

## Winter weather may cause one-way Grand Ave.

By Shaun Zinck [szinck@beloitdailynews.com](mailto:szinck@beloitdailynews.com) | Posted: Monday, November 12, 2012 4:00 pm

A portion of East Grand Avenue may be a one-way street this winter as the city tries to deal with snow removal and construction issues.

Shauna El-Amin, executive director for the Downtown Beloit Association, said during snow emergencies, crews will plow snow against the barriers that were set up near the former Wagner's building, which is being demolished.

The plan would make that part of Grand Avenue a one-way street until crews could remove the snow later in the day.

"You would be able to head west towards State Street, but you wouldn't be able to head east," she said.

El-Amin said it would be given a priority over the other main roads during a snow emergency.

About 15 business owners showed up to the meeting of the Downtown Beloit Association last week, and they were generally accepting of the plan with no major objections, El-Amin said.

"It would close the few parking stalls remaining on the south side, but keep them on the north side of the street," she said. "This creates the least amount of unavailable parking, and we think it's the best solution."

Normally, city snow plow crews push snow to the middle of downtown streets and traffic can pass on either side of the mound of snow. However, because of construction work at the Wagners building, there is not enough room to do this on East Grand Avenue.

Rod Gottfredsen, owner of Austin's Barber Shop, 316 State St., said city officials made him feel comfortable with the plan.

Gottfredsen said he asked about the parking situation on Broad Street once the building was occupied with residents. The city passed an ordinance in July that would allow downtown residents to purchase parking permits that would allow them to leave their car in stalls with no time limits.

"I asked about the plan if the cars are there for three to four weeks and get blocked in by snow," he said.

City officials said they didn't believe that it would become a problem, but would address it if issues arose.

The parking ordinance does allow the city to revisit the parking process if problems arose, which satisfied Gottfredsen, he said.

“As a whole the meeting went very smooth,” he said. “They made me feel very comfortable that they would address any problems if needed.”

El-Amin said they also talked about the timeline for the building, called the Phoenix Project. Hendricks Commercial Property bought the land and several surrounding buildings back in December 2011.

Demolition began on Oct. 29, and is expected to run through the end of the year. Construction will start in January, and businesses should be able to occupy the building by the fall of 2013.

The upper floors will be for residential living, and the current plan is to allow Beloit College students to occupy them. However, the college has not made a decision on whether they will permit students to live there.

Board of Trustee members for the college are expected to talk about the issue during their spring meeting. If students aren't living there then the upper floors will be turned into 24 luxury apartments.