

**MINUTES of a TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION
for Neighborhood Meetings on
Underwood Road, and Harbor Heights Road & Lakeview Drive
May 7, 2014 at Harris Town Hall**

The Harris Town Board met on Wednesday, May 7, 2014 at the Harris Town Hall for a neighborhood meeting work session with residents of Underwood Road, and of Harbor Heights Road and Lakeview Drive. The purpose of this work session was as follows:

- The purpose of this work session is to meet with road residents to discuss the proposed 2014 road improvement projects for Underwood Road, Harbor Heights Road, and Lakeview Drive, and hear their questions, concerns and comments on the impact of such projects.

The work session began at 7:00pm and the following officers were present: Supervisors Dennis Kortekaas, Gary Rosato, and Larry Key, and Clerk Michele Smith. *Absent: Treasurer Becky Adams.*

Also in attendance were Glen Hodgson - Township Road Engineer from SEH, Burl Ives and Jim Kelley – the two newly elected township supervisors, and approximately 6 residents from Underwood Road, apx 8 residents from Harbor Heights Road, and apx 5 residents from Lakeview Drive. Hodgson noted that he sent out letters of invite to all residents of the west side of Underwood Road, and all residents of Harbor Heights and Lakeview Drive.

The work session was called to order at 7:02pm by Chairman Rosato, who recapped the purpose of tonight's meeting and then turned it over to Glen Hodgson, who led the meeting in accordance with the agenda prepared by the Clerk:

1. Pledge to the flag, followed by the reading of the Harris Township mission statement

2. 7:00pm – 8:00pm: *Underwood Road*

- East End (of Park Road)
 - Hodgson commented that on the east end of Underwood Road, the pavement was beyond point of doing an overlay and so he recommended reclaiming the road.
 - Construction cost estimate: \$140,000
- West End (west of Park Road) - approximately 6 residents were in attendance from Underwood/west
 - Issues:

Hodgson explained that there was no easy solution for road improvements on the west end of Underwood Road, which services 13 families, due to the wet and nasty soils underneath the road per soil borings done a few years ago. The westerly section of this road is 8/10 of a mile in length and 6/10 of it has top soil underneath. The borings went down 12-14 feet and revealed it was still wet in places as the road goes through a swamp; and water makes things bad. As a result, drainage improvements would be needed.
 - Options & apx construction costs discussed by Hodgson, the board, and residents:
 - Revert to gravel: \$ 80,000
 - Overlay: \$120,000
 - Reconstruct \$500,000-600,000
 - Do nothing for a year and do an engineering study regarding drainage, ditching, and ground water.

- Comments by the board & audience:
 - Road was paved in 1980, so has lasted 30 years. Comment added that it was overlaid 20 years ago – but has been bad the last 10 years...so really, it only lasted apx 10 years.
 - When the golf course put in, the road had heavy traffic on it which may have caused some of the damage.
 - There was fear that if the bituminous cover was removed, water can get into nasty soils and make matters worse.
 - Q: Could the old tar be left, and class 5 gravel added, packed, and more bituminous added? A: The problem with sandwiching gravel between bituminous layers is that the gravel layer will absorb water and you don't want water right under the bituminous layer.
 - Drainage corrections cost money – and infringes on people's property. The township would need drainage easements to get the water out.
 - Timbers have been dug up from the west end of Underwood Road, as it used to be a corduroy road. Timbers remaining underneath the road are now decaying.
 - Talked about creating a pond, to drain water into – 6 of 8 feet deep. Would need to buy an easement for something like this.
 - Current road is bad, and something needs to be done; one resident commented he was tired of having to replace the suspensions on his car.
 - The crack fill placed 2 years ago didn't last; it was just a band-aid.
 - Q: Could the road be sub cut, filled with gravel and then wait a couple years to overlay? A: Not recommended as the cost would be \$350-400K just for the sub cut and gravel fill.
 - Q: Due to the cost, could the road be repaired in 4 parts? A: If done that way, the township gets nailed with high mobilization fees
 - If an overlay was done at same time as east end, the township would likely get a better deal on the quantity of bituminous ordered, and save on mobilization.
 - Q: How thick will the overlay be? A: 1 ½ - 2" overlay Q: Would a thicker overlay last longer? A: Frost heaves will affect all thickness of bituminous – and cracks will occur in the same spots.
 - If overlaid, the cracks will come back in a year or two...but it may still be better than the current road, for 10-12 years.
 - Q: Current culverts – Are they still effective? Could new ones be put in? Would they help? A: Not sure per Glen. Water does run through the existing 12' -15" culverts at times.
 - An overlay for \$120,000 every 10 years would still be more cost effective than doing a total reconstruction for 500-600K.
 - There are wetland issues to think about too. However, was the road put across a wetland, or did was the wetland caused by the road? This makes a difference.
- In summary:
 - **The people in attendance from Underwood were unanimous in that they did not want to revert the road back to gravel. They would prefer a lift and resurface.**

- In response, Hodgson recommended a tight blade & overlay, as the next best option to reverting back to gravel. And, he would recommend doing both ends of Underwood at the same time to get a better deal on bituminous cost and mobilization; thus, if the east end of Underwood is done, it makes sense to overlay the west end at the same time.
- He further commented that SEH could do a drainage study over the summer and if there's a drainage solution – it could be done after the overlay, in the fall.

At 7:45 p.m., the work session regarding Underwood Road was recessed for casual discussions between residents, the board, and Hodgson.

