

From: Michael May

Sent: Friday, October 05, 2012 10:29 AM

To: jay.obenberger@dot.wi.gov

Cc: emlynn.grisar@dot.wi.gov; lauragoranson@gxmoxie.com; griffdixon@att.net; Dan Devine; Gary T. Barczak; Michael Lewis; Peter Daniels

Subject: Greenfield Avenue Project - Communications Concerns

Good Morning, Jay,

I hope you are well as we head into what looks like a gorgeous fall weekend! I am writing today regarding strong concerns I have regarding communications surrounding the Greenfield Avenue projects here in West Allis. I am copying my co-alderman for this District (also chair of the Common Council's Public Works Committee), Mayor Dan Devine, our Public Works Director/City Engineer Mike Lewis, and Pete Daniels who serves as our liaison with WisDOT for a number of projects.

On Wednesday I attended the most recent Greenfield Avenue project team meeting to ask specific questions related to the construction project from 106th to 124th. I made it a point to emphasize that the businesses and residents of the area will judge the success of the Greenfield Avenue project in small part on the final product (because they demand and expect a well done product) and in large part on the communications/how they are treated during the project. This communication includes frequent project updates with businesses, as well as keeping us at the City in the loop.

- Our engineers have consistently asked to be copied on correspondence that is shared with local businesses. Again, at the meeting on Wednesday, it was mentioned that a letter was shared with local businesses regarding project updates. We were not copied on that correspondence until after the fact and not until we asked again to be copied.
- When I go to the project website (<http://www.dot.wi.gov/projects/seregion/wis59greenfieldave/index.htm>), none of that correspondence is being posted for the general public.
- Businesses were not informed that they could install temporary signing without permits during the duration of construction. I understand that this information was shared with the Greenfield Ave project team back in August and that information only first went out this week.
- Businesses are complaining of lack of business and lack of communication on progress. I know the project team can't magically create loads of business, but communication is workable. I make it a point to intentionally visit the local liquor store owner, flower shop, barber shop, restaurants, gas stations, etc. When I ask about communication or I share with them information they state "we didn't know that." They do admit that communication has become better in the last week - kudos to the team on that.
- Two businesses at the corner of Greenfield & Hwy 100 are going to have their pole signs taken down this week/next week. At the meeting Wednesday we asked if these businesses were informed that the signs would be taken down, and asked if the businesses knew they would have to go through an entire City permitting process for new signs. The answer was basically (paraphrasing) "no, we contacted building owners,

but not the shop operators. That's not our responsibility. I guess we'll have to do that." Again, this is being stated within one week of having to take signs down. It takes time for these businesses to hire people to design new signs, go through the process of permits with the City, etc.

- When asked where the "Businesses Open During Construction" signs were located and why we can never spot them, we were told they are up to two miles away where detour signing begins!

These things are all troubling. The way I see it, however, is that this is in the past. I believe that the project team has good intentions and would like to help us out. With that in mind, I respectfully request we hit the reset button by taking the following corrective measures:

- Please continue correspondence with local businesses when major project milestones are met and when they are going to experience new impacts.
- Please copy our city engineers with any/all correspondence being shared with businesses at the same time or before it is shared with businesses (email, letters, etc.). That allows us to make sure our message is consistent with yours and helps us answer calls when we get complaints and visit our local businesses. This is mutually beneficial. Email works great (low cost/time effort).
- Please update the project website by posting this correspondence so we can easily point callers to information (low cost/time effort).
- Please post "Businesses Open During Construction" signs at the intersection of Hwy 100 & Greenfield (contractor Q3 mentioned they'll work on this ASAP - thanks!).

Thank you, Jay! Please feel free to call or email at any time. I welcome suggestions on how we can help you attain this goal of strong communication.

~Mike

Michael P. May

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