



City of Saint Paul

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Minutes - Final

Legislative Hearings

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Tuesday, February 4, 2020

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House

5 [RLH TA 20-64](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 971 BEECH STREET. (File No. J2010A, Assessment No. 208509)

Sponsors: Prince

Approve the assessment.

Abby Finger, owner, appeared

Moermond: this is a proposed assessment for a property cleanup. Are you an owner occupant or manager?

Finger: I don't live there, I own and manage it.

Staff report by Supervisor Joe Yannarely: this was a Summary Abatement Order sent October 10, removing cabinets, scrap wood, cardboard, trash bags from property by garage, date of orders October 10, 2019, compliance date of October 17, rechecked on October 18, work was done October 21, 2019. Cost of \$322, service charge of \$157 for a total assessment of \$506.

[video shown]

Moermond: video looks the same as the photos, they're all consistent.

Finger: this is back with my challenges with Aspen and the City Inspector. I called Aspen to remove that stuff July 17, I called again September 9, I talked to the hauler in August when they were there they said they would come back the next day. I thought it had already been done. Inspector Thomas came out on October 17, he saw the trash, I told him I would call Aspen again that day, which I did and he said he would put a note in the record. He said he would send me mail, I didn't get it or the first Summary abatement on October 10. I didn't know until I was paying something else that there was a \$500 fee.

Yannarely: Thomas has nothing to do with this.

Moermond: it was a random that there was a C of O inspection in the same time period. You didn't get this notice? Isn't this your address? It was sent to you and the occupant.

Finger: yes, it is my address. I'm expecting with this trash service that if they say they were going to pick it up they would do it.

Yannarely: how did you know it was there if you didn't get the summary abatement order?

Finger: I knew the cabinets were there. I'd been calling Aspen.

Moermond: here is where I'm stuck. The City sent a letter, I'm hearing you say you didn't get it, they are saying there's no returned mail, you're saying you knew the stuff was there. The garage looks like its in disrepair. The stuff beside it looks terrible. It is your responsibility to pick up the piles. I'm struggling with you saying you didn't get the notice.

Finger: I have no idea, I got the notice of this hearing. I'm not saying you didn't send it, I believe it got sent, I just didn't see it. I had removed other cabinets and things from there. They weren't the same cabinets, I've taken out a lot of trash and made a lot of trips to the dump. I didn't want it there. I had Aspen telling me they were picking it up. When I'm there the 17th and I see it is still there.

Moermond: which was actually your deadline to have it done, and the crew didn't show up until the 24th. Thomas may have put a pin in it for you, I also look at this and say that Aspen doesn't have a responsibility to pick up the wet cardboard next to the garage. That's not a bulky item. Junk attracts junk.

Yannarely: there is a notation by the inspector October 18, he said I called Aspen waste and there is nothing scheduled for item pickup at this property. That could be in Thomas telling Stefan that. That's in STAMP on October 18.

Moermond: let's print that page for Ms. Finger. If you had a work order with them, they weren't sharing that with the City. What kind of history here?

Yannarely: August 27, 2018 there was a garbage order. So, a year earlier. And one a year earlier.

Mai Vang: there's one today.

Finger: I bought the property in 2018, that was when the person next door moved their stuff into my backyard.

Leanna Shaff: I put in orders on the garage today.

Finger: it is getting painted and re-sided in the spring.

Moermond: I look at this and think two things, I have the letter going out, you saying you don't have hands on it, you were aware of the situation existing for a long period of time, you talked to the inspector, you say you talked to Aspen about it. When I look at the picture, they don't appear to be organized for a furniture pickup. There are random items, this is not organized in a way I'd expect any hauler to come pickup my one bulky item. It has been this way for a while, I don't know what's inside the garage, but if you're not sorting it out putting it in the garage would solve it too.

Finger: and that's what I would have done if Aspen hadn't told me they were coming to pick it up.

Moermond: you're a property owner and have a responsibility for managing your stuff. I

hear your neighbor dumped it there.

Finger: the cabinets are mine. The drawers. The black plastic bag I would have put in the trash.

Moermond: I honestly think the responsibility comes back to you to maintain the property. I wouldn't want to be the neighbor having to look at this.

Finger: me either.

Moermond: but you didn't do quality control on this, you're not maintaining the property. The very code that gets this cleaned up is the nuisance abatement code.

Finger: I don't disagree with you. I really don't.

Moermond: I would talk to Aspen about it. If you have phone records, I would bring that to their attention, if you're having trouble talking to them talk to Chris Swanson.

Finger: when I called them today the last work order was from September 9 to pickup cabinets.

Moermond: and if they didn't do it, and it went into October, it is on you.

Finger: I wasn't back there until the 17th.

Moermond: six weeks later?

Finger: yes. Usually my tenants tell me if it is not picked up. It is not like I go there every day. So when it was still there I called again. If I knew then it was the deadline for my Summary Abatement, I would have moved it.

Moermond: sorry I don't have a better outcome for you today. I can make it payable over a couple years if that helps.

Finger: I'm going to talk to Chris Swanson, having to pay \$500 is a lot.

Moermond: Council looks at it March 4, 2020. I can make it payable if you want to hedge your bets. I'm sorry I don't have better news for you today.

Referred to the City Council due back on 3/4/2020