

**MINUTES OF THE
WATERTOWN CITY COUNCIL
Special Meeting Thursday, February 18, 2010**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the special meeting of the Watertown City Council was called to order, on **Thursday, February 18, 2010** by Mayor K. J. McDonald at 7:00 PM in the Watertown City Hall Council Chambers. The meeting was held to discuss the “Y” intersection and Carter Street as they related to the County Road 20 project.

Upon roll call the following Council Members were present: McDonald, Rick Mann, Steve Duske, Earline King and Dan Geiger.

The following staff members were present: City Engineer David Martini of Bolton & Menk, Inc. and Acting Administrator/City Clerk-Treasurer and Finance Director Steven Wallner. Carver County representatives were County Commissioner Tim Lynch, County Engineer Lyndon Robjert, Project Engineer Dan Lonnes.

Also present were: (See attached sheets)

McDonald made opening remarks and introduced the Council, City Staff and Carver County representatives. Martini had a presentation on the County Road 20 project including summary timeline, Carter Street issues and the advantages and disadvantages of a roundabout or T-design at the “Y” intersection. McDonald then asked each council member for their comments.

2. COUNCIL COMMENT

Mann stated that the opinion of the public would sway his decision. Duske stated that he would take into account the opinion of the public. He questioned whether the city should waste more money on a redesign of the project for the “Y” intersection. He estimated that it would cost more for a redesign than the estimates given by the engineers. He stated that he has been steadfast in the T-design. He believes a three-way stop will control traffic. Geiger stated that throughout the year there were 23 meetings on the project at which input was given from various sources. He stated that the county first approved upgrades for County Road 20 in 2007 but the project was delayed until now. He favored the roundabout design for the “Y” intersection. King stated that in 2002 a T-design was presented but this was the first time she had ever seen a drawing of it. She stated that if a roundabout had been presented in 2002 there would have been two choices. McDonald stated that there are a lot of complexities with the intersection that need to be heard by the Council.

McDonald then opened the meeting to public comment and/or questions.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Hans Vanderlinde stated that the T-design is the worst option. He definitely is in favor of the roundabout. He stated that if there were so many meetings, why is everyone coming to complain about the project now.
2. Al Schug stated that he is a former firefighter and didn't think the roundabout would work for the fire department or the public in general. He asked why there has been no talk about a second river crossing.

3. John Neaton stated that the roundabout was not needed and that the money could be better used in other areas of transportation in the county. He stated that the roundabout will not change traffic flow and that there has been no major accidents at the intersection.
4. Woman in the audience stated that the city needs to address pedestrian crossings as to how people will cross Territorial Street.
5. Fred Lenz stated that the main problem was at Lewis and Territorial where traffic will back up. He suggested a stop light at Lewis and Territorial to improve traffic flow at peak times. He believes changing the "Y" intersection is a waste of taxpayer money. He stated that the speed limit should be reduced in the area of the new elementary school on County Road 20.
6. Dennis Wabbe asked which buildings/businesses would be displaced by the project. Martini stated that WaterTek and property north of Newton Avenue (across from the Stop N Go convenience store) would be purchased. Wabbe told Duske to vote no on the project because it is an inconvenience. He stated that the city needs to address the Territorial and Lewis intersection. He suggested having a cop at the intersection to help traffic flow through the intersection at times when it tends to back up.
7. Ken Grotbo stated that there are savings to a T-design as opposed to a roundabout. He stated that a second river crossing would help resolve the issue. He asked Martini if he knew the difference in the cost of the T-design and roundabout. Martini stated that he was not sure of the cost differences, but he indicated that the T-design would probably be less.
8. Rob Wilkening stated that State Street would be the ideal location for a second bridge since it links up directly with Highway 25.
9. Erica Leiter asked why the project had to be completed this year. Robjont stated that when the county sold the bonds they had three years in which to use the funds, which would be until 2011. He also stated that the bid climate is fantastic now and since the project is budgeted, it is time to go ahead with it.
10. John Neaton asked if the money could be used elsewhere in the county. Robjont stated that the money could only be used in the eight projects identified by the county in their request for funds.
11. Lynch stated that there are safety concerns on County Road 20 with no shoulder and kids walking on the road due to no trail or sidewalk.
12. Robjont stated that the T-design was introduced in 2002 but at that time roundabouts were probably not an option. He stated that roundabouts have proven to be safer.
13. Wade Stock stated that roundabouts keep traffic moving. He didn't see any reason to create a T-design or add more stop signs. He stated that the T-design will cause traffic to back up. He stated that the Lewis and Territorial intersection needs to be addressed.
14. Paul Neaton stated that if Territorial is made into a through street at Lewis, traffic will back up at Highway 25 and Territorial at the former 66 station. He suggested working back from that intersection.
15. Mike Crom stated that the county had a T-design in 2002 which was presented to the city but the county was also looking at replacing the bridge over the Luce Line Trail and put off the intersection because they didn't have enough money to do both projects.
16. Mel Johnson asked the Council to delay the "Y" improvements and do the rest of the County Road 20 project and work on resolving the problem at the Lewis and Territorial intersection.
17. Steve Rosdahl stated that if it ain't broke, don't fix it. He likes the "Y" intersection the way it is now.

