

Additional information provided by C. DeLong to media....

Minnesota statutes Chapter 429 is what gives Cities the the power to specially assess property owners for improvements.

It comes with a whole host of rules on how you must do things. Feasibility studies, Required Public hearings,etc.

One of the cardinal rules is that the amount a city assesses must not be greater than the increase in valuation of the property due as a result of the project.

We hired BRKW Appraisals, Inc.

*The purpose of the appraisal is to develop an opinion of the special value benefits, if any, accruing to the subject properties resulting from the proposed City of Northfield 2017 Street Reclamation Project. The intended use of the appraisal is for assisting city officials in levying in an equitable manner special assessments to properties benefited by the improvement project.*

*It is noted that not every property potentially benefiting from improvements proposed for streets in the project area was appraised for special benefits purposes. Rather, for most properties, this appraisal reflects a preliminary benefits analysis in that it provides a range of likely special benefits accruing to those properties belonging to a specific use group (e.g., single -family lots). In this appraisal, there are two subject properties intended to represent, in general terms, two subsets of property types: a Typical Single-Family Lot and a Small Single -Family Lot.*

Here is a link to the appraisals mentioned below. My focus was on Sibley View in an effort to keep it manageable, but I've been looking at the Nevada and 9th street area and there are also excess assessment amounts there also.

<http://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/5458>

So basically we don't appraise every property in the area but chose two that appear to be generally representative. We can kind of figure values on other lots based on what we found here. We have only been doing appraisals once every 3 years so we use the general range of benefits during other years. Usually all lots are not exactly alike but generally similar and we can use this baseline general range of benefits to adjust accordingly.

But this year and for 2 properties, in this area, we have an exact special benefits amount.

#### Subject Property 1

Typical Single-Family Lot [2025 Sibley View Court](#) 13,360 SF or 0.31 acres

Typical Single-Family Lot (80' Frontage)

Property Land Value - After: \$57,400

Property Land Value - Before: \$52,700

Approximate Value Benefits: \$ 4 , 7 0 0 or \$59/Front Foot

Reasonable Value Benefits Range: \$54-\$64/Front Foot

We assessed 2025 Sibley View Lane \$4640 which is less than the special value benefit amount of \$4700

This is how it should work.

#### Subject Property 2

Small Single-Family Lot [2008 Sibley View Lane](#) 9,840 SF or 0.23 acres

Small Single-Family Lot (80' Frontage)

Property Land Value - After: \$54,800

Property Land Value - Before: \$50,300

Approximate Value Benefits: \$ 4 , 5 0 0 or \$56/Front Foot

Reasonable Value Benefits Range: \$51-\$61/Front Foot

We assessed 2008 Sibley view Lane \$4640 which is \$140 more than then the allowed special benefit amount.

There are 3 other properties the exact same size as 2008 that were also \$140 too much.

I believe this is a violation of State law whether the property owner complained or not.

At times City Councils might be unaware of specific legal requirements, but when they are made aware, they should lead by example and do the right thing. It is my opinion that a City Council should follow the law. Our City Council did not do this. When made aware of the violation. it was said, well no one complained, we'll fix it later.

I think people should trust that city leaders will do the the right thing whether someone complained or not. What kind of example does it set otherwise?

We justified our actions by saying, we are following our policy.

We blindly followed our policy, followed it right into a violation of State Law.

1900 Sibley View is a completely different animal and is a direct negotiations of an amount with the objecting property owner. He can agree to the new amount or not. It was a compromise. If he hadn't filed an objection I would have included that property in with the other curved lots on the west side of Sibley View, in my first amendment.

I did not get into the assessments for the curved lots on the east side of Sibley View because the front footage(132 ft) wasn't as close to the 80 front footage of the appraised property. I also didn't venture into the arena of cul de sac's.

I thought I had put forth a straightforward not too far reaching amendment that the Council could handle. I guess I was wrong.

I tried breaking it down into two parts, when the first amendment failed, but apparently 4 lots exactly the same, with an exact determination of special value benefit amounts (\$4500) and all over assessed ( \$140), in violation of State Law was [still](#) too much for some to process.