

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
CITY OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING- PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT HEARING  
DECEMBER 7, 2020**

The following are the minutes for the special meeting of the City Council held at 6:15 pm on Monday, December 7, 2020 in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 590 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.E., Columbia Heights, Minnesota.

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Mayor Schmitt called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm.

Present: Mayor Schmitt; Councilmember Buesgens; Councilmember Murzyn, Jr.; Councilmember Novitsky; Councilmember Williams

Staff Present: Kevin Hansen, Public Works Director; Kathy Young, Assistant City Engineer; Barb Thomas, Assessing Clerk; and Nicole Tingley, City Clerk

Also Present: John Schmitt, resident; Jason Robinson, resident.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT HEARING: 2021 STREET REHABILITATION PROGRAM – ZONES 4B AND 5**

**1. Presentation of Information on Street Rehabilitation – Zones 4B and 5 Projects by Staff by Staff**

Public Works Director Hansen provided an overview of the project. He provided background information on how the City's street rehabilitation and assessment program works. This included summarizing how the condition of streets are evaluated and the overall condition index is determined, the funding and cost sharing percentages, the unit rate basis for calculating assessments, and paying for assessments.

**2. Questions and Comments on Street Rehabilitation Project**

Hansen explained that due to COVID-19, they did not hold an informational meeting. Hansen stated that the Public Works Department kept a contact log of residents that contacted the department regarding the project. Hansen provided a summary of it. A copy of the contact log is attached as Exhibit A to the minutes.

Hansen shared an email sent by Dan Borchert (4853 6th Street). Hansen stated Bouchert was opposed to the project because of the timing and the street is in good condition. A copy of the email is attached as Exhibit B to the minutes.

Hansen shared an email sent by Brian Spencer (4847 6th Street). Hansen stated Spencer was opposed to the project because of the timing and the street is condition. A copy of the email is attached as Exhibit C to the minutes.

Hansen shared a letter sent by Linda and Harold Greenwood (4904 6th Street). Hansen stated they asked questions regarding the extent of the work and they are opposed to the project. A copy of the letter is attached as Exhibit D to the minutes.

Councilmember Williams asked if a project has not been approved by the City Council because of resident objections and how much construction extends the life of a street. Hansen responded that the program has taken years off. He also stated that a fully reconstructed street lasts approximately 60-80 years and a partially reconstructed street lasts approximately 40 years. This assumes a mill and overlay every 20-25 years.

Councilmembers Buesgens and Novitsky shared their support for the street rehabilitation program noting the importance proper infrastructure and that it is a good investment. Novitsky commented that it helps maintain walkability of streets without sidewalks.

Jason Robinson (4829 4<sup>th</sup> Street) stated that the assessment was too high and that he has been out of work since March. Robinson commented that he walked to the meeting as his truck broke down and that the walkability of the road is fine.

John Schmitt (4260 Tyler Street) asked if the City receives more complaints for poor road conditions or for fixing the roads. Hansen responded that the Public Works Department receives a lot of complaints regarding potholes and that there are not complaints about road recently fixed.

### **3. Close the Public Hearing**

*Motion by Councilmember Buesgens, seconded by Councilmember Williams, to close the public hearing of the 2021 Street Rehabilitation, Project 2002. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

### **4. Consideration of Resolution**

*Motion by Councilmember Buesgens, seconded by Councilmember Novitsky to waive the reading of Resolution 2020-109, there being ample copies available to the public. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

*Motion by Councilmember Buesgens, seconded by Councilmember Novitsky to adopt Resolution 2020-109 being a resolution ordering improvement and preparation of plans for 2021 Street Rehabilitation – Zones 4B and 5, City Project 2002 All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

*Motion by Councilmember Novitsky, seconded by Councilmember Williams, to adjourn. All Ayes, Motion Carried 5-0.*

Meeting adjourned at 6:38 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Nicole Tingley, City Clerk/Council Secretary

**Exhibit A- 12/7/20 2021 Street Rehabilitation Program - Zones 4B and 5  
Public Improvement Hearing Minutes**

OFFICE TELEPHONE / MEETING RECORD

| Date / Time | Name<br>Company / Address<br>Phone No. / Fax No.<br>E-mail Address | VM | T | M | Discussion   | Follow-<br>Up<br>Needed  | Follow-<br>Up<br>Compl. |
|-------------|--|----|---|---|--|--|-------------------------|
| 1-Dec       | Jason Robison  | X  | X |   | Left multiple voicemails on PW general, and KH & KY direct line VM.  |  |                         |
| 3-Dec       | 4829 4th Street<br>(Zone 4B & 5)                                   |    |   |   | Returned call and he responded that he just wanted a response provided to his email. Response attached   |  |                         |
| 1-Dec       | Mitchell Peka<br>(Zone 4B & 5)                                     | X  | X |   | Voicemail - what are the extents of the improvements?<br>Returned call - said he read the enclosed explanations and what was on the website - He said his questions were answered.   |  |                         |
| 1-Dec       | Linda Greenwood<br>(Zone 4B & 5)                                   | X  | X |   | 49th and 6th - VM left on such a high amount (\$3,402), what justifies that cost, and what all is involved with that cost? Returned call and went through project, how costs are calculated, and reviewed the City's cost share.   |  |                         |
| 1-Dec       | Dave Pallies<br>(Zone 4B & 5)                                      | X  | X |   | Voicemail on what is the extent of the Recon? Returned call and reviewed project scope. Mr. Pallies does not agree with the per parcel cost vs calculating per Front Foot. Brought up trucks on side streets, traffic on 53rd and process to turn 4th into a 1-way.  |  |                         |
| 3-Dec       | Bryan Jones<br>5100 6th Street<br>(Zone 4B & 5)                    |    |   |   | Voicemail on high cost to his condo'd property (old school on 6th), high interest rate, over 10 years: what can be done to lower the cost. This, coupled with a 22% tax increase to his property are unacceptable. Created a map that shows how past assessments were calculated and how the assessments were calculated for 2020. Further discussion next day (12/4). | Provided the Finance Director contact information to review property tax increase. |                         |
| 1-Dec       | Laura Lindquist-Tesquorse<br>(44th Avenue)                         |    | X |   | Wants to attend Hearing via Zoom - to voice her opposition to the project.   |  |                         |
| 4-Dec       | Wayne Bergland<br>4852 6th Street                                  | X  | X |   | Project related questions. Supportive of the street rehab. When is the City going to recon the alley?  |  |                         |



