

To: Schenectady City Council

Re: Ardsley Rd. Sidewalk Assessment issues

Comments for Public Hearing, Jan. 27, 2020

From: David Giacalone

Date: January 27, 2020

There are a half dozen major subjects discussed below that I hope City Council and the Engineering Department will consider before finalizing the Ardsley Rd. assessments and accepting new petitions from additional blocks.

However, first, I want to point out that, as of 11 AM Monday morning, Jan. 27th, the City has not provided the new Project Cost Sheet to the public (it is Attachment #4; the original Contractor Bid is Attachment #3; Attachments #1 and #2 are side-by-side images to compare Project Costs and Individual Resident Cost). The lack of information makes it very difficult for interested Schenectady residents to make useful comments in a public hearing. I was fortunate to have received a copy over the weekend for my review. Neither that document, nor one showing the proposed per ft. cost for the Ardsley residents, \$55.44, is appended to the Jan. 27 online [Agenda](#). Having to review and consider the new proposal at 7 PM tonight, without also having the original Contractor Bid sheet, is not a formula for helpful citizen participation. [By the way, the Agenda item does not even mention the word "Sidewalk". I believe agenda items should be as informative as possible within reasonable space limitations.]

MAJOR QUESTIONS

1] INTEREST RATE: The Project Cost sheet states that the costs shown **do not include interest**, and it appears that the City has not told the Petitioners what the interest rate will be. The proposal is to charge the Residents \$55.44 per ft. of frontage, meaning that a 50-ft. Sidewalk would cost \$2772 *before* any interest.

The **comparable Polimeni-Wallin estimate is the \$2222** cost for a 50' sidewalk without interest, not the \$2700 figure mentioned by Council members, which includes 4% interest over ten years.

\$2772 at 4% for ten years equals total payments of \$3367 [25% more than Polimeni's \$2700]

\$2772 at 2% for ten years equals total payments of \$3061 [13% more than Polimeni's \$2700]

In deciding whether the City's proposal is reasonable, the Residents (and taxpayers) need to know the interest rate and length of repayment.

2] TOP SOIL & SEEDS: The Project Cost sheet shows that the actual Topsoil and Seeds used was 411.45 sq. yds for each, which is an astounding **11.7 times as much** as the Contractor's Bid, which calls for 35 sq. yds. of each. Was that the Contractor's estimation error, or did the Request for Bids have erroneous specs that yielded such a tiny quantity of Topsoil and Seeds in the Bid? How did the small number of Top Soil and Seeds units in the Contractor Bid fail to alert the Engineering Office of this major problem?

- Top Soil & Seeds went from \$3,955 to \$46,493, an increase of \$42,538
- Top Soil & Seeds amount to 19% of the total revamped Project Cost of \$238K (City Share plus Residents Share)
- Is a percentage similar to 19% for Top Soil and Seeds likely to occur on other blocks, if the Program continues?

3] CONTRACTOR BID. The accepted Contractor's Bid *underestimated* Top Soil and Seed costs by \$42,538. How is it that the cost to the Residents in *that* Bid [\$4085 for 50'] was nonetheless *already 84% higher* than the Polimeni-Wallin Estimate?

What were the component costs that went into the Contractor Bid that made the totals per ft. so high even without the "surprise" Top Soil-Seeds expense? That is important, because *such costs may underlie all future bids and sidewalk assessments*.

If the Actual Top Soil & Seeds cost had been in the Contractor's Bid, the Total Cost to Residents would have been \$158,973, not \$116,435. That higher cost yields a cost per foot of \$111.56, or \$5578 for a 50-ft. sidewalk.

4] COMPARING Per Foot COSTS.

POLIMENI-WALLIN: \$2222 for 50' = \$44.44 per ft.

CONTRACTOR BID: \$4085 for 50' = \$81.71 per ft. (without the excess Top Soil & Seeds expense)

\$5578 for 50' = \$111.56 per ft. (If the full Top Soil & Seeds Expense were included)

NEW PROPOSAL: \$2772 for 50' = **\$55.44 per ft. = 25% more** than Polimeni-Wallin \$2222 Estimate

5] CITY SHARE: The City's share under the Proposal goes **from \$63K to \$159K**, an increase of \$96,000. But, the increase in Top Soil & Seeds PLUS the \$9,000 increase for two additional trees removed adds up to only \$52,538. What other items of cost, amounting to over \$40K, is the City picking up (subsidizing) of the Ardsley Project Cost that Residents would normally pay under the Sidewalk Plan?

