

From: Jinny Kolar [mailto:jinny@thekolars.com]
Sent: Saturday, January 5, 2019 12:29 PM
To: *CI-StPaul_Contact-Council <Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: St. Andrews

I am writing to beg you not to destroy the Church of St. Andrews as it is an integral part of the community and a Historic Landmark . The school has ample opportunity to find another more suitable place to expand their school, but they refuse. . Central Lutheran, for example. Save St. Andrews!!

January 10, 2019

Dear Mr. Gause

Re: Historic Designation for St. Andrews & MN Statute 462.357- Variances

My letter is to urge the St. Paul's Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) to recommend approval of the historic designation of the former St. Andrew's church for multiple reasons listed below:

1. **Historic Designation:** The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concerning St Andrew's church concluded in their letter to HPC dated December 11, 2018,

“...We concur that St. Andrew's church is an ideal candidate for local designation...”

The MN SHPO has agreed about historic designation criteria concerning: Romanesque Revival elements, Charles Hausler, Hungarian immigrant community, local architectural significance etc. Therefore, the St. Paul HPC should be recommend that St. Andrew's be historically designated, despite owner's opposition.

One reason for historical designation is that TCGIS tried to have a partial, selective demolition of the St. Andrew's Bell Tower in October 2018, at a public cost of \$65,000 without any significant cost or time savings. Also, there was no public notice, discussion and/or input on this controversial project. St. Paul's Department of Safety and Inspections did not approve plans for partial demolition. The planned 'partial demolition of the church tower' of a major historical building is a key reason why local designation is needed as TCGIS has shown they will make major alterations to the building without input.

TCGIS and supporters argue the St. Paul has never designated a property without owner's consent. My understanding of the National Historical building designation process is that if the owner objects to historical designation, then the property can be listed as historically designated, but with the owner's objection. HPC could verify this. The Federal method of designating historical properties could be used as argumentation for the city council as justification for precedence, that properties are designated at the national level and listed as without owner's consent. Also, the City has no written policy stating that a property can't be listed without owners' consent.

2. **Variations** – As known, TCGIS will need to have three variations (parking, height and area) in order to build a new school and demolish St. Andrew’s. Minnesota State Statute 462.357 governs the municipal variations and conditions to grant a variation, Subd. 6., (2) states the following:

"... Practical difficulties," as used in connection with the granting of a variation, means zoning ordinance; the plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner; and the variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality...."

Here is the link to the Minnesota State Statute which governs city zoning and variations:
<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/462.357>

In December, I called the State Attorney’s Office, to verify that this is a statute. Also, I asked the attorney that since this is a State Statute would their Office be required to investigate and enforce it. The attorney verified the Statute and said that ‘Yes, their office would be required to enforce the Statute’.

In my letter to the Zoning Commission (12/13/18) and my two-minute presentation to their Committee stated the approval of TCGISs requested variations would violate MN Statute because of the following two reasons:

1. The plight of the landowner is created by the landowner and not the property,
2. Variations to allow the TCGIS expansion will alter ‘the essential character of the locality’ by the demolition of St. Andrews and will increase traffic safety problems, parking problems and increased noise.

The State Statute 462.357 governing variations is critical, now that the MN SHPO has evaluated St. Andrew’s church stating in their letter (12/11/19):

“...St. Andrew’s is also architecturally significant at the local level as a distinctive and well-conserved example of the Romanesque Revival style...We concur that St. Andrew’s church is an ideal candidate for local designation...”

Recommendation to approve the variations allowing the demolition of St. Andrew’s would be in violation of MN State Statute 462.357, as demolition will alter an ‘essential characteristic’ of the Warrendale community, as SHPO has stated “St. Andrew’s is also architecturally significant at the local level”

St. Paul has other competing policies in its Comprehensive Plan (economics, education etc.), which need to be noted in HPCs final report. However, State Statute 462.357 on variation approval takes precedence over St. Paul’s other policies. HPC should recommend to City Council, to comply with State Statute 462.357 and not approve the variations which will alter the ‘essential character of the locality’ by the demolition of St. Andrew’s.

3. **Maintenance Costs** - TCGIS has stated their Aula needs: new water heaters, boiler, tuck-pointing, windows, roof, insulation etc. at a cost of up to \$1.1 Million.

First, these items are normal, routine maintenance costs, not historical maintenance costs. There are hundreds of buildings and churches, which are 90+ years old which have new water heaters, boilers, insulations, roof etc. For TCGIS to all of these maintenance items indicates to me, that maintenance could have been intentionally delayed or stopped, in order to self-justify a new building. When TCGIS was presenting photos of cracked roof tiles and cracked brickwork to the Zoning Committee on December 20, they were showing to the City Officials that they are not doing the routine maintenance. If TCGIS is not doing the required maintenance, then TCGIS management could be in violation of City Code 34.36, which states,

“All required equipment and all building space and parts in every structure shall be constructed and maintained to properly and safely perform their intended function accordance with the provisions of the applicable code.”

Secondly, the demolition costs for St. Andrews to my understanding will be on the order of \$2+ million and thus exceed the repair/upgrade costs of about \$1 million. TCGIS presentations typically state the repair costs, but never the demolition cost. The bid cost was \$65,000 for just the partial demolition of the church bell tower last October, which documents that demolition will be very expensive. St. Paul officials should ask TCGIS for the church demolition cost estimate, which needs to be signed by a registered engineer for a project of this magnitude. It would be bad public policy allow to demolition of historically eligible structure, when it could be maintained at a lower cost, and when buildings are required to be properly and safely maintained, according to City Code 34.36.

Third, TCGIS was given a \$2 million loan upgrade the school and church, when they moved in. It appears that no money was spent on the ‘Nuts & Bolts’ mechanical items of the Aula (i.e. water heater, boiler, roof etc.). Given the public expenditure for remodeling the church, only to request demolition of the church 5 years later is BAD public policy and documents TCGIS’s poor planning.

Fourth, Saint Andrews had a church capital improvement project in 1992-1994, with a total cost of \$240,000 for repair of roof, chimney, concrete steps, windows, wood floors, tuck-pointing etc. This repair project was paid entirely by the parish. St. Andrews parish did not ask the public or the Como neighborhood for one penny to fund the repairs. Following the major roof repair, starting in 1997, annual roof maintenance repair of replacing broken tiles was done and the annual costs are tabulated in the attached spreadsheet. The average annual roof repair cost was \$1,478.54 for the years 1997 thru 2009. Father Patrick Ryan would say the ‘We need to be good stewards of the building’.

Good neighbors take care of their property.

In May 2018, I asked TCGIS for their annual roof repair costs and roofing inspection report, but never received a response from TCGIS. St. Paul City officials should ask TCGIS to document how much they have spent on:

1. Yearly roof maintenance
2. Yearly cement work and tuck-pointing.

The main point is St. Andrews paid for and maintained the property. The average annual roof repair cost was a nominal \$1,500 per year for 12 years, after the major roof repair. If TCGIS is not maintaining their property, it is due to their own negligence.

