

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT
SPECIAL COMMON COUNCIL MEETING**

**Police Department
933 Michigan Ave.**

**May 15, 2018
6:00 P.M.**

Mayor Mike Wiza, Presiding

PRESENT: Ald. Jennings, Shorr, Nebel, Oberstadt, Johnson, Slowinski, Kneebone, Dugan, McComb, Phillips, Morrow (6:05 p.m.).

OTHERS

PRESENT: Clerk Moe, C/T Ladick, Attorney Beveridge, Dir. Beduhn, Dir. Schrader, Chief Finn, Chief Skibba, Asst. Chief Zenner, Joe Bachman – Portage County Gazette, Brandi Makuski – Metro Wire Alan Hovorka – Stevens Point Journal.

Discussion and Possible Action on the Following:

2. Traffic lane configuration and other safety measures for the Stanley Street corridor.

Diane Ostrowski, 3328 Stanley Street, said she is against the four to three lane conversion and questioned if it is needed. She said she has not seen any bicyclists on Stanley Street.

Dave Wysocki, 2409 Falcons Cove, whose business is located at 2740 Stanley Street, spoke against the conversion and said the City should not inconvenience everyone for the very few who use the bike lanes.

Rachel Niemczyk, 2309 Ellis Street, whose business is located at 2733 Stanley Street, she spoke against the conversion due to the impatient drivers already on Stanley Street. She said her business has three entries/exits and said people will cut through her parking lot because they do not want to wait for the City bus when it is dropping people off. Ms. Niemczyk fears if Stanley Street goes down to one lane each way will make things worse.

Lorelei Walczak, 3610 & 3628 Stanley Street, said she actively bikes down Stanley Street and said she would use the bike lanes if they were installed.

Teresa Barta, 2409 Stanley Street, said she has lived on Stanley Street for over 20 years. She said she is located near Michigan Avenue and during high volume times traffic gets

bottlenecked up and it is difficult to get out of their driveway. Ms. Barta said if this goes through it will be even more difficult for her to get out of her driveway.

John Haka, 201 Frontenac Avenue, said he came into this without a strong opinion and has become convinced that this is not a good fit for Stanley Street. He said Stanley Street is a major artery for motorized vehicles.

Jan Ronchetto, 3401 Vine Street, said she is terrified to ride her bike on Stanley Street and believes more people will use a bicycle lane on Stanley Street if it was safer.

Bob Ostrowski, 516 Michigan Avenue, said Dir. Beduhn provided good compromises at the meeting in March. He said there is a lot of traffic that goes down Stanley Street and the semis would have a hard time turning if the road diet would happen.

Sarah MacFarland, 408 Soo Marie Avenue, said she rides her bike year round and does not use Stanley Street because it is unsafe. She said if bike lanes were installed on Stanley Street she would be using it to and from work each day.

Scott Winn, 624 Soo Marie Avenue, said Stanley is a neighborhood street. He said something needs to be done whether it be a four to three conversion, traffic lights, or stop signs.

Lawrence Leviton, 826 Soo Marie Avenue, spoke in favor of the road diet because Stanley Street residents want a safe street to get to and from work. He said he would feel more comfortable if bike lanes were added to Stanley Street.

Tim McKeown, 248 North Court, spoke against the lane conversion because traffic backs up and feels if traffic goes down to two lanes it will only exacerbate the problem.

Julie Schneider, 2700 Peck Street, spoke in favor of the of the road diet and said the lane conversion is not about bicycles or cars, it is about the design of the road.

Tim McKnight, 2101 Oak Street, said he has often biked Stanley Street and said the lane conversion is a good thing but the City has to be careful and have concern for the elderly.

Dick Siebert, 500 Indiana Avenue, spoke against the lane conversion. He said he is concerned that in the future, the City will have to revert back to the four lanes because it did not work out.

Greg Wojtak, 916 Frontenac Avenue, spoke against the lane conversion and said safety is number one. He said something needs to be done at Minnesota and Green Avenue so they are easier to cross. Mr. Wojtak said traffic will not go down, it will only be more congested and more dangerous to bike down.

Larry Frostben, 1757 College Avenue, said he has rode Stanley Street twice on bicycle and chooses not to ride it because of the traffic. He said it does not make sense to pay for re-striping when other City roads are in bad condition.

