

## CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

October 6, 2009

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in study session at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 6th day of October, 2009, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Atkins, Butler, Cubberley, Dillingham, Griffith, Kovach, and Mayor Rosenthal

ABSENT: Councilmembers Ezzell and Quinn

DISCUSSION REGARDING EAST LINDSEY STREET CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS BETWEEN CLASSEN BOULEVARD AND ELM AVENUE INCLUDING A PROPOSED STEAM TUNNEL PROJECT TO BE COMPLETED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA.

Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager, said there are three very important issues to discuss and the first will be an update on the East Lindsey Bond Project. He said the second topic will be the University of Oklahoma (OU) Proposed Steam Tunnel Project and Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, and Mr. Burr Milsap, OU, provide a brief overview about the project and answer any questions. He said Mr. O'Leary will conclude the meeting with the Lindsey/Elm Storm Drainage Solution and update Council on recommended Staff options.

Mr. O'Leary introduced Ms. Helene Murdock with Poe and Associates, Inc., which is the firm designing the East Lindsey Street corridor and Mr. Brandon Clayburn of Meshek and Associates, a storm drainage engineering design firm that is working on the Lindsey Street/Elm Avenue drainage solution. He also introduced Mr. Mike Moorman and Mr. Brent Everett from the OU Architectural Engineering Department. Mr. O'Leary said the three issues to be discussed all revolve around the East Lindsey Street Bond Project, some directly and some indirectly. He said OU participation on the project was discussed approximately two years ago when Staff last spoke to Council regarding an alternative design concept, which Staff is now submitting for Council's review and directive. The second point for discussion will be a proposed steam tunnel project, an OU project that cuts through and impacts the East Lindsey Street corridor and the last part for discussion will be the storm drainage problems at Lindsey Street and Elm Avenue, which also impact the bond project.

Mr. O'Leary said the East Lindsey Street Bond Project was approved by the citizens on March 29, 2005, as one of many corridor projects approved at that time and is the last project to be completed in that group. He said the City received two letters from OU President David Boren on April 26, 2006, and October 19, 2006, concerned about the project design and felt the proposed five lanes was not conducive to the university atmosphere or pedestrian activity and questioned the need for a left turn lane at George Avenue. He said Council discussed OU's concerns at a Study Session on November 29, 2006, and talked about possible alternatives for the project. Mr. O'Leary said he was hired as the Director of Public works in January 2007, and this was one of the first projects given to him when he started. He credits Mr. Angelo Lombardo, Traffic Engineer, for suggesting a different type of pavement design, which was designed by Poe and Associates, Inc. He said Staff met with OU on several occasions and formally presented an alternate design on April 13, 2007. The alternate design included a divided four lane street, center landscaped medians, landscaped perimeters, hike and

bike trails along both sides of the street and decorative street lamps. He said OU Officials and Staff agreed and Council approved the alternative project design in May 2007.

Mr. O'Leary said the boundaries of the project are East Lindsey Street starting at Classen Boulevard to just east of Jenkins Avenue. He said the project does not include the Jenkins intersection because that intersection is fairly new. He provided a brief overview of the concept design and said they have not changed from the 2007 design. He said instead of a straight sidewalk or path, there will be a curvilinear section with lots of landscaping along the perimeter as well as along the center median and decorative street lights. Mr. O'Leary said the Duck Pond pedestrian bridge crossing is a historic structure and Staff discussed the concept of leading the new path into the current pedestrian bridge crossing, making it a little narrower than the rest of the path so as not to touch the existing bridge, but still making it American Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible. Mayor Rosenthal asked the width of the proposed pathway and Mr. O'Leary replied ten feet and said other design features in addition to landscaping could be included such as pedestals, brick pavers, etc. He said the concept shown today is similar to that of the Chautauqua Avenue, on the south side of OU campus, which also had a center median, bike type trails and decorative street lights.

Mr. O'Leary highlighted the project costs and said when the original bond was approved by the voters in March 2005, and the project was approximately a \$3.4 million project. He said it is Staff's intent to acquire Federal transportation funds through the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) for 80% of the construction and the City would be responsible for all of the design, land acquisition, utility relocation, and 20% of the construction. He said in 2007 the projected cost was \$5.4 million due to inflation and high cost for petroleum based products and included \$600,000 to \$700,000 for enhancements. He said currently the project cost is estimated at \$5.1 million, due to of the current economy and the enhancements are estimated at \$400,000.