When TCGIS bought the property, they had full knowledge of: the building age, construction, condition, materials, roof construction, fuel use, dimensions, mechanical equipment, windows, insulation, limitations, maintenance needs & costs, etc. of the church. TCGIS could have even asked the church who the architect was. All of St. Andrews records, Catholic Bulletin's etc. document that Charles Hausler is the architect. All TCGIS complaints about Aula maintenance costs, gym size, poor acoustics, no padding, columns etc. should be considered irrelevant. TCGIS knew they were buying a church and a school with 2 sections per grade, not 3 sections. In my opinion, TCGIS made bad planning mistakes in their decision to expand from 2 to 3 sections per grade, which results in the demolition of St. Andrews; along with increased traffic safety issues, lack of parking space for staff and increased noise. The fact is the St. Andrews school was fine with 2 sections per grade for 30 years. When St. Andrew's needed to be expanded, then the churches of Maternity of Mary, St. Rose of Lima and Holy Childhood were created. This is why St. Andrews is considered the 'Mother' church for the other three churches. TCGIS's expansion requirements from 2 to 3 sections per grade is creating the need for variance requests; which are not caused by 'circumstances unique to the property'; therefore, any variances should not be recommended as they would violate State Statute 462.357.

Thank you for consideration of my comments

Steven Greenwood
1111 Argyle
St. Paul, MN

From: Lisa Linnell <linnell70@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, January 06, 2019 5:56 PM

To: Gause, George (CI-StPaul) <George.Gause@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Boulware, Christine (CI-StPaul) <christine.boulware@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Suhan, Allison (CI-StPaul) <allison.suhan@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Cc: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Opposition to Preservation Program and Design Review Guidelines for the Twin Cities German Immersion School

To the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission:

Re: Opposition to Preservation Program and Design Review Guidelines for the Twin Cities German Immersion School

The recent action by the St Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) exposes the deeply flawed approach of considering historical preservation in a vacuum, setting aside the practical consequences of historic designation on the building's owner and the realities cities face as they meet the current and future needs of their dynamic populations. I write in opposition to the "preservation program" and historic designation for the building that is now part of the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS).

First and foremost, the HPC fails to even acknowledge that this building is no longer St Andrew's Church. It was decommissioned and sold by the Catholic Church nearly a decade ago. The Catholic Church did not consider the building architecturally, culturally, or historically significant and sold the building without any preservation restrictions. The 1983 historic survey conducted by Ramsey County shows the property was not considered eligible for local, state, or national designation. The plans for the building are not in Charles Hausler's archives at the University of Minnesota and were never included in the historic designation application. TCGIS opponents like to say "You knew what you were buying." Yes, it knew it was buying a property that the Catholic Church and Ramsey County did not consider historic. For this reason, it is profoundly irresponsible of the city to now attempt to place historic preservation restrictions on the building and its owner, the Twin Cities German Immersion School Building Company.

Second, what is set out in the "Preservation Program and Design Review Guidelines" is not an actionable plan of any sort. It is a wish list being imposed on a nonprofit school by an advisory body, listing no ways that these mandates should be fulfilled and paid for by the building's owner and no acknowledgement of the financial hardships placed on the owner. It even places modifications for sustainability and energy efficiency secondary to purely aesthetic concerns. To expect a nonprofit publicly funded school to set aside its obligations to educate students and devote time, energy, money, and staff resources to the upkeep of a building that is only recently considered "historic" by a few people is preposterous. Why would nonprofit organizations choose to purchase older structures in St Paul, knowing they too could be saddled at any time with an unwanted historic designation pushed for by a small group of marginally interested parties. This is a terrible precedent for St Paul to set and will not serve the long-term interests of St Paul and the goals of its comprehensive plan.

Third, the building has already been significantly altered: church relics and architectural features have been removed, and the back of the building is now attached to the rest of the school. These significant alterations are consistent with the building's current function; it is no longer a church.

How useful is a process that does not consider the practical effects of designation: the additional time and expense to the building's owner of maintaining a historically designated property, the signals sent to potential St Paul property owners that their plans could also be scuttled through unwanted historic designation? I, as a parent and a taxpayer, do not want any additional time, money, and energy taken away from educating TCGIS's students in service to an unwanted historic designation being pursued by a small group of who never use the building and only care about the view from their yards. For the HPC to suggest to TCGIS that historic preservation of a building should be a priority over the school's educational mission is the kind of attitude St Paul should leave behind.

Using historic preservation as a weapon against redevelopment is like trying to preserve the city in amber, telling thriving institutions like TCGIS that they are not welcome in St Paul and should move out. (In fact, some have already said this.) Applying an overly broad definition of "historic" that encompasses anything "old" would leave much in this city untouchable, with the rules of the game dictated by those who have little investment in the outcome, who value exterior aesthetics over function, who like to look at a building but not actually use it. St Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan is just that: comprehensive. City Commissions and elected officials need to look holistically about the needs of the city residents, including supporting thriving schools that make the city attractive to families and prepare St Paul's youngest residents for life-long success.

The city should not set the precedent of allowing historic preservation designation over the objection of building owners, and it should not look at historic preservation in a purely academic context, ignoring

the practical effects, which is exactly what this preservation program does. When historic preservation is used as a weapon, what does the city expect to gain?

Lisa Linnell and Charles Nielson

1472 Holton Street

Saint Paul, MN 55108

From: ronb2000@comcast.net [<mailto:ronb2000@comcast.net>]

Sent: Wednesday, January 16, 2019 7:36 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Twin Cities German Immersion School

Hello

I am a 1957 graduate of St Andrews Grade School and I treasure my experience as former student and member of St Andrews Church. Recently I have become aware of the TC German Immersion School and the wonderful job that they are doing for the students that have chosen to enroll there. I fully support the school and its vision for the future. While this may involve the replacement of the building that was once a church and is now an inadequate gym/cafeteria, I believe that this is clearly in the best interests of the community and entire city. Please do everything that you can to encourage and support this school as they build on their past success and move forward. Decades from now, I am sure that TCGIS students will look back in fondness at their time spent there as I recall my time at St Andrews.

Sincerely,

Ronald Bierbaum

From: Daniel Wheeler [<mailto:wheel027@umn.edu>]

Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2019 1:01 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward4

Subject: Twin Cities German Immersion School - building project

Councilmember Jalali Nelson,

I am so proud to call you my Ward 4 Councilmember! I have been following your work on affordable housing as well as transit and sustainability as these are also interests of mine. I am also keen to see your land use perspectives on the Saint Paul Port Authority. Keep up the great work!

Today I am writing to request your support of the Twin Cities German Immersion School's building project near Como Park in Saint Paul. This school is clearly teaching our youth from a much-needed global perspective - while acting locally. This is apparent in many of the school activities and in the building project as well. Our family has been humbled by the reach of this school across cities, states and

continents. Our daughter continues to learn so much about cultures, traditions, beliefs, etc. from teachers, interns and students. This is the ideal use for this property and location in Saint Paul!

I would be happy to discuss any details further with you either over email or in person. Thank you for your support!

