

Construction Update: Bridge

Reconstruction of the bridge on East Main Street finally started last week. The city started planning for the project following a routine inspection in December 2002; formal planning and scheduling of the project with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) began in 2005. WisDOT is the lead for the project. They bid out the project this spring and awarded it to Concrete Structures of Janesville.

The project started with removal of the bridge deck. Next they drove temporary steel sheet pilings to hold the embankments during construction on the east side of Allen Creek. They will then remove the existing foundation on the east side then drive new pilings. A similar sequence will then occur on the west side of the creek.

Then under a separate contract with the city, R.T. Fox Contractors out of Edgerton has a two week window to install a new watermain. The project will involve percussion driving of a steel casing under the bed of Allen Creek in between the new pilings. With the percussion driving method, the casing will remain full of soil until across the creek and then be cleaned out and the watermain pulled through.

After the watermain, Concrete Structures will pour the superstructure of the new bridge. They will form and pour new sidewalks, install the parapets, and prepare and pave the new roadway over the bridge structure. And miscellaneous work such as signage and turf restoration will round out the project. It is expected to be completed and opened to traffic around mid October.

In the meantime, downtown businesses are open. They are readily accessible, and the detour around the bridge construction is short and easy. A map of downtown area businesses as well as information on the bridge construction can be found on the city website www.ci.evansville.wi.gov.

Construction Update: Stormwater

A less visible project which was also a long-time coming, is the South Sixth Street Stormwater Improvements. The low bidder was R&K and Sons Construction of Evansville.

The project involved installing a perforated pipe with a cloth sock within a trench of clear stone. The pipe gives the existing stormwater pond a drain, directly connecting it to the ditch to the west. Although the pond was not eliminated, giving it an outlet will reduce the localized flooding problems that occurred in the area in the past. Overtop, the earth was shaped to have a slight swale to channel overflow during extreme rains or other times that the pond water might exceed the capacity of the pipe.

First R&K installed an overflow manhole at the retention pond, then they installed the outfall structure at the ditch, then they installed the pipe starting at the ditch and working towards the pond. This sequence would lessen any disturbance caused by construction activity directly over the newly installed pipe. The project was all but complete last week.

Construction Update: Electric Lines

Rebuilding the overhead 15 kV electric lines east of the city had been expected to occur a few years in the future, but tests this spring required doing the project now. Bids early this summer were very competitive, and the project was awarded to Intren out of Union, Illinois.

Intren was delayed in its start because of emergency repair work due to storms in the Stevens Point area. But they started here a couple weeks ago. They've been dressing the poles and have ten of them set. In all there are over 100 poles on this line, with about a third of them being replaced and two-thirds remaining. When they've finished with the poles, they will run new three-phase line and later a single-phase line. The gauge of the new lines and the neutrals will exceed state requirements.

The project runs along Highway 14 from County Road M past Riley Road. Materials have all been ordered and are on hand. Weather permitting, the project should be completed in about the next six to eight weeks.

Amazing Week

I could not help but notice the amazing schedule of activities this week. There are some really unique and special events over the next few days.

The Rock County Council on Aging is holding its Wednesday Walks program in Evansville on Wednesday with a tour of our historic district. The tour starts at 10:00 at the Eager-Economy Building, 7 East Main Street. A leisurely pace will be maintained with the guided tour lasting a bit over an hour. Both the architecture and historical significance of buildings on the tour route will be described. The tour will cover the heart of Evansville's historic district and will include commercial buildings, four churches, and a number of residences. Wednesday Walks is a new program of the Rock County Council on Aging, and is designed to encourage exercise, knowledge, and self-reliance for seniors while viewing Rock County's interesting sites.

Also on Wednesday, the Green Rock Audubon Society is celebrating 20 years devoted to bird conservation as a member of the National Audubon Society. Past and present members and the public are invited to come for cake and enjoy the evening entertainment. World-renowned wildlife and bird photographer Dr. Steve Servantez will share and discuss beautiful pictures of birds. This free event will be from 6:30 to 9:00 pm at Creekside Place, 102 Maple Street.

On Friday, Leonard-Leota Park and St. John's Lutheran Church will be considered by the Wisconsin Historic Preservation Review Board for nomination to the Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places. Leonard-Leota Park has been nominated both as a designed landscape and a fine example of projects funded by the federal government during the Depression era. St. John's Church is an outstanding example of the work of Monticello architect John Steinman.

On Sunday afternoon, the Grove Society is ending its summer season with an indoor picnic at Creekside Place. Although it is a social event, they also have business to discuss about the local history museum and docent program. The Grove Society is looking into how they might make adjustments, short- and long-term, to make the museum more valuable to the community and to make the docents' work more satisfying. The museum is located in the Baker Office Building at the Madison Street entrance to Leonard-Leota Park. The Madison Trust for Historic Preservation recently presented a 2011 Preservation Award to the Grove Society and the city for the building's restoration. The restoration work was conducted almost entirely by volunteers, including over 130 individuals and 50 businesses and organizations.

Then on Sunday evening, the Theodore Robinson Society holds its annual meeting at 7:00 pm at Creekside Place. The meeting will be highlighted with a talk by award-winning wildlife artist Jonathan Wilde. Jonathan's work is included in the permanent collection of the "Birds In Art" at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wausau. Jonathan grew up in Evansville, and one of his earliest works is the water color mural in the Theodore Robinson Intermediate School, when he was a high school student.

Magnolia Bluff Park

Magnolia Bluff Park is in the running for "America's Favorite Park," a contest sponsored by Coca-Cola. The grand prize is \$100,000 for park improvements. Please help the park win by voting for Magnolia Bluff Park. A simple vote is worth one point, or each uploaded park photo will get five points. You can vote as many times as you like.

We have a link on the front page of the city website www.ci.evansville.wi.gov. Once on the contest website, search for either Magnolia Bluff Park or Evansville, WI. Then click the red dot on the interactive map and follow voting instructions from there.

Please help spread the word, vote as many times as you can, and upload lots of photos to help Magnolia Bluff Park. The contest ends September 6.