

**From:** [Celeste Mazur](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support for 83 Douglas rezoning proposal  
**Date:** Saturday, January 8, 2022 7:20:54 AM

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Dear Saint Paul City Council members,

We would like to express support for the housing project for veterans at 83 Douglas (**File# 21-309-362, 83 Douglas Rezoning**), a partnership between Charles Stephens/Laurel Gamm, Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV), and YardHomes, Inc. In our view, the benefits of this project are twofold - it helps to meet the ongoing housing crisis within the city of Saint Paul, and also it provides support for people in the homeless community who can transition to living independently.

As residents and homeowners in Saint Paul for over 20 years, we are thrilled to see a creative proposal to increase housing options, and to create multi-unit housing on previously empty and unused lots. I'm an instructor at Saint Paul College, where I encounter and hear stories of MANY Saint Paul residents who struggle with the lack of housing availability. In more than 13 years teaching and working with thousands of Saint Paulites, I've heard countless stories of housing scarcity that prevents people from living independently, and in many cases, leads to homelessness. This project has a direct positive impact on the housing crisis in our city.

In addition, we're happy and proud that the city of Saint Paul is considering approving a creative solution for people in the homeless community through this partnership. We live in Macalester-Groveland two blocks from the Project Home shelter in the former provincial house of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet – a partnership between the CSJ community and Interfaith Action of Greater Saint Paul. During the planning stages of this project there were questions, fears and concerns from neighborhood residents about its impact, but it's become a positive and welcome addition to the neighborhood. We're proud of this creative partnership leading to safe and supported housing for residents on their way to more permanent independent living situations. The 83 Douglas proposal has parallels to Project Home - well-designed and supported housing, connection with an organization that provides services for residents, and the ultimate goal of aiding low-income residents toward independent living. We want to see more of this in our city.

Charles Stephens and Laurel Gamm are active Saint Paul residents committed to the common good - at the neighborhood level, through their work as physicians serving veterans and the homeless community, and through owning a community-oriented laundromat on Saint Paul's West Side. We applaud their desire to benefit the city and citizens in this way, and we fully support this project.

Celeste Mazur & Bill Slobotski

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