

IMPROVEMENT HEARING
SUNRISE ISLAND BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT
CITY OF CROSSLAKE
MONDAY, JUNE 21, 2010
6:00 P.M. – CITY HALL

The Council for the City of Crosslake met in the Council Chambers of City Hall on Monday, June 21, 2010. The following Council Members were present: Mayor Jay Andolshek, Steve Roe, Rusty Taubert, John Moengen and Dean Swanson. Also present were City Administrator Tom Swenson, Clerk/Treasurer Jenny Max, Community Development Director Ken Anderson, Public Works Director Ted Strand, City Attorney Mike Couri and City Engineer Dave Reese. There were approximately 14 people in the audience. (Sign-in sheet attached)

Mayor Andolshek called the Public Hearing to order at 6:00 P.M. and stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed Sunrise Island Bridge Replacement Project. Mayor Andolshek then turned the meeting over to City Administrator Tom Swenson.

City Administrator Tom Swenson read the Affidavit of Mailing confirming that a copy of the Notice of Hearing was deposited in the U.S. Post Office on June 4, 2010 with postage prepaid in an envelope containing the name and address of the property owners benefiting from bridge construction based on current tax records received from the Crow Wing County Auditor's Office. On June 14, 2010 a copy of the notice of hearing was deposited in the U.S. Post Office with postage prepaid in an envelope containing the name and address of property owners adjacent to Sunrise Island Road which could be affected by the bridge construction. On June 8th and June 15th the Notice of Hearing was published in the City's official newspaper, the Northland Press.

The meeting was then turned over to City Engineer Dave Reese who presented an overview of the feasibility report dated December 2008 and prepared by Widseth Smith Nolting as authorized by the Council under Chapter 429 of Minnesota State Statute. The full report is available at City Hall. City Engineer Dave Reese stated that the purpose of his presentation is to review the existing conditions of the bridge, discuss what is proposed for the bridge and the cost of the proposed improvement. The feasibility study evaluated the existing bridge and what cost options there are for full replacement compared with partially repairing the bridge. Based on reports received from Crow Wing County, the pilings need to be replaced and the bridge is considered functionally obsolete. Repairing the bridge would prolong its estimated life approximately 10-15 years, but the repairs would probably not increase the load rating. If the bridge were to be completely replaced, the life expectancy of a new concrete bridge would be 60-70 years.

The feasibility study and design plans were required to be completed in order to apply for State Bridge Bond Funding. Based on the grant received from the State, the bridge will need to conform to State design standards. The width of the proposed bridge would increase from 20 feet to 26 feet and have a 30 MPH speed limit. A temporary road would

be constructed to provide access during the construction period of approximately 3 – 3 ½ months. The proposed bridge would be contained within the right-of-way and the City would request temporary easements on the South and North sides of the bridge. The City is proposing to assess the fifteen benefiting property owners on an equivalent lot basis for 50% of the local cost of the bridge. Based on Minnesota State Statute 429 if the project moves forward, there will be another hearing for the proposed assessment to discuss final costs of the bridge and the City Council would then set an interest rate and period for which the assessment would run. Based on current known cost estimates, total cost for the proposed bridge would be \$658,371 of which \$484,663 would come from State funding and \$173,708 would come from local funding. Of the local funding amount, 50% would be assessed to the benefiting property owners which is approximately \$86,854.

Jerry Jurek of 34054 Sunrise Island Road was present and stated that there are only fifteen people on the island. The proposed assessment of \$5,800 is a lot of money to have to pay.

Roger Lewis of 34061 Sunrise Island Road was present and stated that he lives very close to the bridge. Mr. Lewis asked what the existing width of the bridge is, to which City Engineer Reese noted it is twenty feet wide. Mr. Lewis stated that aesthetically, the wood bridge fits the area and the look of Crosslake and questioned what the new bridge would look like. City Engineer Reese noted the proposed bridge does not include any artistry or lighting and any cost for that would have to be paid through local funding.

Ron Schoneman of 33992 Sunrise Island Road was present and stated he doesn't think the residents need a new bridge, no one wants it and it doesn't need to be built to handle 30 MPH speeds.