Mr. O'Leary outlined the project schedule and said a big part of any major project is the environmental clearance process which was successfully completed in March 2008. He anticipates the right-of-way (ROW) acquisition process to be completed by March 2010 and said there are no buildings or complete properties involved in the ROW area for this project. He said most of the properties are University owned and are small sections of land that are located along the perimeter. There are a lot of utilities within the project area and one of the requirements of the Federal Transportation funds is all utilities have to be completely removed, making it an extensive process and the utilities relocation process will begin April 2010. Mr. O'Leary said Staff would like to bid the project in the Fall of 2010, and begin construction in January 2011. He said Staff anticipates the project will take approximately 18 months putting the construction completion date in June 2012.

Mr. O'Leary requested Council direction relative to the added enhancement costs and maintenance of the landscaping, irrigation, lighting, street furniture, and hardscape. He said both the City and OU will benefit from the project. He said Council could consider a formal agreement with OU, possibly in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding that would address the details and if Council so desires, Staff would work with OU on the agreement to be submitted for Council's formal consideration.

Councilmember Dillingham asked what OU would be willing to do in terms of cost sharing on the project and Mr. Moorman said OU would like a major say in design and final installation and is willing to pay the additional costs if a bigger and better design is desired. He said OU is very hands on when

it comes to landscaping, the design as well as the installation. Councilmember Butler asked if the proposed irrigation is close to any of the old arsenic wells and Mr. Moorman said OU would use only non-potable water for irrigation purposes. Councilmember Cubberley felt the nearby neighborhoods would embrace the project if it includes beautifully enhanced landscape and said the grassy medians on Chautauqua Avenue would not be adequate. He said when this project was initially proposed, OU indicated they would be willing to participate in both landscaping and maintenance if allowed to have some side streets access points closed, making left turns obsolete. He felt a trade-off for closures and enhanced landscaping could be a compromise between OU and the City. Councilmember Kovach asked how Staff is proposing to come up with the \$400,000 difference and Councilmember Cubberley said if OU will agree to do some of the work, the City will need to come up with money from our Capital Budget, just as promised when the citizens voted on the bond issue. Mr. O'Leary said the primary infrastructure would be built under the normal Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) process and said from a budget standpoint, the City has the budget to bid and build the project. Simultaneous to the final design process and working on an agreement with OU, he envisions Phase II being OU's enhancement project, whether a bid project or in house project, it would be the last item to happen. Mr. O'Leary said there are parts of the project to be worked out, for instance the irrigation, light poles and the power for those light poles will probably be some of the City's portion of the cost. Councilmember Kovach asked if bike paths are included and Mr. O'Leary replied ten foot bike paths will be installed on each side of Lindsey Street and Staff will also look at the project to address ADA issues. Mayor Rosenthal said the project has the potential of being a win-win situation in terms of improvements to the neighborhoods and the entrance to OU and felt the specifics needed to be formalized. Mr. O'Leary said the project will also improve water main lines, as well as the crossing of Lindsey Street at Bishop Creek, which will provide major drainage improvements.

OU approached the City in May 2009, regarding the installation of a steam tunnel to improve their campus utility system. Mr. O'Leary said the steam tunnel will be an 8' X 10' concrete underground structure and will hold steam lines, cool water lines, electric lines, fiber, etc. He said the steam tunnel would lead to a new location for future building and steam generation operation, which is needed to serve the growing OU campus. Mr. O'Leary said the connection of the proposed building to the existing steam tunnel goes under Lindsey Street, near Jenkins Avenue. He said the project will require OU to replace the existing storm sewer box under Lindsey Street to lower it below the proposed steam tunnel. He said this will affect some of the City's drainage system, but it will be built back and intact. Mr. O'Leary said this is not only a sixty foot tunnel project, but a major storm pipeline project. OU anticipates construction beginning December 2009, at the south end near the proposed new plant and from June 25 through August 5, 2010, construct the steam tunnel and drainage system under Lindsey Street. Councilmember Atkins asked what the detour traffic flow will be when Lindsey Street closes and Mr. O'Leary said the closure will only be the section from Asp Avenue to Jenkins Avenue and will only be closed during the summer of 2010; however, this closure will affect six Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (CART) bus routes and alternatives are currently being reviewed on those routes.

Mr. O'Leary said the last topic to discuss is the drainage issues at Lindsey Street/Elm Avenue and Lindsey Street/College Avenue. He said the City, along with Meshek Associates, analyzed the flooding problems in the area and recommended an underground pipeline and box type structure that would come across Lindsey Street discharging into Bishop Creek. He said the estimated cost for the Lindsey Street/Elm Avenue drainage solution is \$4 million and was not included in East Lindsey Street Bond Project. Mr. O'Leary said the City had to make certain that whatever was designed for the bond

project would accommodate a future drainage solution. He said if Council desires the Lindsey/Elm drainage solution to move forward, the estimated additional costs would be \$950,000 and to lower the section under the proposed OU steam tunnel would be another \$650,000 and would only complete work to the west side of the tunnel. Mr. O'Leary said the cost to fund a future project and finish the system would be approximately \$2.4.

