

Public Works Committee

5. 2.

Meeting Date: 01/18/2022

By: Bruce Westby, Engineering/Public Works

Title:

Consider Sound Wall Improvements East of State Highway 47, North of Xkimo Street

Purpose/Background:

As discussed at the Public Works Committee meeting on October 19, 2021, the noise wall constructed as part of the three (3) single-family residential unit development called Ramsey Villas North, located in the northeast quadrant of State Highway 47 and Xkimo Street, was not constructed such that it will serve its intended purpose as a noise barrier.

Though plans for this development, including the noise wall, were approved by the City, the wall was designed and constructed to extend downwards into a low area such that the top of the wall is lower than Highway 47, which prevents the wall from being effective at reducing traffic noise.

During the project approval process, several residents from Xkimo Court contacted City staff to ask what could be done to reduce traffic noise from Highway 47. The residents were informed that the developer would construct a noise wall similar to the existing wall east of Highway 47 roughly 600 feet to the north, and that the wall would extend along the west edge of the Ramsey Villas North plat.

Attached is a copy of an email received by the City Engineer from residents along Xkimo Court NW, east of State Highway 47 and north of Xkimo Court, following a meeting between the City Engineer and the residents on site on Monday, September 27, 2021. The email requests that the City consider the following items:

- Partner with MNDOT to determine if building an appropriate, effective noise wall would be their responsibility or the City's
- If MNDOT has the responsibility, then to partner and advocate for them to seek funding to build an effective noise wall on par with the height above street level of, and extending to, the existing noise wall further north along ctty 47
- If the City has the responsibility, pursue approval and prioritize allocating funding to build an effective noise wall on par with the height above street level of, and extending to, the existing noise wall further north along ctty 47
- Establish a noise ordinance to discourage vehicles from excessive acceleration or jake-breaking at the 47/5 intersection
- Seek partnership with Ramsey PD and/or the Anoka County Sheriff, to establish a presence in the area [even if simply parking in-between calls or completing paperwork] to discourage the above behavior
- Post signs on Hwy 47 to notify drivers of the noise ordinance and that it is enforced by the City of Ramsey
- Provide a plan timeline, along with regular communication on progress, regarding the above to the residents of Xkimo Ct. Nw.

After the Public Works Committee considered the residents request on October 19, 2021, the committee directed

Staff to contact the developer and their engineer to determine if either or both are willing to partner with the City to redesign, reconstruct and/or extend the noise wall to serve its intended purpose. The Committee also directed Staff to return with estimated costs to reconstruct and/or extend the sound wall to the end of the plat and/or to connect to the existing wall to the north for consideration at a future meeting.

The City Engineer contacted the developer and received the attached letter in response. Based on this letter Staff does not anticipate that the developer will be willing to partner with the City to resolve the resident's concerns either by assisting with potential design modifications and/or by contributing to costs.

The City Engineer also contacted the project engineer with Bogart-Pederson to discuss this issue. The project engineer stated he would be discuss this issue in more detail after the Public Works Committee discussed this issue again this evening.

Construction of a sound wall could not begin until the ground thaws in the spring of 2022, at the earliest. This would require the collection of topo survey to determine where a sound wall could effectively be constructed along this corridor. For a sound wall to be effective it should be constructed to a height of 6-feet or more above the pavement of northbound Highway 47.

Attached is a figure showing how long the sound wall would need to extend to the north of the Ramsey Villas North plat to connect to the existing sound wall approximately 900 feet north. Staff estimates construction costs for a similar noise wall would be approximately \$210 per linear foot at today's construction costs. This would equate to a minimum construction cost of \$50,000 to salvage and reinstall the section of wall that extends below the grade of Highway 47 and to then extend the wall to the north end of the Ramsey Villas North plat, and a minimum construction cost of \$125,000 to extend a similar wall along the undeveloped parcel to the north to connect to the existing wall. These costs do not include indirect costs or costs required to enter into a Limiter Use Permit with MnDOT if the wall needs to be constructed within their right-of-way.