- In order to reduce the Resident Cost to \$55.44 per foot, the City is taking on 2/3rds of the Total Ardsley project cost of \$238K.
- **How did the \$37,000 subsidy specified at the January 7 Committees Meeting balloon to \$96,00?**
- Shouldn't the City show the public and the Residents how/why the original Contractor Bid was so high, how it came to the prices charged in the First Bills, and the breakdown of costs on the new "Actual" Project Cost sheet?

6] FOR THE FUTURE:

- Which expenses will the City take upon itself for any future Sidewalk Assessment District? What amount of subsidies is the City willing to pay for future blocks?
- Will the DeCamp residents be allowed to withdraw their Petitions, as was promised when the program was approved?
- What is the expected cost per foot of sidewalk for future blocks, once Residents pay for all the appropriate costs, such as Top Soil & Seeds?
- Save The Trees. Couldn't the City dedicate money for the maintenance of some of the shade trees that are on the Project streets, perhaps hiring a licensed arborist as a consultant for each Petitioning block? Since the Engineering Dept. removed all the mature trees when replacing sidewalks on N. Ferry in 2008, its policy appears to doom many valuable mature trees (at the cost of \$4500 per tree) that could very well survive and thrive after a sidewalk project with best practices care and maintenance. See my posting "Schenectady Needs a Tree Preservation Policy" at <http://tinyurl.com/TreePolicy>

Thank you for considering my Comments. Please write or call if you have questions.

David Giacalone
16 Washington Ave. #3
Schenectady, NY 12305

[L] CONTRACTOR BID COSTS and [R] NEW PROJECT COSTS:

ARDSLEY ROAD: Contractor Bid					
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	PRICE PER UNIT	TOTAL ITEM COST
#001	MOBILIZATION	EA	1	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500
#115.3	REMOVAL OF TREES AND STUMPS 24-36"	EA	8	\$ 4,500	\$ 36,000
#350.11	CONSTRUCTION OF 6" SIDEWALK AND DRIVEWAY	SY	940	\$ 112	\$ 105,280
#380	BAR/MESH REINFORCEMENT	SY	140	\$ 5	\$ 700
#700.01	WORK ZONE TRAFFIC CONTROL	LS	1	\$ 27,000	\$ 27,000
#851	TOPSOIL	SY	35	\$ 75	\$ 2,625
#852	SEED	SY	35	\$ 38	\$ 1,330
			TOTAL PROPOSAL		\$ 179,435
CITY SHARE					
#115.3	REMOVAL OF TREES AND STUMPS 24-36"	EA	8	\$ 4,500	\$ 36,000
#700.01	WORK ZONE TRAFFIC CONTROL	LS	1	\$ 27,000	\$ 27,000
			TOTAL CITY SHARE		\$ 63,000
COST TO RESIDENTS					
			TOTAL PROPOSAL		\$ 179,435
			LESS CITY SHARE		\$ (63,000)
			COST TO RESIDENTS		\$ 116,435
COST PER FOOT OF FRONTAGE					
			COST TO RESIDENTS		\$ 116,435
			TOTAL FRONTAGE (ft)		1,425
			\$/ft		\$ 81.71

ARDSLEY ROAD: Project Costs					
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	ACTUAL QUANTITY	PRICE PER UNIT	TOTAL ITEM COST
#001	MOBILIZATION	EA	1.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00
#115.3	REMOVAL OF TREES AND STUMPS 24-36"	EA	10.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 45,000.00
#350.11	CONSTRUCTION OF 6" SIDEWALK AND DRIVEWAY	SY	1000.95	\$ 112.00	\$ 112,106.40
#380	BAR/MESH REINFORCEMENT	SY	218.92	\$ 5.00	\$ 1,094.60
#700.01	WORK ZONE TRAFFIC CONTROL	LS	1.00	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 27,000.00
#851	TOPSOIL	SY	411.45	\$ 75.00	\$ 30,858.75
#852	SEED	SY	411.45	\$ 38.00	\$ 15,635.10
			TOTAL COST		\$ 238,194.85
COST TO PROPERTY OWNERS					
-	CONCRETE SIDEWALK	LF	1,425	\$ 55.44	\$ 79,002.00
			TAXPAYER SHARE		\$ 79,002.00
CITY SHARE					
-	TOTAL COST				\$ 238,194.85
-	LESS COST TO PROPERTY OWNERS				\$ (79,002.00)
			CITY SHARE		\$ 159,192.85

[L] CONTRACTOR BID RESIDENT COSTS and [R] NEW PROJECT RESIDENT COSTS (prices):

