

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING
March 14, 2019, 5:00 PM, Room 303**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Noah Schuchman, Chief Administrative Officer; Wayne Parson, Chief Financial Officer; Keith Hamre, Director of Planning & Construction Services; Jim Benning, Director of Public Works & Utilities; Cindy Voigt, City Engineer.

ALSO PRESENT: Leah Blevins, City Treasurer's Office; Howard Smith, Engineering.

PERSONS PRESENT FOR AGENDA ITEMS: Kyle Poldoski, Barbara Vogler, Jim Gould, Amanda Bauer, Jack & Bonnie Nelson, Brian Johnson, Kyle Johnson, Fredric J. Love, Stephen P. Urie, Jeremy Carlson, Linda Harper, Bob Walker.

Noah Schuchman called the hearing to order at 5:00.

TABLED ITEMS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 2019 Street Preservation Project (Decker Road from Piedmont Avenue to 225 Feet North of Mall Drive)

Howard Smith gave an overview of the project. He said it would involve pavement reconditioning and utility work, and would involve 1.49 miles of roadway. The project will take place over two years, beginning this summer and finishing up in 2020. Construction will start at the north end near the mall. Utilities will be installed to Anderson Road. Pavement will be removed or reclaimed. 3900 feet of curb and gutter, ADA pedestrian ramps, and bike lanes will be installed. Currently the driving lanes on Decker Road are 16 feet wide. The inclusion of the bike lanes would reduce the width of the driving lanes to 11 feet.

The existing water main, which has experienced three breaks in just the past year, will be replaced with larger-diameter plastic pipe. Hydrants will be replaced, with new ones being installed in the same locations as the old ones. The gas main will be replaced, as will the stormwater line, with new drainage structures added. Sanitary sewer will be extended, but not assessed to benefitting properties, and as part of that work the city will replace a portion of the WLSSD sewer line.

Keith Hamre inquired if the special assessments for the road construction are based on lot front footage. Howard said they are, at an estimated \$25 per front foot. Cindy Voigt asked if there

would be a connection fee for anyone wanting to connect to the new sanitary sewer, and Howard said there would be.

Noah Schuchman then invited attendees to make their questions and concerns known.

Barbara Vogler of 2541 Providence Drive said that her house is not even on Decker Road and wanted to know why her property is being assessed. Leah Blevins replied that Ms. Vogler's property is a corner lot that abuts Decker Road, and Jim Benning said that this is consistent with what the city has done for many years.

Jack Nelson of 3626 Decker Road said that three years ago at a public meeting the residents were informed that there was grant money so the project would not be assessed. Cindy Voigt said that was a Metropolitan Interstate Council meeting at which no city staff were present, and that the MIC did not have the authority to tell them there would be no assessments.

Fredric Love of 3325 Decker Road inquired if every resident, church, etc. along the road would be assessed. Leah replied that they would. He then brought up the issue of speeding traffic when the new pavement is in place. Jim Benning said that the city's normal procedure is to build the road, then scope out the traffic, and if warranted, the police department will be informed.

Kyle Johnson of 3002 Piedmont Avenue agreed that speeding is an issue. He also wanted to know if businesses along the route would be assessed at a higher rate. He said that most of the traffic on Decker Road is heading to the mall area. Jim Benning explained that to normalize, the assessment amounts are calculated as though the street was a 28-foot wide street, and that residents are not paying more because it is a wider, busier street. He said that the city typically has not assessed commercial properties at a higher rate, and that calculating assessments at the full width would be considerably higher than \$25 per front foot. Cindy Voigt added that the city is picking up 75% of construction costs and 100% of the costs of any utility work.

Jim Gould, a friend of Ms. Vogler's, asked if there would be any exemptions from the special assessment, and Leah Blevins replied that everyone with abutting property would be assessed.

Jack Nelson asked if the addition of bike lanes affected the project cost. Jim said they did not. Howard Smith added that the driving lanes on Decker Road are abnormally wide, and the addition of a five-foot bike lane on either side will reduce the driving lanes to eleven feet, and that narrower driving lanes are likely to slow traffic down.

Ms. Vogler asked what the interest rate on the assessment would be. Leah replied that the rate would be 3.35%.

Jim Benning moved to suspend the hearing for discussion, and Keith Hamre seconded. Cindy Voigt then inquired why a hearing notice was not sent to the Miller Hill Mall, and Leah explained that the county had split that parcel after Essentia Health purchased the old Younkers store, and that she had only learned of it earlier that day. Jim recommended that the hearing remain in suspension, that a second hearing be scheduled to include the mall and Essentia, and then the board could vote to recommend the project or not. Noah Schuchman said that if the

project was recommended, an ordering-in resolution could go to the city council on April 8. Jim added that it is the council that ultimately decides to go forward with the project. Howard Smith said that the earliest possible date for a continuation of the hearing was March 26th. Cindy Voigt moved to readjourn the hearing on March 26th at 5:00 PM, room to be determined. Keith Hamre seconded and the motion passed.

The hearing was recessed at 5:35 PM.

INFORMATION ONLY:

None.

Next regular meeting: Tuesday, April 9, 2019 in Room 106A at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Noah Schuchman
Chair, Special Assessment Board

Jeanne Horn
SAB Secretary