



Special City Council Meeting
6:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 25, 2019
Conference Room
23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, MI 48335

FINAL

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was held on September 25, 2019, in Farmington City Hall, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, MI. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Steve Schneemann.

1. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Sara Bowman	Mayor Pro Tem	Absent	7:37 pm
William Galvin	Councilmember	Present	
Joe LaRussa	Councilmember	Present	
Steve Schneemann	Mayor	Present	
Maria Taylor	Councilmember	Present	

City Administration Present

City Manager Murphy
City Clerk Mullison
City Treasurer Weber

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Move to approve the agenda as presented.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	LaRussa, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Galvin, Councilmember

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was heard.

4. FARMINGTON ROAD STREETScape DISCUSSION

City Manager introduced the status and next steps for the proposed Farmington Road Streetscape project. City Treasurer Weber, with help from Matt Parks of OHM, gave a presentation to outline improvements being considered. Planning from a previous streetscape project was reviewed, the competitive nature of a TAP Grant was considered, and updates to the older plan were pointed out.

The presentation given, along with the handouts referenced, is available on the City's website at the link that is relevant to this meeting at <http://farmgov.com/City-Services/Government/Agendas-and-Minutes/City-Council.aspx> (or contact the City Clerk). A cost overview was considered, including projected grant funds and RCOC participation. Split funding between the City and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was reviewed, with details of debt service and funding particulars broken out. Spreadsheets were handed out to Council with funding details. A projection of revenue available to the DDA was reviewed.

The deadline for TAP Grant submittal is October 16, 2019 with a tentative funding decision time of February 2020, putting the project out to bid in Fall 2020, and with construction in 2021.

Schneemann commented that the project might be a stretch for the DDA, but that it was something the DDA had been committed to for a long time. He said that it was unfortunate that Farmington Road wasn't done when it was originally planned as it would have cost almost half of what it is projected to cost now. He stated that Farmington "feels half done", and that businesses and establishments are begging for this to be done. He maintained that the worst thing possible would be not to get this done now, as promises were made with recent passage of a millage. He is an advocate for the project, and though he wished it cost less, current cost projections are understandable. As far as a funding split, it might be a huge stretch for the DDA but is not insignificant for the City either. He observed that this project been at top of everybody's list for years and that it will be formative along that stretch. Farmington Road will be safer and more walkable, especially at the Farmington Road and Grand River intersection.

LaRussa questioned the presented funding percentages of sidewalk and streetscape as well as debt service versus real cost. He objected to receiving detailed spreadsheets about funding without having a chance for study. Weber explained the provided debt service details, and Parks described the engineering details, including the reuse of present concrete in the project. LaRussa asked about whether the Farmington Road streetscaping would match the existing Grand River design, possible value engineering, the funding of sidewalks as separate from the project, and the perceived change in direction from previous capital improvement focus and projections. He examined the proposed \$300,000 debt reallocation decision.

Discussion followed on capital improvement planning targets, whether this was a DDA focused project, what future TIF growth might be dedicated to the streetscape, and changing assumptions. Risks, shortfalls, contingencies, proposals and bids, Tap Grant follow-through, bid strategies, and alternatives were also touched upon.

Bowman's written thoughts on the project were handed out by Schneemann, as she was not able to be present for the meeting. She said "I have had an opportunity today to meet with Dave [Murphy] and Chris Weber to review this evening's presentation. I am writing to provide my support for the motion as presented. Based on the information provided, I feel that any further delays would be contrary to the promise that we made to citizens upon passing the millage that we would pursue development and re-development opportunities. Farmington streetscape has long been a desire to complete, and we are in a good position to accept a TAP Grant to assist us with making this a reality."

Taylor stated that she is in favor of either doing it as it is or if the DDA could pay a little bit more. She reiterated that the project is a no brainer and that she is in favor of it, and stated that the people want it.

