



May 14, 2010

To Whom It May concern,

Blaisdell and 1st Avenues are important to the Kingfield neighborhood for two very different reasons: they are routes for auto traffic to move to and from the neighborhood and, more importantly, they are home to many Kingfield families. The current design of the avenues favors automobiles, resulting in traffic speeds that are too high, poor conditions for bicyclists, and an unsatisfactory pedestrian environment. A better balance needs to be struck between the many users of these streets.

KFNA believes that the proposed addition of bike lanes on Blaisdell and 1st is a good first step to make these routes more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. Bike lanes will reduce the existing lane widths in many places, the existing width of which is a contributor to the problem of excessive vehicle speeds. Bike lanes will increase drivers' awareness of other roadway users, which hopefully will cause the average driver to have more awareness of the residential surroundings and adjust his or her driving accordingly. For those reasons, and to encourage bicycling in the community, KFNA supports the layout of Blaisdell and 1st Avenues as presented by NTP Coordinator Shaun Murphy at Lyndale Neighborhood Association offices on March 17th.

A significant concern that is not addressed by the proposed layout of Blaisdell and 1st Avenues, however, is the pedestrian crossing of Blaisdell, specifically at 34th Street. This crossing is along an important pedestrian route with major trip generators at the Lyndale School and the Blaisdell YMCA. However, the route is interrupted by the heavy car traffic driving too fast along Blaisdell Avenue. Drivers at this intersection routinely violate Minnesota statute 169.21 subd. 2, which requires that drivers yield to pedestrians at unmarked intersections (but has been rarely enforced). KFNA is disappointed that a program that was supposed to fund bike and pedestrian improvements in this case neglected a major pedestrian problem point. KFNA strongly recommends that the City of Minneapolis study this intersection for the addition of facilities that would better protect pedestrians, including zebra striping, pedestrian activated warning flashers, bump-outs, or a traffic signal.

In addition, we ask that the City of Minneapolis pursue the reduction of posted speed limits on Blaisdell and 1st Avenues from the current 30mph to 25mph. KFNA understands that state law allows this reduction on streets with bicycle lanes, and believes that this reduction in speed limit will improve safety and livability.

In summary, KFNA supports the proposed layouts of Blaisdell and 1st Avenues as presented by NTP Coordinator Shaun Murphy at Lyndale Neighborhood Association offices on March 17th as a first step towards more livable streets in Kingfield. Specifically KFNA is supportive of the addition of bike lanes, a crucial element for completing Blaisdell and 1st Avenues as streets that accommodate all roadway users. KFNA requests that the City of Minneapolis look for opportunities for further traffic calming and pedestrian facilities along Blaisdell and 1st Avenues, most urgently at the intersection of Blaisdell and 34th Street, and consider lowering the speed limit to 25mph.

Submitted on Behalf of the KFNA Board of Directors,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Linnes-Robinson".

Sarah Linnes-Robinson,  
KFNA Executive Director