Timeframe:

Staff estimates 20 minutes will be needed to present this case and respond to questions.

Observations/Alternatives:

Observations:

Staff contacted MnDOT and was informed that their preference would be for the wall to be on the private property. However, MnDOT did confirm that they would be willing to discuss construction of a wall in MnDOT right-of-way, but that they do not have funds to pay for such work. Also, the City would need to execute a Limited Use Permit to define the responsibilities of the City related to maintenance and removal of the wall, if necessary in the future.

Staff informed the Xkimo Court residents that this case would be presented at this evening's Public Works Committee meeting so Staff anticipates there will be several residents in attendance, either in person or remotely.

Alternatives:

Alternative #1 – Motion directing Staff to further explore noise wall improvements along the Ramsey Villas North plat.

Alternative #2 – Motion directing Staff to further explore noise wall improvements along the Ramsey Villas North plat, and to further explore noise wall improvements along the undeveloped parcel to the north.

Alternative #2 – Motion of other.

Funding Source:

To be determined based on the Committee's direction to Staff.

MnDOT does not have funds to share in any of these costs, and Staff is continuing to explore external funding sources for such sound wall improvements.

Recommendation:

Staff does not have a recommendation to offer at this time.

Action:

To be determined following discussions.

Attachments

Noise Wall Gap Figure

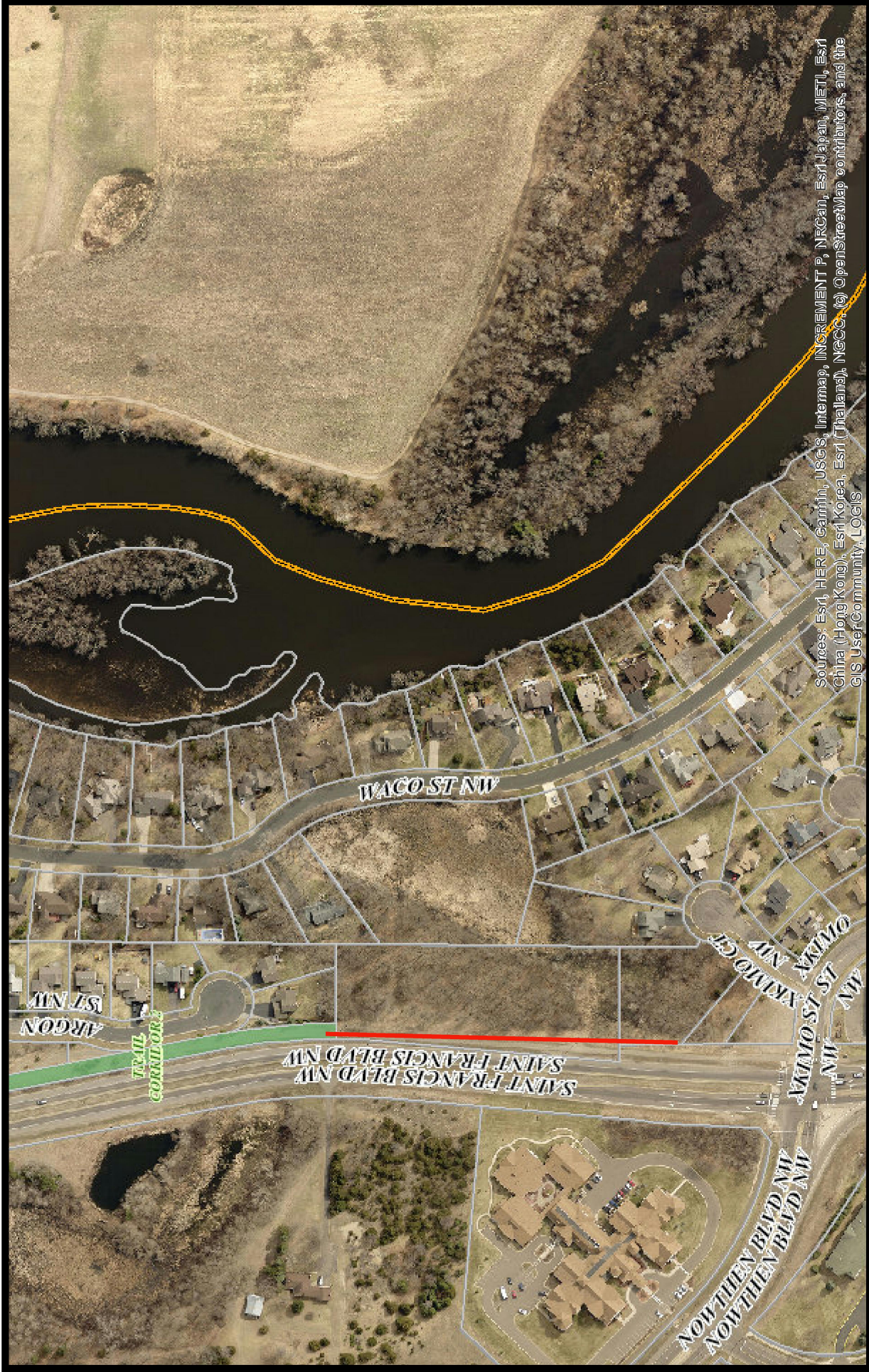
Xkimo Court residents email

Ltr re Riverside Development Company Ramsey

Form Review

Inbox	Reviewed By	Date
Grant Riemer	Kathy Schmitz	01/13/2022 04:07 PM
Kurt Ulrich	Kathy Schmitz	01/13/2022 04:07 PM
Form Started By: Bruce Westby		Started On: 01/11/2022 10:40 AM
Final Approval Date: 01/13/2022		

TH 47 Sound Wall Gap



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri
China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the
