

Bauer, Kelly (CI-StPaul)

Subject: FW: 7/15/2015 Item 42, RES PH 15-186

From: Mike and Benita [<mailto:warns@pclink.com>]

Sent: Monday, July 13, 2015 12:10 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward4

Cc: #CI-StPaul_Ward1

Subject: 7/15/2015 Item 42, RES PH 15-186

Please enter this email message into the official record for the 7/15/2015 St. Paul City Council Meeting, Agenda Item 42, Public Hearing RES PH 15-186.

I oppose allocating public money to finish funding the Marshall Avenue median project. This project has been rejected for funding at least twice (2011 and 2013) in the CIB public process. A major reason this project was rated low was that the medians that have already been built have created unsafe conditions for bicyclists using the bicycle lanes. Placing a raised median in the middle of the roadway doesn't allow motorists enough room to pass bicyclists with the 3 foot gap required by state law.

When this project was last moving through the CIB process, I personally went out to Marshall Avenue and measured a cross section of the roadway, curb to curb, to determine how much room there was for motorists to pass bicyclists. A small car could carefully pass and maintain a 3-foot gap, but a large vehicle like a school bus, fire truck, or semi-tractor/trailer rig, could not legally pass. Then my spouse and I got on our tandem and were riding in the bicycle lane when a school bus passed between us and the median. The bus driver moved the bus over as far as he could, but could not get it over far enough to create a 3 foot gap. I reached out my left arm and the side of the bus was about 3 inches away from my finger tips.

At the July 1 Union Park District Council BOD meeting, two representatives of the St. Paul Fire Department spoke to the Board. Both of them clearly stated that roadway treatments such as medians, bump-outs, and traffic circles were an impediment to emergency vehicles responding to an emergency. They specially mentioned the Marshall medians as being problematic, because their drivers typically use the center turn lane areas to pass stopped vehicles, and the motorists can't always pull over far enough to allow fire trucks to pass. In a fire or serious medical emergency, every second counts.

If you want to use money to create effective solutions to improve pedestrian safety without creating unsafe conditions for bicyclists and hindering emergency responders, please create ADA-compliant crosswalks with small center islands right at the intersections where they are most needed. Use paint to create a center median that will give motorists the impression of a median, without any raised curbing (see Selby Avenue between Victoria and Lexington). Quit building these expensive and unsafe medians.

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