

City of Oronoco
Highway 52 Public Hearing
September 13, 2004
7:00 PM

Before the Public Hearing was opened, Acting Mayor Scott Keigley offered condolences and thoughts to former Mayor Bruce VanSickles' family. Bruce passed away yesterday.

The Public hearing was called to order by Acting Mayor Scott Keigley at 7:00PM. All Council & Clerk present, Mayor Jason Ottman absent.

Present were members of the Community, Senator Senjum, Rep. Demmer, Mike Sheehan, Jai Kalsy, Jim Fenske, Greg Paulson.

Jai Kalsy then took lead of the meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to have the Council and Community see the final layout of the plan, and MnDOT needs final approval by Council before construction can begin. The presentation consisted of 5 topics that were to be covered: 1) A brief Background of the Project, 2) Layout Presentation/Overview, 3) Design/Build Concept, 4) Schedule, Costs, and Impacts, and 5) Comments/Questions.

The Hwy 52 project for Oronoco has been moved up from 2009/2010 to 2005/2006. Jai presented a brief layout of the project including discussions on the overpasses, and frontage roads (available for viewing at City Hall). He explained the design build concept which allows design and construction to happen simultaneously. The schedule is as follows: In late 2004, the project will be advertised and letters of Interest will be solicited. In Feb. of 2005, MnDOT will Issue request for qualifications. In April/May of 2005, a shortlist of qualified teams and will issue request for proposals. In Oct. of 2005, proposals will be evaluated and scored. In Nov. of 2005, letting will begin. In early 2006, construction will begin. The project will be complete by Dec. of 2007. The following cost impacts were presented: Total cost will be approximately \$42 million dollars (including right of way costs); with the total cost to the City estimated at \$306,000 (which is less than 1% of the total cost). The following persons came forward to be heard at the Public Hearing: *(The portions in italic are responses from MnDOT rep's).*

Dan Ondler (135 1st Ave NW)

Dan questioned what will happen to the west frontage road bridges. *MnDOT will turn them over to the County and then they could turn them back over to the City.*

Gerald Wimmer

Questioned why the east frontage road was so far out. *It was stated that the separation are according to federal standards.* He also questioned the new bridges. *There will be fill brought in for them.* And if there will be channel work done. *Yes.*

Todd Hinsch (W. Center St.)

Todd questioned why the original plan had the west frontage road continuing down through 12th street and the map tonight shows the west frontage road going through a residential neighborhood along 12th St SW, and then down 3rd Ave. SW. *This west frontage road was determined as long term need, and there weren't any discussions about who was going to pay for it. There is not enough funding for the project to put road where it has been proposed. MnDOT will build what is necessary and critical, using 3rd Ave SW is at a lower cost and no additional land is required to purchase from the property owners, and it is least intrusive. There are also frontage road connections mapped to 85th street that have been eliminated. Resources are stretched, and it's typical for local participation (City) in large road projects.*

Dick Nelson (Council Member)

Stated he was tired of hearing the word 'unfortunate'. He pointed out that along with their newly proposed west frontage road running by a City Park, and a residential area with 2 daycares, there is a new high end development which is on Phase IV of an 8 phase project. He asked if there were any counts or survey on traffic, and stated that MnDOT needs to put the road where it belongs! He asked why the frontage road on the east side of 52 which goes south to 1 home couldn't be a right on right off access to that property owner. *It was stated that frontage road pertains long-term safety issues, and that MnDOT has already made compromises.* Nelson stated that the west frontage is also a safety concern, especially if it goes by parks and daycares.

Collette Justin (845 Forest LN SW)

Stated that she is already an 'unfortunate' recipient of thousand of cars, that the speed is already high along 12th St SW, and people already blow through the stop sign at the corner of 12th St SW and 3rd Ave. SW. She asked if their proposed west frontage road was permanent or temporary, and if this wouldn't be compounding the problems already there. *The piece is mapped so it could be put in eventually. The speed on frontage roads is generally 30 mph.* Collette stated this is a 100% residential neighborhood and asked if any studies have been done. *No specific studies were done, but future impact was looked at.*

Mark Kuehn (Owner of Tilly's & RV Park)

He questioned the effect of the west frontage road would have on the people returning home after consuming alcohol not only from his establishment, but from Rochester after they have been drinking, and then driving on a frontage road past 2 city parks and 2 daycares. The newly constructed RV Park was confronted with concerns of pulling out onto Hwy. 52, and now it's being suggested they go through a neighborhood. The new proposed frontage road doesn't make sense. He asked MnDOT what the value of a child's life was. He stated to put the frontage road in where it was first proposed, it needs to be there.

Dale Ragan (Owner of Mom's Antiques)

Dale had an overhead presentation. He stated that the Highway 52 project is well needed. Personally, this is his 3rd site impacted by the Highway 52 projects. He thinks that

MnDOT sent misleading info to the City (referring to July 16, 2004) diagram showing the west frontage road going straight south of 12th Street SW. From what he is hearing that MnDOT is saying there is not enough money for the frontage road, and stated that the State moves money from one project to another, and asked why they couldn't do that for this west frontage road. Dale showed all the residential and truck traffic that would be filtered down through the residential neighborhood. Dale measured both 3rd St SW and the first west frontage road proposed by MnDOT, and there isn't much difference. He restated to MnDOT to reconsider their new west frontage road and to get the necessary funds to shift for the completed frontage road. Dale asked Council to reject the final plan.

Keith Stolp (3rd Ave SW)

Keith pointed out that 3rd Ave. SW will have to be upgraded by MnDOT and that they could take the money out for that upgrade and put it toward where the west frontage road should be.