Ron Carlson, 3356 Oak Avenue, said he would not feel comfortable riding a bike down Stanley Street. He said he does not believe traffic calming measures will work for Stanley Street and worries about people backing out of their driveway safely.

Bryan Worzella, 717 Washington Avenue, asked when the needs of the few dictate so much. He suggested widening the road and adding bike lanes for bicyclists' safety. Mr. Worzella suggested putting in a stop light due to the amount of traffic. He said the alders should be listening to the constituents and what they want rather than their own personal beliefs.

Jim Fetherston, 3124 Feltz Avenue, spoke in favor of the road conversion as it has been done across the Country and has worked fine. He said the left lane is often known as the fast lane and questioned if the fast lane is really needed on Stanley Street.

Dan St. Peter, 408 Glennon Avenue, spoke against the four to three conversion on Stanley Street. He said people are losing sight of the main concern, safety. Mr. St. Peter suggested rather than looking at one option, a solution should be found that is liked by the majority.

Sherri Fetherston, 3124 Feltz Avenue, said she supports this in hopes that it helps clear up the confusion of where bicyclists should ride and rules of the road. She said she does not feel comfortable riding down Stanley Street because of how busy it is.

Lynn Schulist, 408 Glennon Avenue, said the main concern that has been brought up at all the meetings is safely getting in and out of driveways for Stanley Street residents. She said none of the layouts have said they would make this issue better.

Bill Seybold, 2421 Golden Road, Plover, said he is neither for nor against this and said anything to make the roads safer for everyone is a good thing.

Bernice Sevenich, 1017 Jasmine Lane, said Council needs to use their common sense and do what the constituents are telling them to do and what they feel is the best for the whole community.

Trevor Roark, 601 Washington Avenue, said he drives on Stanley Street four to six times a week and said it is wide, fast, and unsafe. He said since Highway 66 has been re-routed Stanley has not seen the amount of traffic it once did. Mr. Roark said re-stripping the road would cost less than adding stop signs, traffic beacons, and/or traffic lights.

Wade Wilquet, 2940 Bimini Court, Plover, said he previously resided at 3318 Stanley Street. He said he has spoken with a lot of truck drivers who said they would avoid Stanley Street if it was converted to three lanes.

Phil Janowski, 1017 Old Wausau Road, suggested widening the road to add bike lanes or widening the sidewalks to six feet so there is enough room for walkers and bicyclists.

Robin Rothfeder, 1640 Ellis Street, said he studied Transportation Planning in Utah and said Stanley Street is overbuilt for the size of Stevens Point. He said the only way to promote this area is to do a conversion or reconstruct the road.

Nathan Sandwick, 633 Portage Street, said he is the Community Resource Development Educator with the Portage County UW Extension. He said there has to be a balance between public opinion and professional expertise when it comes to matters like this.

Rob Harper, 1732 Elk Street, spoke in favor of the road conversion in hopes to slow traffic down on Stanley Street.

Tom Brown, 317 Sixth Avenue, spoke in favor of the road conversion, and said this is not an "us vs. bikes" issue, rather the inability for motorists to enter or cross Stanley Street. He said going down to one lane should make it easier for those backing out of their driveway. Mr. Brown said currently, there is no safety for bicyclists on Stanley Street.

Jo Seiser, 317 Sixth Avenue, spoke in favor of the road conversion because it will make Stanley Street a more comfortable place to be for all the users.

John Quirk, 325 Front Street, said he is neither for nor against the road conversion but something needs to be done.

Chris Tielens, lives in Plover; said she has rentals on McCulloch Street. She said she is in support of the four to three lane conversion. She believes any consequences from this

can be lived with. Ms. Tielens said she often has conversations with alderpersons and they are listening to what everyone has to say.

Jenny Burton, 5718 Sandpiper Drive, spoke in favor of the road conversion in order to give bikers their space on the road. She said she bikes nearly every day and likes the streets that have bike lanes because it gives her a space on the road.

Ald. Johnson read emails from Kimber Goodwin and Bill Schierl who support the lane conversions on Stanley Street.