Dan Wheeler

--

Dan Wheeler
1672 Hubbard Ave
St. Paul, MN 55104

From: Kelly Rogers [mailto:kjrogers_17@yahoo.com]

Sent: Sunday, January 20, 2019 2:42 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: : Support for TCGIS

St Paul City Council Members,

I am writing today in support of the TCGIS building project. I don't have a child that goes to TCGIS, but I live in the neighborhood on Chatsworth St. I have remained on the sidelines on this issue basically because I didn't think my opinion was needed. However, after seeing more and more news that the school is still fighting an uphill battle to make the necessary improvements to their space, I feel perhaps you aren't hearing enough from the side of supporters in the area.

I want the school to succeed. I want them to expand and meet the needs of current and future students. I want them to stay in the neighborhood and not be pushed out by some disgruntled and boisterous neighbors. Why? Because I believe the positives the school brings to our neighborhood outweigh the negative. The playground is lovely, they installed rain gardens to be good stewards of the lake/environment. I've seen students doing trash pick up. I also see the school administrators trying to improve the number one complaint which is traffic and parking. Bussing, carpools etc have all been started and it seems they're open to improving those efforts.

I believe there is far more support to keep the school in the area, than the opposition...we just didn't realize it would even be an issue! It only makes sense to meet them where they are at with their building variances. If TCGIS is pushed out because they're too popular and growing, what goes into that space? Another group that's willing to keep up the grounds? Work with neighbors or will a vacant church stand and continue to deteriorate over time? I feel annoyed people are telling a school what to do with their buildings!

I have no intention of sending my daughter to TGIS as we have chosen a local private school, but I do believe it would be a big mistake to not meet the request of this ever popular school. I do not support the historical designation of a property against the wishes of the property owner. I understand the neighbor's argument to not want to lose the visual of the church, but it's not their choice anymore. The school owns the building. Let them do what they wish. I am sure more teachers, & families that attend the school would love to be new neighbors should those that don't want change leave.. TCGIS has helped put St Paul/Como area on the map for many people – it will help Central HS down the road as

well with enrollment. I think we are being short sighted if the City Council chooses not to work with the school on their plans to improve their land.

Students are the future of St Paul—why not give them a great school building to learn and grow in vs an old abandoned church to retrofit? They've tried—times up! Time to move on to something nicer, more current and from the plans I have seen online very aesthetically pleasing!

St Andrew's had it's turn, times have changed. TCGIS should be able to use the land they own as they see fit and if that means taking the church down and building something new, nothing should stand in the way of that. The improvements the school has brought to that block over the years goes without saying. Let's keep a good, vibrant, forward thinking neighbor in the hood!

Thank you for your time, feel free to share this with decision making subcommittees.

Sincerely,
Kelly Schwab
[Chatsworth St N](#)
[St Paul MN 55103](#)

From: Tim Johnson [<mailto:tim.johnson@positivelightmedia.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2019 11:32 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: German Immersion School

Dear Mr. Bostrom,
I live in your district at 995 Orange Avenue East in St. Paul.

I'm writing to express my support for the expansion of the German Immersion School in St. Paul.

I have friends who send their kids to this school and feel that not supporting their efforts for expansion is not good for the school or the city. I also feel that it's not fair for them to have to fight the historic designation that was requested after they bought the property. This editorial provides great context of the challenges faced by the school:

https://www.parkbugle.org/german-immersion-school-makes-case-for-church-site-rebuild/?fbclid=IwAR3uQQNRaPZEYZXB1r1UPBIBKICTTMvcB-bkldfErBRrZn1HvEI_yM0lgPM

It is my sincere hope that this will come to a good resolution. Thank you for having an open mind about this issue as the St. Paul City Council moves to address it.

Gratefully,
Tim

Dear Councilmember Nelson:

I'm sorry I missed your office hours this morning; I would have loved to deliver this in person!

My family has lived in the West Como neighborhood since 1995. My two sons are a 5th grader and a kindergartner at the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS).

A vocal group of activists and neighbors have taken it upon themselves to push TCGIS out of the neighborhood (MY neighborhood!) by whatever means necessary. As a Como resident, this makes me sad. As a parent, this makes me angry. The current matter at hand is the "preservation" of the Aula; the former sanctuary of the long defunct church. Please take the opportunity to tour it. It has been significantly changed to remove religious icons, windows etc. and is now permanently attached to the modern school building. There is no "church" to restore or maintain.

Less than one third of the school property is the sanctuary of the former St. Andrew's Church, which is owned by the Twin Cities German Immersion School Building Company. After two years of study and deliberation, TCGIS has determined that the former church building does not provide adequate or appropriate space for the students' needs and has decided to replace it with a new purpose-designed structure.

St Paul should be proud of TCGIS. It is an excellent, publicly-funded school serving St Paul families that also draws families from outside St Paul to live, shop and enjoy all the city has to offer. Investment in education is rightly part of St Paul's comprehensive plan. The TCGIS building project also aligns with the City's vision for smarter use of urban space, including greater density and projects that improve watersheds (an important design element in the TCGIS building project). I urge the City Council to approve the site plan and variances requested by TCGIS and reject the "weaponized" historic designation being sought by school opponents. In fact, the proposed "historic building" plan from HPC includes portions of the new addition, and odd chunks of an outside shed and other bits of property. It simply doesn't make sense.

The plan developed by TCGIS will accomplish a very important goal: provide a better learning environment for students and staff. Because of the school's successful educational program, more families are staying at TCGIS during middle school years, increasing the student body, which will top out at a maximum of 3 classes per grade, K-8. This building project is not an "expansion" of the school, as opponents choose to characterize it; it is developing appropriate space in a school that is successfully retaining students. Special education students should receive services in private spaces, not hallways; a gymnasium should not have arches with sharp corners and deafening acoustics. Teachers should have adequate space for class preparation. My son should not have to do his extra reading lessons in a hallway in front of anyone who walks by. **The building should function as a school.**

I have been frustrated and dismayed by the obstacles placed in TCGIS's way by a small but vocal group of activists, calling themselves "Save Historic St Andrew's," and their allies in city offices. A member of the St. Paul's Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) helped draft the petition to the HPC requesting historic designation for the building, against the objections of TCGIS. The St Paul Zoning Committee rejected its staff's recommendation to approve TCGIS's variance requests and site plan, citing their **private conversations** with an SHSA member who formerly sat on the St Paul Planning Commission, **one-sided conversations** on the Save Historic St Andrew's advocacy Facebook page, and incorrectly characterizing the school as a "commuter school." I dispute this last reason, as my family lives in Como Park, and approximately 50% of the student body is from St Paul. My children (and many others and staff) ride bikes or walk to school when weather permits.

This is no different than any other St. Paul school; many Como residents “commute” to Saint Anthony Park Elementary or other schools for example.

In addition, the group falsely characterizes the school as segregated (even dragging in the NAACP) which is an insult to the many families of color and from other backgrounds whose children attend the school. While the upper grades are largely white Europeans (to be expected from the mostly German founding families), the lower grades are a wonderful mix. My older son’s class includes children of Korean, Mongolian, Turkish, African American, Somali and Chinese backgrounds. (Full disclosure: my children are African American.) The school functions under the standard state lottery process for admission and we were lucky winners in that! I strongly encourage city officials to better educate themselves on public charter schools, how they are funded and how their student population is built. This has been a severe detriment (and distraction) to this important conversation.

