Oronoco City Council
Public Hearing Minutes
January 6, 2005

Mayor Joy Bertsinger called the Public Hearing regarding Hwy. 52 to order at 7:00PM. All Council present. Bertsinger introduced MnDOT representatives, and gave a brief overview of the 3 maps. Bertsinger also informed those present the guidelines to follow when speaking. City Attorney Tom Canan arrived at 7:05PM.

Dick Nelson (115 2nd Ave. NW)
Dick didn't think it was necessary to be here. He stated when the project first started, there was no cost to the City, and now the cost of everything is twice the City Budget. Dick thinks the City should go with Plan A, and the west frontage road; but he wants an opinion from the attorney whether the City can go outside their City limits to build the frontage road.

Chris Liffrig (108 12th St SW)
Chris questioned why the County cannot pay for the $450,000 cost to the west frontage road.

Kim Eckman (307 12th LN SW)
Kim wanted clarification between Option A & B.

Gordon Cariveau (1030 5th Rd NW)
Gordon stated that the City is at the point where either Option A or B is going to have to be decided. He lives on the west side and is concerned about emergency services accessibility to the west side of Oronoco, which Plan B does not provide in an efficient manner. He suggested Plan A and to get it done right the first time.

Keith Stolp (1765 3rd Ave. SW)
Keith wondered if 12th St SW and 3rd Ave. SW were going to be used as a frontage road on the west side, who will upgrade these roads. They're way too narrow, and 3rd Ave. SW is a gravel road. He suggested taking the money that would be used to upgrade these streets, and put it to the frontage road running straight south off of 12th St SW.

Lee Forstie (40 NE)
Lee stated that Plan B is not a viable option. He suggested going with Option A and figure out where to get the money from at a later date.

Paul Pendergrass (105 MN Ave. N)
Paul stated that he was very disappointed that the County did not stand behind and support the City of Oronoco with the Highway 52 project.

Paul Dahlman (325 1st Ave. NE)
Paul stated he thinks that the cost of this project should be shared by the township, county, and city.

Dale Ragan (Mom's Antiques Owner)
Dale has been to several of the meetings, and was concerned that MnDOT did not follow proper procedures. He stated that the outstanding issues of Plan B were that it separated the city and would cause safety concerns, and that the notice for Plan B was not legal. He suggested that the City appeal to MnDOT to follow legal procedures and give the City more time.

John Abenstein (10978 11th Ave NW)
John stated that the west frontage road is a county issue because it's not in city limits, and it should share equally in the cost so it would be fair and equitable to all the citizens.

Kevin Weitzel (J.C.'s Owner)
Kevin stated that he supports Plan A. Plan B cuts off Hsy.52 south traffic. He will move to another site, and wants the city to make Plan A work.

Brad Olson (210 7th St SE)
Brad stated that Plan A is the only option the City has. He stated that the whole project cost and all billing should be provided by the County and MnDOT.

Peter Sanders...310 12th LN SW Peter **was unable to attend and called City Hall**
Peter called and is unable to attend the Public Hearing, and would like his viewpoint heard.. He stated, "I think Plan A is a possibility, with no frontage road on the west side until a traffic study is completed. The overpass by JC's is needed for EMS services to get to the West side, even if it means raising taxes."

Cynthia Sanders...310 12th LN SW **(Cynthia was unable to attend and called City Hall)**
Cynthia called and is unable to attend the Public Hearing, and would like her viewpoint heard. She stated, "Plan B is not a good option. I am in favor of Plan A because it gives EMS coverage and general access to the West side of the City."

Katie Dudley...925 1st St. NW **Katie was unable to attend and called City Hall**
Katie called and is unable to attend the Public Hearing, and would like her viewpoint heard. "My concerns are value of homes, and the fact that Plan B doesn't reflect the 'freeway' perception that MnDOT wants. With poor access, the value of homes would plummet. The whole point of the Hwy. project was so that there wouldn't be traffic going from 0-70 onto Hwy. 52. It's a safety hazard to have right in right out access. I'd rather have the 25 mile per hour frontage road. In the future, maybe the City would have the money to buy the property for the frontage road to run straight south of 12th St to County 12/112.