Galvin asked Murphy what the public engagement strategy was. Murphy replied that one had not been developed at the moment. Galvin would like to see a two year public engagement strategy carried out. He stated that the city needs a "Plan B", that he knows costs will increase, and that the project could be scaled back by making a few sacrifices. He would like to have dialog for what would cost less within the design. He would prefer that concrete owned and paid for by Oakland County should be saved, and wants to give the project 100% to the DDA. He proposed to fund \$1.5 million and give project control to the DDA with less risk for the City. He suggested that would streamline the entire process by taking Council out of project decisions. He reminded Council that the future Maxfield Training Center project will need streetscape, road improvements, and will need to claim more of the 2 mil levy, and requested that Council not take funding that might be needed away from MTC project. Galvin asserted that the costs of the streetscape will affect other important projects. Discussion arose about public engagement and why other projects might have to wait. He asserted that this project is what DDAs are made for and requested that administration makes sure that the three year forecast considers the MTC project.

Discussion followed concerning correct and legal funding of this project.

LaRussa requested that Weber update funding priorities previously discussed by council to include MTC costs. Weber countered by asking what the MTC project looks like, since nothing has been determined and only very broad numbers have been discussed.

Schneemann brought attention back to the impending streetscape grant deadline. Galvin asked administration to take ten days and come back with another proposal before an October 9th joint meeting with the DDA Board. Murphy said that he had no problem with doing that, but that administration will be proceeding with work on the grant application as though Council was going forward with the project. Schneemann wanted to move ahead and asked why wait and analyze, do different scenarios, and lose the project. Galvin wants to vote on it in the DDA Board's presence on October 9th. LaRussa asked to see a document showing the DDA as the majority funder, and Galvin declared himself not ready to vote on the topic.

LaRussa required the DDA to take a bigger stake because the streetscape is in the center of town and stated that he was not ready to vote if the cost share was a 50/50 split. He was not happy about not receiving the materials prior to the meeting and being required to make an immediate decision. His expectations were set based on prior published materials, and he was not comfortable with changing recommendations. He felt the current recommendation was inaccurate and wants a complete reallocation and reprioritization. Discussion about how projects are planned for and how projections are made occurred. Weber suggested several reports that he could come back to the next meeting with. Funding split options were considered.

Bowman arrived at 7:38 pm. Discussion continued about variables and possible reallocations, with suggestions about what Galvin and LaRussa would like to see in the next set of projections. LaRussa asked if an accrual for the MTC project could be started now, so that when that project becomes current, there are funds planned and available.

Bowman asked why accrual was even being discussed when the City should be spending on promised projects and improvements. She stated that the whole point of the millage was to be able to move forward with projects, and that the streetscape was not a new project. She stated that the streetscape has clearly been a priority for a long time.

Grant sources, other sources of funding, and millage allocations were considered. The timeline for grant application, joint meetings, and other project planning was also discussed.

Move to authorize Administration to proceed in accordance with the City Manager's recommendations to include:

- **Authorizing the TAP Grant application to be submitted to the State by October 16, 2019.**
- **Approving City Administration's recommendation that the City and the DDA split the cost of the Farmington Road Streetscape project on a 50% basis for each entity.**
- **Authorizing City Administration to work with City Engineers to prepare the project for bidding and to bring back the bid results to City Council and the DDA Board for discussion and appropriate action, once the TAP Grant is approved.**

RESULT:	APPROVED AS PRESENTED [3-2]
MOVER:	Taylor, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Bowman, Mayor Pro Tem
AYES:	Bowman, Schneemann, Taylor
NAYS:	Galvin, LaRussa

5. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was heard.

6. COUNCIL COMMENT

Bowman stated that this project has been high on her priority list for as long as she has been around and is a great opportunity with the climate and the economy and the opportunity She looks forward to hearing the DDA's comments and reminded Council that these projects do not get cheaper with time. She was pleased that this discussion occurred and that Council ended up where they did.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Move to adjourn the meeting.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Taylor, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Bowman, Mayor Pro Tem

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Steven Schneemann, Mayor

Mary J. Mullison, City Clerk

Approval Date: October 21, 2019