

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL  
LITTLE CANADA, MINNESOTA**

**JANUARY 8, 2020**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a special meeting of the City Council of Little Canada, Minnesota was convened on the 8th day of January, 2020 in the Council Chambers of the City Center located at 515 Little Canada Road in said City.

Mayor John Keis called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and the following members of the City Council were present at roll call:

**CITY COUNCIL:**

Mayor	Mr. John Keis
Council Member	Mr. Tom Fischer
Council Member	Mr. Christian Torkelson

**ABSENT:**

Council Member	Mr. Rick Montour
Council Member	Mr. Mike McGraw

**ALSO PRESENT:**

City Administrator	Mr. Chris Heineman
City Engineer	Mr. Mark Kasma
Public Works Director	Mr. Bill Dircks
City Clerk	Ms. Heidi Heller

**IMPROVEMENT  
NO. 2020-01  
ALLEN AVENUE**

Mayor Keis opened the Public Hearing to consider the improvement of Allen Avenue (from Centerville Road to Edgerton Street) by pavement reclamation, concrete curb and gutter, and miscellaneous improvements, along with the proposal of a sidewalk from Centerville Road to Desoto Street. There were 11 residents in the audience.

The City Engineer reported that the purpose of tonight's hearing is to present the proposed improvement of Allen Avenue to the City Council and impacted property owners. This meeting gives property owners the opportunity to provide input and voice concerns about the project. The City Council will then determine whether or not the project moves forward.

The City Engineer provided information and showed photos of the condition of Allen Avenue that resulted in the proposed improvement. He stated that the street has deteriorated to a condition that now requires

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reclamation. He stated that there are some drainage issues in this area, but the main problem is with the driving surface. He explained that the City's Comprehensive Plan indicates that a pedestrian connection is desired along Allen Avenue to connect existing sidewalks and parks. He stated that there is a six-foot wide sidewalk proposed for the south side because there are less driveways to cross. He explained that there would be a five-foot strip of grass between the curb and the sidewalk which keeps pedestrians further from traffic and there is better success growing grass in at least a five-foot strip.

The City Engineer reviewed the general plan for the street and the proposal to remove the two medians on Allen Avenue. He stated that there have been accidents because of the median, along with difficulties for plows, and by removing the medians, the road can be narrowed to help with traffic calming. He noted that the Pitrina Park monuments can be placed in other locations next to the street if the residents want to keep them.

The City Engineer explained the City's street improvement planning process. He explained that after the streets that need work are determined, the process begins with neighborhood informational meetings and progresses on to the public hearing to consider ordering of the improvement, which is this evening's hearing. Once bids are received and awarded, construction starts, and typically after substantial completion of the project, an assessment hearing is held. At that hearing, which is typically in October, property owners have the opportunity to voice opinions on the proposed assessments. The Council would act on any objections received and then approve the assessments. The assessment amounts can be paid within 30 days with no interest charged; otherwise they will be assessed to property taxes for a certain period of time

The City Engineer explained that they will also inspect water main valves and repair or replace things as needed. He reported that there will be times that driveway access is restricted due to construction activities. However, emergency vehicle access, mail and garbage service will be maintained. Mail service is typically moved to a temporary box outside the project area if the Post Master requests. The Engineer reported that property owners will be kept informed of timing of construction activities that will restrict access. He also noted that there will be an on-site inspector available to address property owner concerns. He noted that the City Code allows construction work hours from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturdays.

The City Engineer reported on project funding, noting that sanitary sewer, water main and storm sewer repair costs would not be assessed. Fifty

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percent (50%) of the street costs will be funded through special assessments to benefitting property owners. The Engineer then explained the special assessment process in detail which is based on the City's Assessment Policy that has been in place since 1995. He noted that the properties will be assessed at a per unit charge so all properties pay the same amount.

At this point the public hearing was opened for comments from the general public.

David Thimsen, 2977 Caroline Court, asked if the cost includes having the cul-de-sacs done. The City Engineer stated that they did figure out the costs for the cul-de-sacs, but the Association has decided not to go forward with that work. He noted there would be a little work done in them to make the new pedestrian ramps for the sidewalk.

Paul Mangan, 387 Allen Avenue, asked if the five-foot buffer between the sidewalk and street could be removed in order to keep the sidewalk further from the homes. He stated that they would prefer that the islands be left in place for traffic control and traffic calming reasons. He stated they help prevent trucks from using Allen Avenue as a shortcut. He wondered where the monuments could be placed since they are intended to be seen on both sides. He stated that there are boulders on at the Centerville Road intersection and they ask that they remain since they were placed there after a car drove in to the side of house. He asked that the timing of the construction be kept to a minimum.

The City Engineer stated that they would make sure that there is access at all times other than specific times when work is being done. Fischer stated that the concern may be for the owners on Allen Avenue when the driveway curbs are poured because they will have no place to park. Keis stated that this type of inconvenience is something that every street project has to deal with for the 5-7 days when the concrete is curing. The Public Works Director stated that less than 50% of the curbing is anticipated to be replaced, so since it will not be an entire stretch of curb that is being poured there will be areas where residents can park. The City Engineer explained that there currently is a right turn lane on Allen at Centerville Road, but that would be removed, the road narrowed and green space added. He noted that the monument could be placed in this location.

Susan Thimsen, 2977 Caroline Court, stated that they get a lot of trucks turning around in Caroline Court that are lost. Another resident stated that Sherry Court also gets a lot of turn around traffic because people do not know where they are.

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Kathy Furtado, 2995 Sherry Court, asked for more clarification on what work would be done in the cul-de-sacs. The City Engineer stated they would only be doing a little work on the sidewalk for the pedestrian ramps.

Paul Mangan requested that the homeowners association could have input as to where the monument signs would be placed.

Keis stated that the City is looking for standardization on sidewalks and his opinion is that every neighborhood should not have different sidewalk or green strip widths. The City Engineer stated that the city could consider replacing any trees that may be removed.

Susan Thimsen asked if the new sidewalk would be plowed. The Public Works Director stated that the city plows and maintains all of the sidewalks, but they are not salted.

Barb Jordahl, 2991 Sherry Court, stated that between the backs of the homes in all of the cul-de-sacs there is a low spot where the water seeps towards Allen and the grass is always soggy, so she is concerned that the sidewalk would be icy. She stated that everyone has had some sort of water problems. The City Engineer stated that they will look into the area's drainage and he will have the surveyors shoot further behind the homes in order to understand how the water drainage is actually occurring. The Public Works Director stated that maybe some inlets could be added to the existing storm sewer.

Fischer stated that he has gone back and forth about removing the medians, but noted that it does make sense to remove them even though they do slow down traffic a little. He stated that they have caused accidents and assumed that most residents have almost slid in to them at some point during winter.

Lee Margl, 2979 Frattalone Lane, asked if the grasses and large rocks from the medians could be saved and used somewhere else. The Public Works Director stated that they will work with the residents to do that.

Keis asked if everyone in attendance was in support of proceeding with the improvement. No one in attendance stated they were not in support for the project. Keis stated that the sidewalk will be added with approximately a five-foot green strip, but those details have yet to be determined since the sidewalk design has just started. He noted that once the plans are finalized, they will be shared with the residents.

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Upon motion by Keis, seconded by Torkelson, the public hearing was closed.

Keis stated that the Council cannot act tonight because there are not at least four Council members in attendance. The Council will vote on this improvement project at the City Council meeting on Monday, January 13, 2020.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

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John T. Keis, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Christopher Heineman, City Administrator