

## **Item 23-1396: Approve the roadway design parameters: Perkins Street, from Prospect Avenue to the RR Tracks**

**Municipal Services Committee**

Mon, Nov 20, 2023. 4:30PM

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 01:50**

We have no public hearings or appearances this evening. We'll start with our first action item. It's 23-1396 approve the roadway design parameters for Perkins street on Prospect Avenue to the railroad tracks and have it be reconstructed with concrete pavement and curb and gutter. Do I—attorney, do I need to read the entire?

**Darrin Glad (Assistant City Attorney) 02:17**

I think it's best.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 02:18**

Okay. All right. The details of the proposed Perkins street reconstruction project are as follows: New concrete pavement constructed to a width of 31 feet from back of the curb to back of the curb, which is nine feet narrower than the existing Street of 40 feet within this portion of the project; new five foot concrete sidewalk where none currently exists within the project limits; curb extensions, the narrowing of pavement, at Charles Street to serve as traffic calming; and existing on street parking would be restricted along the east side of Perkins street within the project limits. And with that, is there anyone who wishes to speak on this item today or has any questions? Director Block if you wanted to maybe just give a quick overview.

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 03:15**

Thank you, chair. As we presented during the last meeting, the design hearing, just to recap the design parameters that you listed remain consistent with what was presented at the design hearing. The underground utilities, as a reminder, will be improved in 2024, and this roadway reconstruction project would occur in 2025.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 03:41**

Thank you. Alder Siebers.

**Aldersperson William Siebers (District 1) 03:44**

Was the sidewalk issue resolved?

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 03:47**

Staff still proposes that sidewalk be installed where none currently exist within the project limits. Yes.

**Aldersperson William Siebers (District 1) 03:54**

Thank you, Chair.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 03:56**

Alder Meltzer? District Four. [referring to the district 4 microphone]

**Aldersperson William Siebers (District 1) 04:04**

That one is dead. [referring to the microphone.]

**Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 04:06**

Thank you. Yeah, so I wasn't here at the last meeting, but I did listen to the video. And I do think that sometimes neighborhoods don't support having a sidewalk put in, and I feel like unlike some of the other elements, the sidewalk is something that can potentially be delayed without as much impact and especially because it would have a cost savings that I think is more relevant right now than maybe in some other years. I'm going to make a motion to remove the sidewalk and see if anyone else on the committee would like to second that.

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 04:46**

I'll second for discussion. I did want to ask Director Block if you could address would there be any issues with removal of the sidewalk or is there digging or things that will be done anyway? What are the pros and cons of removing the sidewalk from this project, please?

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 05:07**

Sure. Staff would not recommend removing the sidewalk from the project scope. The ability to install sidewalk within this larger contract would be the most cost effective. I think there is a displayed need for walkability and pedestrian accommodations along this corridor just given its route, the bus stop, and providing future connections within the area. So I think the overarching sidewalk policy within the city of Appleton—the installation of the sidewalk now with this project would be the most cost-effective time to do so.

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 05:50**

Thank you. Alder Alfheim.

**Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 05:52**

I just comment on the amendment. We all listen to the feedback from the community. And we definitely heard the need or the want for reducing of speeds. And I think that the part of this conversation we miss is by narrowing—we narrow the road to reduce the speed. Therefore the comfort that the neighborhood feels in the lack of need of sidewalks is actually going to change because we're actually impacting the road size in order to reduce the speed.

**Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 06:19**

So I would be concerned for two reasons. One, the need for the sidewalk will go up when we reduce—when we narrow up the road from a safety perspective. Also I remember what—I'm not sure—somebody said it about this being 100-year design. So in essence, we look at the taxpayer dollars that we're doing and we're trying to figure out a long period of time what's in the best interest of the neighborhood and the town. And I can hear the locals right now feeling it isn't. But when we make one change, it leads to the next, and in the long run, I think it is the right choice to have the best pedestrian safety options available, which means reducing speed and having safe ways for those to walk. So I would not recommend the amendment. I would like to hold with the initial plan.

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 07:09**

Yeah, I agree. You know, I can't imagine purchasing a home—I'm sorry. Go ahead.

**Darrin Glad (Assistant City Attorney) 07:17**

If I may, just for clarification purposes. We never had a motion to approve this. So we had the motion to amend—

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 07:24**

Oh my apologies. Yes.

**Darrin Glad (Assistant City Attorney) 07:25**

So is that a motion to substitute by amendment then? Removing the new five-foot concrete sidewalk where none currently exists within project limits from as it's listed?

**Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 07:38**

Yeah, if that makes it easiest for—

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 07:41**

And then I would second that.

**Darrin Glad (Assistant City Attorney) 07:42**

Okay. I just wanted to clarify where we were, because we kind of skipped that part. Thanks.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 07:47**

Thank you. I was just going to say that I can't—I can't think of purchasing a home right now, you know, as someone who just purchased a home for my son, you know, not having the ability for my son when he was little to ride up and down the sidewalk in front of my home in a safe way. And I don't think that we want to make things more difficult for people to purchase homes and for the neighborhood to be accessible. Any other questions, comments? Alder Doran?

**Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 08:25**

Thank you. Just a, I guess, question for our attorney then where we're at here with doing this motion by substitution. Are we in effect now voting on the action item without sidewalks, correct? And then a no vote then would—if we vote no, because we want to keep the sidewalk in, now we've denied the action item as a whole. Correct?

**Darrin Glad (Assistant City Attorney) 08:49**

That is where we would be because of the procedural route that this took. So then you'd probably have to do a motion to reconsider if you wanted to reconsider as a whole.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 08:59**

I think would it just be easier if the committee would allow to withdraw the amendment by substitution and the second and then start over? What is the easiest way to do this, Attorney Glad?

