

07/16/2021

RE: 1297 7th Street West Vacant House Cat. 2 Status

I am contesting the proposed vacant building assessment of the above property for \$2,284.00. My parents purchased this home in 1945 and my two brothers and my sister and I grew up here. At present the home is used as my urban cabin and sanctuary, occupied from time to time just not resided in by family at present. I pay water and sewer to the city and Waste Management for trash removal. I contracted to have the yard maintained during the summer months and the front sidewalk and walkway up to and around the house and in back of the garage cleared of snow and ice during the winter. I also pay along with my neighbors to hire an individual to keep the alley plowed. The utilities (water and Xcel Energy) are connected and working properly and have **always** been paid on time. The exterior and interior of the house are well maintained. I am currently at the house on a weekly and if not daily basis and I am in the process of staining a slat fence in the backyard.

This spring the next door neighbor left a couch in the alley partially on my property and their property. He contacted Waste management regarding picking up the couch. In the meantime a letter was sent by the City to me giving me several days to remove the couch or the City would charge me to remove it. I contacted the City that it was not my couch but my neighbors and they had made arrangements to have the couch picked up. I wanted to be a good neighbor and also contacted Waste Management regarding the couch, but was informed that only the owner can arrange a pick up. Waste Management did share with me that the owner had called regarding the couch but didn't provide them with a pick up date. The couch was eventually picked up by Waste Management. A city employee also entered my yard and filed a report that there were bags of yard waste, a chair, samples of marble and granite and other items. I contacted Rick Gavin regarding this as those items had just been put in the backyard for disposal. The chair had been left by someone on the side of my property so we put it with the other items we were getting rid of. I was in the process of cleaning up the yard and we were going to bring the bags of yard waste to a disposal site that week.

I paid a snow removal company for a number of years to clean the public sidewalk during the winter months. I always paid them in advance for the snow season. They had been previously recommended to me by a neighboring business owner. I never had an issue until February of 2019 when the company stopped coming to remove the snow and ice from the sidewalk. I tried contacting them but the number was disconnected. I contacted Rick Gavin about the situation and indicated I was looking to hire someone for the remainder of the year as I couldn't do it. Being octarian and having MS forces me to hire for those tasks a younger more mobile person might be able to perform. I hired 2 individuals to clean the sidewalk. One was the individual who owned and was renovating the house next door. This

past winter we kept the sidewalk clean of snow and ice. We also cleaned a portion of the neighbor's sidewalk that had access to the street.

Conclusion:

The home should never have been put on the Registry. The city had a very subjective means to determine it w/o inspections. In the 76 years the home has been in the family, the walk has been kept clear and the yard maintained.

The city shut the water off even though bills were being paid because usage had declined or stopped. There was no theft of service.

Due to contractor problems, there was a hick up in getting the sidewalk cleaned for a short time. That has been remedied.

Other parties have been tossing their trash in front of the garage in the alley since trash service changes in 2018-2019. All but one time I have arranged for cleanup. The time was when someone discarded an animal carcass in the alley and Got Junk would not take it and I was not going to handle a possible hazardous item, after finally being able to access it when the neighbor moved the truck and trailer blocking access.

It was these minor and rare issues that put the house on the vacant registry which could have been cat 1 or cat 2. The home is always secured, functional and livable. The house has even been updated through a city program as recent as 1980s for electrical and plumbing. If I were to desire a renter, I would go through the proper inspections and licensing. To sell I would order a Truth in Housing Inspection. At this time, I do not need to be singled out to have this home inspected unnecessarily.