

Study Meeting #29
Tuesday, October 24, 2006, 8:00 p.m.
Fire Station #1
95th & Nicollet Ave. So.
Bloomington, Minnesota

Call to Order

Mayor Gene Winstead called the study meeting to order at 8:18 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Mayor Winstead, Councilmembers R. Axtell, S. Elkins, K. Nordstrom, S. Peterson, and V. Wilcox.

Absent: Councilmember A. Grady.

**STUDY ITEM #1 -
Hwy. 169/I-494
Interchange
Reconstruction,
Presentation &
Discussion of the
Design, Cost
Participation and
Municipal Consent**

City Manager Mark Bernhardson announced that per a request from State Representative Neil Peterson, he is providing Council with a copy of Peterson's email that explains his viewpoint on the 169/494 interchange.

Tom O'Keefe, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) began the presentation by stating this information is being provided in preparation of MnDOT's submission of their preliminary design of the 169/494 interchange to the cities of Bloomington, Edina and Eden Prairie. He talked about the schedule for the project and that it is being evaluated for inclusion in their 10-year plan and specifically the 2016 timeframe. He stated it remains a very high candidate for advancement if the MVET amendment passes or other funding comes out of the Legislature and is signed into law so MnDOT desires to keep the project on schedule in case it advances. It will be submitted next week so the City needs to hold a public hearing. He introduced Victoria Nill, the Project Manager and Wayne Norris, MnDOT's West Metro Area Engineer to continue the presentation.

Nill began with a slide show that addressed the following items and she indicated it had been shown to the various neighborhoods as well:

- The project map with a focus on the area to the north.
- A description of the I-494 corridor & the T.H. 169 corridor.
- Background on the T.H. 169 corridor.
- Cities involved in this project.
- A description of the traffic and crash data relating to T.H. 169.
- Past and current photos of the interchange.
- Project goals: Remove 3 remaining signalized intersections, construct the partially direct interchange, preserve the median on 169, minimize impacts to existing 169 bridge over I-494.
- Project constraints: Demanding capacity, system to system moves, Anderson Lakes, 4F /6F properties, right-of-way, and the Nine Mile Creek Watershed.
- Project partners: Bloomington, Edina, Eden Prairie, Federal Highway Administration, Met Council, Three Rivers Park District, Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, and consultants.
- A review of the environmental documentation to date.
- Aerial of the 169/494 Interchange Project.
- A description of the local moves that were not allowed resulting in four roundabout designs at Valley View Road.
- A review of the issues relating to Friendship Village: Without access from Highwood Drive, residents are concerned with the accessibility for ambulances. A study of the response times from Friendship Village to certain points east, west and north indicate a worse case scenario of an 80-second increase in time needed to head north in the off-peak period. It assumes the main access out of Friendship Village is out the front entrance. It was stated Marth Road will be a two-way road coming out of Friendship Village.

**STUDY ITEM #1
continued**

Bernhardson stated the current ambulance provider is Allina and while they come from the east or the south, they don't serve Eden Prairie or Edina. They are usually stationed at Fire Station #5 off of 106th Street & Bush Lake Road or Station #4 waiting for ambulance calls.

Nill explained why Marth Road is to remain two-lanes and Highwood Drive to be cul-de-saced with no access to Hwy. 169 adding not everyone at the public meetings was pleased to hear that.

Nordstrom inquired as to the neighborhood's opinion of Highwood being a cul-de-sac.

Nill replied that MnDOT met with Friendship Village regarding accessibility to their site and with the neighborhood to the east that is concerned with the connection to Marth Road.

Peterson remarked that the City has been shying away from designing long streets with cul-de-sacs but Nill stated that is what the neighbors wanted.

Elkins commented that it almost came down to what would save the most trees in that area. He inquired about the type of visual and noise barriers to be used along that stretch.

Wayne Norris explained the existing noise wall is proposed to be replaced and will be extended up to Marth Road. He's looking at a potential visual barrier to prevent headlights from shining into neighborhood homes. The high earthen berm is now proposed to be located on the east side to protect Friendship Village residents. No noise barriers are proposed for the neighborhoods east of this area. He mentioned a visual screen might be installed in the Wyoming and Tierney's Woods area but there will be no noise barriers in that area. He added installation of any visual barriers is usually not included in MnDOT projects.

Bernhardson reported Rep. Neil Peterson met with the two neighborhoods to the east and inquired if he had shared that information with MnDOT.

O'Keefe replied he was not sure if Peterson had met with them as a group.

Nill stated Rep. Peterson indicated the residents had a concern with Marth Road being a one-way road and proceeded to show the exhibit MnDOT presented to Friendship Village. The exhibit showed three different views:

- View A (from a 3rd story window at Friendship Village) before and after. She commented the trees planted would be samplings and not full grown trees as was shown in the drawings.
- View B (3rd story window at Friendship Village looking northeast) before and after.
- View C: Minor changes.
- View from the Ensign neighborhood.

Nill reviewed the project schedule: Nov. 30 (Informal Open House – location undetermined)

Winstead requested the open house be held in Bloomington, as our residential will be impacted to a greater degree than either Edina or Eden Prairie.

Nill replied they will look at a Bloomington location and continued reviewing the schedule: Municipal Consent approval in December.

It was stated the public hearing could be held on December 4 at the Council meeting.

With regard to the MVET tax, Winstead inquired if it would accelerate the projected date of 2016.