18. Andrew Madsen asked when the traffic counts for the project were taken. He stated that Lewis Avenue is the issue not the roundabout. Martini stated that the traffic counts were done in the spring of 2009.
19. Steve Wollak lives in Forest Hills and believes a roundabout is the best solution. He stated that Carter Street should be closed for the fire department and Lewis intersection needs to be resolved.
20. Sue Burke stated that she is concerned with the access for Bremer Bank not working appropriately. She believes Carter Street needs to be left open for now.
21. Angie Boll doesn't like the original Carter Street proposal. She stated that the city needs to look 20 years down the road and a roundabout is the best solution.
22. Laurie Mann stated that there will be a trail along County Road 20 from the "Y" to Paul Avenue and a roundabout will help slow the traffic for pedestrians.
23. Andrew Madsen asked why the Lewis and Territorial intersection wasn't considered first.
24. Rob Wilkening agreed that the Lewis and Territorial intersection needs to be addressed.
25. Robjent stated that when the county designs an intersection or a roundabout, they look 20 years in advance. He stated that they want to build the right design now.

4. COUNCIL OPINION

It was at this time that McDonald asked the Council for their opinions.

Geiger stated that Chaska has put in roundabouts with no real issues or complaints. He stated that Watertown can save some money in other areas such as eliminating curb and gutter and the trail. He stated that the engineers have done a great job and come up with the right design.

King stated that she likes roundabouts.

Duske stated that the audience seemed to be split 50-50 on the design for the "Y" intersection. He stated that he was sorry about Bremer, but he believes closing Carter Street is preferable for the fire department. He stated that the extra cost of changing the design is a factor in his decision.

Mann stated that the roundabout is the best solution and he is not in favor of spending extra money for changing the design. He also is sympathetic to Bremer Bank, but believes the fire department's needs are important for Carter Street to be closed.

McDonald stated that he believes roundabouts work in many locations, but not in this situation. He believes the best solution is to install a T-design or delay the "Y" intersection and do the rest of the County Road 20 project. He stated that there is room to make changes later if a T-design is put in now, but if a roundabout is put in now, there is no room for changes later on.

DUSKE MOVED, GEIGER SECONDED A MOTION TO AMEND THE OCTOBER 27, 2009 MOTION APPROVING THE SCOPE AND LAYOUT OF COUNTY ROAD 20 PROJECT BY INCLUDING OPTION NUMBER 2 FOR CARTER STREET. MOTION CARRIED 3-1 (MCDONALD VOTED NAY AND MANN ABSTAINED).

Prior to voting on the motion, Duske thanked everyone for their input. He stated that the project needs to move forward without any further costs. Mann stated that he agreed with the motion and that it was an uncomfortable situation. He stated that the aspect of a roundabout will fix the problems at the "Y" intersection and the needs of the many. McDonald stated that the reason he would not support the motion was that he thought there was a better way. He believes the "Y" intersection is not the place for a roundabout.

5. **MUNICIPAL CONSENT**

GEIGER MOVED, KING SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE MUNICIPAL CONSENT, AUTHORIZING THE CITY ENGINEER TO SIGN COUNTY ROAD 20 PROJECT DOCUMENTS IN THE CITY'S BEHALF. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 9:19 PM.

ATTEST:

Steven Wallner
Clerk-Treasurer

K.J. McDonald
Mayor