

September 23, 2014

A special meeting of the Scandia City Council was held on the above date for the purpose of establishing goals and giving direction for Log House Landing Improvements. Mayor Randall Simonson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The following were present: Council members Dan Lee, Sally Swanson, Chris Ness, and Jim Schneider, and Mayor Randall Simonson. Staff: City Engineer Ryan Goodman, Public Works Director Tim Kieffer, and Administrator Kristina Handt.

Motion by Ness, seconded by Lee to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Simonson asked if anyone in the audience wanted to say anything the Council hasn't already heard.

Pam Plowman Smith, 20919 Quint Avenue, commented that her group was comprised of a large group of people, many that don't live on the river. They have made an effort to talk to others including those at Meisters and on the landing. Many said it was their favorite place because it was so rustic. They have 550 petition signers. Nonlanding users wanted to keep the spending limited. Their plan allows for plenty of trailer parking near the landing. Quinnell parking would tie it to the river access. Gilbertson Creek is on private land. Folks want the Council to consider best management practices, National Park Service and St. Croix River Association comments, the comprehensive plan and want a more inclusive process.

Steve Bubal, attorney with Kennedy and Graven, assisting the Friends of Log House Landing, spoke about indemnification. MNDOT almost always requires it. This doesn't increase liability for the city. The City would be in a better position if the variance was approved by the state. There could be more liability with a wider road.

Simonson introduced a video of Butternut Falls Trail and Log House Landing he took on 9/22/14. Simonson noted there are significant differences between the two roads such as the surrounding environment and terrain.

Goodman summarized the purpose of the meeting and briefed each topic. He provided background information on the typical vehicles including trailers and fire trucks that might access the landing and provided road widths in the three sections.

The Council focused on street width next. Goodman noted the preliminary layout is 26 feet curb to curb and 32 feet with parking. The plan includes 480 feet of parking which would be enough for 12 trucks with trailers. Swanson asked where the 26 feet came from. Goodman responded it was in the design guidelines for the grant. Lee asked if the grant also covered storm water. Goodman said yes and the City would have to meet the requirements of the watershed district and DNR as they relate to storm water runoff. Schneider commented the road needs to be wide enough for two vehicles to pass. Ness commented he would like to see it similar to Quinnell's width. Simonson was concerned if the pullout approach was used the City wouldn't be able to prevent people from parking there. Handt commented there have been 29 police reports at the landing in the last 2 ½ years and 24 of those were parking related. Folks have been parking in the pull out areas currently. Goodman summarized the Council consensus as wanting two way traffic with a minimum of 21 feet driving lanes.

The Council discussed surface options next. Goodman provided handouts showing various pervious applications such as Grasspave2. Goodman would recommend pavement for the driving lanes but the Council could consider Grasspave2 or something similar for the parking areas. It could also help stabilize the bank leading into Gilbertson Creek. Grasspave2 could support the weight of emergency vehicles like fire trucks, would cost more than bituminous, would need to be mowed and could not be plowed in the winter. Simonson was concerned about how grass would grow in so much shade. Goodman said it could be done with the right seed. Schneider expressed concerns about pervious surfaces. Goodman said if the road was tilted to the north there would be little drainage to the south. Kieffer commented that tilting the road could cause problems during the freeze/thaw cycle. By crowning the road the water would runoff of the sides. Simonson asked how much the road would need to be raised. Goodman said the current plans he provided has the curb and gutter at grade three inches of fill would be needed to align with the bituminous. Further down the hill a higher curb would handle the water better but a surmountable curb could be considered in the flatter areas at the top. Schneider expressed a preference for the driving lanes to be paved. Simonson and Ness agreed but also wanted to explore alternatives for the parking area.

Ron Barczak, 19899 Quinnell Ave, said he hopes to see the advisory committee have some input.

Ness asked if there were unopened roads in the area. Handt replied, yes there are two unopened north south roads east of Quint and north of 205th St.

The Council moved on to discuss design considerations. Lee and Swanson commented they didn't want curb and gutter. Ness said he wouldn't rule out curb and gutter but wants to explore other options. Goodman commented that it will be hard to control runoff of a crowned road without curb and gutter on at least one side. If the road is tilted to the north other options such as a pipe in the ground could be explored but there will still be a need to control the velocity of the runoff before it gets to the rain garden or pond at the bottom of the road.

Craig Christensen, 20661 Quint Ave, commented that snowmobilers used the road in the winter to access the river.

The Council moved on to discuss parking considerations. The Council does not want to increase the parking beyond what is there.

Judy Rydeen, 14633 Oakhill Court N, expressed concern about parking encroaching on private property. Handt told her the entire project is proposed within the public right of way and would not be on private property.

Simonson expressed concern regarding overnight parking.

Lisa Schlingerman, 20661 Quint Ave, noted that Log House Landing has been specifically excluded from the ordinance regulating parks.

Handt shared photos from Deputy Majeski that showed problem parking at the bottom of the landing. It has been posted no parking but the signs keep getting taken down.

Schneider commented there should be no parking at the bottom of the landing. That area is needed for maneuvering boats. Parking along the side of the road and it could be a pervious surface.

Katherine Lewis, 20077 Quinnell Ave, asked if parking would be along the south side of the road. She is concerned that would put vehicles closer to the creek.

Swanson commented that parking shouldn't be expanded; it should be done in a controlled way.

Schneider noted that at Big Marine Park Reserve and places in Chisago County there is a sign at the landing that says if there is no available parking the launch is closed.

Safety and Maintenance were covered next. Katherine Lewis noted there had been a fire south of the landing in the past in which Scandia Fire used the landing access. Winter maintenance issues surrounded questions of whether or not or where to plow the road and the impact of snowmobiles. Swanson was concerned about what snowmobiles could do to the pavement. Simonson asked about the possibility of a more natural appearance to the retaining wall. Goodman said natural stone or vegetation options could be explored.

Additional items on the agenda were discussed. Goodman suggested the possibility of working with an arborist to determine tree impact, removal of dead limbs and selective pruning and trimming for tree health. Goodman also noted that while Gilbertson's Creek is on private property the City could consider additional projects involving bank stabilization within the city right of way that could reduce sediment to the creek.

Ness asked if it would be possible to curve the road to avoid trees as was proposed in the 2007 plan. Goodman replied it would be possible to avoid the white pine. Additionally with the smaller parking area and narrower road the tree impact would be reduced.

Simonson asked if the watershed had anything to add. Kristin Tuenge, President, Carnelian Marine St. Croix Watershed District said they want the least invasive project, limited increase in impervious surface and low cost project as possible.

Next Steps:

The Council agreed to create a special committee to provide options on the Log House Landing Improvements. The committee would consist of one Council member, two Planning Commission members, two watershed board members, three public members, and one from the St. Croix River Association. It was agreed to advertise for the applicants for the public positions and the Council would make appointments at the Oct. 21st meeting. Plowman Smith asked when the project would go to the Planning Commission for review. Handt said it would occur as it has in the past in that the Planning Commission holds a public hearing in November on the Capital Improvement Plan and makes the recommendation to the Council. The November Planning Commission meeting is November 5th.

Motion to adjourn by Ness, seconded by Swanson. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:38pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristina Handt
City Administrator/ Clerk