

**Riverfront Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**09/08/2022**

**Opening:**

Co-Chair Marc Geil called the meeting to order at 5:00pm in the City of Sterling Council Chambers.

**Present:**

Marc Geil, Terry McGuire, Skip McCloud, John Brady, Kris Noble, Janna Groharing, Mike Sprague, Joe Strabala-Bright, Nick Lareau, Alderman Josh Johnson, Alderman Chris Wilen, City Manager Scott Shumard. Also Present were Ron Clewer of Gorman & Co (Teams), Joel Zirkle of Fehr Graham, Michael Smith of Studio GWA (Teams), Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader, City Engineer Cory Buck, Mark Sauer of Meade and Hunt, Alderman Jim Wise and City Clerk Teri Sathoff.

**Absent:**

Heather Sotelo, Pete Dillon, Mayor Skip Lee, Ashley Sarver,

**Council Meeting update:**

City Manager Scott Shumard provided an update on the action taken by the City Council at the August 15, 2022 meeting. They approved the following six items presented to the Council by the Riverfront Commission;

1. Set-Up Projects estimated at **\$1,400,000**
  - a. The Previously Council approved \$299,525 for Master Planning, Historic Consultant for tax credits, Physical Needs Assessment, Building scanning, etc.
  - b. \$395,000 to begin grant applications, evaluate connection to Lawrence under the railroad and conduct a study to get a railroad quiet zone at the Avenue B crossing
  - c. \$705,475+/- for building lighting, securing Lawrence property, addressing the windows on the Lawrence building, roof repairs at National and interim programming on the riverfront
2. Stub Utilities from Wallace Street to the south during the Wallace Street reconstruction in preparation of future development (water, gas, electric, sewer) **\$150,000**
3. Pathway Lighting & Security Cameras **\$950,000**
4. Concession/Warming House/Restrooms including mechanicals for future ice ribbon and/or splash/water features **\$1,350,000**
5. Public plaza area with spray feature **\$TBD**
6. Play area that also includes tot lot and ADA features **\$850,000**

City Manager Shumard stated he has started getting RFPs on quiet zones for the railroad, he has also contacted Surf Broadband about installing broadband in the area while Wallace Street is under construction. Shumard advised the group that Wallace Street work is progressing, the tracks are coming out as well as the concrete, reconstruction will start next year.

**Feedback of Next Step Items:**

1. Cory Buck – gave a presentation of estimated costs related to stubbing in utilities, the original estimate to stub the utilities in was \$150,000, the estimate is down to \$100,000. The price on the water main is between \$12,000 and \$30,000 depending on the size needed.
2. Joel Zirkle – reported the lead paint in the Lawrence Building is not as bad as originally thought. The paint on the interior walls and columns are not lead-based. The majority of the lead-based paint is on the railings, in the elevator, and on the fire doors. The items that stay will be abated, if they do not stay in the building they will be removed and sent to scrap. The Stanley National Building number two does have lead-based paint that will need to be abated on a majority of the columns. The follow up work on quantities of asbestos will be done this week after that abatement costs will be available. The preliminary testing results in the plating areas show that the residue will be manageable and does not appear to be as costly as originally thought. Joel will look into the use of EPA protected areas on the Stanley National Property.
3. Mark Sauer – Gave a lengthy presentation of estimated costs related to the Plaza with Spray pad. The redesign of the park area along Wallace Street will include a consolidating of the buildings and relocating the ADA playground to the center area of the amenity space, creating more efficient parking. The Amphitheater is located along the river in the EPA protected area.

The three buildings would be relocated to one building in the center of the property, by combining the three buildings into one and centrally locating it, the expense for running the utilities would be lower. The building would be 2,800 square feet and will cost approximately \$1.3 million.

The Skating Ribbon would have the refrigeration units strategically placed, this would work best as a seasonal amenity, there would be coils placed in the concrete to keep the ice frozen. In the off season it could be a story path with a focus on the history to the Steel Mill.

The Firepit could be wood or natural gas. The gas firepit will have a higher cost to install however, it would not require wood to be available for burning. The fire pit could be on a timer with push button operation. The fire pit could also be programmed to operate on specific days and at specific times.