St Paul should not set the precedent of granting historic preservation over the objections of a building’s owner. There was no historic designation attached to the building when it was purchased; neither the Catholic Diocese nor the Vatican Canonical real estate agents sought historic designation when the Catholic Church owned the building. Surveys conducted by the City of St Paul (2001) and Ramsey County (1983) did not find the building eligible for historic designation. The recent claim that the building is “historic” is specifically to thwart TCGIS’s building project. As one St Paul Planning Commissioner described it, historic designation is being “weaponized.” Allowing this designation will signal to those interested in buying older buildings in the city that they, too, could have their plans scuttled by a small but loud group of activists with virtually no stake, positive or negative, in the outcome and bearing absolutely no financial impact.

TCGIS is already bearing the costs of these activists’ agenda: time, money and energy being diverted from educating students toward fighting this unwanted historic designation. I, **as a parent and a taxpayer**, am outraged by what I see as St Paul’s complicity in this. The City Council needs to put an end to these seemingly endless rounds of meetings, hearings, and reconsideration and approve the school’s site plan and variances and reject this unwanted historic designation.

I encourage you to **deny this historic designation** and allow the school to move forward, thrive and continue to produce amazing global citizens that our city can be proud of. As a professional in the field of international communications, I can attest to the need for such globally-minded workers at companies with locations throughout St. Paul and the Twin Cities as a whole. Allowing a group of small-minded residents to stunt this future-focused school and its contributions to the city is a waste of taxpayer money and a sad statement on the values outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.

Thank you for your service to Ward 4 and St Paul.

Lyn Throckmorton
1378 Albert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55108

From: Lisa [<mailto:hager.koenig@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Friday, January 25, 2019 3:34 PM

To: *CI-StPaul_Contact-Council <Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Cc: Freking, Heidi (CI-StPaul) <heidi.freking@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Renstrom, Scott (CI-StPaul) <scott.renstrom@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Support TCGIS

Interim City Councilman Kassim Busuri

St Paul Ward 6

via email

Dear Councilmember Busuri,

Thank you for your willingness to represent St Paul's ward 6 on an interim basis. As a resident of ward 6, I am happy to have you and know you will represent our interests and those of the great city of St Paul.

I am writing today about an issue that impacts my family deeply and that needs your support and attention: Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) and its need to renovate its property. I request that you support TCGIS's request because success for our school goes hand in hand with success for the city of St Paul.

TCGIS is a K-8 public charter school. It has 580 students, with 264 living in St Paul (46%), including mine. My sons (kindergarten and 2nd grade) receive special education services through the school and are learning every day. We explored many options, both public and private, when we deciding which schools to apply to and TCGIS was my top choice- I feel so lucky to be able to send my kids to TCGIS.

In 2013 TCGIS purchased a vacant former church property in the Warrendale/Como neighborhood of St Paul and breathed new life into it by building vibrant, successful charter school. TCGIS families are moving to the neighborhood, some have bought up vacant or foreclosed properties in close proximity to the school. TCGIS teachers deliberately move to the neighborhood as home buyers or long-term renters. Residents in that area have enjoyed increased property values as a result of TCGIS families and teachers moving in and the success and stability of the school.

TCGIS is a good neighbor. It has hosted national night out and other gatherings. The neighborhood benefits from quiet nights, quiet weekends, and those times when school is out of session such as winter and spring breaks and summers. TCGIS installed rain gardens to add beauty and capture the environmental benefits of storm water filtration and pollinator habitat. TCGIS students pick up trash as a volunteer activity in the neighborhood. TCGIS also organizes community events like the Oktoberfest Fun Run and the Halloween Parade.

TCGIS has determined through a lengthy and thorough process that it must renovate its property in order to meet its obligations as a public school. Namely, it needs to provide additional classroom space, special education space, and it must provide a safer space for physical education. As a parent whose child receives special education services and whose child has been injured in the unsafe space, I know the need to remodel is real.

Please note that the property TCGIS purchased is zoned R4 and that a school is an allowed use for R4. The city of St Paul does not differentiate between traditional public, public charter, or private schools when considering variances for an allowed use.

The school has faced opposition from a small but vocal neighborhood group who opposes the school's efforts because they will involve remodeling a portion of the school that was once a lovely church. They want to designate the school property as a historic or find ways to block reasonable variances in TCGIS' building plan that would undermine the remodeling effort. Their interests and demands are unreasonable. They do not align with student needs, property owner rights, the city's own Code of Ordinances, or the city's long term planning goals outlined in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The majority of testimony in public hearings held regarding the remodeling plans support TCGIS. Of those supporters, most are St. Paul residents. Please consider this when the issue comes before you and **vote in support of TCGIS**. I will reach out again later this winter when you are sworn in and the topic is on the agenda for the council. In the meantime, if you would like to discuss my request or would like additional information, please contact me or see the [TCGIS building project page](#). I appreciate your support!

Sincerely,

Lisa Koenig

[876 Rose Ave E](#)
[St Paul, MN 55106](#)

To Whom it may Concern,

I am writing to you to express my opposition to the historic designation of the former Saint Andrews church building on Como Avenue.

This building was sold to the Twin Cities German Immersion School ((TCGIS) a number of years ago because the attendance at the former Saint Andrews church had dropped so low that the diocese decided to merge this congregations with another and close and sell the building. There was no community opposition to selling the former Saint Andrew school and church buildings to TCGIS and the school bought both buildings in good faith thinking it could now make this location its permanent home.

As with any home that is purchased, when one purchases and then owns a structure, one has the reasonable expectation that one should be able to make the changes needed to make the home suitable for its owners. This is what TCGIS also expected. After much research and after looking into many, many other options, TCGIS came to the conclusion that, to best serve its students, it would need to rebuild a portion of its property. Some of the neighbors are now trying to prevent this by getting a Historic Designation for the former church building.

I live in the immediate vicinity of TCGIS and I am one of the neighbors who does **not** wish to prevent TCGIS from making the school serviceable for its students. I oppose the Historic Designation for this reason. The building is no longer a church - it is now part of a school. It is not reasonable to expect that a school should try to maintain it's structure based on it's **former** use. A school should be permitted to maintain (or alter) its structure to suit it's **own** needs.

My family purchased our home from a single person with no children. Just, as we needed to change our home to meet the need of our current family (not its former owner) so should TCGIS be permitted to do so. I feel the Historic Designation would place an undue burden on the school to maintain the building in a way that does not best serve its students.

Further, I feel that forcing such a designation on the school, could put us in jeopardy of losing the school from our neighborhood. This, I feel would be a terrible loss. TCGIS has completely revitalized my neighborhood and has filled a void in our community. We should do all that we can to keep TCGIS in its current location.

