

CITY OF MILACA

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Discuss the Milaca Junction Addition Development Process

March 5, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Dillan called the meeting of the Milaca City Council to order at 5:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Upon roll call, the following council members were present: Mayor Dave Dillan, Councilors: Ken Muller, Lindsee Larsen, Norris Johnson and Tim Poorker.

Staff present: City Manager Tammy Pfaff, Police Chief Quinn Rasmussen, Public Works Supervisor Gary Kirkeby, Assistant City Clerk Deloris Katke, Communications Specialist Mary Mickelson and Milaca Liquor Store Manager Vicki Jeys

Others present: Matt Heggernes (ECE), Joe Cronin (EDC), Sam Johnson (Parcel Real Estate), Phil Gravel (Stantec), Heidi Peper (Stantec), Steve & Sue Hage, Lainey Hoskins (MLC), Chloe Smith (Union Times). Tom Fisher and Molly Zens via Zoom

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Finish/Finalize Survey and Layout:

The City of Milaca convened to address various community development initiatives, including the finalization of a survey aimed at gathering input from residents. Mayor Dave Dillon emphasized the importance of inclusivity in the survey process, encouraging council members Ken, Norris, Lindsay, and Tim to contribute their ideas. The goal was to ensure that diverse perspectives were considered to enhance the survey's effectiveness and overall community engagement.

City Manager Pfaff explained the proposed layout. She stated that at the liquor store there is an EV Charging station behind the liquor store and we could make a dog park on the back side of the liquor store. She stated we would have to move the street light and sign on the east side of the liquor store and would have to move the crosswalk. Sam Johnson questioned if the main entrance could be moved to the west side of the liquor store and make the main entrance on the west side. Liquor Store Manager Jeys explained that there were 30 coolers all along the west side and there was a lot of storage so it would be hard to do without having to re-do the whole layout of the liquor store. Jeys then asked if the people parking on the east side were going to have to backup onto the proposed road and Phil Gravel from Stantec stated they would the way it was now.

The council also explored the potential for splitting a lot to create additional space for community projects while considering existing wetland and easement restrictions. Sam Johnson stated the importance of early lot splitting in the development process as it could facilitate transactions and allow for more flexible land use. Minimum lot width was discussed and would need to be looked at. Steve Hage stated that a 125" wide lot is pretty narrow when setbacks are added in and suggested moving the road down and making the lots more squared than long.

Further discussions focused on the recent acquisition of land by Circle K and the potential for purchasing additional parcels to improve traffic flow in the area. Sam Johnson expressed a willingness to engage in discussions with Circle K regarding property sales and development plans, emphasizing the need to understand land ownership and layout. Steve Hage touched on the importance of curving roads to slow down traffic and enhance the overall appeal of the development. The discussion emphasized the need for curvier roads to slow traffic and improve safety, particularly around parking areas and crosswalks. There was also a query about who determines the speed limit in these areas.

Sam Johnson stated we just need to start with a preliminary plan -see who is interested. Steve Hage stated that from a meeting he attended down in Princeton, there is a lot of interest for like half an acre and building a 3600 square foot building on lots like that. They discussed the need for basic architectural controls to maintain aesthetic consistency and prevent undesirable uses, such as too many of the same businesses. The conversation also touched on the potential for conditional use permits to give the council control over business types. Mayor Dillan stated he is hoping to have wholesale/retail balance out there. Phil Gravel then asked if there should be a ratio of land to buildings on the lot. Joe Cronin asked if the lots could accommodate mini-malls? Sam Johnson stated that this area was probably not the best area for that but he could see more by the dentist office. Steve Hage stated there could be a building with multiple businesses in one like an insurance company and then maybe a trade business in the other part of the building. Marketing strategies were also discussed. Possibly a billboard if city ordinance allows.

b. Discuss Infrastructure Costs:

c. Discuss best Funding Options and Submittal of FY2026 Pete Stauber Grant: Discussion ensued in regard to grants that may be available. Federal funded grants are now on hold/paused. Heidi Peper spoke on some programs that were available. Mille Lacs Water and Soil Conservation District also would like to be involved as far as funding for potential funding for rainwater gardens and water runoff projects. Heidi stated there were local, state and federal programs available. There are grants available for infrastructure as well. Steve Hage questioned if you would have to select one program? Heidi stated they could be matched with federal grants. You just couldn't match federal grants with federal grants. So we could use 50% state funds to match federal grants. City Manager Pfaff stated we did submit to the Pete Stauber grant for this project. This would be 100% grant. Mayor Dillan stated we would be entertaining all avenues that are available. City Manager Pfaff asked if Heidi did grant writing to which she stated she does.

d. Grants Received for Development: Mayor Dillan stated the city has received the following: Empowering Cities \$5,000 and Initiative Economic Development Workforce Grant \$10,000. These are pretty much helping with engineering costs.

e. When to Sell the Lots/Price of Each Lot, etc. per Realtor Examples: Mayor Dillan stated in the packet Sam had included a lot of information in regard to prices. Sam stated that we just need to be flexible on pricing. There was some discussion in regard to setting a price per square foot type of pricing. City Manager Pfaff stated right now the total cost of this project is \$691,300 and if funding is not available, we could fall back on the water and sewer funds to get the water and sewer in there at least. Discussion ensued about possibly phasing the project.

It was discussed to have a workshop before the next council meeting to discuss this topic and start the meeting at the development site. Date to meet out at site first and then have council meeting back at city hall was set for May 15, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Mayor Dillan called for a motion to approve a work session at 5:00 p.m. on May 15, 2025. Motion made by Larsen, seconded by Muller. No further discussion. All in favor of work session at 5:00 p.m. on May 15, 2025. Motion passes.

f. Approve Realtor Exclusive Listing Agreement/Extend Term: Mayor Dillan called for a motion to Approve Realtor Exclusive Listing Agreement/Extend Term. Motion made by Muller, seconded by Johnson.

City Manager Pfaff stated they first needed to discuss the term of the agreement. Herself and Sam discussed to have the term go out to the end of 2026. Mayor Dillan called for a motion to extend the term to 12-31-2026. Motion made by Muller, seconded by Poorker.

Now with no further discussion on approving the Realtor Exclusive Listing Agreement, motion passes.

Steve Hage commented that this was the most functional and healthy group of people to deal with that he has seen. This is what makes our country great – having neighbors and communities come together.

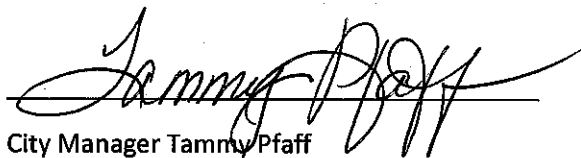
Mayor Dillan called for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Johnson, seconded by Larsen. No further discussion. All in favor, motion to adjourn passes.

Meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.



Mayor Dave Dillan

ATTEST:



City Manager Tammy Pfaff