

Item 24-0215: Approve the recommended lighting updates near the intersection of Walnut Street and College Avenue

Item 24-0216: Approve the proposed modification to the Central Business District Street Vendors Ordinance

Municipal Services Committee

Mon, Feb 26, 2024 4:30PM

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 57:00

Give me just a second to get back to my agenda here. Here we go. All right. Item action item 24-0215. Approve the recommended lighting updates near the intersection of Walnut Street and College Avenue.

Aldersperson William Siebers (District 1) 57:16

Move for approval.

Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 57:17

Second.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 57:18

We have a motion to approve and a second. Any discussion? Alder Siebers.

Aldersperson William Siebers (District 1) 57:24

Thank you. I had mentioned this before the meeting. And I was wondering why there isn't anything in regards to lighting on Lawrence and South Walnut—er South State.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 57:45

Director Block? Or who would like to handle this? I guess, Chief Olson?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 57:51

I think in relation to the Y and certain areas, DPW was asked to focus on—we focused where we were asked. So, Chief may be better suited to answer the other corridor.

Police Chief Polly Olson 58:10

So, Sergeant Chris Biese has some special training in what's called CPTED, which is Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. And he took a look at that entire area. And to Director Block's point, we just chose to focus on the 100 block of South Walnut at this time, though, I think we can all recognize that there are other parts of the downtown area to include Lawrence Street that could use a boost in in lighting. But I think right now we're just trying to tackle a piece that we can tackle for right now.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 58:49

Go ahead, Alder Siebers.

Aldersperson William Siebers (District 1) 58:50

From my limited experience doing a ride along, my—what I perceived or what I saw was more problem in that area (Lawrence and State Street) than South Walnut, though I realize that we had a serious incident on South Walnut. But when I did the ride along, there was—number one there was after the bars closed the restaurant on State Street had a grouping of people there and there was some problems there. And then the parking lot across

from Wells Fargo—there was two incidents there when I did my ride along. So, I would hope somebody would take a look at South Walnut—uh South State Street and Lawrence. Thank you.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 59:52

Chief, did you have anything to add?

Police Chief Polly Olson 59:54

I would just like to add that we are looking at the West corridor of College Avenue, and we will continue to evaluate where we can make some of those changes. And again, the only reason South Walnut was focused on at this time was because it was a chunk of roadway that we could focus on making some improvements, and I think that this is going to be a project that isn't going to be concluded with just one little area—that it's going to take a lot more over the next several years probably to accomplish what needs to be accomplished down there.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:00:33

So, we're troubleshooting the most important areas first but likely working on the corridor as a whole?

Police Chief Polly Olson 1:00:42

Yes. And to Alder Siebers' point, there are a lot of incidences that happen in that specific area he's referring to as well. And I think it would be, quite frankly, up to committee to decide where they'd like to put the resources that we have available in terms of boosting up some of that lighting.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:00:59

Thank you. Alder Alfheim.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:01:01

Thank you, Chair. Thank you to everybody who's working on this issue. I love that the city is including the community, the business downtown area. My question is related to what Alder Siebers said; considering the funding for this project is coming from the ARPA money, wouldn't it make sense for us to—you know, again, we can't—there's no way we're gonna get all the spots, and I think that's valid, right? If we do two, then we're gonna wish we had three and four. If we do three and four, we're gonna wish we have seven and eight. So, I understand there's no end to where this project could go. However, I do think downtown, there's pretty clear communication on the corner that he's referring to being another hotspot. Wouldn't—would it not be wise, while we have the opportunity with the ARPA dollars, to double down and do the same thing on the other block for a total of 30? I think it's so overall a small amount. But is that not an option? Or is that something that the APD, the city would consider looking at?

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:02:06

If you could answer that, and, Chief Olson, if there's anything to add, or if you could maybe address—I heard Alder Siebers say that there was a restaurant in that area. Is that going to be addressed possibly by our next action item that we have for vendors? Or is that just—okay? Just curious—just want to make sure that we're getting that all out in the open. But if you could address maybe Alder Alfheim's concerns.

Police Chief Polly Olson 1:02:37

I guess I would tend to agree; however, I really would refer to Director Block and her team as far as deciding what sort of lighting and how that would work through that corridor in terms of do we have enough budget dollars to accomplish what we'd like to accomplish there?

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:02:54

I would think possibly it would be appropriate to deal with this item, and then meet with Director Block and talk about some other options. Alder Doran, were you asking to speak?

Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:03:07

Would—can you let her answer?

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:03:08

I'm sorry. Go ahead, Director Block.

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:03:10

I would just add that DPW—we could put together a similar type of just analysis on what is the existing lighting out there today on the wood poles near that intersection and within that block section, similar to how we have done. I don't know what type of level of effort we're talking about here, but the—so that could be done.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:03:34

Yeah, I think it would be helpful. I think we all want to do what's best for safety down there. And that may mean—I think it means dealing with these items that we have in front of us and then possibly looking forward as well. Alder Doran?

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 1:03:49

Thank you. Just a quick question for Chief Olson. You've talked about how one of the officers had some specific training in this. I assume there's some data out there that you guys have looked at that shows success in in making these sorts of changes and adjustments to reduce incidents of crime where those improvements were made?

Police Chief Polly Olson 1:04:10

Yeah, absolutely. Sergeant Biese has, like I mentioned, attended some advanced training in this particular area and definitely has used some of what he's learned and how it applies to the downtown. I know some of the strategies he's been using over the last few weeks is putting a drone up in the air at certain times of the day and night to, again, look at data, look at what the lighting actually looks like from the sky, and help guide decisions in terms of where are there, you know, spaces that could require some additional lighting, again, as a prevention tool. I think lighting is probably one of the simplest ways that we can try to prevent some crime, and I think that is, quite honestly, just a common-sense way of thinking in terms of if you have an area that is well lit, it's less likely that you're going to have some type of criminal activity happening there. So, there are definitely many areas through the downtown area, especially, I would say, the west side where you have alleys, you have dumpsters, you have certain placement of things that are going to create areas that are going to be dark and where there could be a, you know, criminal behavior from happening. So, I think, you know, this idea of adding some additional lighting is definitely a step in the right direction.