With best regards,

Evelyn Stillwell
1099 Chatsworth Street
Saint Paul, MN, 55103

Hello,

Yesterday (January 26th) I sent an email to you expressing my opposition to the historic designation of a portion of the TCGIS building. In case it was not entirely transparent in my letter, I live in the immediate neighborhood of TCGIS and also teach at the school.

Best,
Evelyn Stillwell

From: Faith Asper [<mailto:faithasper@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, January 22, 2019 7:24 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Support for German Immersion School Expansion

Hi Amy -

I am Como resident (1005 Idaho Ave West). I understand that it is possible that the city council may need to review and approve the German Immersion School plans for expansion.

I wanted to send my support for the German Immersion School. If the German Immersion school was not allowed to move forward with their building plans, I fear that the school would be forced to vacate the area. I think that our neighborhood benefits from having a stable occupant in the area.

I find it odd that the group opposed to the school expansion has chosen to come forward now. Where was this group several years ago when the Catholic church was selling the property? Why didn't they ask for historic designation of the church at that time?

I hope that the expansion plans do not need to be elevated to the city council. But if so, please know that I stand behind the German Immersion School. I'm proud to have this school as part of our community.

Thank you.
Faith M. Asper

From: Julie Elias <shamrockdame@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2019 10:33 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward2

Subject: AGAINST Historic Preservation Designation at TCGIS Property

Dear Councilmember Noecker,

Thank you for this opportunity to present my opinion about the historic preservation discussion regarding the former St. Andrews building near Como park.

My children have all attended Twin Cities German Immersion School. We have been a part of this community since 2005, the school's 2nd year in operation. Through the years we have grown from 40 students to its current 585 students. During these years we have moved 3 times as the school grew. In 2012, thanks to our school community, our past and present directors, our board, and its conservative planning, we were able to buy the buildings and buildout the current location, making it our "forever home", wonderful accomplishment for our community and a testament to our dedication and competence. We felt very lucky to have found this space and this location.

Over these past 6 years we have increased the vitality and value of the Warrendale neighborhood in numerous ways. We rebuilt and upgraded the existing buildings and filled them with vitality and life again. Teachers and TCGIS families continue to move to the neighborhood to be close to school, buying or renting. This increase in demand and quality has raised property values for residents. TCGIS has made the pre-existing school site greener by landscaping and adding play areas, turf fields, and rain gardens that have improved the character of the surrounding area with greater stormwater filtration and served as pollinator habitat for monarch butterflies. These improvements have benefited the Warrendale neighborhood and the city at large.

Thanks to our successful academic program and community, we have encountered new challenges. First, the enrollment projections for our current school building have been surpassed by a full section per grade in grades 5-8, creating an unforeseen lack of space. Second, TCGIS is experiencing a need for smaller learning spaces, a need currently handled by having staff meet with students in hallways. Third, our growing student population requires two gym classes run at the same time. We meet that need by using the gym and the cafeteria for now, but that option won't be available as we continue to grow. Finally, our cafeteria is overcrowded at lunchtime.

A forced preservation of a historic building will have a deep and negative impact on the prosperity, safety and welfare of the people who learn, study and work within that building. Please consider comments made by several members of the Planning Commission's Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee which indicated that historical designation should not be used as "a weapon" by people who will not have to carry any responsibility, including any financial obligation, for the burden imposed when there is a designation over the property owner's objection.

TCGIS is confident the full City Council will do the right thing and approve the school's construction project when it meets to discuss the plan. The only German immersion school in the state, TCGIS is a model Minnesota public charter school. TCGIS gives Minnesota kids the chance to engage with the world.

Thank you for your sincere consideration,
Julie Elias

Please consider visiting the comprehensive [TCGIS building website](https://www.tcgisbuildingproject.org/) at <https://www.tcgisbuildingproject.org/>

From: Dani Nicholson <serendipitousdani@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 26, 2019 4:25 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Reject Historic Designation of former St. Andrew's

January 26, 2019
Council Member Thao
St. Paul City Council
25 Fourth Street West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council Member Thao,

I write today urging you to DENY the applicable for local historic designation of what is currently the Twin Cities German Immersion School and formerly St. Andrew's Catholic Church. The owner is against historic designation and I believe it would set a dangerous precedent to allow a group with no liability to insist what a property owner does with their property.

When the school purchased the property from the Archdiocese in 2013 there was no discussion of historic designation. A group of neighbors decided to petition for historic designation five years after the sale of the property. They would like to see the City put the financial burden of care and maintenance of a former church that has been largely altered on a thriving non-profit. While I try to believe the intention is noble, what I hear in neighborhood meetings and see online is that some of these folks are annoyed about parking and traffic near their homes. Please do not allow historical designation be used as a weapon to keep Twin Cities German Immersion School, and St. Paul, from prospering.

Thank you for your time and service,
Dani Nicholson
1751 Lafond Ave.
St. Paul
Ward 4

From: Rich Iwen <richiwen@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 30, 2019 1:20 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1; #CI-StPaul_Ward2; #CI-StPaul_Ward3; #CI-StPaul_Ward4; #CI-StPaul_Ward5; #CI-StPaul_Ward6; #CI-StPaul_Ward7
Cc: *CI-StPaul_Mayor
Subject: Please reject historic preservation at TCGIS

Dear City Council and Mayor Carter,

I am writing to urge you to vote No on any historic preservation designation for the former St. Andrews church in the Como neighborhood, now owned by Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS). The historic designation has been pushed by a group of neighbors known as "Save Historic St Andrews" (SHSA.) There are a number of reasons why I ask you to vote no:

1) TCGIS does not want historic designation. This would be the first instance of historic designation applied against the owner's wishes, and would constitute, in my mind, an act of government restricting the rights of the property owner without compensation. SHSA, the group pushing for designation, would carry none of the financial burden of designation, nor would they bear any of the impact on the designation, as they do not use the building at all.

2) TCGIS is a public school funded entirely by state education dollars. Any historic designation would force the school to use state education dollars on historic preservation.

3) TCGIS has adaptively reused the former St. Andrews for the last 5 years as a makeshift gym and cafeteria. Due to increased student retention in the higher grades (not increased enrollment or expansion), TCGIS needs more classrooms, a standard sized gym, and a larger cafeteria - a total of 24,000 square feet of purpose-built educational space. The former St. Andrews is approximately 18,000 square feet. It is impossible to create 24,000 sq ft in a 18,000 sq ft building. SHSA has claimed repeatedly that continued or different "adaptive reuse" would meet TCGIS's needs, but have failed to offer any suggestions as to how that might happen. And again, the property owner has the right to determine the best use for their property.

4) The historic designation proposal makes several claims as to why the building should be preserved: The architect, Charles Hausler, who was also the first city architect of St. Paul, a Hungarian community which existed in Como in the 1930s and 1940s, and some architectural elements of the building. I'll address each of these items in turn.

4a): Charles Hausler: He was indeed the first City Architect of St. Paul. He also designed several other churches in St. Paul, which are still being used as churches, and several schools, which are being used as schools. The historic preservation guidelines state that the best candidate for preservation is a building still being used for its original purpose. If Historic Preservation Commission wishes to preserve Hausler's work, there are other buildings being used for their intended purpose, which may be owned by owners willing and interested in having their buildings designated. TCGIS's building is not being used for its original purpose, and has been substantially altered.