**Darrin Glad (Assistant City Attorney) 09:27**

I think because the way this is motioned to substitute by amendment, this posture right now—I think withdrawing it probably be the best way to get the will of this committee. These rules aren't made to be a hindrance to the process, but it just kind of got a little funky here.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 09:47**

Sure. Okay, so I will withdraw my second.

**Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 09:50**

Okay, I'll withdraw my amendment.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 09:52**

So now we're back at the item as listed.

**Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 09:55**

Move to approve.

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 09:56**

We have a motion to approve and a second.

**Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 09:59**

And I'll move to make my amendment, and once again see if there is a second.

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 10:11**

And it looks like there is no second. Alder Hartzheim? No? Okay. Alder Doran.

**Alderson Chad Doran (District 15) 10:20**

Thank you just wanted to ask one quick question and staff about the curb extensions, and just sort of maybe a, I guess, a some bigger picture, look at how we how we decide where those are appropriate within our sort of framework. Because I think both of these projects are I'm not sure the sort of pedestrian counts that we see in those neighborhoods, I guess. But adds obviously cost—a little more different—difficult to plow and work around for some of the staff. So I'm just curious how we decide where those are appropriate or if it's just something that we're trying to install everywhere we have crosswalks now in future projects?

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 11:00**

Thank you, Chair. I'll add some background, and then I'll also ask our city traffic engineer, Mr. Lom, to comment and add more detail as well. I think it—there's a lot of factors that layer into where we select the locations based on geometry, just constraints within the existing layout, and then obviously, pedestrian and traffic patterns and what we've been observing here at the city. I will add, I think, one minor correction that in terms of adding costs, we're also—we're reducing pavement width, so there's a reduction in costs as well. So no doubt, it's some different geometry, but the actual total pavement width in that area is reduced. But you're right on the maintenance considerations in terms of taking more time for operations to maneuver around.

**Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 11:54**

So we did spend a little bit of time talking about this at the last meeting. When we talk about trying to calm traffic, we're—there's a whole toolkit, if you will, of different types of treatments that we can use to try and accomplish that. The first and most effective way to do that is to narrow the street. And we're doing—and we're proposing that here. And then beyond that, what we like, what we look at is what can we do at the intersections in a way that is going to have the effect of slowing traffic and calming traffic in a way that has the least impact on cost and maintenance activities? And all those things are important considerations.

**Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 12:45**

So in this particular case, because there's parking on one side, curb extensions on one side really lends itself quite well to that. By doing that you give the effect of narrowing up the street, you eliminate any parking near the intersection, which can affect sightlines, you get the pedestrians out further so that they are can be seen by drivers and the pedestrians can see the drivers. But there is no one size fits all flowchart that says, "if this than that." It's a bit of an art. And we're, frankly, working our way through that as we get more and more experience with it.

**Alderman Chad Doran (District 15) 13:22**

Okay, thank you. And the reason—part of the reason I was asking this is because I know, historically, you've talked about how narrowing the streets are the most effective way. But I was just curious with the narrowing of the streets already, if obviously staff feels it's important to still have that in there. Now that's a—I appreciate the clarification there. That helps me understand better why. So thank you.

**Alderman Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 13:45**

Any other questions or comments on this item? Alder Croatt.

**Alderman Chris Croatt (District 14) 13:51**

District 13. Thank you chair. I was at the last meeting. And I was trying to pull up the map here and look at this neighborhood again. But I believe one of the concerns that was expressed by a property owner was related to the sidewalk installation and the sidewalk was going to go in on Perkins but not on the side street. Has that been resolved? Because I think the city offered to put it in.

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 14:15**

Is that okay, chair? Yep. So shown up on the screen is just one portion of this corridor at Charles Street. And so yes, you can see the sidewalks do not extend on the side streets. It's outside of the scope of this project. But DPW would be willing to work with individual property owners related to the concern of "how do I get, you know, my equipment to remove snow?" We could certainly extend that sidewalk portion to the driveway. Of course, it's new concrete sidewalk and it would be assessed per our policy. So that would be clear to the property owner, and then our project engineer would have to work to you know, lay it out, make sure the grading matches and things like that.

**Alderman Chris Croatt (District 14) 14:59**

Okay, thank you.

**Alderman Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 15:01**

And just to clarify, the policy is that we want sidewalks. Eventually, our hope would be to add sidewalks in those areas.

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 15:09**

With our Complete Streets policies and sidewalks installation. Yeah, it's building the network of accommodating all modes of transportation. Correct.

**Alderman Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 15:19**

Thank you. Any other questions or discussion? Alder Doran?

**Alderman Chad Doran (District 15) 15:25**

Thank you. Just a follow up on that, then, I guess if say homeowners on Charles Street wanted to extend that sidewalk there? How does that impact future reconstruction of that street then with, say, utilities and things? Would that sidewalk need to come out when those utilities are redone? Or are we clear of that?

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 15:43**

So I think every effort would be made that we wouldn't throw away, you know, effort and work related to this. Of course, we'd have to match existing conditions. So depending on the profile of that road in the future, reconstruct profile, it—there may be impacts, but that would not be considered new sidewalk at that time. It'd be part of the project costs during that project.

**Alderson Chad Doran (District 15) 16:04**

Okay. Thank you.

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 16:07**

Any other questions, comments, discussion? Hearing none. With that, we'll vote. All those in favor, say aye. Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I saw you lift—I saw your hand. My apologies. Okay. All those in favor say aye. Aye. Any opposed? That motion passes five zero.