Richard Nuss of 34080 Sunrise Island Road was present and concurs with everyone else's comments.

City Engineer Reese commented that the County's assessment of the bridge is that the core timber pilings are rotting away or already gone and the pile caps are beginning to crush. The options to provide maintenance improvements to the existing bridge would be approximately \$175,000 and that would only last 10 to 15 years.

Joy Lotze of 33986 Sunrise Island Road was present and stated that there are only three year-round residents and wonders if it makes sense to spend this much money on a bridge that isn't used very much. A wooden bridge also has some character and Ms. Lotze doesn't know of any other wooden bridge in Crosslake or Pequot Lakes.

Based on various questions from the audience concerning what decisions have already been made by the City Council, City Attorney Mike Couri noted that by following Minnesota Statute Chapter 429, the Council has not and cannot make a decision without first having a feasibility study completed to be able to estimate the cost of the improvement. The City Council needs to be able to show the affected property owners

what the impact is to them. The City Council cannot delegate a vote to the public, but the public has the right to be heard and appeal the decision made by the City Council. City Attorney Couri also noted the courts have held Cities to a higher standard of care and require things such as roads and bridges to be maintained in a safe condition.

Dan White, property owner on Sunrise Island, was present and stated that his preference would be to have another wooden bridge if the cost was the same as the concrete bridge. City Engineer Reese noted the cost is the same if the City were to rebuild a new concrete bridge using State funding compared with simply repairing the existing bridge. Also, the cost for a new wooden bridge would not be eligible for State funding.

Elizabeth Nuss of 34080 Sunrise Island Road was present and noted the City did not do any maintenance of the bridge until approximately 1993 and currently the residents are the ones who pound in nails and shovel snow. Ms. Nuss does not support a new concrete bridge.

Dorothy Hayes of 34092 Sunrise Island Road was present and commented that their homeowner's insurance is already high based on living on an island. The property owners don't want to jeopardize their safety but don't feel a new bridge is the solution.

Councilmember John Moengen responded to some of the residents' concerns. Being on the Crosslake Fire Department means he looks at things from a safety perspective. Councilmember Moengen knows that when there is a fire call, those fire fighters aren't going to stop on one side of a bridge and run across with hoses. Their main concern is to make sure everyone is safe and keep the fire contained, and that means they will take a fire truck across a bridge even if that bridge isn't meant to hold the weight of a full fire truck. The fire trucks are only going to get bigger and heavier in the future.

Councilmember Swanson noted he has been involved in the City for over 20 years. This problem is difficult due to the many issues that have been brought up during the meeting. Councilmember Swanson appreciated hearing from all of the residents.

Jerry Jurek of 34054 Sunrise Island Road commented that the amount of the assessment is too high and if it was in the \$2,000 - \$3,000 range that it might be more reasonable for the residents to support.

City Administrator Tom Swenson noted that the question was asked if the City has ever assessed any other projects at 50% and approximately twenty-six miles of roads have been paved since he's been at the City, all benefiting property owners have been assessed 50% of the cost. Councilmember Roe asked the residents if they would be willing to pay \$7,500 every ten years, because that might be a possibility due to the current condition of the bridge. Councilmember Roe also commented that he feels it would be foolish money for the City to be paying for the same repairs every 10 years.

Tom Bzoskie of 35340 Maroda Drive was present and commented that the City has already expended \$35,000 in the design and feasibility study and wondered if it was necessary based on the public opinions received.

After hearing all of the public comments, it was the consensus of the Council to have the feasibility cost estimates for repairs to the existing bridge updated by WSN, re-accept the feasibility study and then re-notice the property owners for a second improvement hearing.

There being no further discussion regarding the Sunrise Island Bridge Replacement Project, MOTION 06S2-01-10 WAS MADE BY JOHN MOENGEN AND SECONDED BY RUSTY TAUBERT TO ADJOURN THE SPECIAL MEETING AT 7:29 P.M. MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jennifer Max
City Clerk/Treasurer

Deputy Clerk/Minutes/6-21-10 Bridge Hearing.doc