Ald. Johnson said she spoke with a gentleman in her district about the Stanley Street project and he raised concerns with parking on Stanley Street. She said when she spoke with residents in her district about this, the majority were in favor of the Stanley Street project.

Ald. Oberstadt said a constituent contacted her and suggested changing the speed limit in the area as a solution.

Ald. Kneebone read an email she received from Richard and Celeste Hadfield, writing in favor of the bicycle lanes on Stanley Street.

Ald. Slowinski said he received an email from Valerie Legrande, writing against the Stanley Street project.

Ald. Jennings said in December 2017 Chancellor Patterson wrote a letter to the Mayor and Dir. Beduhn in favor of the four to three road conversion and she said he still supports it.

Ald. Shorr read a letter written from Chris Burch in support of the conversion.

Ald. Shorr said he has had a lot of phone calls in regards to the concerns with this project.

Ald. Dugan read emails from Scott Bonikowske, Joel Rutkowski, Al Prosser, Doug Moore, and Lori Carlson writing against the four to three road conversion.

Ald. Dugan read an email from Joan Honl who wrote in favor of the Stanley Street conversion.

Ald. McComb said she talked with a constituent who was against the Stanley Street road conversion and said she had a voicemail from Bill Schierl asking her to express his support for the road conversion.

Ald. Morrow said he spoke with Stanley Street residents and found the majority are against the road conversion. He said he spoke with the residents around the Moses Creek area as well as his neighborhood. Ald. Morrow said the majority of the residents were against the conversion.

Ald. Phillips said his constituents are against the conversion but said they do not have a say because it is on the other end of town. He said his constituents told him not bring it to the South side.

Ald. Nebel said she had conversations with constituents and said one constituent is more open to the lane conversion idea because it relates to safety rather than bicycle lanes.

Mayor Wiza said any comments submitted to the Mayor's office, including Dir. Ostrowski's memo, are at the Clerk's office as well as the hand signed and online petition. As no one else from the public wished to speak, Mayor Wiza closed the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

Ald. Shorr **moved**, Ald. Jennings seconded, to approve that the Department of Public Works prepare to solicit bids in June for two scenarios to restripe Stanley Street with the following parameters: converting from four car lanes to three lanes from Michigan Avenue to 1) Indiana Avenue and 2) Lindbergh Avenue. B. the re-striped lanes will include a standard 14' TWLTL (two way left turn lane) turning lane as well as 5' demarcated shoulders in both directions, C. changing the Minnesota Avenue intersection to have all-way stop signs, with left-turn bays instead of TWLTLs. D. appropriate transitions at the east end of the lane conversion, to merge traffic into three lanes going westward and expand to four lanes going eastward, and E. addition of a new crosswalk possibly with a pedestrian refuge, at Clayton Avenue, as well as consideration of crosswalks for Lindbergh and/or Indiana Avenues.

Ald. Shorr said the western part of Stanley Street at Michigan Avenue works great. He said he is avoiding the most far western end of Stanley Street due to the increased amount of traffic there. Ald. Shorr said in option "A" there are two streets listed so then Council can compare and select an option. He said a traffic study was done and it showed that traffic does not flow well on Minnesota Avenue and that it would benefit from having a four-way stop. Ald. Shorr said the cross walks are placed in lower volume less controversial traffic areas.

Ald. Dugan questioned having the conversion at Indiana Avenue or Lindbergh Avenue and said it is only a three block difference.

Ald. Shorr replied that it could be a large dollar amount between the two locations.

Ald. Dugan said Indiana Avenue is a road that serves from Schmeeckle to Paris Street, which serves two sub-divisions and has a bus stop. She said this area would benefit from being in the conversion. Ald. Dugan asked why Clayton Avenue was selected to have a cross-walk.

Ald. Shorr replied saying it was a street they selected to encourage pedestrian traffic.

Ald. Dugan said in item letter "E" she is advocating for Indiana Avenue because a lot of people are crossing at this intersection and it is very wide.

Ald. Slowinski said Council is trying to piece the road conversion in so the City can afford it. He questioned why the City is wanting to do a conversion on a curve and said it should be at a controlled intersection. Ald. Slowinski said he agrees that something needs to be done at Minnesota Avenue but feels Stanley Street would get bottled up with the lights at Michigan Avenue and the four-way stop at Minnesota Avenue.