4b) Hungarian community: There may have been a Hungarian community in Como seventy years ago. This community no longer exists in any way whatsoever. The heyday of this community lasted 20 years. TCGIS has already been in the Como building for 5 years, with no plans to move. TCGIS will, if allowed, soon have a longer history in the Como neighborhood than this lost Hungarian community. I believe people have priority over memories.

4c) The historic proposal claims that the building is unique in some ways, but that is simply not the case.

5) SHSA has falsely claimed that TCGIS has focused exclusively on tearing down the building. This is not true. TCGIS examined building to the east of the former St.

Andrews, and also the west, but both options would require extreme zoning variances, reduce playground space for school children, and would be unaffordable. See slides 47-50 in the powerpoint presentation that was given to the St Paul Zoning Committee on Dec 20, 2018

here: <https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Planning%20%26%20Economic%20Development/TCGIS%20Zoning%20Committee%20Slides%20-%2012202018.pdf>

In short, the property owner has determined that the only feasible way to achieve the required and desired goals on the site is to remove the former St. Andrews and rebuild on that site.

6) The former St Andrews church has been significantly altered by a 2014 addition which abuts directly onto the rear of the building.

7) The boundaries of the proposed preservation lot do not make any sense. The Historic Preservation Commission approved the historic site boundaries on January 14, 2019. Their proposed boundaries can be seen in slide 60

here: <https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Planning%20%26%20Economic%20Development/1-14-19%20St%20Andrews%20Full%20HPC%20Staff%20Report%20packet%20for%20web.pdf>

They propose to designate one-half of a storage shed, straddling lot 11 & 12. They propose to designate half of an entryway that was constructed as part of the 2014 addition (seen in the upper left corner of lot 12). This simply does not make any sense.

I ask you to reject the historic preservation application for all the reasons. The residents of District 10 voted in favor of the variances required for TCGIS's new building plan with solid majorities on December 5, 2018.

The Twin Cities German Immersion School is a public school, drawing nearly half of it's students from St Paul. It is the only German immersion school in Minnesota, and one of the very few in the US. TCGIS is an asset to the City of St. Paul and the Como / Warrendale neighborhood:

- TCGIS is the only German-immersion school in Minnesota.
- TCGIS is one of the very few German-immersion schools in the country.
- TCGIS brings 15-30 intern teachers from Germany to St. Paul every year for a semester or the entire year. TCGIS literally is raising the profile of St. Paul and Minnesota internationally, and creating long-lasting relationships around the world.
- TCGIS hires both locally and internationally; people move from Germany to live and work in St. Paul at this school.
- TCGIS hosts 30-40 8th-grade students from Germany every September. The first impression these kids have of the United States is that of St. Paul, Minnesota.

Historic preservation will dramatically restrict the ability of TCGIS to provide a modern comprehensive education to our children. Please reject this designation proposal and allow TCGIS to use and build on its property as it sees fit. I am happy to answer any questions you may have about my letter, and also encourage you to review tcgisbuildingproject.org for more information on the entire process and plan to date.

Thank you,

Rich Iwen
TCGIS parent
2436 30th Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Dear Councilmember Nelson:

Thank you for your service.

I am a longtime resident of Ward 4 and District 10. My son started kindergarten this fall at the Twin Cities German Immersion School.

He is adopted and has had some struggles with physical and social/emotional development. That is why I am so pleased with the school: he is doing great.

I have never contacted you on any matter, but feel strongly that the school should be allowed to use the space it has to provide even better service to our children.

The church property was vacant for many years. The neighborhood is zoned R4 and the school is an allowed use for R4.

Please support the building they have proposed.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Gardner, Esq.
1483 Albert St. N.
St. Paul, MN 55108

January 28, 2019

The Honorable Chris Tolbert
Councilmember, Ward 3
Saint Paul City Council

Via email: Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Re: Historic designation of former St. Andrews Church (I am opposed)

Dear Councilmember Tolbert:

My family lives in Ward 3, but I am writing to you about a project in Ward 5 because I believe it has implications for the entire City.

The City Council will soon consider whether to designate the former St. Andrews Catholic Church as a historic property. The former church was closed by the archdiocese in 2011 and sold in 2013 to the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS), a public charter school established under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 124E. The TCGIS proposes to demolish the obsolete church building and construct a purpose-built educational facility that better serves the needs of its students.

I have no personal interest in the former church or in the TCGIS. I did live within sight of the property for over a decade, so I know the neighborhood fairly well. We also considered enrolling our children at the TCGIS, but when our oldest son was accepted at nearby Randolph Heights, we chose the “walkable” option.

While I generally support protection of historic resources, I oppose this designation because it sends three very discouraging messages to anyone who might want to invest in our City.

Message 1: The city will designate your property “historic” without your consent, and will essentially prohibit you from redeveloping. This can happen even if you purchased the property just 6 years ago, with “no strings attached” and with no warning signs that the site could soon be found “historic.”

Message 2: The City will designate your property “historic” if a handful of vocal neighbors, former parishioners, and architecture buffs push hard enough for it - even though the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) has twice before (in both 1983 and 2001) found the property not “eligible for designation” and not “recommended for further designation study”.

Message 3: The City will designate your property “historic” even if the Planning Commission finds the designation inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

We need people to invest in our City. We need people to redevelop vacant properties. We should not discourage investment by changing the rules for a property shortly after purchase, and we should not designate a property if the owner objects. The City should review its list of potentially historic properties, and make clear its intentions with regard to designation every time one of these properties is offered for sale, to allow interested buyers to make an informed decision.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments, for your service to the City, and especially for your service to the residents of Ward 3.

Katie Stromberg
1267 Palace Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105

From: Nancy Strege <n.strege@comcast.net>

Sent: Monday, February 4, 2019 8:43 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Choose a Brighter Future for St. Paul Neighborhood: Reject a Historic Designation of the Twin Cities German Immersion School Property

St. Paul City Councilmember Thao,

In past years, the upper grades at Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) had one, maybe two, classes per grade level. In 2013, my daughter started TCGIS with three kindergarten classes of approximately 24 kids per class. She's now in the fifth grade, and her grade level size remains about the same as when she started. This is true for the other grades ahead of her. Students are no longer leaving our school once they hit middle school grade levels, which is a great testament to the extraordinary educational opportunities TCGIS provides.

TCGIS's incredible success, however, has caused some growing pains. Today inside TCGIS, for example, special education classes and other meetings are held in hallways; there's no proper gymnasium/auditorium despite growing sports and performing arts programs; and students eat lunch in shifts starting mid-morning in order to accommodate everyone in the small cafeteria.

