

Public Works Committee

6. 1.

Meeting Date: 02/15/2022

By: Bruce Westby, Engineering/Public Works

Title:

Receive Updates on Sound Wall East of State Highway 47, North of Xkimo Street

Purpose/Background:

The purpose of this case is to provide available updates. Staff will provide more information and will seek further direction from the Public Works Committee on March 15th.

As discussed at the Public Works Committee meeting on October 19, 2021, the sound wall constructed with 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 it's 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, residents from Xkimo Court contacted City staff to ask what could be done to reduce traffic noise from Highway 47. Staff ultimately responded by conveying that the developer would be constructing a sound wall similar to the existing wall east of Highway 47 roughly 1,000 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 submitted by a resident of Xkimo Court showing they were informed that the sound wall would extend along the entire west edge of the plat.

Also 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 cty 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 cty 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 would be willing to partner with the City to redesign, reconstruct and/or extend the noise wall to serve it's 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.

Staff contacted the developer, Riverside Development Company, and has since received three response letters from their attorney informing Staff that the developer is willing to assist the City in resolving this matter by providing a history of past discussions and to offer its opinion on any potential changes to the wall, but that they are not agreeable to assuming any financial liability associated with such changes. Their attorney also noted that the City cannot continue to retain any of their clients financial securities outside of what is allowed by the Development Agreement, namely their one-year warranty and landscaping warranty. Staff is therefore preparing to return all securities outside of the warranty securities outlined within the Development Agreement.

Staff also contacted the design engineer, Bogart-Pederson, to discuss their willingness to assist the City in resolving this matter. According to Bogart-Pederson they informed City Staff that any wall constructed on their client's property would not be able to serve as a noise wall due to the low elevations on site, and that constructing a wall within Highway 47 right-of-way would not likely be economically feasible due to the need to relocate existing buried utilities and overhead power lines, but Staff instructed them to construct the wall per the plans. However, Bogart-Pederson is willing to share their topographic survey with the City so we can look at the potential for relocating the wall within the Highway 47 right-of-way.

Any efforts to relocate or extend the existing sound wall could not begin until the ground thaws in the spring of 2022. This would include collection of additional topographic survey to determine where a sound wall could effectively be constructed along the corridor. For a sound wall to be effective it should be constructed to a height of 6-feet or more above the pavement on Highway 47.

Attached is the 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 existing wall within the Highway 47 right-of-way and to extend the wall to the north end of the Ramsey Villas North plat, if possible, and a minimum construction cost of \$125,000 to extend the wall through 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 Limited Use Permit with MnDOT if the wall can indeed be constructed within their right-of-way.

Timeframe:

Staff estimates 15 minutes will be needed to present this case and respond to questions.

Observations/Alternatives:

Staff informed the Xkimo Court residents that this case would be presented this evening so one or more residents may be in attendance.

Funding Source:

Funding amounts and sources will be discussed in detail on March 15th.

Recommendation:

Staff does not have a recommendation at this time.

Action:

No action is requested at this time. Staff will provide more information and will seek further direction from the Public Works Committee on March 15th.

Attachments

Xkimo Ct residents requests

Xkimo Ct resident email

Sound wall gap figure

Sound Wall Pictures

Form Review

Inbox	Reviewed By	Date
Grant Riemer	MaryJo Warner	02/10/2022 03:55 PM
Kurt Ulrich	Kurt Ulrich	02/10/2022 03:59 PM
Form Started By: Bruce Westby		Started On: 02/10/2022 10:49 AM
Final Approval Date: 02/10/2022		