GIS User Community, LOGIS

7/12/2021, 3:59:38 PM

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From: [Richardx.Bailey](#)
To: [Bruce.Wesby](#)
Cc: [Ted.Blaikley](#); [Megan.Blaikley](#); [angel.hughes129@gmail.com](#); [Bertin.Chabens](#); [Richardx.Bailey](#)
Subject: Xkimo Ct Nw Noise Wall Follow up and letter
Date: Friday, October 8, 2021 4:41:41 PM
Attachments: [RE: EXTERNAL RE Project 20-117.msg](#)
[Noise Wall 4.jpg](#)
[Noise Wall 1.jpg](#)
[Noise Wall 2.jpg](#)
[Noise Wall 3.jpg](#)

Hi Bruce,

Thanks again for stopping out last week to discuss the ongoing noise issues we've been experiencing and for offering to take forward a letter highlighting our concerns, to help move towards resolution. Please find this letter below. Attached you'll find the email we referred to during our discussion regarding the originally communicated noise wall length as well as photos of what was built.

Please let us know if you have any questions...

Hello,

First off, thank you for taking the time to review the below concern and related requests from us, the residents of Xkimo Court Nw.

The chief concern, which we have raised before, is the increased noise levels in our cul-de-sac, which directly affects the 20+ people that call Xkimo Ct Nw 'home'.

We first began noticing the increased traffic noise when the city approved the construction of Stoney River directly across, and elevated above, Highway 47 from us; as there exists no noise barrier on our side of 47, we feel the effects of traffic noise deflected from Stoney River directly into our neighborhood.

Last year we were notified of the approved sale of the land on the west side of the cul-de-sac to a third party home builder. Since this meant the removal of what little natural noise protection [mature trees/growth] we had on those lots, we raised our concerns regarding the noise impact we anticipated and, unfortunately, have since realized. The cumulative traffic noise level is so high at times that it can be heard clearly inside homes and even requires pausing conversations when outside.

