

This is a formal appeal to the Snelling Avenue project for installation of decorative lighting and narrowing of the parking on Snelling Avenue between Minnehaha and Pierce Butler. We have been long time landowners and business owners along that Corridor. The parking has been an issue for the last 15 to 20 years having the encroachment of the city highway 51 and the increased need for parking spaces for businesses along that Corridor. When they widen the highway they had promised to remove snow during the winter along those Boulevard's. Over the last 10 years we have called both the city of St. Paul public works and Ramsey County public works. Neither one of these entities ever took responsibility for removing the snow along at Boulevard. It becomes a major safety issue especially during the winter with a car count of over 40,000 cars per day on that street. Many of our businesses including Mac and PC stations at 735 Snelling Ave., the Black Sea restaurant at 739 Snelling Ave., Hamline Hardware at 755 Snelling Ave., and the Mirror of Korea at 761 Snelling Ave. Have struggled in their businesses due to a lack of parking. This has been even more evident in the winter months when the snow has built up and created no parking on the boulevard due to lack of snow removal or Space for storing any of the snow. The lack of storage space isn't the number one concern, the safety of customers and pedestrians parking on the boulevard when the banks start encroaching on Highway 51 is even more of an issue.

Hamline Hardware has been a mainstay in the midway area since 1926. The hardware stores lease is up this April. They are awaiting the outcome of the assessment to renew their lease. The current owners of the hardware store are probably not going to renew their lease and move out of the Midway community if they are assessed with the lighting assessment. You may be losing a business that has been a cornerstone of the community since 1926.

It is been difficult for the Midway community in this area over the last 15 years with the increased speed of traffic due to the highway. The rent in the area for local businesses are already well below market value. This has an impact on the appearance and the beauty of the area. We are extremely concerned that any additional financial burdens on both these businesses and property owners could severely affect the current businesses. We object to the project on both a financial aspect and a safety issue. Try parking on the boulevard sometime during the winter and getting out of your car while watching oncoming traffic at 35 to 40 mph. Now push those boulevards into the parking an additional 2 feet and put a 2 foot bank of snow pushing the cars out an additional 2 feet due to lack of snow removal promised by the city. The city is been put on notice now if there are any injuries or death caused by the safety issue presented they should be held responsible. Much of the traffic on this route our semi trucks large box fans and commercial vehicles. This only amplifies the safety issue.

In the initial planning stages of the city we have heard no talk of this lighting project until recently. My understanding is that none of the business owners or property owners were at the meeting for the approval of this project to go forward. As a business owner and property owner on this Corridor I firmly object to moving forward with this project.

Sincerely
Michael Hagen
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