Should you vote to designate a building on our school campus a historical site, as a small, vocal group is now asking you to do, you will prevent TCGIS from properly revamping the property we own, and will force us to tell students who have attended TCGIS their entire school careers to go somewhere else. That's the best case. The worst, and more likely, case is that TCGIS will be financially forced to close its doors. And then what? A lovely St. Paul neighborhood will be home to an abandoned old building that will continue to decay because no other entity in its right mind would want to purchase the property and have to deal with all of this mess. That hardly sounds like a winning plan for the future of this currently vibrant Como Park neighborhood. Perhaps you should ask District 10 residents near the former Shalom Home property on Midway Parkway how they enjoy living with an abandoned commercial property in their vicinity.

As a council member, you surely understand that St. Paul and the neighborhoods within it are living, evolving entities. I believe it is extremely bad precedent to lock down city property owners with historic preservation designations simply to maintain an aesthetic stasis that benefits only a small number of people at the expense of a great many others. If the historic preservation designation had been weaponized against St. Paul's early city planners as it is being used against TCGIS today, St. Paul would never have progressed past the shanty towns built by the first settlers to become one of the "most livable cities in America."

I admit that our world has become generic in many aspects, so I understand why people want desperately to hold on to places built in by gone eras. No doubt, there is a time and a place for historic preservation. In this case, however, the opportunity cost of preservation is future greatness. While this old church building has history, its useful life has come and gone. It is now time to move forward in creating a space that will properly meet the needs of this unique and vibrant school community and that will greatly contribute to the ongoing vitality of this quaint neighborhood.

I wholeheartedly urge you, as a leader charged with shaping St. Paul's future, to consider the long-term impact your decision will have for generations to come. How does a crumbling former church building fit into that future compared with a modern space created specifically for teaching children to think broadly and optimistically about the world? Please reject the petition to turn our school property into a historic location.

Nancy S. Strege
2508 Matilda Street
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

Council Member Busuri,

I am writing in regards to the proposed expansion of the German Immersion School. I am a neighbor one block from the school with two children, four and six, one of who attends the school so far. We have owned a house in Saint Paul's District 10 for nine years now.

This school is the backbone of our community and the reason that so many of us have moved into the neighborhood. The school has only been at this location five years and already families have poured

into this neighborhood to be at this school.

The school has absolutely done so much to engage our neighborhood in the design process:

- They attempted about 20 different configurations, almost all of which avoided demolition, including trying to buy adjacent houses.
- They held many meetings where the school invited the SHSA group to work together for a compromise and design together. The progress that was made was completely lost when a few of the SHSA folks decided they no longer wanted to compromise on adaptive reuse and wrote the school an email in June, 2018 that stated: "SHSA is seeking local designation, which doesn't need the permission of the property owner." and that's when SHSA stopped coming to the joint working sessions.
- The school still holds monthly planning meetings where SHSA folks attend, but they no longer contribute.
- The school has presented many times to District 10 in good faith to engage the community.
- The school has done so much with us neighbors in mind, including expanding from one bus to five, the proposed solid fence, lighting, public art on the new building, and involvement from the community.

Our neighborhood is overwhelmingly in support of the remodel.

- On 12/5/18 At the District 10 meeting, residents voted overwhelmingly to approve the variances.
- On 12/14/18 The City Planning Committee rejected the historical designation by a vote of 12 to 1.
- On 12/19/18 District 10 voted to approve all 3 variances.
- On 12/20/18 At the last zoning committee hearing, of the St Paul residents, 68 people spoke in favor compared to 19 against. That's only 20% against the project!
- Of our neighbors within sight of the school (2 blocks) only 17% of the houses have SHSA signs.
- The actual number of neighbors opposed to this project only totals about two dozen.

Our neighborhood is absolutely behind this project. We want this project.

We should be able to live in a community where our elected leaders represent the *MAJORITY* views of our community and not a few squeaky wheels. If you want to represent your people, then you must look at the numbers. I don't want to live where my neighbor can tell me against my will that I need to historically designate my house when they didn't designate theirs. Or that I can't put a window in my house because she liked how the last neighbor had it looking.

A week ago 1252 Como Boulevard E, a vacant lot overlooking Como Lake, came on the market for \$350,000. My wife and I immediately lined up a builder and have applied to three different loan officers for a construction loan. We plan on building an \$800,000 dream home on the site. Our neighborhood is so amazing, with the park, amenities, neighbors, and of course the school. It is extremely important that our children go to one of the best schools, and the German Immersion School is our choice.

Yesterday, the zoning committee hearing voted against their staff recommending approving the site plan. This gave us such a startle that we have immediately halted our building plans. See, we have been debating building here or in the Moundsview School District because both have great schools. Because

our children's education is so important to us, we will build in Moundsview if this expansion doesn't get approved. We can't put a price on our children going to a top-rated school, with room for band, a real gym, and windows. It's sad to say, but if the German Immersion School wasn't here, the local St Paul school does not meet our expectations. It is rare that the city leaders determine where you live, but this is one of those cases.

I ask that you give our community what we need: A beautiful new building that is fit for learning that will draw families searching for good schools to St Paul.

You will make a real difference in our lives. Thank you for listening.

Adam, Kari, Hans, and Britta

From: Bob Strege <b.strege@comcast.net>

Sent: Tuesday, February 5, 2019 7:31 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Cc: *CI-StPaul_Mayor <Mayor@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Twin Cities German Immersion School Should Not Be Designated A Historic Site

St. Paul City Councilmember Thao:

As the parent of a fifth grade student who has attended the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) since kindergarten, I am asking you to reject the petition to turn a crumbling former church building on our school property into a historic location. This is a short-sighted petition being presented by a small but vocal minority of citizens. If approved, a historic designation will put an insurmountable financial burden on this unique public charter school and risks shutting down one of St. Paul's few charter schools that is thriving and educating children to think inclusively and optimistically about this community and the broader world.

Our school family truly does understand the emotional ties some in this group have to the old building. Thus, as good stewards of this neighborhood, our Board has worked exhaustively to try to make the space work as a school and has taken painstaking efforts to search for alternative sites for us to move to. After spending considerable investments in time and money—which surely could have been used for more constructive educational endeavors for staff and students—it was determined that neither re-designing the church building nor moving are financially possible.

We have been forthcoming and transparent in these efforts, yet for some reason, this minority group against our plans seems incapable of believing we have actually done the analysis

and investigation into alternatives and options. They don't believe us when we tell them—and try to show them—that we have truly considered every option, including adaptive reuse. This group

has yet to offer us any viable solutions, and somewhere in the process they've developed a false narrative about our leadership and continue to be in denial about all the efforts we've made. This

group is so emotionally entrenched in its position, it refuses to look at the facts and continues to grow more and more contentious and malicious towards a St. Paul school simply trying to educate its

bright, young students in the best possible way.

This entire process has become an appalling waste of time and resources for our school and for the City of St. Paul as well. Look at the planning commission vote foul-up on this matter. Really? Shame

on this group hell-bent on dismantling what has grown to be a unique and successful learning facility St. Paul can and should be proud of. And with what end game in mind: Our school is forced to close and the crumbling building they do not even own is allowed to remain standing but abandoned? You don't have to look very far to see the negative impact St. Paul's District 10 residents living near the former and now vacant Shalom Home property on Midway Parkway are dealing with in their neighborhood. Historic preservation of our case is not a winning plan for St. Paul or this currently vibrant Como Park community.

