

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT: AMES PUBLIC LIBRARY RENOVATION AND EXPANSION
CONSTRUCTION STAGING**

BACKGROUND:

The downtown area that includes public parking Lot S has gone through significant change over the past couple of years. This lot is between 5th Street and 6th Street and between Kellogg Avenue and Douglas Avenue. As you may recall, the City used to have two public parking lots in that area (Lot R and Lot S). As part of the Development Agreement with First United Methodist Church (recorded May 31, 2011), the church purchased the real estate that contained Lot R in an amount of \$70,345.80. In addition, the church had sole financial responsibility for expanding Lot S with public parking spaces on the north side of the lot in order to lessen the impact to the City for the loss of public parking spaces in Lot R. This construction was completed late in the 2012 calendar year.

In January 2013, the Ames Public Library Renovation and Expansion project began occupying space in public parking Lot S located at the corner of Kellogg Avenue and 5th Street to accommodate staging of construction materials and equipment. This lot is anticipated to be closed for approximately 18 months to facilitate the construction of this project, which is dependent upon construction progress of the Library expansion.

Due to the construction activities such as façade work, additional areas will needed to be closed periodically in order to provide a safe work zone. These areas will likely include the parking spaces and sidewalk on the north side of 5th Street directly adjacent to the Library. Another area may be the public parking spaces on the west side of Douglas Avenue directly adjacent to the Library. The sidewalk on the west side of Douglas Avenue has remained closed following the roadway reconstruction in order to not immediately tear out replaced sidewalk with the Library project.

Another part of the Library project will include reconstruction of the alley between the Library and First United Methodist Church. During that closure, the church will be accommodated with six parking spaces in public parking Lot Q which is situated north of the Library. Parking Lot Q currently has 58 metered spaces, 22 reservable spaces, and 4 handicap spaces. Seventeen of the 22 reservable spaces are currently occupied. An additional 14 spaces will be used in Lot Q by residents of 608 Douglas Avenue during the estimated 6 week reconstruction of Douglas Avenue between 6th and 7th Streets.

While determining if an alternate location for staging could be utilized, per a request by First United Methodist Church that has now been withdrawn (see attached email), staff contacted properties owners in between 5th and 6th Streets on Douglas to determine if

there were potential issues with a closure as it related to their properties. Two out of the three property owners indicated that it would have a significant impact on their operations and were not in favor of any type of road closure for the project. Additionally, staff contacted CyRide as it also uses Douglas Avenue for its Red Route between City Hall and North Grand Mall. At this time, CyRide is detouring this route until all of the Douglas Avenue reconstruction is completed in 2013 to avoid confusion to its ridership.

If Council determines that Lot S is the best location for staging, staff would suggest adding a screening material to the fence to help with the appearance of the operations. It would also be appropriate to offer the First United Methodist Church free temporary hooded meter parking spaces in Lot Q when the alleyway is closed due to utility work for the project.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can: (1) authorize the closing of Lot S to serve as a staging area for construction materials and equipment related to the Library expansion project; (2) direct the contractor provide screening material to the fenced area in the City of Ames, Lot S and (3) offer free temporary hooded parking spaces in Lot Q during alleyway closures.

Base on current projects, this lot could be closed to the public for up to 18 months and the alleyway intermittently for utility work.

2. The City Council can authorize the closing of Douglas Avenue between 5th and 6th Streets to serve as a staging area for construction materials and equipment related to the Library expansion project.

As noted, not all of the abutting business owners along this section of Douglas Avenue are in support of this closing.

3. The City Council can decide not to approve the closing of Lot S or Douglas Avenue for a staging area for construction materials and equipment related to the Library expansion project.

Under this option, the contractor on the Library expansion project would be allowed to charge to the Library project for the extra costs involved in locating another staging area and it could potentially slow the project completion.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Now that the First United Methodist Church is about to complete its beautiful renovation and expansion project, they have concerned about the unsightliness of this staging area as well as the inability to utilize the public parking in Lot S for their mobility impaired parishioners. Some City Council members have received complaints about this situation. Therefore, City staff has explored options that will

satisfy the needs related to the Library expansion project, the abutting business owners, and the First United Methodist Church. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts we could not identify the “perfect” solution that will satisfy all parties.

Based on the length of time for the Library construction project and the need for a staging area in close proximity to the site, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1.

From: "Fred Lewis" <fred@fumcames.org>
To: "Melissa Mundt" <mmundt@city.ames.ia.us>, "Diane R Voss" <DVoss@city.ames.ia.us>
Cc: "Dale VanderSchaaf" <dvschaaf@gmail.com>, "Rod and Sandee Bodholdt" <bodholdt@isunet.net>
Date: 02/08/2013 09:43 AM
Subject: Regarding the city parking lot at 5th and Kellogg Avenue

To: Melissa Mundt, Assistant City Manager

From: Rev. Fred Lewis, Senior Minister/Lead Pastor of Ames First United Methodist Church
February 8, 2013

I trust you will pass this note on to others in the City Manager's office, the Public Works department, the Interim Library Director and Library Board, Mayor Campbell, and to our elected City Council. The Ames First United Methodist Church Council (Board) confirmed by consensus last evening (February 7) my proposal that we now simply concede, with some concessions, to the City regarding our concerns, and the concerns of our parishioners, regarding the city parking lot at the corner of 5th and Douglas Avenue. This action on our part allows us to take "the higher road" and be as "good neighbors" to the businesses and organizations on Douglas Street. Plus, we want to maintain our good working relationship with the City of Ames. On behalf of the congregation, I will again share that we wished there would have been a chance for a small group meeting of the persons who have the most at stake in this decision weeks ago where together some options could have been developed. Earlier conversations would have most certainly helped in this situation. I hope the leadership of the City of Ames will take note of the way this was all managed.

The concessions that we hope to receive are quite minimal:

- First of all, we ask that the alley between our church property and the library stays open so persons are able to use it to access our new south entrance and parking area during the time of library construction, especially on the weekends and on days in the week when we may have a funeral.
- Secondly, we do understand that there most likely will be days during the week, due to utility work, when that alley is not going to be accessible to the church so we ask that (1) we be given two days notice whenever the alley might be closed, and (2) on the days the alley is closed that the city will give to the church 6 free parking spots on Kellogg Avenue or in the north city parking lot at the corner of 6th and Douglas.

- Thirdly, we do hope that as the construction proceeds and space becomes available in that city parking lot that there may be a way to regain some parking in it so that we will not have to wait for the full completion of the project.
- Fourthly, we want to revisit to clarify or change an agreement we had with Art Weeks regarding a parking space available to the library on the alley side of our church property, especially ensuring that the church has use of it on weekends and evenings.
- Lastly, we do hope that some kind of landscaping netting might be placed up and around that parking lot during the time of construction to somehow beautify the area, as stated in conversations with Melissa Mundt

Please let me know, by either email or a phone call, if I, and other church leaders, need to be present for the February 12th City Council meeting or any future City Council meetings where topics regarding this matter might be on the agenda.

Thank you, Melissa, for your assistance now with this communication and thank you for the fine way you have been of assistance to all involved in this issue in helping to clarify and guide.