

Falcon Heights Council Workshop Minutes

April 1, 2015

6:30 p.m.

Members present: Mayor Lindstrom, Council Members Long, Harris, and Mercer-Taylor

Members absent: Council Member Brown Thunder

City Staff present: Interim City Administrator - Tim Pittman,
City Engineer - Kristine Giga
Finance Director - Roland Olson
Deputy Clerk/Park & Recreation Supervisor - Tim Sandvik
Administrative Coordinator - Katie Thrasher

1) Discussion on Sidewalks along Garden Avenue

City Engineer, Kristine Giga presented information on Garden Ave including the existing plans and plans including the addition of a sidewalk. The dimensions of the street were given along with what the changes would include.

Finance Director, Roland Olson discussed 3 phone calls City Hall received from residents who were concerned about installing a sidewalk. A 74 year old resident at 1810 Arona was concerned about snow removal as she is physically disabled, and also losing the ability to park in her rear driveway. A resident at 1811 Simpson shared those concerns. Finally, a resident at 1811 Pascal expressed her concern with the congestion of traffic. She also wanted to know who would pay for snow removal.

Resident Mary Hannon Jacobson of 1754 Simpson spoke about her first hand experiences walking with her children to and from Falcon Heights Elementary. She expressed a variety of options including installation of a sidewalk on only part of the length instead of extending all the way from the school to E Snelling Drive. She reported going door-to-door (11 houses in total) where 2 houses were in support of a sidewalk, 5 were unsure, 3 were opposed to it, and 1 she was not able to contact. Ms Jacobson also mentioned the possibility of funding this project through grant opportunities.

Resident Jim Ulty agreed with the safety concerns, but was concerned about the use of the sidewalks when school is out. He also mentioned his concern with traffic congestion near the school.

Resident from 1711 Albert St reported that there are 490 students attending Falcon Heights Elementary. There are 82 walkers in the North Quadrant. There are 88 students that are open enrolling from St Paul which is likely a contributing factor to traffic congestion.

Resident from 1810 Simpson noted he shares the interest in sidewalks for biking safety. As a resident who would lose a part of his driveway, he is willing to sacrifice that extra space in the interest of expanding biking opportunities and increased safety.

Council expressed interest in exploring other options and continuing to examine this issue.

2) University of Minnesota Update on the future of Les Bolstad Golf Course

John Steadland - Associate to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Initiatives addressed the council and community present with an update on the golf course. (he was accompanied by Jan W and Peg Wolf) John stated that in 2012 the university began to assess the golf course that has been suffering from neglect. Potential renovation would be privately funded through fundraising, and the university continue to explore a variety of options with the course. He was very clear in stating multiple times 'right now we do not have a plan in place'. He went on to discuss that the St Paul campus is also in consideration for a place to move their track and field facilities.

Residents asked Mr. Steadland a variety questions about the future of the golf course and where the future of the track may be. Residents expressed concern in losing the course and its rich history. Residents also expressed concern about a new track facility adding to traffic congestion and adding noise and sound pollution to the area.

The workshop concluded at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Timothy Sandvik
Deputy Clerk