Mark Kuehn (Owner of Tilly's and RV Park)
Mark questioned Plan B allowing right in and right outs for the entire city and surrounding township. Questioned MnDOT on why they couldn't allow the right in right outs for the few homes that were south of 12/112 that frontage roads were being built for, and taking the savings from not putting in those roads and put it towards the west frontage road.

Paul Pendergrass
Stated that the right on right offs by the old furniture mart in Rochester were closed down by MnDOT, and the same would happen here. He said the right in right offs would probably be lost in 5 years.

Jai Kalsy (MnDOT)
Jai stated that MnDOT wants Plan A, but Plan B will be undertaken if the city doesn't give municipal consent. The Hwy. 52 corridor project is to be a freeway style project. He stated that the cost of the frontage road is not a MnDOT responsibility because this parcel of road serves a local road. Their money needs to be spent on the trunk highway system.

Scott Steffens (535 Zumbro Hills Dr.)
Scott stated that both Plan A and Plan B were unacceptable. The frontage road that MnDOT wants goes past daycares, and parks, and he told Jai he sure wouldn't want that in his neighborhood.

Jeff Vladmick (MnDOT)
Jeff clarified that the pink portions on Plan B were part of the Hwy. 52 project planned for 2015-2020, and if the city doesn't give municipal consent, MnDOT will walk away from the overpass project and move that money up to the interchange north of the city.

Rick Moen (Eau Claire, WI)
He' a landowner in the city and thinks the city, county and MnDOT should share a percentage of the cost of the west frontage road for Plan A. This would be a benefit to landowners, but is really needed for safety.

Mayor Bertsinger stated that Olmsted County is still willing to offer their AAA bond rating.

Jim Bier (County Commissioner)
He stated that the west frontage road is a road for the City, not the county. The county cannot set a precedent.

Dick Nelson
Dick asked Bier if the county pays for roads in Wabasha county. And Jim stated there are probably some shared costs with them. Nelson stated he can't see the city spending money on this west frontage road because it's in the township, not the city.

Randy Bartz (1215 W Center St.)
Randy had a few questions: 1. Is Oronoco Plan A considered a design and Build? (yes) 2. Has MnDOT considered a 'Michigan Barrier?' (actually a Jersey Barrier), and 3. Who owns the median? Jai Kalsy stated that the Jersey Barrier was an alternative, but there were maintenance concerns for it; so it was determined not to be a good option for this site. Randy asked if the January 14th deadline meshes with the design and build concept. Kalsy stated that it goes back to the funding, and there is a danger that the money for Plan A will move up to Plan B. Randy asked the politicians present how they can gain respect when they're elected in good faith, and then don't help the city; and then asked if the Jan. 14th deadline was fitting.

Judy Ohly (County Commissioner)
Judy stated that there isn't time to redesign the project, MnDOT needs a decision. She thinks Plan A is a good option for the City because of the safety concerns, and that the county needs to stay in its own parameters.
Bertsinger clarified that the city is now being told by MnDOT that the west frontage road is a jurisdictional issue, not a budget issue.
Judy state that the tax base will increase with more home and businesses coming into Oronoco.
Bertsinger clarified that the land surrounding the west frontage road was in the township, not in the City limits.

Collette Justin (845 Forest LN SW)
Go with Plan A

Dan Simonson (1099 Lone Oak LN)

Paul Howe (415 6th St SW)
Paul supports Plan A. Plan B is a non-choice leapfrogging over the city and would have an adverse impact on the city. He suggested annexing all 4 quadrants by the west frontage road, and go with the financing that is available.

Mayor Bertsinger clarified that the City does not vote on Plan B because it doesn't require municipal consent. If the City denies municipal consent on Plan A, then Plan B WILL happen.

Jim Cody (1025 W Center St.)
Jim asked that if Plan B was done, and in 5-7 years MnDOT would close all right in right outs, how much would it cost to have an overpass done then??

Dan Ondler (135 1st Ave. NW)
Dan said that MnDOT has been very irresponsible to have Plan B put up, and that they cannot say it's even a safe option for the city; he thinks its extortion.

