



Tuesday, May 21, 2024

## **Council Approves Story Street Mill and Overlay Project**

*City leaders also move forward with potential agreement to clear way for vets center*

City council members voted Monday night to move forward with the improvement of Story Street from Mamie Eisenhower Avenue through 11<sup>th</sup> Street as part of an ongoing effort to beautify the downtown district.

The council also directed the city staff to develop an agreement to work with three local veterans' organizations that want to demolish 807 Sixth St., clearing the way to build a new veterans center with a restaurant, lounge, meeting room and outdoor seating area. The estimated demolition cost is more than \$120,000, which the city would pay no more than \$60,000.

Fourth Ward Councilman Terry Moorman, who chairs the city's economic development committee, said the project is "great for downtown" and would remove a dangerous eyesore.

"It's the old Kruck Building. I've been in the building several times. It needs to go away. It's structurally unsound. It also sits on top of Honey Creek, which is a problem for us. When that building is gone it will no longer sit on Honey Creek which is the main stormwater line for Boone."

At-large Councilwoman Linda Williamson said, "It looks like it'd be a great improvement for that block, so I think it's a step in the right direction."

City Administrator Bill Skare said the city budget has available funding through its stormwater and demolition accounts. City Attorney Jim Robbins will draft a development agreement for the council and veterans' groups to review.

The initial anticipated cost of the Story Street project was approximately \$939,000, but Manatt's submitted a base bid of \$663,571.95. The company submitted a bid alternate of \$114,393 for specific work or materials not included in the base bid. Four other companies submitted base bids ranging from \$665,540 to \$824,787.

Manatt's workers will grind that section of Story Street to remove just enough of the old surface to level and smooth it, before new asphalt is overlaid. The work is estimated to take three months with the goal of beginning in June and finishing before this year's Pufferbilly Days celebration, set for Sept. 20-22.

City Administrator Bill Skare has noted that while final paving will only require several days of disruption to downtown traffic, other aspects will be time consuming.

Council members, who unanimously awarded a contract with Manatt's Inc., of Ames, to proceed with the Story Street Mill and Overlay Project, have expressed enthusiasm about the project since the idea was first discussed.

Last year, Moorman noted the paving project would play an important role in the downtown's generational transition and a rebirth. "It would do wonders for the appearance of downtown," he said.

Williamson, another vocal advocate for downtown revitalization, has expressed the goal of making Boone "a destination where people come for the day."

"If we add more shops and restaurants to the downtown people will come and spend the day," she said in February.

In other business, the council:

- Appointed Barbara Madson, Lowell Davis and Levi Barber to six-year terms on the library board.
- Approved Human Services Awards for the 2024-25 fiscal year in to the following groups: Beckwith Family Adult Day Service of the Boone County Hospital, \$3,000; Boone County Probation, \$7,000; Child Care Junction, \$10,000; Heart of Iowa Rural Transit Authority (HIRTA), \$14,500; Home Care Aid, \$5,000; Impact Community Action Partnerships, \$13,000; Meals on Wheels, \$5,000; Public Health Nursing (Vising Nurse Service), \$6,000; Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), \$6,500; YSS Boone County (Youth and Family Counseling Center), \$6,000; and YSS Boone County (School Mentoring Program), \$4,000.

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