# Exhibit B- 12/7/20 2021 Street Rehabilitation Program - Zones 4B and 5 Public Improvement Hearing Minutes

**From:** [Donna Schmitt](#)  
**To:** [Nicole Tingley](#); [Kevin Hansen](#); [Kelli Bourgeois](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: city street rehab program  
**Date:** Monday, December 7, 2020 11:51:21 AM

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Nicole,

Please make sure all council members get a copy of this.

Thanks,

Donna Schmitt, Mayor  
City of Columbia Heights, MN

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** BRIAN A SPENCER <BSPENCER10@msn.com>  
**Date:** Dec 7, 2020 11:45 AM  
**Subject:** city street rehab program  
**To:** Donna Schmitt <DSchmitt@columbiaheightsmn.gov>  
**Cc:**

*This message originated from outside the City of Columbia Heights email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments. If necessary, contact sender by phone. **WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!***

Dear mayor

Our street is in good shape and does not need to be replaced,  
I work for Centerpoint Energy and drive all over the metro area and  
beyond, our street is in great shape compared to streets in other areas.

In this time of the pandemic people are not able afford this additional financial burden.

Dan Borchert  
4853 6th St NE  
Columbia Heights , MN 55421  
612-845-5822

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# Exhibit B- 12/7/20 2021 Street Rehabilitation Program - Zones 4B and 5 Public Improvement Hearing Minutes

**From:** [Donna Schmitt](#)  
**To:** [Nicole Tingley](#); [Kevin Hansen](#); [Kelli Bourgeois](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: city street rehab program  
**Date:** Monday, December 7, 2020 11:52:28 AM

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Nicole,

He also sent this one.

Donna Schmitt, Mayor  
City of Columbia Heights, MN

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** BRIAN A SPENCER <BSPENCER10@msn.com>

**Date:** Dec 7, 2020 10:28 AM

**Subject:** city street rehab program

**To:** Donna Schmitt <DSchmitt@columbiaheightsmn.gov>

**Cc:**

*This message originated from outside the City of Columbia Heights email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments. If necessary, contact sender by phone. **WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!***

Dear Mayor,

I want to voice my protest to this program,

This is a bad time financially for people right now to do something like this

Furthermore the street I live on is in great shape and does not need to be replaced,

Brian A Spencer

4847 6<sup>th</sup> St NE

Columbia Heights, MN 55421

763-571-5792

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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Exhibit D- 12/7/20 2021 Street Rehabilitation Program - Zones 4B and 5  
Public Improvement Hearing Minutes

Regarding Project Number: 2021-Z4-03-001 Partial Street Reconstruction / Public Hearing on December 7, 2020.

The City of Columbia Heights  
590 40th Avenue NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421-3878

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

We are unable to attend the December 07, 2020 public hearing in person, but would appreciate if you would take our objections into consideration regarding Project Number: 2021-Z4-03-001 Partial Street Reconstruction.

We received a letter from the City of Columbia Heights Public Works Department dated November 20, 2020, stating the estimated assessment cost of our property for this proposed project would be \$3,402.00 for a partial street reconstruction. In our opinion, we feel this amount appears to be exorbitant.

Our property is 40 ft wide and the street is approximately 27' 3" across from side to side, not including the curb/gutter. If we are responsible for only half of the street width plus the 40 ft width of our property, that comes out to approximately 548 square feet. According to our calculations, we would be paying \$620.80 per sq. foot for this street repair. We believe the amount we are being asked to pay for our portion is excessive and a gross overcharge for our area of the reconstruction involved, which is approximately 40 ft. X 13 ft 7". The proposed cost of \$3,402.00, we feel, is way overpriced and not justified.

We just had the entire public sidewalk replaced in front of our residence only 3 months ago. Our curb and gutter is in decent condition, so we cannot see any necessity of replacing sections of the curb/gutter in front our residence and therefore we should not be charged for these items in the street project.

In the 44 years we have resided at our residence, the City of Columbia Heights has never assessed this high of an amount for a partial street reconstruction. We are certain the community as a whole cannot afford this type of overpriced expense, especially during the current situation of a ongoing pandemic, which has deeply affected the economy.

We are asking that you reconsider performing the street reconstruction work at this time, and only reconsider the proposed project when the economy recovers. We would also appreciate if you would look into the cost per homeowner to determine if the estimates proposed are actually a fair price in comparison to other cities that are having the same type of street restoration performed, as the cost seems so high per square foot for this proposed project.

Therefore, we are objecting to the proposed project and ask that the approval be DENIED.

Thank you your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Columbia Heights Homeowners and Occupants,

Linda Greenwood



Harold Greenwood



Property Address:

4904 6th Street NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
763-586-9841

December 01, 2020