

April 9, 2013

To: Legislative Hearing Officer

From: District 1 Community Council, Land Use Committee

Re: Gambling License for 2201 Burns Ave.

As a matter of general principle, the District 1 Community Council has no objections to awarding charitable gambling licenses to businesses in our area. In this particular case, however, neighbors have expressed specific concerns about the impact this added activity will have on the well-being of their area. In an effort to address the needs of the neighbors and of the hotel, and to reap the benefits to eastside organizations that should receive the benefits of the gambling proceeds (the city 10%), we are offering the following suggestions toward a solution.

We understand that the original site plan review for the hotel required certain landscaping amenities that have not been maintained. Lack of mowing along Suburban Avenue, and of upkeep of trees and shrubs in that area have been an on-going problem for neighbors. We suggest that the management commit to proper maintenance of the grounds adjacent to its neighbors, as specified in the original site plan.

In addition, there seems to be periodic overflow parking along both Burns and Suburban Avenues to the west of the hotel that neighbors consider a potential safety hazard. While we understand that these are public streets, we also understand that the hotel had asked McKnight Village to share parking space during those times and that the request was denied. They evidently anticipated that there would be a problem and made one attempt to solve it. We note, however, that there is abundant (even over-abundant) parking in other parts of the district – at SunRay Shopping Center and at the Target lots on Suburban and White Bear. We suggest that management enter discussions with either of these locations to share parking when an overflow is anticipated and then to use their airport shuttle to bring customers to the hotel. This could 1) solve the neighbors' parking concerns, 2) demonstrate a dedication to hotel customers' comfort, and 3) build synergies among the businesses in our area.

We thank the neighbors for bringing their concerns forward. We thank the hotel management in advance for seeking a mutually acceptable solution to those concerns. We look forward to building a more vibrant community with all its members.