, corner of Goldbelt and Calhoun. This has to be one of the most hazardous intersections in the City. The process of walking down the portion of Calhoun to be reconstructed is absolutely harrowing. She would not even think about riding a bike on this stretch of road...she likes to ride. She agrees with other comments as this is a dangerous corridor. She agrees it needs to be redesigned, but not just for people and bikes, but also for any utility or other type of emergency vehicle. In 2004 a section of Calhoun that intersects with Goldbelt was under construction. The neighbors all got together and they paid for AEL&P to put the conduit underground for the utilities. She says it is possible to put the lines within conduit and underground. She would like to see the City add conduit installed for putting the utility lines underground. So eventually the power lines could be taken down.

Mary Alice McKeen, 212 W. 9th Street. She has lived here for 39 years. She doesn't feel the City has made any effort to consider the neighborhood's concerns for this street. She stated when the project began the neighborhood started emailing with each other discussing suggestions. One individual wrote back saying..."These are interesting ideas. Good luck getting the City to take any of these suggestions. From my limited experience, they are pretty unreceptive to community suggestions." She feels there has been lip service paid, but there has not been any meaningful response to community concerns or suggestions. She said the Engineering Department responded saying they didn't have the scope to widen the road. She feels making the street 2-way and 3 foot sidewalks is not being safety conscious. She really feels the 1-way should be seriously considered. This is the only way to have reasonably wide sidewalks, a bike lane and traffic on this street. She feels the City has threatened the neighborhood by saying a traffic study would be too expensive. She thinks this is disingenuous for the City to say. She would like all of these studied. She feels the allegation of the fire department not being able to get a fire truck up 9th Street is false. She would like all of these items studied.

Discussion ensued.

This topic will be taken up again as the 1st item on the February 8, 2021, Work Session. Public comment will not be taken at this work session.

V. INFORMATION ITEMS – Due to a lack of time, Information Items were not heard at this meeting.

- A. ADEC Compliance Order by Consent
- B. Electric Bus Roll Out
- C. Capital Improvement Plan

VI. CONTRACTS DIVISION ACTIVITY REPORT

- A. January 8, 2021 to January 26, 2021

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:11 PM.

- A. Next meeting will be a Work Session, February 8, 2021, 12:00 PM.

Members of the Public Present:

Frances Leach
Emily Ferry
Duff Mitchell
Frankie Pillifant
Garret Gladsjo
Keith Gerken
Kirby Day
Kollin Monahan
Laurie Berg
Laurie Craig
Lucas Chambers
Marilyn Holmes
Mark Choate
Peter Metcalfe
Mary Alice McKeen (Sean)

Members of the Press Present:

Jeremy Hsieh, KTOO
Pete Carran