

Menshek, Peggy Y

From: Benson, Scott A
Sent: Saturday, April 15, 2006 5:13 PM
To: Colvin Roy, Sandra K; Lilligren, Robert W; Johnson, Barbara A; Hodges, Betsy A; Glidden, Elizabeth A.; Menshek, Peggy Y
Subject: FW: Stevens Ave. Aessment

-----Original Message-----

From: THJ [mailto:thj@cmwigggle.com]
Sent: Fri 4/14/2006 6:21 PM
To: Benson, Scott A
Cc:
Subject: Stevens Ave. Aessment

Dear MPLS. City Council Member,

I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the assessment for road improvements that affect my property at 5506 Stevens Ave. South in Minneapolis MN.

LOT # 004 BLK 002 BROOM PARK

Currently my property has been assessed \$2,150.40 for I-35W Frontage Road reconstruction, Special improvement of existing street # 9761.

I oppose this assessment as it is unfair to the property owners on Stevens Ave. Normally in a street improvement assessment the City of Minneapolis pays for 2/3 and assesses 1/3 to the property owners. In this case MNDOT is paying 2/3 and the City of Minneapolis is trying to dump the remainder on the property owners. How is it fair or equitable that the City of Mpls. bear no financial obligation in this street improvement case?

In the case of my property at 5506 Stevens Ave. So. we live adjacent to a public bus stop as well as the street being a designated as a Snow Emergency Route. Between the cars parked in front of our property for "Park and Ride" use and the designation of a Snow Emergency Route, not to mention parking for the Russian Museum of Art, we realize no personal use of the street in front of our property.

Furthermore, the section of street in front of our property on Stevens Ave. could be argued to be more of a "freeway on-ramp" than a useable public street.

The street is one way and there is no barrier between the traffic that utilizes the "street" and the traffic that utilizes the "freeway ramp".

So if the City doesn't want to pay for improvements for the "street", why not get MNDOT to cover 100% of the expense of this portion of the roadway since they are unwilling to locate their freeway ramp so that it is separated from the residential housing by means of a divider or sound wall? If our property was protected by a divider or sound wall that would separate it from the "freeway ramp", then perhaps our "street" might feel a little more like a residential street and the proposed property assessments might seem a little fairer, (except for the part in which the City of Minneapolis doesn't want to contribute financially).

Before you vote one way or the other, I implore you as a City Council member, to consider how you would vote if you were the owner of my property. Would you consider the City dumping the full responsibility of street improvement on the property owner as fair practice? The City is not following normal protocol which is for the City to pay 2/3rds of the costs of improvements. Secondly, should the City pay a higher burden of improvements when a public street is designated as a

Snow Emergency Route or other special right of way that directly affects how much perceived or actual use a property owner might be able to attain in the way of parking and other use? If you had to live on a Snow Emergency Route/ undesignated Park and Ride/ Bus Stop overflow you might see our point. I would also encourage you to look into the assessments themselves because from speaking to my neighbors the assessments seem arbitrary as to the amount assessed to each property. Properties nearer the North corner of each block seemed to have been assessed at a lower rate than those lots closer to the middle of each block. Can you explain this? I don't understand it.

In conclusion, as a property owner in the City of Minneapolis I already pay taxes, so in my opinion this assessment is double taxation. The audacity of the City to try and skate out on its implied and actual obligations to provide services that as taxpayers we already pay for, is unacceptable. If the property owners on Stevens Ave. must pay an assessment to aid in the construction of a State funded Highway project, at least the City could follow already established protocols, i.e. (A) the property owner should not be responsible for more than 1/3 of what the City of Minneapolis intends to contribute. (B) If MNDOT is paying 2/3 of the costs then the City of Minneapolis should be paying the remaining 1/3, out of which they should not be able to assess more than 1/3 of this amount to the property owners of the City Street. (Stevens Ave. S.) Further consideration should be taken when a City Street is designated as a Special Right of Way, and or a Snow Emergency Route. The City should realize and compensate in such instances that the property owner adjacent to such "Special Right of Ways" do not realize the normal benefits of having a public street in front of their properties, for instance, parking. Therefore in "fairness" the City should bear *more* of the financial responsibilities in maintaining the condition of these "Special Right of Ways".

Thank you for your careful consideration when voting on this assessment amendment.

Thayne H. Johnson
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