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 1:05:33

Thank you. And then just two quick follow ups for I think Public Works staff. We are looking at here more than maybe a dozen sort of changes to lighting, either changing lighting or adding lighting. And we obviously talk about the cost to implement that. Do we have a sense of what the ongoing maintenance costs of these changes will be?

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 1:05:55

I expected that question from you. **[This comment elicited laughter.]** So, the total ongoing cost—so it's a little convoluted because the way the lease works with WE energies is the first seven years are a certain rate and then every year after that is about 1/4 of that original rate, and that's the way they kind of bleed off the cost of the original—of the light fixture. But if we just average it out across 10 years (which seemed like a reasonable way to do it), the improvements that you see in the agenda tonight are about \$350 per year of ongoing cost above and beyond the install cost that falls under that \$15,000. The \$15,000 gets it installed, then then you're paying about \$340 total for that whole package per year.

Alderman Chad Doran (District 15) 1:06:50

Okay, thank you. And then, since a couple of my other colleagues sort of mentioned it, that there are other areas they already have concerns about and likely will be more, does it make sense to look at, you know, what we might want to do in total in downtown, versus just taking these up one at a time? I'm not sure that there's a right or wrong answer there, I guess. But, I mean, we are incurring some significant costs here at each intersection we'd be looking at or each area we're going to end up looking at, and then there are, you know, the ongoing costs that are gonna have to get factored into future budgets for all of that. And while \$350 for one area might not seem like a lot, if we're doing 10, you know, or more, you know, these costs all add up at some point. I don't know if staff, just given now that what we're looking at, if there's a reason for us to look at doing this and in total, and getting a better grasp of where we might be rather than just one at a time.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 1:07:48

That's certainly something we can do. Right? You're on. **[This comment was made to let Director Block know her microphone was on.]**

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:07:53

We can certainly do that. It's just putting limits around the scope of the project because much as has been stated before tonight, you know, we have one area, it's easy to want two and three, and then where's four and five?

Alderman Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:08:10

Do we see there being a value in purchasing more lights at the same time? Is there a volume discount that you think we might be eligible for?

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 1:08:19

So far—to be clear what's being proposed right now, sort of on the scale of just making it happen and working with what you have all the way up to what you'd like to see I think as a as a long-term permanent solution, which would be what we did around the Y on all those new streets over there. We our way on the—this proposal that you see here is to simply take wood poles that already exist. In in most cases, they're wood poles that already have fixtures on them, and simply replace replacing them with a much brighter fixture. So as far as WE energies works, it's all super prescriptive based on the Public Service Commission's tariffs. There is no benefit in in whether we do one or 100.

Alderman Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:09:14

Alder Siebers, I saw you.

Alderman William Siebers (District 1) 1:09:15

Yeah, I think Chief Olson and her team as well as ADI can come up with a pretty good idea in terms of where more lighting is needed. You know, I don't think the entire Downtown needs to be re lit. I think there's just

certain areas in downtown Appleton that should be focused on, and I think ADI has a good handle on that as well as APD.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:09:48

Any other comments or discussion. Um, Alder Meltzer?

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 1:09:52

Thank you. I think that we are reactively responding to situations in our community, and we've identified a priority, and I think that this is a really important step. And especially hearing that there is absolutely no volume discount related to these light fixtures, I think that it—I would like to see us move forward with this and then continue to have conversations about what's the appropriate second priority. It sounds like we already have a contender, but obviously to do the due diligence for that. I don't feel that the space is this meeting tonight. But I would like to see, you know, more work on this coming forward to this committee.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:10:39

Thank you. Alder Hartzheim.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 1:10:42

Thank you chair. This is gonna sound like a little bit of a bipolar kind of comment, because I'm sort of struggling back and forth between this. Earlier Alder Alfheim said \$30,000 is relatively cheap. That doesn't feel cheap to me. But on the other hand, \$30,000 of ARPA dollars is the way to spend ARPA dollars; that is the correct way to ensure public safety or help to ensure public safety with the funds that the federal government granted us through ARPA. I appreciate that the police department has worked very diligently on trying to figure out ways—and the Department of Public Works as well—on trying to find ways to address this issue, but I also feel saddened that we have to try to do these things. Thank you.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:11:28

Anyone else? Discussion on this item? Hearing none, we'll vote all those in favor say aye. Aye. Any opposed? That motion passes five zero.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:11:38

We do have one remaining action item. Is it just one? Let me just double check the second page. Okay. And being that we are over time, and I think this probably deserves a very thorough discussion, I think it may be prudent to entertain a motion to hold this item until our next meeting. Would anyone be willing to make that motion?

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 1:12:06

I'll make the motion to hold. I had some questions about it as well.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:12:09

We have a motion to hold. Do we have a second?

Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:12:11

Second.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:12:12

We have a motion to hold and a second. Any discussion on holding the item? Alder Hartzheim?

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 1:12:18

Is there any timeliness issue in regards to holding?

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:12:22

Director Block, and I think also Chief Olson, would there be any issues with holding this item until the next meeting?

Police Chief Polly Olson 1:12:29

None. None from PD.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:12:31

Thank you.

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:12:33

No. Specifying the next—

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:12:36

The next municipal services—

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:12:38

—scheduled meeting in March. March 11.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:12:40

Correct. Thank you. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll vote to hold. All those in favor say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Motion to hold passes five zero.