At 8:00 p.m., Chairman Rosato called the work session back to order regarding the next two roads, reiterated the purpose of meeting, and turned it back over Hodgson

3. 8:00pm – 9:00pm

- **Harbor Heights Road** – There were apx 8 people in attendance from this road
 - Hodgson commented that he would recommend a tight blade and 1 ½“ to 2” bituminous overlay on Harbor Heights Road, apx 1/3 mile long, as the pavement is still salvageable with an overlay. In another two years, it probably would not be salvagable. There are drainage problems on this road due to minimal ditches. However, vast draining improvements would be beyond the scope of the project he was proposing.
 - Overall, residents agreed that there are drainage issues on this road, starting it at the top near Highway 169. These drainage issues include water flowing over the road. **All residents in attendance commented that they would like to see drainage corrected some how.**
 - Other comments/suggestions were as follows:
 - In the natural low spot, water flows over the road. Could a catch basin be installed, to a pipe under the road, and fed to the natural drop to lake? If so, this could prevent water from running over the road.
 - There are culverts under the road now, but they have filled in. They are located in Walter's yard and go straight across road. There is another culvert at the cul-de-sac. That one is buried as well – the outlet has been covered; it doesn't go all the way through the turnaround.
 - The cracks on this road were fixed a few years ago, to buy some time.
 - The road currently crowns both ways; it was suggested that the crown be sloped toward the swamp as if crowned property, they may not need culverts.
 - At Mishawaka landing, there are little v-channels for drainage; could something similar to this be done? It works better than a culvert.
 - Q: Is *reclaiming* the road an option, rather than just an overlay? Especially with the large 4 inch wide cracks, it seems like a better option, especially if reclaiming Lakeview (to save on mobilization costs). And would a reclaim have more life? A: Yes, it would - another 2-4 year at that point. The cost is higher: An overlay would be apx \$45,000 and a reclaim would be apx \$60,000 - without any pipe work; these are construction costs only figures.
 - A resident talked to Hawkinson, and they recommended a tight blade and overlay
 - The extra cost to reclaim is minimal compared to repairing again: Adding 15 years life for an added for \$15,000, plus there is less crack fill needed with reclaimed roads

also. Plus, if the reclaim machine is there for Lakeview anyway, would get a better deal.

- If the cost is the issue, could they wait a year and do it right?
- One resident submitted a letter, as he could not attend tonight's meeting. Albert Clark Jr – Harbor Heights Road - commented that he couldn't see spending money on road, as it's in good shape, except for the rumble strips going down to lake. However, that slowed people down, and taxes are high enough. (The audience commented that he is the first resident on the road.)
- Q: If gas lines will be going down that road this summer, and maybe Paul Bunyan, would it be better to wait until that stuff? A: No – those would go in next to the road, and so won't affect the road.
- Improving the turn around was discussed:
 - The ROW needs to be researched as it's not on township property. The board had an original verbal agreement with Gracie – and then with Ernie Jacobson – but nothing was in writing. The township has been maintaining this turn around for 25 years and it is needed for school busses to turn around. The Board would like to blacktop the area, but they are not sure what their options are. At a minimum, Class V will be added. **Overall the board and residents agreed that the turn around was needed.**
- Options recapped with construction only cost estimates:
 - Overlay: \$45,000
 - Reclaim: \$60,000
 - Do nothing for a year

The Harbor Heights discussion ended at 8:30pm ended.

- Lakeview Drive – There were apx 5 residents in attendance from this road
 - Hodgson commented that he would recommend reclaiming this road, as it's not good enough for an overlay. There are drainage problems all over.
 - Resident/board discussed and commented as follows:
 - John Maturi stated he didn't want to lose his trees; his house number is 32455. He is the second lowest spot on the road. Eddie Varin's place is the lowest. There is a low area between the two places, which runs to lake.
 - Where road curves left, a sheet of ice in winter forms on road and freezes at night, causing safety issue. However, it doesn't happen every spring.
 - Water flows down from Lakeview trail; if that could be that be diverted to 169, that would help.
 - A French drain may help prevent water across road.
 - Water on road and driveways is an issue.
 - A catch basin may help from snow melt runoff.
 - There is a lack of right of way along much of this road. It's not a 66 foot ROW, but rather a 'prescriptive easement' where the ROW is only extended a bit beyond edge of the bituminous for maintenance.

- Hill is very steep – and scary in winter; this is at the beginning of road, off 169. At one time, the board talked about cutting down the hill. However, that is costly. And, that stretch of bituminous is new – as it was laid when Hwy 169 was improved.
- Q: Would property owners assessed for improvement? A: No – there currently are no assessments done in Harris Township. All property owners in Harris share the cost of all road improvements, via their property taxes. Harris Township could – as an urban township – assess if needed, but have never exercised that power.
- Q: Will Lakeview Trail be improved? A: No- it's not a township road.
- **In Summary:**
 - The recommendation by Hodgson is to reclaim Lakeview Drive – do what we can to improve drainage, in a cost effective manner.
 - When a final *drainage plan* for Lakeview Drive is determined, Hodgson will get the residents and the board back together again, to review the proposed plan.

With no other comments by the audience or board, Hodgson recapped that for the next regular meeting of the board, he will analyze and provide estimates on what was discussed regarding Underwood Road resurface option, and an option to reclaim Harbor Heights. In addition, he will research drainage solutions for all roads as discussed. And he will add in engineering costs to all estimates so the board has a better feel of the total costs.

4. Adjourn

The Neighborhood Meeting work session adjourned at approximately 8:57pm, by a motion from Supervisor Kortekaas and a second by Supervisor Key.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Harris Township Clerk