ADDRESS	STREET	FRONTAGE (ft)	TOTAL COST TO RESIDENT	ANNUAL COST FOR TEN (10) YEARS	QUARTERLY COST
1031	Ardsley	223	\$ 18,221.06	\$ 1,822.11	\$ 607.37
1037	Ardsley	100	\$ 8,170.88	\$ 817.09	\$ 272.36
1043	Ardsley	50	\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
1049	Ardsley	50	\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
1055	Ardsley	compliant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
1061	Ardsley	50	\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
1069	Ardsley	50	\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
1077	Ardsley	50	\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
1085	Ardsley	50	\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
1089	Ardsley	50	\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
1095	Ardsley	50	\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
1345	Union	310	\$ 25,329.72	\$ 2,532.97	\$ 844.32
1034	Ardsley	55	\$ 4,493.98	\$ 449.40	\$ 149.80
1040	Ardsley	45	\$ 3,676.89	\$ 367.69	\$ 122.56
1046	Ardsley	45	\$ 3,676.89	\$ 367.69	\$ 122.56
1052	Ardsley	compliant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
1058	Ardsley	45	\$ 3,676.89	\$ 367.69	\$ 122.56
1064	Ardsley	compliant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
1070	Ardsley	45	\$ 3,676.89	\$ 367.69	\$ 122.56
1076	Ardsley	37	\$ 3,023.22	\$ 302.32	\$ 100.77
1082	Ardsley	compliant	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
1092	Ardsley	120	\$ 9,805.05	\$ 980.51	\$ 326.84
TOTAL FRONTAGE		1,425			

ARDSLEY ROAD: Assesment Cost by Address					
ADDRESS	STREET	FRONTAGE (ft) *	SET PRICE PER LF	ASSESSED COST TO PROPERTY OWNER**** (frontage x price)	ASSESSED COST DIVIDED BY TEN (10) YEARS****
1031	Ardsley	223 **	\$ 55.44	\$ 12,363.12	\$ 1,236.31
1034	Ardsley	55	\$ 55.44	\$ 3,049.20	\$ 304.92
1037	Ardsley	100	\$ 55.44	\$ 5,544.00	\$ 554.40
1040	Ardsley	45	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,494.80	\$ 249.48
1043	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1046	Ardsley	45	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,494.80	\$ 249.48
1049	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1052	Ardsley	0	\$ 55.44	\$ -	\$ -
1055	Ardsley	0	\$ 55.44	\$ -	\$ -
1058	Ardsley	45	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,494.80	\$ 249.48
1061	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1064	Ardsley	0	\$ 55.44	\$ -	\$ -
1069	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1070	Ardsley	45	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,494.80	\$ 249.48
1076	Ardsley	37	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,051.28	\$ 205.13
1077	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1082	Ardsley	0	\$ 55.44	\$ -	\$ -
1085	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1089	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1092	Ardsley	120	\$ 55.44	\$ 6,652.80	\$ 665.28
1095	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1345	Union	310 ***	\$ 55.44	\$ 17,186.40	\$ 1,718.64
TOTAL FRONTAGE		1425			

CONTRACTOR BID SHEET

ARDSLEY ROAD: Contractor Bid

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	PRICE PER UNIT	TOTAL ITEM COST
#001	MOBILIZATION	EA	1	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500
#115.3	REMOVAL OF TREES AND STUMPS 24-36"	EA	8	\$ 4,500	\$ 36,000
#350.11	CONSTRUCTION OF 6" SIDEWALK AND DRIVEWAY	SY	940	\$ 112	\$ 105,280
#380	BAR/MESH REINFORCEMENT	SY	140	\$ 5	\$ 700
#700.01	WORK ZONE TRAFFIC CONTROL	LS	1	\$ 27,000	\$ 27,000
#B51	TOPSOIL	SY	35	\$ 75	\$ 2,625
#B52	SEED	SY	35	\$ 38	\$ 1,330
TOTAL PROPOSAL					\$ 179,435

CITY SHARE

#115.3	REMOVAL OF TREES AND STUMPS 24-36"	EA	8	\$ 4,500	\$ 36,000
#700.01	WORK ZONE TRAFFIC CONTROL	LS	1	\$ 27,000	\$ 27,000
TOTAL CITY SHARE					\$ 63,000

COST TO RESIDENTS

TOTAL PROPOSAL	\$ 179,435
LESS CITY SHARE	\$ (63,000)
COST TO RESIDENTS	\$ 116,435

COST PER FOOT OF FRONTAGE

COST TO RESIDENTS	\$ 116,435
TOTAL FRONTAGE (ft)	1,425
\$/ft	\$ 81.71

ADDRESS	STREET	FRONTAGE (ft)
1031	Ardsley	223
1037	Ardsley	100
1043	Ardsley	50
1049	Ardsley	50
1055	Ardsley	compliant
1061	Ardsley	50
1069	Ardsley	50
1077	Ardsley	50
1085	Ardsley	50
1089	Ardsley	50
1095	Ardsley	50
1345	Union	310
1034	Ardsley	55
1040	Ardsley	45
1046	Ardsley	45
1052	Ardsley	compliant
1058	Ardsley	45
1064	Ardsley	compliant
1070	Ardsley	45
1076	Ardsley	37
1082	Ardsley	compliant
1092	Ardsley	120

