

Copy: Janet Dailey

8901 Blackhawk Rd
Middleton, WI 53562

May 14, 2009

Larry D. Nelson, P.E.
City Engineer

City County Building, Room 115
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Sir:

This letter is being written in response to the Notice of Public Hearing before the BPW with regards to a proposed Special Assessment for street improvements on Blackhawk Road. This notice was sent to affected property owners along Blackhawk Road.

The primary purpose of the proposed improvement seems to be to add designated bike lanes on both sides of Blackhawk Road. The city is projecting that as a property owner at 8901 Blackhawk Road, I will be liable for 100% of the cost of a new curb and gutter to abut the bike lanes as well as four feet of the roadway itself in addition to 50% of the cost of replacing existing drive aprons for the same reason which is estimated at \$9035.45

I'd like to point out a few reasons why adding bike lanes to Blackhawk Road at this point in time is neither expedient nor necessary.

- 1) No cyclists pass through Blackhawk Road without using it as an access route to one of the other major trails – primarily County J/Military Ridge Trail to the south as shown by the Madison Area Transportation Planning Board map of bike trails. Old Sauk Road which runs parallel to the entire length of Blackhawk Road less that half a mile south of it has dedicated bike lanes on both sides and serve this purpose just as well if not better. Dedicated lanes on Blackhawk so close to a major roadway that runs parallel to it with pre-existing lanes that serve the same users is inherently wasteful.
- 2) The east half of Blackhawk Road – which is the target of the proposed improvements is primarily accessed by Pleasant View Road (from Old Sauk Road) which has no designated bike lane – this will lead to a floating section of roadway with a bike lane. Again this doesn't seem to have any viable purpose.
- 3) The residents of Blackhawk Subdivision itself – who incidentally aren't all in the proposed SAD which is based solely on frontage with Blackhawk Road – have easy access via inner roadways to Old Sauk Road which as mentioned above has dedicated bike lanes.
- 4) Blackhawk road is not a major thoroughfare, is lightly used by motor vehicles and is therefore reasonably able to handle motor and bicycle traffic without dedicated bike lanes

In addition to the above, I'd like to note that per Wis. Stats. § 66.0703(1)(b), the amount assessed against any property for any work or improvement which does not represent an exercise of the police power may not exceed the value of the special benefits accruing to the property. The published preliminary resolution does not assert an exercise of police power.

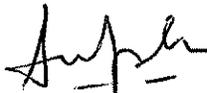
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I'd like to request an explanation of how addition of these bike lanes to a road with no continuous biking lane access to any other road is proposed to add more value to my property – to the tune of over \$9000 - than it has lost in the past general assessment cycle due to the housing crisis alone.

"Special benefits" under sub. (1) (a) is defined as an uncommon advantage accruing to the property owner in addition to the benefit enjoyed by other property owners – I further fail to see how a bike lane on a minor roadway (Blackhawk) otherwise connected to larger roads like Pleasant View that have no bike lanes is proposed as a uncommon advantage to me just because my property has frontage with the road. Any advantage – while completely unessential as stated above, nevertheless benefits all residents of the subdivision.

Please record this letter as a strong written objection to the proposed Special Assessment. I urge the Common Council to reconsider the necessity and prudence of undertaking expensive, nonessential projects like these in the current economic conditions.

Sincerely,



Sunil Gopalan

CC:

- City Project Engineer – Janet Dailey
- City of Madison Board of Public Works
- Alder Paul Skidmore; District 9



Department of Public Works
City Engineering Division

608 266 4751

Larry D. Nelson, P.E.
City Engineer

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Facilities & Sustainability
Jeanne E. Hoffman, Manager
James C. Whitney, A.I.A.

Operations Manager
Kathleen M. Cryan

GIS Manager
David A. Davis, R.L.S.

Financial Officer
Steven B. Danner-Rivers

Date: May 8, 2009

To: Property owners along Blackhawk Road

Re: Public Hearing before Board of Public Works
May 20, 2009 6:30 P.M.
Room 260 Madison Municipal Building
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Madison, WI

The City of Madison in conjunction with the City of Middleton and the Town of Middleton is proposing to do street improvements on Blackhawk Road from Pleasant View Road to approximately 400 feet west of Rose Court. Currently the Town of Middleton is resurfacing Blackhawk Road to the west of Rose Court. This project involves special assessments for owners subject to the City of Madison Ordinance. You are being sent this letter to notify you of the public hearing before the Board of Public Works at the above referenced date, time & location. City Engineering will be making a short presentation at the meeting to discuss the project, followed by the public hearing. Attached to this letter is a schedule of assessments that contains the estimated cost for each property on the project that is subject to a City of Madison assessment.

