

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION TO REVIEW THE UNDERPASS PROJECT OF THE NORMAL TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, NORMAL CITY HALL, FOURTH FLOOR UPTOWN STATION, 11 UPTOWN CIRCLE, NORMAL, MCLEAN COUNTY, ILLINOIS – MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2019.

1. START:

The Work Session was called to order at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 18, 2019.

2. ATTENDANCE:

The following Councilmembers were physically present

PRESENT: Mayor Chris Koos and Councilmembers Kevin McCarthy, Chamberly Cummings, Stan Nord, Karyn Smith, Kathleen Lorenz, and Scott Preston. City Manager Pamela Reece, Assistant City Manager Eric Hanson, Corporation Counsel Brian Day and Town Clerk Angie Huonker were also present.

ABSENT: None.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Sonja Reece, Former Councilmember and current Normal resident, spoke about the history of the Uptown Development during her 24 years of service and the importance of supporting an underpass.

Tim Ryan, Normal Resident and Representative of Labor's 362, spoke in support of an underpass, indicating the project would provide career opportunities and insurance to trade workers, and open up development opportunities south of the tracks.

Ron Ulmer, Normal Resident, stated that he is neither in favor of nor against the underpass. Mr. Ulmer indicated a cost effective, user-friendly project with an appropriate facilitator is what he would favor, if the project moves forward.

Patrick Dullard, Normal Resident and President of the Friends of the Constitution Trail, spoke in support of an underpass, indicating it would return the trail to its originally intended route and would bring federal dollars spent by our community back home.

Raegan Rinchiuso stated she is a frequent trail user and supports the underpass due to safety concerns for pedestrian and cycle traffic.

Ross Manuel, Normal Resident, stated he lives near the trail and is a long-time user. Mr. Manuel thanked the Town for their vision and construction of the trail, indicating that concerns with pedestrian and cycle traffic is why he would support an underpass.

John Weaver, Normal property owner, stated that he would not support an underpass due to federal and state debt. Mr. Weaver indicated there should be a cost-to-benefit analysis done.

Marc Tiritilli, Normal Resident, indicated he didn't feel there was any urgency on the project. Mr. Tiritilli indicated there should be a cost-to-benefit analysis done so we know what we can afford.

Jeff Fritzen, Former Councilmember and Normal resident, stated the reason for this discussion is success. Mr. Fritzen stated the Uptown transformation supports an underpass that will

compliment growth and development. Mr. Fritzen indicated the need to keep the momentum moving forward, not change course, in order to build on the success of Uptown.

4. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE UNDERPASS PROJECT:

Public Works Director, Wayne Aldrich reviewed the history of the underpass project. The information reviewed included a look at the partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Commerce Commission, Amtrak, and Union Pacific Railroad.

Mr. Aldrich reviewed the milestone dates of the project, including original Council authorization, the removal of the at-grade crossing, and Council authorization to update the Uptown Plan. Information was also given on alternatives to the underpass, project goals, criteria for analysis, and the purpose and needs statement. Mr. Aldrich also discussed the Project Team scope of work which included coordination with the railroad, development of a concept plan, utility survey, coordination with Illinois Commerce Commission, a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) study, and grant applications.

Mr. Aldrich also provided a summary of funding for the project which included the original project budget of \$24.6 million, a revised estimate of \$22.6 million, the receipt of a \$13 million Build Grant, Town capital, Illinois Commerce Commission Grade Crossing funds, State capital bill, and other federal and grant funding options that could be utilized.

During the Council question and answer there was discussion on at-grade street and pedestrian crossing, options to re-route the Constitution Trail, funding gaps, and the cost of on-going maintenance. Additionally, Council discussed the Town's strong relationship with partners in Washington D.C., Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Commerce Commission and the railroad.

Council also discussed what the reimbursement process would likely be, what the project completion timeline would be, and the potential to phase the project. Specifics on the bridge depth of an underpass versus the height of an overpass were also discussed.

During the completion of the conversation it was noted there is no good timing for a project of this type and that it's important for the community to realize the evolution that has gone on, the direction Council has previously taken, and the importance of continuing the discussion of the project.

5. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further items for discussion, the Work Session was adjourned at 7:00 p.m., Monday, November 18, 2019.