James Satriano (220 1st Ave NW)
He thinks the City is being forced by MnDOT. He told the city that they've got to have Plan A. He suggested lowering the speed limit through Oronoco also.

Sheriff Borchardt
He told the city that they do not want Plan B. He stated that Plan A is the option for the city. He doesn't want to see Plan a go away, because there have been enough deaths at the corner by JC's, and that corner needs to be closed.

Todd Hinsch (W Center St.)
Todd stated that the city cannot afford to not go with Plan A. If the city drags their feet, they may lose their funding along with Plan A.

Kelly Morse-Nowicki (720 Center St W)
Kelly concurs with everyone. She stated that Plan A will unite the city. She checked with her insurance provider, and they stated that their insurance would go up $400 per year for their home; because emergency services would be more than 6 miles away (with Plan B).

Al Hanson (145 3rd St SW)
Al is for Plan A. He questioned why the frontage road couldn't merge back onto Hwy. 52. *MnDOT wants to control all access, need to ensure the safety.* The timetable on the project was questioned. The staging is determined by the contractor and it has to all be phased in. MnDOT will work with the City and traffic during construction. The timeline is as follows: The letting will be Nov. 2005, construction and bridgework will be winter of 2006 and construction will be complete by December of 2007.

Mike Sheehan (County Engineer)
Concerning the west frontage road, it is a jurisdiction issue. Mike stated that the county only does county roads. He also stated that Plan A doesn't stop the interchange on Plan B, because County 12 to the east of the northeast of the city has to be relocated anyway. The county wants Plan B because it moves up this change to county 12. He also discussed Pine Island and how the interchange would benefit the south side of their city. Mike also discussed sales tax and the uses of it.

Kelly Gallagher (305 13th LN SW)
Kelly questioned why the west frontage road was on the original map to begin with. Kalsy from MnDOT stated that the original layout was just for long range needs, and the roads on it didn't necessarily mean that they were going to all be put in. It was stated that MnDOT needs to convey these 'long range needs' better to cities.

Mary Brown (310 1st Pl SW)

Brad Olson (210 7th St SE)
He asked if township was considering putting money into the project. *It was stated that there have not been any discussions with the township or the landowner that the west frontage road would run through.* He stated that the city doesn't have jurisdiction to put a road in the township.

Collette Justin
She stated that MnDOT has a mountain out of a mole hill because they didn't clarify details on all of their original and preliminary maps.

Mark Kuehn
Mark stated that the county, city and township should pay for that west frontage road. There's two township developments close by (Zumbro Hills and Cravath's).

Chris Liffrig
The City has to have Plan A. The city would have to annex this land for the west frontage road.

Kelly Gallagher
Asked for a show of hands in favor of Plan A *(this cannot be done).*

Dan Anderson (715 7th Ave SW)
Dan brought up the orderly annexation agreement with the township and asked how this went into play with everything.

Keigley thanked everyone for attending. He stated that he didn't appreciate the city being referred to as idiots by a county commissioner. Keigley said the Council's vote in December to deny municipal consent was based on concern about what the residents voiced.

At 8:45PM, Bertsinger called 3 times for any additional comments. Bertsinger motioned to close the Public Hearing, Hall second; all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joy Bertsinger, Mayor

Cheryl Nymann, Clerk/Treasurer

City of Oronoco

1-6-05
9:00PM

Joy Bertsinger called the meeting to order at 9:00PM and asked if council needed time to give MnDOT a decision on the municipal consent, *they did not.* Bertsinger motioned to have the City give Municipal consent on the final layout (a.k.a. Plan A), Keigley second; DISCUSSION: Keigley stated that he was glad to see that MnDOT moved Plan A up from 2009 to 2006; and that the Councils initial decision was based on comments and concerns raised from it's citizens; and they are once again listening to the concern raised by it's citizens. Voice Vote indicated all in favor, motion carried.

McDermott motioned to adjourn at 9:05 PM, Keigley second; all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joy Bertsinger, Mayor

Cheryl Nymann, Clerk/Treasurer