

**City of Columbus**  
**Regular City Council Meeting**  
**Closed Meeting Format**

**MN Statute Section 13D.05, subd. 3(c)**

**04.13.2022**

The 04.13.2022 meeting of the City of Columbus City Council closed to the public at 8:51 p.m. by Mayor Jesse Preiner at City Hall. Present were Councilmembers Robert Busch, Janet Hegland, Shelly Logren and Sue Wagamon; City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko, City Attorney Bill Griffith, City Engineer Kevin Bittner, Public Communication Coordinator Connor Keith and Public Works Director Jim Windingstad.

**25. 182<sup>nd</sup> Cul-de-Sac Purchase of Easement**

Mursko provided a map of the 182<sup>nd</sup> Lane NE cul-de-sac for the potential purchase of easements with property values. The owner of the southeasterly property wanted compensation for the easement, and the owner of the northeasterly property also requested compensation if the City followed through and paid the southeasterly property owner.

Based on most-recent property valuations divided by square footage, the turnaround's southeasterly property is worth \$0.27 per square foot. Following that same formula, the turnaround's northeasterly property is worth \$0.33 per square foot.

Griffith confirmed that his office had conducted a comparable sales analysis, finding that comparable properties are worth approximately \$0.25-\$0.35 per square foot, right in line with Mursko's estimate. As a result, with the small easements the City was looking to obtain from the property owners, setting a price using these metrics would yield a small compensation for both parties that he didn't feel would close either deal. Griffith also shared that the property owners on the west side of the proposed cul-de-sac would not receive compensation since they were receiving more land back from existing City easements than the City would need for the project, so it would be conducted as a land swap.

Griffith and Mursko recommend \$1500 per landholder on the eastern side of the proposed cul-de-sac as he felt a flat purchase agreement had a better shot of getting both parties to the table. Based on a simple square footage sale, the value of the properties would lead to an offer of approximately \$300. Griffith also recommended including a release of any claims in both contracts.

Griffith confirmed the City is not obligated to initiate this project, but advised that the area should be shaped up by Public Works. Windingstad agreed, indicating that while the turnaround in its current design is common across the City, this one does need some attention.

Departing from Mursko, Griffith recommended \$2500 per property owner so that the sellers felt the City was willing to negotiate. Mursko didn't like the idea because the final number the City would be willing to spend in that scenario is so far above the value of the land, but she understood the logic.

Logren shared that she would be open to making a first offer based on the approximate value of the land plus the \$500 for the property owners' legal fees, followed up by another offer valuing the land at \$1 per square foot with the legal fee stipend. Logren liked that the price was set on data.

Hegland proposed the City not pay property owners to obtain the easements because it would be precedent-setting and historically, this has not been the City's practice. If the property owners did not want to move forward with the cul-de-sac project by providing the easements then the project should be halted and the hammerhead simply repaired.

Windingstad pointed out that the City has 66 feet right-of-way, which he would want staked to ensure he doesn't exceed while re-grading the hammerhead.

Griffith summarized the Council's direction, saying that the Council decided not to offer to purchase easements from property owners and as a result will repair the gravel hammerhead within the existing easement instead of constructing a cul-de-sac.

**Motion by Hegland to adjourn. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Logren – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.