Mr. O'Leary said Staff along with representatives from OU, Poe and Associates, Inc., and Meshek Associates discussed alternatives and Mr. Bob Hanger, City Engineer, felt there was a south drainage solution option; therefore, Meshek Associates conducted a study and identified a viable and feasible south option solution. He said the solution would pick the water up at Elm and College, going down College Avenue with a box type structure and theoretically an open channel into a detention basin just north of Imhoff Road. He said from a physical standpoint this drainage solution will work and would cost approximately \$4.1 million. Mr. O'Leary said OU initially expressed concern about the location of the detention basin relative to their future expansion plans; however, as long as the water is detained, the detention basin can be placed anywhere in that general location, or the box culvert placed under Imhoff Road can be increased. He said the south option is a good option; it is affordable, and basically it prevents other problems on the East Lindsey Bond Project. If Council were to select the south option as a future drainage project, it would have no scheduling or cost impacts on the current East Lindsey Bond Project.

Councilmember Cubberley asked if there would be more easement issues and ROW acquisitions if the south drainage option is selected and Mr. O'Leary said the idea would be to keep the drainage in the street, but Staff would need to obtain easements and ROW. Councilmember Butler said she had concerns about both options in reference to the impact on the receiving stream. Mr. O'Leary said if Staff were to weigh which option had the least impact on the system, it would be the south option because it is a direct inlet to the South Canadian River and does not go through Bishop Creek or impact any other tributaries. Councilmember Cubberley expressed concern with the south option since the details are not complete and the drainage solution at Lindsey/Elm is a long term solution that will probably not be done for a very long time. Councilmember Griffith asked if Council adopts the east drainage solution, would it will delay the bond project and Mr. O'Leary said it would be at least a six month delay to redesign the project. Mayor Rosenthal appreciated Council's concerns about the flooding, but said Staff is faced with flooding problems amid all of the Storm Water Master Plan (SWMP) and she felt Council will work through the priority project list identified in the SWMP, of which this project is included as one of the top priorities. She was concerned there could be additional hidden costs if Council chooses the east drainage solution.

Mayor Rosenthal asked OU representatives if the issue was the location of the detention pond or just a detention pond period and Mr. Mike Moorman, said it is a combination of both. He said they are open to the concept of the south drainage option, but the drawing shown today would not be acceptable; however, OU is willing to work on a solution. Mr. Brandon Clayburn, Meshek and Associates, said he is somewhat responsible for the detention pond location and what it means to him in terms of design and trying to offset the impacts of the various waters from one basin to another basin is volume. He said if there is not a certain about of volume for the extra water that is diverted to this area, there will be an increase in flow rates downstream. He said there are several alternatives, but water must be contained to some degree in bringing the water from one basin to another basin. Councilmember

Butler felt a detention pond as a teaching tool, i.e., “wetlands,” would be a great asset to Sam Noble Museum’s outdoor activities.

Councilmember Dillingham felt there was not enough information on the east solution, in terms of how it will work and cost and was concerned about delaying the steam tunnel project and the bond project six months. Councilmember Butler agreed the other projects should not be delayed. Mr. O’Leary said OU’s steam tunnel project will not be delayed and City Staff has had several discussions with OU, since they are constructing a 6' X 4' box under the tunnel to lower the storm drain, about the possibility of them constructing the box twice as big or installing two parallel boxes at the same time. He said it would not be OU’s obligation to construct a larger or second box, but there may be a possibility to add the increase to OU's contract with City participation, which would cost approximately \$1 million.

It was the consensus of Council to support of the south drainage option and Mayor Rosenthal suggested Staff work with OU to obtain a letter of commitment to work out details on the south drainage option as well as a memorandum of understanding for cost and maintenance on the East Lindsey Street Bond Project for Council's consideration.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled “*East Lindsey Street Corridor Improvements, Classen Boulevard to Elm Avenue*,” dated October 6, 2009, submitted by Mr. Shawn O’Leary, Director of Public Works, Mr. Bob Hanger, City Engineer, Mr. Lonnie Ferguson, Capital Project Manager, Ms. Helene Murdock, Poe and Associates, Inc., and Mr. Burr Milsap, University of Oklahoma

Participants in discussion

1. Mr. Steve Lewis, City Manager
2. Mr. Shawn O’Leary, Director of Public Works
3. Ms. Helene Murdock, Poe and Associates, Inc.
4. Mr. Lonnie Ferguson, Capital Projects Manager
5. Mr. Mike Moorman, OU, Architectural Engineering Department
6. Mr. Burr Milsap, Vice-President, Administrative Affairs, OU
7. Mr. Brandon Clayburn, Meshek Associates

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

ATTEST:

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City Clerk

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Mayor