Prior to the development being approved, we had inquired regarding having a noise wall included with the construction on the site, and were subsequently provided a plat drawing/photo [see attached email] which indicated a noise wall *would* be built and *would* extend for a considerable length of the property as well as mirror the size the noise wall farther north along 47. Since we were advised this was the plan, we were satisfied with the accommodations to protect the interests of our families.

Unfortunately this accommodation was not followed through upon, to the detriment of our neighborhood and directly affects our quality of life. We were advised after the sale was approved, that a 'mistake' was made and the drawing shared wasn't actually correct; the noise wall would not equal the length we were told it would, but instead be less than 1/2 as long. In addition the "noise wall" that was constructed by the builder is completely ineffective and quite frankly, unacceptable. As shown by the photographs attached, the wall was not built using the street level as the baseline, but instead followed the undulating topography of the land itself; this resulted in an inferior "noise wall" who's top, in places, is below street level and can be described, at best, as an exercise in futility and who's appearance doesn't do any favors for the aesthetics or reputation of the city.

To rectify the above we respectfully request the following items be pursued by the City of Ramsey:

- Partner with MNDOT to determine if building an appropriate, effective noise wall would be their responsibility or the City's
 - If MNDOT has the responsibility, then to partner and advocate for them to seek funding to build an effective noise wall on par with the height above street level of, and extending to, the existing noise wall further north along city 47
 - If the City has the responsibility, pursue approval and prioritize allocating funding to build an effective noise wall on par with the height above street level of, and extending to, the existing noise wall further north along city 47
- Establish a noise ordinance to discourage vehicles from excessive acceleration or jake-breaking at the 47/5 intersection
 - Seek partnership with Ramsey PD and/or the Anoka County Sheriff, to establish a presence in the area [even if simply parking in-between calls or completing paperwork] to discourage the above behavior
 - Post signs on Hwy 47 to notify drivers of the noise ordinance and that it is enforced by the City of Ramsey
- Provide a plan timeline, along with regular communication on progress, regarding the above to the residents of Xkimo Ct. Nw.

Thank you in advance for your review and partnership on this matter that is of high importance to us; please let us know how we can support you in this pursuit.



Writer's Email: rbrandenburg@quinlivan.com

Writer's Direct Dial: (320) 258-7841

VIA EMAIL ONLY

January 7, 2022

Kurt Ulrich kulrich@cityoframsey.com
Ramsey, Minnesota City Administrator

Chloe McGuire Brigl CMcGuire@ci.ramsey.mn.us
Ramsey, Minnesota Senior City Planner

Bruce Westby bwestby@ci.ramsey.mn.us
Ramsey, Minnesota City Engineer

RE: Riverside Development Company – Ramsey
Villas North Noise Barrier Wall Completion

Dear Mr. Ulrich, Ms. McGuire Brigl, and Mr. Westby:

This letter is in follow up to my letter to you of November 8, 2021. I understand the City is seeking to convene a meeting of the Public Works Committee to discuss options for addressing issues raised by residents of the Ramsey involving the effectiveness of the noise barrier wall along Xkimo Court. Riverside Development Company, as the original developer of Ramsey Villas North, is willing to participate in these discussions, but only for the purpose of providing a history of what occurred in the past and to help, if asked, to determine what might be done as a part of a new City project to enhance the noise dampening effectiveness of the wall. The record is quite clear that the wall was designed and constructed in full compliance with the requirements imposed by the City in the Development Agreement dated May 3, 2021 and as directed by the City. As such, my client does not have and by agreeing to participate will not agree to assume any financial liability associated with the making of any subsequent changes to the wall. It is willing to offer its opinion on the potential making of such changes, if doing so is deemed to be helpful.

If you believe having a representative of the developer at the meeting would be beneficial, my client is willing to do so as long as it is agreed that its participation in the meeting is solely for the purpose of providing background information and, if asked, to offer suggestions for potential future changes by the City. Please let me know if you would like Riverside Development Company to attend the meeting under the conditions outlined above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Ron Brandenburg'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Ronald W. Brandenburg
RWB/

C: Mari Freiberg
Riverside Development Company