

Revised agreement paves way for Hwy. 33 work to start in spring

Written by Kristyn Halbig Ziehm
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It's official — the Highway 33 reconstruction project between Port Washington and Saukville should begin this spring.

The Port Washington Common Council on Tuesday signed a revised agreement with the state for the work.

"We're less than one month away from the bid opening for the long-awaited Highway 33 project," Public Works Director Rob Vanden Noven told aldermen.

The city's original contract with the state was signed in 2000, and a number of changes have occurred since then, he noted.

For example, the cost of obtaining real estate has increased tenfold. In 2000, it was estimated that the cost of obtaining real estate along the two-mile stretch would be \$110,000, with the city's share set at \$12,500
Vanden Noven said.

"That was optimistic even in 2000," he said.

Now, the entire cost of real estate acquisition is estimated at \$2.5 million, with the city's share expected to be \$172,000, Vanden Noven said.

The city's share of the entire project is \$1.8 million, which includes a \$142,000 credit that will be applied to the new streetlights, as well as a \$605,000 landscaping credit because the city will be planting the trees along
the street, he said.

A significant portion of that money should be escrowed for median maintenance, Vanden Noven said, noting the trees will require a fair amount of care in the first few years and the city should hire a contractor to do this work.

One major change in the contract is the fact that it no longer covers work done for the Village of Saukville, Vanden Noven said. Instead, the village will have a separate agreement with the state.

That agreement was approved by the Village Board Tuesday.

The original contract required the city to pay the full cost of the highway work and obtain reimbursement from Saukville, he said. Saukville officials asked the state to separate the contracts, Vanden Noven said.

Last week, the Board of Public Works approved special assessing adjoining property owners for curb, gutter and sidewalk work along Highway 33. Preliminary figures show the assessments will range from \$150 to

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more than \$100,000.

The largest assessment, however, is for city-owned property. Many of the highest assessments are for properties in the Town of Port Washington. These charges will be deferred until the land is annexed into the city.

A preliminary resolution on the assessments is expected to be considered by the Common Council in April or May, after bids for the work are opened and the actual costs are known.

A public hearing on the assessments will be held after that.