Representative Randy Demmer

He spoke to Representative Bill Kuisle and they agreed that this is an important project and this stretch of highway needs to be done. He stated MnDOT is doing the best they can. He pledged to get this west frontage road into the project where it should be, that it's common sense and has to be done. He also stated that it is important to keep the project moving. Rep. Demmer asked Council to approve the final plan, but complete the west frontage road so it goes south on 12th Ave. SW.

Lynn Benrud (810 Forest LN SW)

Lynn asked how much it would cost to put the frontage road in. \$430,000.

Mike Sheehan (Olmsted County Engineer)

Mike said he will be taking the County Commissioners out on a road tour of the Highway 52 project, and will come in to Oronoco. He is concerned with the status of the project and encouraged Council to approve the layout, with options. He said money is always an issue. But, it is crucial for public safety on our roads to keep this project moving along. Nelson asked his opinion on the west frontage road. Mike stated that if the west frontage road goes south on 12th St SW, it could be possible for future developers pay for the road. And the part of the Hwy. 52 project (west frontage road) that is going to be used most, is missing.

Karen Squillis (21/2 miles west on county 12)

She asked if the frontage roads will be gravel or paved. *Frontage roads south of 12/112 will be gravel. The County will be working on 12/112 at the same time by the east frontage roads and it will be regraded and surfaced.* She then asked if 3rd Avenue will be paved. *The County and the Township are working on that.* Karen asked how they decide which roads will be paved. *The amount of traffic.*

At this time, it was stated that the City has 90 days to approve or deny the final plan from MnDOT. Council Member Dick Nelson asked if any traffic studies have been done. *Yes, traffic counts and future projections were looked at.*

Tom Novak (Riverwood Hills II)

Tom stated that safety is a big concern, and asked what the determining factor on S. 112 frontage road. *There was greater exposure/risk to homes entering 52; and if the house on the frontage road south of 112 was to enter 52 from their home, it would be going against the study that was done. "Freeway Style" driver expectations of traffic makes the risk greater. They would add it to the project if they had funding for it*

MAYOR JASON OTTMAN ARRIVED AT 8:05PM.

It was asked if the Council can approve the Plan with conditions of the idea to flip the east/west frontage road. It was stated that they MnDOT can get \$42 million dollars for the project but not \$42.4 million.

Collette Justin

Stated she's been hearing ifs and empty promises and no one can tell her when the west frontage road will be done by the government. She's hearing it MIGHT get done. She asked why the housing development (Riverwood Hills) that now exists isn't shown on the map; and why it wasn't up to date. *The map is done in layers, and that part of the map was produced 3 years ago. Projections and assumptions have been taken into account.* Collette asked if they were aware of the number of new homes, the existing park, and addition of a new park along 3rd Ave SE in the area. *MnDOT has the numbers and are working off a base assumption.*

Chris Liffrig (112 12th St SW)

Voiced his concern about the condition of the road with steep embankments, the sharp turns on 12th St SW, and the semi and large truck traffic that will be coming through his neighborhood.

Joy Bertsinger (Council Member)

Questioned MnDOT's purchase of the Stolp property, and where his access will be, because 5th St. SW is considered a cart path. Council will want a written opinion on this matter.

Senator Senjem

Thanked Joy for inviting him. He said this is a magnificent project, but there's a piece missing. The Senator agrees the 90 days should be used to work through this aspect (west frontage road) of the project. He said that Senator Murphy is well aware of the project, and if the Council tabled this, it would give the state representatives and government staff time to get money. Even though there's competition for the money

from MnDOT, he thought this should be able to be worked through it. He pledged to make it work for the City.

Jerry McNamara

Jerry stated that there's a knoll on the 3rd Ave. SW road and it would have to be fixed. He asked what the comparison was between the frontage road running down 3rd Ave. SW and the way it was originally proposed. *The big difference in cost would be purchasing right-of-way, and he pointed out there are 90° angles, not 45°. He didn't have specific numbers.*

Council suggested having a separate meeting with all the Council and their State Representatives. Nelson stated that he respects the work MnDOT has done, and this is a great project, but common sense should tell you that a frontage road doesn't belong in a residential area. This idea puts a blemish on the whole project, but the citizens, and Council are angry. Dick stated that he'd much rather has a choice as to where the frontage road goes, instead of MnDOT telling them where it was going to be.

Yvonne Olson

She was wondering if Ryan's Construction will connect to this. *It will on the NE Access Road.*

Mike Gunderson (220 4th St NW)

He thought it was an incomplete project. Mike asked if noise abatement had been considered, whether there were federal dollars available for it, and what the future of it was. *Depends on where it's at. The west side noise level will go down because of the road shift to the east. Noise walls are not part of the project or justified.* Bertsinger asked if noise gets justified, will MnDOT be responsible for it. *Yes, MnDOT would pay for it only if a different project was going to be planned.*

Acting Mayor Scott Keigley asked if there were any additional comments. Keigley concluded the Public Hearing @ 8:30PM. Nelson motioned to table MnDOT's final plan until a future date so they have time to meet with representatives, Bertsinger second; all in favor, motion carried.

Bertsinger motioned to contact Senators and Representatives, get an idea of meeting dates, and at the next regular council meeting, schedule a special meeting with them to discuss this project, Keigley second; all in favor, motion carried. The Clerk was asked to narrow down dates and bring to next Council meeting.

Keigley motioned to adjourn at 8:45PM, Nelson second; all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted:



Jason Ottman, Mayor



Cheryl Nymann, Clerk/Treasurer