

Scott Tornquist

From: Scott Tornquist [scott@TornquistForRiverCity.com]
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2007 8:06 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: appreciate focus

Mark-

Well said. We are working on sidewalks as a "bigger picture" issue. I hope to have an agenda item on February 6 to establish a citizens committee to look into possible solutions to the many inequities we have with our current sidewalk policy.

Let me run an idea by you. What if we established an enterprise fund for the purpose of installing new sidewalks where none exist. If we "taxed" each household \$2.00/year (this could show up on one Mason City Public Utility bill each year), we could raise around \$25,000 each year. The city could establish a priority list of locations where sidewalks do not exist, and the enterprise fund could be used to install sidewalks each year as funds permit per the priority list.

The city currently invests \$50,000 per year in sidewalk repairs, also in order of prioritized need. This program could continue as is. New construction would require either new sidewalks at the perimeter, or payment of the equivalent cost to the enterprise fund if the community deems sidewalks are not really needed at this location.

I am not of the mind that we need to require sidewalks in front of every house on every street in Mason City to make sure everyone is treated the same. There are many quiet streets and cul-de-sacs that simply do not need sidewalks; the cost and maintenance (including snow removal) creates unnecessary burdens. However, those of us that do not have sidewalks in front of our homes (myself included) should contribute to the cost of sidewalks in the community since they do provide a benefit to all.

It would seem that only the property owner can be responsible for snow removal on sidewalks on their property. I don't know how we can ever get around this. So, there will be those that don't want sidewalks in front of their house, even if they don't have to pay for them, simply because they don't want to have to shovel. But, that is one of the drawbacks (offset by many benefits) to living in a community. If we can cost shift to obtain greater equity, I think we have solved the lion's share of the problem.

I'd really appreciate your thoughts; I have not shared this idea with anybody outside of a handful of staff.

Have a great day, and thanks for taking the time to email me.

ST

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2007 9:00 PM
To: Scott@TornquistforRiverCity.com
Subject: appreciate focus

Scott

I appreciate your efforts at getting a broader perspective on the streets issue. I live at [REDACTED] 6th St. SE and have 3 children who walk to and from Jefferson or John Adams. As you pointed out, the sidewalk situation in this part of town is pathetic (my description), which makes the traffic issue even worse. I am in support of the proposal of expediting the process to see if it is feasible to extend Illinois south and 19th St east to create an alternative arterial traffic route. Obviously, I would also like to know what the city can do to require sidewalks. This is both a safety issue and a quality of life issue. Making the city as 'family friendly' as possible would seem to be an equal part to jobs creation to address our population issue.

Mark [REDACTED]