

From: Diane May [<mailto:diane.dianemay@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, May 05, 2015 12:33 PM
To: Eric Zidlicky; Biales, Ellen (CI-StPaul)
Subject: My letter to the St Paul City Council about the Sound Barrier

MnDot promised myself and my neighbors we would get the Sound Wall on the North Side of Hwy 94 extended to wrap around the last 3 houses on Maria Avenue between Old Hudson Road and Euclid Street over 10 years ago. I live one block north of Hwy 94 on Maria Avenue and the Sound Barrier mysteriously ends before the last house on Maria Avenue. The decibel levels are so loud from the highway that my previous neighbor on the end could NOT hear her child screaming if he was outside and she was inside the house. We waited patiently year after year for our turn for funding. After 5 years of waiting, my nearest neighbor moved out of St Paul.

Last year, MnDot asked us to vote on whether we wanted a Sound Barrier that went all the way to 3rd Street. I said, "Yes!" That Sound Barrier design did not pass and the next neighbor of mine moved to the suburbs.

The design was reworked and is now what you have in front of you. You are being asked to give your Municipal Consent to the MN Dot's sound wall design in it's current form. I now say, "No," and here's why.

I exchanged, "Good-byes," with my last neighbor that owned the house next to the highway in December. Because of that, I am no longer pushing that the Sound Barrier get built RIGHT NOW. I am taking off the hat of a concerned neighbor that was fighting for the needs of my home-owning friends and now putting on the hat of the sitting Board President for the Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Service. DBNHS owns 3 structures with a total of 6 units of Affordable Housing right next to the currently proposed Sound Barrier.

I am recognizing that The Gateway Corridor (BRT) will most likely get built and much of this Sound Barrier MNDot puts up would have to be torn down and reconfigured. Therefore, it doesn't make sense to me to build a sound barrier and then tear it down in a few years when a dedicated bus-line gets built. I believe it is a waste of taxpayer money.

My belief that the north Hwy 94 sound wall should be wrapped around the last 3 houses on Maria Avenue and go up the entrance ramp to Mounds Boulevard has not changed. But, this doesn't have to be done right now. Nor does the highway sound barrier need to extend a few more blocks up Mounds Boulevard to Conway Street, or be as tall as is the one currently being proposed. And while I have the floor, I would also like to say when the Gateway Corridor comes in, I want 652 Conway Street saved as a-half-a-million in STAR grants were used by DBNHS to bring back this building in the Dayton's Bluff Historic District.

In conclusion, please do not give your Municipal Consent to the MN Dot's sound wall design in it's current form. First, let the Gateway Corridor be built and then give Municipal Consent for a Sound Barrier. A sound barrier is needed for the last three Maria Avenue houses hanging out next to the highway. I have waited 10 years so far, and I will wait patiently for this to be done right.

Sincerely, Diane May