O'Keefe replied this would be one of four packages put forward by the Governor Pawlenty if it passes. He stated if MVET doesn't pass, it probably wouldn't get done until 2016 but this project is in MnDOT's 10-year work plan, which is currently being developed.

Peterson inquired if any thought was given to locating the bridge crossing 494 at the Golden Triangle Road with a connection at that point or was Washington Avenue the only one considered.

**STUDY ITEM #1
continued**

Norris replied they've explored various areas for the crossing and the Golden Triangle Road is a bad location for construction and Washington is a better alternative.

Peterson inquired about bicycle connectivity and the provisions being made for bicycles and whether Highwood Drive would be a good east/west bicycle route.

Nill explained the ring road system has a bicycle trail that runs along Washington, Viking Drive, and West 78th Street.

Axtell inquired how this project would be affected if cost wasn't an issue and how the projected traffic numbers from the south will impact this particular design.

Nill replied that 60,000 Average Daily Trips (ADT's) was an accurate number in 2002 but it takes into account Met Council's and the City of Bloomington's Comprehensive Plan projected numbers for 2027 so growth was considered in this design.

O'Keefe remarked that a clean slate wouldn't have changed the nature of the system movements much.

Bernhardson inquired about the estimated project costs today.

Nill replied the total project cost is estimated at \$125 million, which includes a 10% risk factor and an 8% construction/administration cost so Bloomington's share would be \$1.7 million.

Nordstrom stated for clarification Eden Prairie's share would be \$3.2 million and Edina's would be \$2.3 million.

Bernhardson stated a Highwood bridge would cost another \$7 million, which would be considered a local project for Bloomington by MnDOT's standards, and therefore, would be Bloomington's responsibility.

Nill stated the noise walls would cost approximately \$5 million and the aesthetic budget for visual barriers would be approximately 7% of the project.

Bernhardson inquired about the connection.

Using a map, Nill described the access to and from the interchange stating two local connections not being provided are located in the northeast quadrant, which will force them to access the roundabouts at Valley View Road.

Wilcox inquired how the cost was calculated for Bloomington.

Nill explained the system to system moves are paid for by MnDOT but with regard to local moves, if part of the project benefits Bloomington and the City desires to have certain moves or elements incorporated into the project, Bloomington has to pay for those. The signal costs are a shared expense based on contributing legs. Roadway, bridge and signal costs are the three primary ones in this project. She added there are lots of partial acquisitions and temporary easements needed for right-of-way but none of the partial acquisitions will start until the funding has been identified.

Norris commented a Northwest Traffic Study was conducted using today's traffic volumes on local streets and then MnDOT's projected volumes after the project were analyzed and that although traffic would be reduced initially by the project, traffic would build back up to what it is today within the next 20 years.

Winstead restated Friendship Village is very concerned with their entrance and anything MnDOT can do to enhance it coming from the north would be helpful.

**STUDY ITEM #1
continued**

Peterson requested MnDOT pay close attention to the feedback they've received regarding aesthetics in particular regarding the retaining walls, as the top of the one on the south side of 494 east of the West Bush Lake Road bridge has a random look to it where a more undulating appearance would have been more pleasing.

Norris reported on the status of the Pauser, Birchholm, Rambo, and Bossart properties.

Winstead requested MnDOT provide the City with a copy of their explanation/response to Rep. Neil Peterson's comments, as this will be presented to the neighborhood at another open house and will then come back to the Council for Municipal Consent approval.

O'Keefe stated MnDOT will notice the open house, which will be held on November 30 but the City needs to notice the public hearing.

Winstead concluded by restating more conversation needs to take place regarding the entrance to Friendship Village.

**STUDY ITEM #2 –
France & Old
Shakopee Road
Update**

Larry Lee, Community Development Director stated staff would like Council direction on the following with regard to France & Old Shakopee Road:

1. Is the Council interested in extending the development pattern of the northeast and southeast corners to the southwest corner of France & Old Shakopee Road?
2. Does the Council want staff to bring forward a resolution initiating rezoning of the area to the B-4 District for consideration at a future regular meeting? Initiating rezoning does not require the Council eventually approve the rezoning, but rather sets in motion the public hearing and hearing notification process.

Elkins stated staff has already gone through an outreach process with the neighborhood twice in this area and the B-4 zoning is consistent with the vision for the area so it would behoove the City to get it out there. Nordstrom agreed.

Axtell inquired if it was consistent with the other two corners.

Bernhardson replied the current owner indicated a desire to do a B-4 development but there are outlying areas that the developer doesn't own. The question is whether the entire area should be rezoned now. If the development doesn't take in the outlying parcels, they would be orphan B-4 parcels.

Council consensus was to proceed with the B-4 zoning.

**ADDITIONAL
COMMENTS**

Bernhardson reminded Council of the 5:30 p.m. governance session on Monday, October 30, which will be followed by the regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. He stated Tax Increment Financing (TIF) would be part of the Mall discussion. Regarding the Old Town Hall, he inquired if Council wanted to risk \$140,000 to replace the roof this year. If so, staff would proceed with a contract for the work.

Winstead stated it's time to get this project rolling and costs will only increase if it gets put off to next year. He expressed confidence in the Bloomington Historical Society's fundraising ability stating there will be a community effort on this project going forward.

Larry Grainger, Bloomington Historical Society was present and added the Society has momentum for a two-year fundraising effort.

Bernhardson stated the site work and roof could be done this year.

ADJOURN MEETING

Mayor Winstead adjourned the meeting at 10:03 p.m.

Barbara Clawson
Council Secretary