

**WORKSHOP
OAKDALE CITY COUNCIL
April 13, 2021**

The City Council held a workshop on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue North, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting began at 5:00 PM.

Present: Mayor Paul Reinke

Council Members: Jake Ingebrigtsen
Susan Olson
Colleen Swedberg
Kevin Zabel

Also Present: Christina Volkens, City Administrator
Jim Thomson, City Attorney
Susan Barry, City Clerk
Brian Bachmeier, Public Works Director/City Engineer
Jeff Koesling, Parks Superintendent
Alyssa MacLeod, Communications Specialist
Chelsea Petersen, Administrative Services Director
Emily Shively, City Planner
Bob Streetar, Community Development Director
Bill Sullivan, Police Chief
Julie Williams, Recreation Superintendent
Kevin Wold, Fire Chief

Stan Karwoski, Washington County Commissioner (virtual)
Ken Larson, Slumberland (virtual)
Connor McCarthy, United Properties (virtual)
Scott Peterson, United Properties (virtual)

Mitch Bartlett, Washington County (virtual)
Joe Gustafson, Washington County (virtual)
Stan Karwoski, Washington County (virtual)
Adam Josephson, Minnesota Department of Transportation (virtual)

SUMMERFEST

Communications Specialist MacLeod provided an overview of plans for the 2021 Summerfest event: two-day event, food trucks, entertainment, skateboard contest, 5k, kids activities, art fair, fireworks, medallion hunt, and scavenger hunt; no parade or carnival. She noted that no changes had been made to the COVID guidelines discussed at the March 23 meeting. Communications Specialist MacLeod further noted that “save the dates” information on Summerfest had been posted and vendor applications were being finalized.

Parks Superintendent Koesling commented on the difficulties in planning and he supports not holding Summerfest due an uptick in COVID cases. He indicated that Public Works staff would not enforce the wearing of masks at outdoor events as mandated by the Governor. Parks

Superintendent Koesling shared that he wanted Summerfest to continue be a positive reflection on the city.

Communications Specialist MacLeod noted that Cottage Grove canceled their June festival and other communities had not yet decided on whether to hold events.

Recreation Superintendent Williams stated that although the Summerfest Committee was hopeful that the community event could take place, the increase in COVID cases has raised concerns.

In response to a question from Council Member Swedberg, Communications Specialist MacLeod noted that a decision on whether or not to hold the event could be made next meeting.

Police Chief Sullivan commented on the potential of community events in the metro area attracting demonstrators. He also commented on the difficulties relating to mask enforcement.

Council Member Olson supported canceling the event sooner rather than later and expressed concern with staff being tasked with enforcing masks and social distancing.

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, Communications Specialist MacLeod noted that there would be no financial impact on the city should a decision to cancel the event be made in early June rather than in May, besides a large cancellation fee if the fireworks were cancelled and loss of deposits on some of the music groups.

Council Member Zabel supported holding off on a final decision on holding the event.

Police Chief Sullivan commented on the importance of having Summerfest dates locked down for scheduling of police personnel.

Mayor Reinke asked that vendors be made aware of the potential that Summerfest could be canceled or scaled back.

City Administrator Volkers offered that the event could be comprised of food trucks only.

Communications Specialist MacLeod offered that several pop-up events could be held.

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, Recreation Superintendent Williams shared that there had been a few incidents of persons not wearing masks at the city's Indoor Market but largely it has not been a problem.

Staff was directed to bring back options for a scaled down Summerfest event to the April 27 City Council meeting.

4FRONT EXPANSION

Community Development Director Streetar reviewed a request from Slumberland and United Properties to develop up to 310,000 square feet of new construction north of County Road 14, west of I-694, east of Ideal Avenue, abutting the Willowbrooke neighborhood to the north.

City Planner Shively added that a code amendment would allow two more permitted uses: light manufacturing and office-showroom/office-warehouse.

In response to a question from Council Member Swedberg, City Planner Shively reviewed access off of County Road 14.

In response to a question from Council Member Olson, Community Development Director Streetar described the view of the buildings and landscaping from Willowbrooke.

City Planner Shively added that the city's design standards would provide exterior standards for the buildings.

In response to a question from Mayor Reinke, Scott Peterson, United Properties, explained that the site would not connect to Willowbrooke on the north and described the right-in, right-out access on the south. He added that trucks would park in the rear of the buildings.

Community Development Director Streetar added that in preparation for the additional development of the 4Front site, Willowbrooke moved open space from the north portion of the site to the south.