Ald. Jennings thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and taking part. She said she supports the four to three lane conversion because it is a low cost way to improve the corridor. Ald. Jennings said the alternatives to restriping are more costly and do not correct the underlying issues.

Ald. Nebel said she appreciates that people are involved with this issue. She compared this to the Patch Street conversion and said people were not happy about it when it was first done but now there are no complaints. Ald. Nebel said she hopes the lane conversion will improve the Stanley Street neighborhood.

Ald. McComb said she is grateful for people taking part in this discussion. She feels people who are against the lane conversion are making weak arguments that are based on emotion and opinion. Ald. McComb said when making decisions for City policy data, evidence, and long term vision are better options than common sense. She said the traffic count is too low to mandate four lanes. Ald. McComb said backing out will be easier because residents can back into the TWIDL. She said alders need to make decisions for the best of the City of Stevens Point and are not delegates.

Ald. Oberstadt apologized for missing calls regarding the Stanley Street project. She said the Stanley Street accidents do fall within the normal range. Ald. Oberstadt said the lane conversion would slow down traffic and would hopefully make it easier for residents to back out of their driveways. She said Stanley Street needs to be re-painted anyway and if it does not work as expected the road can be re-painted. Ald. Oberstadt said people have been asking for this to be put on a referendum; however, this could not be a referendum because the borrowing would need to be greater than ten years and the project requires no borrowing.

Mayor Wiza said anything could be placed as a referendum; however, it is typically for larger projects. He said a referendum would cost the City \$3,000 - \$4,000.

Ald. Johnson said she would like to see the Stanley Street neighborhood become a beautiful neighborhood and believes the road conversion can help do that.

Ald. Morrow said the main concern he has heard was the intersection of Green Avenue and Stanley Street. He said the majority of the people he spoke to do not want this conversion.

Ald. Phillips asked Dir. Beduhn if it is a problem converting four to three at Lindbergh or Indiana Avenue rather than at an intersection.

Dir. Beduhn said the transition can occur two different ways, 1. at an intersection, or 2. create the transition which uses a long length of road. He suggested putting the transition at East Maria, but it would need to be looked into.

Mayor Wiza asked Dir. Beduhn if he would request flexibility at the intersections and, if so, which intersections.

Dir. Beduhn said it depends on what the Council wants. He said the Engineering Department has not looked into Lindbergh Avenue.

Mayor Wiza asked Ald. Shorr if he would offer flexibility in his motion.

Ald. Shorr said he wants to keep the reference points as is. He said he would like to try and figure out the transition points.

Dir. Beduhn said he would assume the transitions would be at East Maria Avenue to allow for the transition from two lanes down to one.

Ald. Slowinski asked Dir. Beduhn if there are concerns of bottlenecks between Michigan Avenue and Stanley Street with having a four-way stop.

Dir. Beduhn said there could be at certain points of the day; however, he does not have enough information to answer his question.

Ald. Kneebone said everyone can agree that they want Stanley Street to be safe for all users. She said most people in her district are for the Stanley Street conversion. Ald. Kneebone said she believes this is in the best interests of all the residents. She said if this does not work the City can always go back to the two lanes, it is only paint.

Call for the Vote: Ayes: McComb, Dugan, Kneebone, Johnson, Oberstadt, Nebel, Shorr, Jennings.

Nays: Morrow, Phillips, Slowinski. Motion adopted.

Ald. Shorr **moved**, Ald. Johnson seconded, to work with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Street Safety Commission to examine the full range of near and longer-term issues involving Stanley Street including speed limits, later-phase restriping going further eastward, and traffic flow at the Green Avenue and North Point Drive intersection.

Ald. Morrow said he thought a roundabout was being put in at the Green Avenue-North Point intersection at the future phase.

Dir. Beduhn said there was a meeting with the DOT and they said they do not plan to do anything in the near future with Stanley Street. He said down the road they are looking at re-paving it and at that time a roundabout may be installed.

Call for the Vote: Ayes: Ald. Jennings, Shorr, Nebel, Oberstadt, Johnson, Kneebone, Dugan, McComb, Phillips, Morrow.

Nays: Slowinski. Motion Adopted.

3. Adjournment.

Adjourned at 9:32 p.m.