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(Neb.)-Ash Street Expansion Ordinance Approved, Heading To Public Hearing 🔊 **Listen**

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/20/2014 09:51 AM

Photo: Public works director Milo Rust explains a component of the Ash Street expansion at the Chadron city council meeting on Monday evening as Big Bat's Shell co-owner Tye Pourier looks on. (Photo by Eser Graham-Marski-KCSR News)

(CHADRON)-The city of Chadron is one step closer to seeing the extension of Ash Street move forward toward landowners to the north. The ordinance was in its third and final reading at the Chadron city council meeting Monday night, which was to establish a paving district for the paving of Ash Street north from Hwy. 20 approximately 710 feet. The council voted unanimously to pass the ordinance after a considerable amount of discussion and new developments brought forward by Bat and Patty Pourier, Big Bat's Shell co-owner Tye Pourier, and the family's attorney. Mayor Karin Fischer says the new information may require another look at some of the dynamics of the project.
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Bat and Patty Pourier informed the council that they are in the process of purchasing the land to the north of Big Bat's current property and were interested in seeing the ordinance changed to reflect a longer paving district that could be utilized further north than the original length of 710 feet. The Pourier's attorney, Joe Kishiyama, also questioned why the street would be designed to stop before it reached all the landowners' property to the north.

City building/zoning official Janet Johnson and city manager Wayne Anderson explained that the ordinance had originally been established at 710 feet because that was how much of an extension was requested by the original landowners who had expressed interest in seeing the street extend beyond Highway 20 to businesses and soon-to-be developed land to the north.

Tye Pourier stated that he feels the Ash Street extension can be beneficial to everyone, including Big Bat's, if it is implemented in the right fashion for all involved. He expressed some concern as to the current drawings

depicting the extension, because he said it would make turns for the big rigs that access Big Bat's diesel tanks nearly impossible. He said this would likely cause the station to have to move the tanks and lines running to them to a different location, which will cost approximately $500,000.

Public works director Milo Rust said that the city has been working to ensure that all property owners have a say in the plans and that changes have been made in an effort to accommodate concerns. The Pouriers expressed that they felt more could have been done. Mayor Fischer says she thinks it's important for both sides to meet together with open minds to share ideas and find a way to work through the complexities of the project together.
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Fischer says the passing of the ordinance allows for the public hearing to commence, which will provide yet another opportunity for discussion regarding the project. Over 50 percent of landowners will have to again acknowledge that they are in favor of the project in order for it to become a reality. If over 50 percent do not want the extension, the ordinance will be repealed. When the ordinance was initially created, over 50 percent were in favor. Taco John's manager Ben Rust was at the meeting Monday night, and he expressed that his store is fully in favor of the street extension.

Fischer explained that if the majority of landowners are in favor of the street extension at the hearing, there will still be room for changes to the street's design if need be.
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The public hearing is scheduled for Monday, March 17th, which will occur during one of the city council's regularly scheduled meetings.

(Questions? Comments? E-mail news@chadrad.com.)