



Mayor Seibold reported she wanted to set up a subcommittee to look at several zoning ordinances, including lot coverage requirements. In the meantime, the commission could grant variances for these types of projects or could table them until possible revisions could be adopted. She felt this section of ordinance was one that needed to be reviewed for possible revisions to allow more flexibility.

Commissioner Dills noted that variances had already been granted to construct the garage and was not willing to approve a further variance based on the information given at the original hearing.

Commissioner Skaggs agreed that further review of the specifics of the lot coverage requirements was necessary. In the meantime, he favored following the rules currently in place because there were ways the applicant could meet the ordinance requirements.

Commissioner Graham stated he understood the challenges of working on these smaller lots and agreed pavers were expensive and that a garage was desirable. He stated he would support the request.

Commissioner Johnson was also concerned about these smaller lots, but agreed adding the pervious pavers would make this request more palatable to her.

- B. Johnson-Miller. That the motion be amended to require the use of 170 square feet of pervious pavers in the driveway and apron area to reduce the lot coverage to 44.6%.

Yeas: Dills, Graham, Johnson, Miller and Seibold – 5

Nays: Skaggs – 1

Vote on 2015-08-B, as amended:

Yeas: Johnson, Miller and Seibold – 3

Nays: Dills, Graham, Skaggs – 3

City Attorney Huff announced this variance request would need to be held until the next meeting when Commissioner Duncan was present to cast the tie breaking vote.

- 2015-09. A zoning hearing was held on the request of Eric Rongey, owner of 2113 Wealthy, to interpret the definitions of “lot coverage” and “permeable surface” in Sections 5.12 and 5.14 to allow a vegetative roof system to count as half the area when calculating “lot coverage, pavement and buildings.”

Zoning Administrator Faasse reviewed the revised plan for a new home on this lot. He stated that in addition to the permeable pavers, the applicant had reduced the size of the front porch, narrowed the driveway, and proposed a smaller patio and detached garage than originally planned. Because the lot coverage by buildings and pavement was still projected at 44.7%, the applicant is requesting the ordinance be interpreted to allow use of a vegetative roof on the garage to further reduce the lot coverage calculations so that a variance is no longer needed. As an alternative, the applicant requests that the City Commission consider granting a variance to allow lot coverage of 44.7% by buildings and pavement.

Mr. Faasse noted his concern about the ramifications on future development projects if vegetative roofs are allowed as a means to reduce lot coverage calculations.

Joel Peterson of J. Peterson Homes asked for permission to use a live roof as a pervious surface for the purpose of reducing lot coverage calculations. He felt the style of garage would fit into the neighborhood. He noted that the use of a detached garage in the back yard created the need for a longer driveway that added to the lot coverage percentage. He felt placing an attached garage with the garage door out in front of the home and a shorter driveway would not match the other homes in this neighborhood.

Mayor Seibold opened a public hearing. The following people were present to express their opinions:

- Andrew Howard, 606 Greenwood

Liked the green roof as a modern solution to this type of issue, but was concerned about future maintenance of the green roof.





- Timothy Allard, 2931 Oakwood Supportive if all operations have been reviewed for possible savings and reductions. Suggested attempting an even higher goal for road conditions than 6.0.
- Nancy Minard, 2453 Albert Very supportive of local millage.
- Reynolds Brander, 2648 Lake Drive Questioned whether state proposal would provide enough funding to improve local streets.
- Joshua Greenberg, 2770 Woodcliff Circle Felt road funding should be a state function. Not in favor of higher local taxes.
- Ryan Minkus, 2114 Welathy Supportive of intent to improve conditions; made suggestions for city information to residents.
- Chris Eckert, 2827 Reeds Lake Blvd Supportive based on the proposed language, time limit and commitment on how funds are to be spent.
- Marilyn & Bill Lundquist, 2222 Wilshire Supported local millage to supplement state funding.

2015-12. Request to adopt a resolution setting ballot language for a dedicated street and sidewalk millage proposal on May 5, 2015.