The proposed improvements include widening the roadway to include a designated bike lane on both the north and south sides of the road, curb and gutter where required on the south side of the road and gravel shoulder on the north side of the road. This project will also include construction of additional storm sewer to serve this area. If the project is approved, construction would take place during the summer/fall of 2009.

Street Improvements

The proposed street improvements include installing concrete curb and gutter pulverizing the existing pavement, widening of the road approximately 5 feet on both the north and south sides for bike lanes and re-paving the entire length of roadway. There is no new sidewalk proposed for this project, but some existing sidewalk will need to be removed and replace for spot repairs or to correct grade problems that currently exist today. All existing drives will be reconstructed.

South side of Blackhawk Road:

The drives on the south side of Blackhawk Road will have new concrete drive aprons installed. With the possible exception to the south side of Blackhawk Road from Winding Way to the west, the ditch will be filled and new curb and gutter will be constructed. The ditch may be preserved in this area but it will not be fully determined until the final design is complete. Any drive culverts in areas with new curb and gutter will be removed, as they will not be required.

North side of Blackhawk Road:

The properties on the north side of Blackhawk Road will have new asphalt or concrete drives installed to match the drives that exist today. New corrugated metal culverts will also be installed as needed for the ditch. There will be no sidewalk installed on the north side of the road. Curb and gutter may be required in certain areas to correct for grade deficiencies.

The City of Madison, City of Middleton, and Town of Middleton along with the property owners adjoining the reconstruction will share the cost of the street improvements. Any properties in the City of Middleton and Town of Middleton will not be covered in the attached assessment schedule. Properties in the City of Madison are assessed in accordance with the City of Madison General Ordinance. The City assumes the entire cost of the improvements to the storm sewer and the construction or reconstruction of the sidewalk and handicap ramps at each intersection. The property owners are responsible for 100% of the cost for any new curb and gutter adjacent to their property, in accordance with the attached schedule of assessments. In addition, they are assessed for a cost equivalent to constructing four (4) feet of the roadway.

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The City of Madison shares the cost on a 50-50 basis with the property owners for removing and replacing existing drive aprons. The City of Madison is responsible for the remaining pavement width to the centerline of Blackhawk Road. The City of Middleton and Town of Middleton are responsible for the improvements north of the centerline of Blackhawk Road and any assessments to adjacent property owners that may result. The attached Schedule of Assessments shows a breakdown of costs for each of the assessable items and the total estimated cost to be assessed to each adjacent property owner. Janet Dailey is the street design engineer and you may contact her at 261-9688 or Jdailey@cityofmadison.com if you have any questions regarding this issue.

Storm Sewer

Storm sewer main, leads, and inlets will be installed as part of this project. This work is not assessed to property owners. Greg Fries is the storm sewer designer for this project; you may contact him at 267-1191 or Gfries@cityofmadison.com.

Impact on Trees and Landscaping

During construction, it will be necessary to remove some of existing the trees within the project limits to accommodate the construction of the curb and gutter and ditch. This letter shall serve as notice to the property owners of the impending removal of the trees located between the property line and the street. Every attempt will be made to save trees along this project but it will be necessary to remove those that can not be worked around.

Please note that construction will also have an impact on existing flower gardens and other plantings or other improvements within the right of way. With the nature of this work, property owners should anticipate that most of the terrace will be disturbed, therefore, any plantings or special landscaping features that an owner wishes to save from damage should be removed from the terrace and ditch areas prior to the start of construction. Please make arrangements to remove these items prior to the start of construction. If you have questions on this issue please contact Janet Dailey at 261-9688.

Assessments - General

A special assessment is a special charge for work that the City of Madison is planning to complete. The attached schedule of assessments shows an estimate of the property owners' share of the project based upon the City's assessment policy. When the project is bid, and work is complete, a final assessment will be calculated based on work actually performed. The final assessment is payable in one lump sum or over a period of 8 years, with 5% interest charged on the unpaid balance.

Accommodation Requests

To request accommodations for special needs or disabilities or have any other questions regarding this project, please contact the Project Engineer, Janet Dailey at Jdailey@cityofmadison.com or at 261-9688. This includes requests relating to the Public Hearing and also requests relating to the actual operations of construction.

Sincerely,



Larry D. Nelson, P.E.
City Engineer

LDN:jd

cc: Alder Paul Skidmore, District 9
Christy Bachmann, City Engineering
Greg Fries, City Engineering
Maria Eddy, City Forestry
John Fahrney, City Engineering
Shawn Stauske, City of Middleton
David Shaw, Town of Middleton
Sara Ludtke, Town of Middleton