TOTAL FRONTAGE	1,425
----------------	-------

TOTAL COST TO RESIDENT	ANNUAL COST FOR TEN (10) YEARS	QUARTERLY COST
\$ 18,221.06	\$ 1,822.11	\$ 607.37
\$ 8,170.88	\$ 817.09	\$ 272.36
\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
\$ 4,085.44	\$ 408.54	\$ 136.18
\$ 25,329.72	\$ 2,532.97	\$ 844.32
\$ 4,494.98	\$ 449.40	\$ 149.80
\$ 3,676.89	\$ 367.69	\$ 122.56
\$ 3,676.89	\$ 367.69	\$ 122.56
\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ 3,676.89	\$ 367.69	\$ 122.56
\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ 3,676.89	\$ 367.69	\$ 122.56
\$ 3,023.22	\$ 302.32	\$ 100.77
\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ 9,805.05	\$ 980.51	\$ 326.84

PROPOSED ARDSLEY COSTS/PRICES for the Jan. 27, 2020 Public Hearing

ARDSLEY ROAD: Project Costs

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	ACTUAL QUANTITY	PRICE PER UNIT	TOTAL ITEM COST
#001	MOBILIZATION	EA	1.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00
#115.3	REMOVAL OF TREES AND STUMPS 24-36"	EA	10.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 45,000.00
#350.11	CONSTRUCTION OF 6" SIDEWALK AND DRIVEWAY	SY	1000.95	\$ 112.00	\$ 112,106.40
#380	BAR/MESH REINFORCEMENT	SY	218.92	\$ 5.00	\$ 1,094.60
#700.01	WORK ZONE TRAFFIC CONTROL	LS	1.00	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 27,000.00
#B51	TOPSOIL	SY	411.45	\$ 75.00	\$ 30,858.75
#B52	SEED	SY	411.45	\$ 38.00	\$ 15,635.10
TOTAL COST					\$ 238,194.85

COST TO PROPERTY OWNERS

-	CONCRETE SIDEWALK	LF	1,425	\$ 55.44	\$ 79,002.00
TAXPAYER SHARE					\$ 79,002.00

CITY SHARE

-	TOTAL COST	\$	238,194.85		
-	LESS COST TO PROPERTY OWNERS	\$	(79,002.00)		
CITY SHARE					\$ 159,192.85

ARDSLEY ROAD: Assessment Cost by Address

ADDRESS	STREET	FRONTAGE (ft)*	SET PRICE PER LF	ASSESSED COST TO PROPERTY OWNER**** (frontage x price)	ASSESSED COST DIVIDED BY TEN (10) YEARS****
1031	Ardsley	223**	\$ 55.44	\$ 12,363.12	\$ 1,236.31
1034	Ardsley	55	\$ 55.44	\$ 3,049.20	\$ 304.92
1037	Ardsley	100	\$ 55.44	\$ 5,544.00	\$ 554.40
1040	Ardsley	45	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,494.80	\$ 249.48
1043	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1046	Ardsley	45	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,494.80	\$ 249.48
1049	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1052	Ardsley	0	\$ 55.44	\$ -	\$ -
1055	Ardsley	0	\$ 55.44	\$ -	\$ -
1058	Ardsley	45	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,494.80	\$ 249.48
1061	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1064	Ardsley	0	\$ 55.44	\$ -	\$ -
1069	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1070	Ardsley	45	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,494.80	\$ 249.48
1076	Ardsley	37	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,051.28	\$ 205.13
1077	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1082	Ardsley	0	\$ 55.44	\$ -	\$ -
1085	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1089	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1092	Ardsley	120	\$ 55.44	\$ 6,652.80	\$ 665.28
1095	Ardsley	50	\$ 55.44	\$ 2,772.00	\$ 277.20
1345	Union	310***	\$ 55.44	\$ 17,186.40	\$ 1,718.64

TOTAL FRONTAGE	1425
----------------	------

- * Frontage determined from Tax Maps.
- ** Additional frontage is for 20 ft on side street to connect to ADA ramps.
- *** Additional frontage is for 20 ft on side street to connect to ADA ramps as well as 100 ft along Union Street.
- **** These costs do NOT include interest.

****Costs do NOT include interest.