The Splashpad would have rock features with sprays, a large dump bucket, a fountain feature with lighting as well as mist stations. The Splash pad will need to be within

100' of the building for utilities. The recirculatory water system would be more expensive to install but less expensive to operate.

The Playground would be approximately 13,000 square feet. It could have a surface of poured in place rubber or surface engineered wood fiber either are ADA compliant. The surface engineered wood fiber would be less expensive; however, this would require more maintenance. When asked, Sauer recommended using a combination of both surfaces.

The four-season shelter would have two toilets per gender, with a family changing area located on the side. Will have a concession area and covered seating.

The amphitheater would not require more than a roof to hang audio visual equipment. The seating design could pay homage to The Mill.

The Veteran Memorial area could have a reflecting pool with a monument of some type.

The Canoe/kayak launch could either have a slide to transport the craft to the water or a winding pathway to make the grade easier to maneuver.

The Parking lot will have bioswales to slow the water. This could be an area that could have educational signage.

The open-air shelter would be behind the current swing benches and will have views of the river.

The entire budget is \$6 million, after the Gorman sheet at \$1.4 million, Utilities at \$150,000, Electric and Technology at \$950,000 and the Shelter at \$1.35 million the remaining balance would be \$2.15 million.

The potential budget for the Spray Pad and Plaza would be \$440,000, the Central Plaza would be \$380,000 and the playground would be \$1 million. Leaving \$330,000 in flex money.

Mark Sauer would like the next steps in the process to be for a building design to be decided on as well as progressing on the engineering. To progress on engineering, we need to lock in on the design. Sauer has a request out with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party for itemization on the splash pad as well as the playground. The breakdown in prices are;

- West Parking Lot \$480,000
- West Plaza \$610,000
- Ice Skating Ribbon \$1,425,000
- Spray Pad & Plaza \$440,000
- Central Plaza \$380,000
- Playground \$1,000,000

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Priority Amenities: \$1,820,000

Budget:\$2,150,000

“Flex”:\$330,000

Alderman Johnson asked if it was possible to have everything installed for the skating ribbon with the exception of the refrigeration since that is expensive portion of the ribbon. Skip McCloud agreed, he asked, of the \$1.4 million how much of that would be able to be done now.

The group discussed the location and design for the refrigeration unit for the skating ribbon. Sauer showed the group examples of refrigeration systems used in other communities and how it is disguised with landscaping and fencing. Sauer advised that there will be some noise from the back side of the system, so that should be placed facing the parking lot.

Marc Geil asked the group if they would like to return in 1 month with updated information on the playground price breakdown as well as updated information from Joel on remediation costs. Sauer would like to have feedback on the building design by then as well.

Sauer showed the group samples of building designs.

Ron Clewer informed the group that Fehr Gramh was able to scan the Lawrence building floor, and they determined there are no structural issues. Clewer also advised the National tour had a great outcome. Tour goers were able to provide feedback after the event, Michael Smith shared the feedback that was received. There were several former employees that shared memories. Several shared their thoughts for different uses for the future. Clewer stated that there was a lot of positive thoughts and sentiments in the group he led. Clewer stated they are looking for outlets to get the information out there to the public, the popup market was an excellent platform. Michael Smith asked what a good way to access National for the second tour on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Brad Schrader stated the 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue entrance should work best.

Ron Clewer stated they are currently updating the website. He would like to have photos as well as the notes from the meetings. Ron, Ashley and Michael will be attending the Farmers Market a few times throughout the winter to keep the momentum going through the winter months.

Janna Groharing advised the group she was approached by a person from Whiteside County Natural Area Guardians. She would like to capitalize on the prairie grass on the riverfront. She

would like to have use the Market Place for an outdoor presentation and tour spot for the area in June when the prairie land will be in full bloom. Sauk Valley College had someone give a presentation on prairie preservation, it was well attended and a popular event. The group liked the idea of promoting the prairie since a portion of it will remain for a few more years. Alderman Johnson stated he would like to see a group maintain the prairie properly.

The meeting adjourned at 6: 53 pm.  
Teri Sathoff

City Clerk