Mayor Reinke stated his support for the request.

Ken Larson, Slumberland, commented on the uniqueness of the site.

City Planner Shively noted that the next step would be to bring the code amendment to the Planning Commission and then to the City Council

PROPOSED POLICY: SOCIAL MEDIA

Communications Specialist MacLeod reviewed the proposed policy on social media.

Staff was directed to bring the policy forth for adoption at the April 27 City Council meeting.

PROPOSED POLICY: DONATIONS TO PARKS

City Administrator Volkers reviewed an updated draft of a proposed policy that addresses donations and memorials in city parks. She noted that Section 9.0: Gifts to the City would be removed and made part of a different policy.

Following discussion, staff was directed to rework portions of the draft policy and bring it back to an upcoming Council work session.

COUNCIL TOPICS

Acorn Awards

Council Member Swedberg noted that the annual City Council tour of Acorn Award winning properties was being considered for June 29.

After some discussion, the City Council asked that the tour be set for Tuesday, July 13, prior to the start of the regular meeting.

ISD 622 Boundary Changes

Council Member Zabel shared that he had heard from a number of residents upset with some elementary school boundary changes made by Independent School District 622 that will have student attend school outside of Oakdale. He suggested that the City Council send a statement to the school district supporting Oakdale residents attend schools in Oakdale.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen recalled that in an earlier discussion, the superintendent stated that families with at least one student attending Eagle Point Elementary School would be allowed to continue to attend Eagle Point regardless of any boundary changes.

(Discussion to continue later in the meeting).

10TH STREET ACCESS

City Attorney Thomson reviewed correspondence sent to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) opposing the termination of the Limited Use Permit relating to the access to the HOM Furniture site (and daycare building) on 10th Street east of the I-694 ramp granted to the city in 1993.

Mitch Bartlett, Washington County, provided an overview of the progress of the county's project that began in 2020: pedestrian trail to Cub Foods and flashing yellow signals for access to I-694. He shared the county's support for the access to remain open.

Adam Josephson, MnDOT, stated that the closure of the access was being sought for vehicle and pedestrian safety at the access. He explained that the previous manager of the HOM Furniture site had expressed concerns with vehicles cutting through the site to access Helmo Avenue or 10 Street as well as the speed traveled by some vehicles. Mr. Josephson added that MnDOT contacted the city's Community Development Department when it learned of the HOM Furniture project and the Limited Use Permit was subsequently terminated by MnDOT.

Mayor Reinke indicated that HOM Furniture wanted the access to remain open.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen strongly opposed closing the access and asked if the flashing yellow signals would help mitigate MnDOT's safety concerns.

Mr. Josephson replied that the flashing yellow signals would likely reduce accidents at that intersection.

Mr. Bartlett discussed options for the flashing yellow signals and stated that restricted access would also increase safety.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen asked if closing the access would increase safety concerns at the 10th Street and Helmo Avenue intersection. He added that he has witnessed a number of accidents at that location and that he, in fact, had been in an accident at that intersection.

Mr. Josephson provided accident data projections for both locations showing an overall reduction in accidents.

County Commissioner Karwoski stated his support for the city for the access to remain open. He added that additional signal improvements in the vicinity would help address safety concerns.

Mayor Reinke asked that MnDOT consider leaving the access open until a determination can be made on how the flashing yellow lights affect the flow of traffic.

Mr. Josephson offered the following options and stated that he would need to discuss them with others:

1. Leave access open until a determination can be made on how the improvements made by Washington County affect the traffic safety.
2. Close access after completion of Washington County's project.
3. Close access at this time and Washington County to modify their current project.

It was the consensus of the City Council to leave the access on 10th Street open, collect data for a number of years, and then make a determination on whether the access should be closed.

Mr. Josephson stated that should that option be acceptable to MnDOT, an agreement would need to be reached that defines the timeframe and deadline for collecting data and for the Limited Use Permit to be reinstated or redrafted that the city would cover costs relating to closure of the access, when so determined. The council did not acknowledge or comment on that suggestion.

On another topic, County Commissioner Karwoski announced that federal approval had been received on the Gold Line transit project.

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ISD 622 BOUNDARY CHANGES (cont.)

The City Council continued to discuss the Independent School District 622's boundary changes and supported sending individual letters to the school superintendent asking that Oakdale residents have the opportunity to attend Oakdale schools.

ADJOURNMENT

The workshop adjourned at 6:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Barry,
City Clerk