- A. Johnson-Dills. That a resolution setting ballot language for a dedicated street and sidewalk millage proposal on May 5, 2015 be adopted as set forth in Exhibit "A" attached hereto with ballot language as follows:

**CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS  
DEDICATED MILLAGE  
FOR MAINTENANCE AND CONSTRUCTION  
OF STREETS AND SIDEWALKS**

The City of East Grand Rapids Charter authorizes the City to levy up to 20 mills for general municipal purposes. Due to required millage rollbacks the City currently levies 13.3119 mills. Shall a partial "Headlee Override" be adopted so the current limitation on the amount of City taxes that may be levied against all taxable property in the City of East Grand Rapids be increased by up to 2.0 mills (\$2.00 per \$1,000 of taxable value of all real and personal property in the City) for a period of not to exceed ten (10) years beginning July 1, 2015, to be used exclusively for the improvement, repair, maintenance and construction of public roads, streets, sidewalks, storm drains and right-of-ways within the City of East Grand Rapids; provided however, that if the State of Michigan tax proposal (Proposal #1 on this ballot) passes, the City will be authorized to levy only 1.23 mill (\$1.23 per \$1,000 of taxable value of all real and personal property in the City) for said purpose and duration?

If approved and levied in its entirety, the 2.0 mill increase would raise the sum of approximately \$1,170,000.00 in 2015.

Commissioner Johnson spoke in favor of the ballot language, stating that costs have gone up while revenues have remained flat or decreased and are no longer enough to maintain and improve side streets.

Commissioner Dills questioned whether the Task Force had discussed a shorter millage term than 10-years. He stated he was comfortable with the 1.23-mill levy amount, but was not opposed to discussing a shorter term. City Manager Donovan explained it would take at least five years for the city to begin improving overall conditions and stated five years may not be long enough to begin showing results.

Mayor Seibold reported that if the state proposal passes, the city would not receive the full projected yearly amount until the third year of the sales tax increase. She felt this was further reason to go with a 10-year millage term in order to allow the city time to utilize the local and state funding to make progress on local streets and sidewalk efforts. She also noted the city commission would be reviewing the road funding revenues and expenses annually during the budget cycle and could adjust the improvement plans and millage rate if state

funding or the situation locally changes.

Commissioner Skaggs stated local governments across Michigan have been waiting for several years for the state to address the road funding crisis. He felt the city needed to act to begin improving conditions now as it was unlikely the State Legislature would be doing any more to address this issue for several years. Commissioner Skaggs reported he knew of several recent millage requests with 7, 8 and 10 year terms.

Commissioner Graham stated this issue was incredibly important to our city and favored a local solution rather than depending on the state. He felt the streets and sidewalks greatly impacted the quality of life of our citizens and reflected on the city as a whole.

Commissioner Skaggs thanked the Task Force members for their research and recommendation. He felt a local millage would improve streets, sidewalks, trails and stormwater systems and agreed it was the appropriate time to let the voters decide this issue. He reiterated that 78% of local roads would be in poor condition by 2018 if maintenance and reconstruction efforts are not increased. He noted the city's general operating millage had actually decreased in the last 20 years and revenue sharing from the state was no longer guaranteed. He supported the proposed rate of 1.23 mills tied to the passing of the Statewide proposal.

Mayor Seibold stated that local streets have deteriorated with the shrinking revenues over the last several years. She felt putting off this local millage would not be a good use of city resources as it would cost more to fix streets and sidewalks if the city waits to get started on an improvement program.

Yeas: Dills, Graham, Johnson, Miller, Skaggs and Seibold – 6  
Nays: -0-

2015-13. Miller-Skaggs. Motion to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- A. To approve the minutes of the regular meeting held January 5, 2015.
- B. To approve payroll disbursements of \$254,348.87; county and school disbursements of \$815,241.60, and total remaining disbursements of \$76,843.84.
- C. Authorization for staff to seek bids for a new telephone system for city operations.
- D. A contract with Arrowaste for waste hauling services for all city properties.
- E. Amendments to the contracts with Metro PCS and T-Mobile for cell tower antennas at the city's water tower site as set forth in Exhibits "B" and "C" attached hereto.
- F. A report on water and sewer rate changes by the City of Grand Rapids.

Yeas: Dills, Graham, Johnson, Miller, Skaggs and Seibold – 6  
Nays: -0-

2015-14. No other public comment was received.

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m., subject to the call of the Mayor until February 2, 2015.

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Karen K. Brower, City Clerk

Attachments: A – Resolution approving ballot language for an election on May 5, 2015

Attachments listed above are available for inspection at the office of the City Clerk.