

From: [+1 952-412-2043](tel:+19524122043)
To: [CouncilHearing_English \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Voice Mail (1 minute and 36 seconds)
Date: Monday, March 31, 2025 1:50:42 PM
Attachments: [audio.mp3](#)

Hello, my name is Eric Wilber ARIC, last name WILB as in boy ERI live at 870 Parkview Ave. I am calling in regards to the Wheelock Grotto project and I would like to strenuously object to this project due to the fact that it is ill conceived and unfinished in its planning. The fact that you're trying to force a sidewalk down a street that does not need one, Remove trees that do not need to be removed that are 40 plus years old. The fact that the stated purpose of this project is to update our infrastructure, yet the fact that there are no plans to bury power or cable lines means that in 10 years or so, when you guys come up with a new policy that says all power lines and cable lines need to be buried, you're gonna have to dig everything up again and kill trees again. Sidewalks, like I said many times in team and city meetings, are not maintained at all. They're terrible. So why are we adding more? This project smacks of incompetence at every level and I really wish you guys would reconsider. Thank you.

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From: [Aric W](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Wheelock-Grotto Phase 1 Assessment for 870 Parkview
Date: Wednesday, April 23, 2025 10:10:30 PM

You don't often get email from aricww@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I was unfortunately unable to attend today's meeting, but I would like to add my objection to the special assessment for my home and the homes in my neighborhood.

1. No part of the assessment should include any portion of the cost of tree removal or the addition of a new sidewalk. According to the special assessment policy section 1.1 the property must receive a special benefit from the improvement
 - A.) We as a neighborhood in an overwhelming majority strenuously objected to the removal of trees and the addition of a sidewalk. The fact that our representatives chose to ignore us and actively fight against us certainly does not benefit us.
 - B.) Removal of trees reduced our property values by approximately \$10k per house. Considering new trees planted are unlikely to reach the level of maturity to adequately replace the removed trees in our lifetimes, this brings the cost to each home to over \$20k
 - C.) Sidewalks benefit passers-by not individual houses, to individual houses they add labor (shoveling in the winter and additional maintenance in the summer) There are no passers-by because our street goes nowhere and what passers-by we did have came to see the beautiful canopy over our street which is now gone.
 - D.) As a disabled Marine Corps veteran suffering from PTSD I chose this house to purchase due to the feeling/illusion that the house was in the country, and because of not having sidewalks. you have removed this illusion jeopardizing my mental health not only with the removal of trees but with the stress this unwanted project has introduced into my life. see(<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/why-nature-based-therapy-is-gaining-traction-among-veterans-180982074/>)
Not to mention risking my physical health with additional shoveling now required for a sidewalk myself and my neighbors did not want.
 - E.) The addition of the sidewalk will cost me even more money due to destruction of my personal property (beautiful paver stone sidewalk that cost thousands of dollars)



2. Once Again, according to the special assessment policy section 1.1 the property must receive a special benefit from the improvement.
 - A.) Upgrading or updating the sewer and storm drain lines does not provide special benefit to my property in any way. This is not new infrastructure, this is in place infrastructure that I and my neighbors pay ever increasing property taxes (Mine have close to tripled in the last 10 years) for the city to maintain. Updating this infrastructure benefits the entirety of the city, not just my home or my neighborhood.
 - B.) Assuming you disregard my argument in 2.a the cost of a NEW septic system for a three bedroom house is approximately \$8,000 (and I'm rounding up)... updating a sewer system is not a brand new septic system and it does not only benefit me, where is the other \$2k + in the assessment coming from? A sidewalk we didn't want, turning my beautiful tree lined neighborhood into a suburban hellscape against the neighborhood's wishes? I say \$2k, but it's actually \$12k+ since the city claims to be paying half or more.
 - C.) Considering this infrastructure is 85 years old, this project did not exactly take the city by surprise, the city has had literally 85 years to plan this project and to budget for it. If not the last 85, since I have been hearing about it for the last 5 years... the city had 5 years to properly plan and budget. Since 2021 the city of Saint Paul has taken in more than \$1.11 billion in tax revenue. The city council claiming that it can't come up with a full \$10million or \$20million to fully fund an infrastructure project over the course of 5 much less 85 years is laughable and points to gross negligence in proper planning and mismanagement of funds.
 - D.) If the city can't manage to come up with funds in 85 or 5 years, why should individual households be forced to come up with \$10k+ in less than one year. \$10k is a lot of money, we are NOT a wealthy neighborhood. We can pay over time with Interest... so it's going to cost even more than \$10k... I will avoid going into a long rant about regressive and unfair taxation but now it has been mentioned.

D.) If the city can't afford to maintain existing infrastructure without assessments, then why is the city so hellbent on wasting money cutting down mature trees, buying, planting, and supposedly caring for new trees, and adding new sidewalks that the city obviously can't afford (hence the assessment) and obviously can't afford to maintain (hence the assessment again ... or just walk around the neighborhood and look at the horrible state of the existing sidewalks.

In summary, assessments and poorly planned projects like these, along with people like CVP Kim and Mayor Carter (*who refuse to represent an overwhelming majority of their constituents*) are a prime example of why people are losing faith in the city of Saint Paul, the democratic party, and democracy as a whole. It has become so apparent to me through this fiasco why people are so willing to put the government and our futures into the reckless hands of those who would dismantle it like Donald Trump and JD Vance.

I sincerely hope you actually read this, that it hits, and that the city council rethinks these ridiculous assessments, the way it has been conducting business, and "planning" projects.

-Aric Wilber
870 Parkview Ave Saint Paul, MN 55117