The reality is that costs associated with maintaining the historic appearance and character of a nearly 100-year-old building while trying to continue operations within a functionally obsolete structure are rising exponentially. This threatens our school's ability to meet the needs of its staff and students and will result in increased attrition levels and lost enrollment and revenues, which all told, imperil the school's long-term viability. This isn't hyperbole or emotional drama. These are the facts.

Please also note that the original owners (the Catholic diocese) in all of its years of possession, did not see fit to obtain a historic designation for this old building. When the diocese scheduled the facility to close because it could no longer afford to maintain the building as its parish base dwindled, where was this group now so intent on preserving it? If their objective truly is about preserving an old structure, they should have made their case then. TCGIS purchased this previously-idle property without a historic designation, or threat of one, in place and brought it back to life. It is unfair and unreasonable that this group is now harassing TCGIS with its selfish edict because a few people want to look at an obsolete church building.

Please thoroughly think through the unreasonable financial burden that would be placed on this thriving St. Paul public charter school and the upheaval this long, drawn-out process is causing students, staff, parents, and neighbors, should you choose to designate our school building a historic site. I ask you to unequivocally reject this idea. Doing so is directly in concert with St. Paul's goal to remain one of the most livable cities in America. I'm sure you would agree that crumbling, abandoned properties are not part of that dream.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Bob Strege
2508 Matilda Street
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

From: Winston Kaehler [<mailto:winkaehler@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2019 6:39 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward3
Subject: Re: Proposed demolition of St. Andrew's Church

P.S. I should have referred to the Twin Cities German IMMERSION School.
My address is: 1712 Palace Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105.

On Tue, Feb 5, 2019 at 6:28 PM Winston Kaehler <winkaehler@gmail.com> wrote:
I strongly oppose the plan of Twin Cities German School to demolish the building of the former St. Andrew's Church. The benefits to the people of St. Paul of preserving this building far outweigh the supposed benefits of demolition to its current owner.

From: Sarah Erkinen [<mailto:sarah.erkinen@gmail.com>]
Sent: Friday, February 8, 2019 11:47 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Oppose Historic Designation of TCGIS

City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council Member Prince:

As a parent of a student at the Twin Cities German Immersion School, I oppose the historic designation of the former church that is currently part of TCGIS.

Although we live in Roseville now, my family did live in and own a home in Saint Paul from 1997-2018 and we made a conscious decision to have our children attend school in Saint Paul because of the academic reputation TCGIS has in the Twin Cities and beyond.
We enjoy what the City of Saint Paul has to offer. We have a vested interest in the development of the city as the school brings us to Saint Paul every day. We do our various errands, shopping and freetime activities within the city and our children participate in sports and activities through the Saint Paul Community Ed. We support businesses along Grand Avenue, are members of the Bell Museum and the Science museum and frequent Saint Paul restaurants and businesses. **We spend much of our financial resources in Saint Paul.**

I ask that the Saint Paul city council oppose historic designation as this issue would likely cause the school to suffer insurmountable financial hardships and drive families away from Saint Paul.

Most respectfully,
Sarah --
Sarah Erkinen

Dear Council members,

I am writing to oppose the historic designation of the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS). What I have found lacking in this entire process is any discussion of the human impacts this forced designation would have on the hundreds of families for whom TCGIS is a centerpiece of daily life.

So, let's assume that this council votes in favor of Historic Designation.

TCGIS now has two choices. Stay in its current location and maintain an historic property with dollars coming out of teacher's salaries and educational programs. Or move.

The school decides to stay. They attempt to make due with 18,000 square feet instead of the 24,000 square feet necessary. They re-purpose part of the gymnasium into classrooms that cannot be insulated because the HPC program has determined that insulation will harm the building. The already undersized gym becomes an even smaller and less adequate space to fulfill the Minnesota State Physical Education Standards. Much less, there school cannot sponsor any extra-curricular sports.

The lack of space means pull-out and special education classes are conducted in the hallway.

Minnesota state law bars TCGIS from leaving an empty seat in the school if there is a child willing to fill it, but there is simply no space to support three sections of K-8. So, after grade 5, students are entered into a second lottery. Every year 25 - 30 students (who in three years would have tracked to Saint Paul Central) are told they will need to leave their friends behind and transfer somewhere else. 25 - 30 families are asked to upend their daily life and center it around some other school perhaps in some other city.

Alternatively, TCGIS decides not to conduct a second lottery and instead reduces all grades to two sections. They lay off six full-time elementary school teachers and some now redundant support staff. They cut recruitment outreach efforts.

The nebulous preservation grant funding alluded to by proponents of historic designation never materializes. The maintenance costs continue to bleed the budget. As TCGIS receives only 60% of the funding of district schools and cannot levy property taxes, they try to offset this cost burden by reducing bus routes. This increases the traffic in the neighborhood and makes the school less accessible.

TCGIS tries to make it work for a couple of years, and then decides the only course of action is to leave Saint Paul. The prospects for selling such a large property with its attached historic designation are few and far between. After an extended vacancy that depresses the surrounding property values, the school loses money on the sale and incurs a \$1,000,000 bond pre-payment penalty.

Doors shutter.

Council Members, TCGIS is the largest German Immersion school in North America and the only German immersion school in Minnesota. TCGIS is only one of three public German immersion schools in the entire United States. TCGIS has been honored as a multi-year Rewards School by the Minnesota Department of Education for successfully closing the achievement gap, exemplary academic achievements in state exam proficiency, student growth, and graduation rates.

In a perfect world there would be enough public funds to properly invest in everyone's priorities. In reality, where interests compete, proper education of our children must always come out on top. If there is a municipal need for a forced historic designation policy, this is surely not the property on which to plant that particular flag.

The Germans say 'was machst du.' It means 'what are you doing' but the literal translation is 'what are you making.' I have always loved that little semantic quibble because it exemplifies the German spirit. They make things. And TCGIS is no different. They are making a brighter future by giving our children the tools to thrive in a global community.

So, Council Members, what future will you help make? Was machst du?

Anthony Radecki
5904 Park Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55417

From: Linde Althaus <linde.althaus@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 10, 2019 8:36 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Opposition to historic designation

Dear Councilmember Thao-

Twin Cities German Immersion School is a K-8, public charter school based in St. Paul that has been proud to offer students across the Twin Cities a high-quality education in a language immersion setting for over a decade. The school has been successful at attracting students to the lottery for admission, as well as retaining students as they have progressed through the upper grades. Our family has students in the 4th grade, 1st grade and an incoming kindergartner. This letter is written in opposition to the attempt of an outside group to designate part of our school property as “historic.”

TCGIS is planning to replace a former church building with a modern space designed for educating students. The school has investigated all possible options for years and based on the budget and needs of our students, this decision to replace the former church building has been voted on by our elected school board as the best option. Our school needs a proper gymnasium with two sections for classes to meet during the same hour. The cafeteria needs natural light, improved accessibility and proper restrooms for a group of children. We need more classrooms and small group spaces, so classes are not shuffled around and children are not working in the hallways. We will use this square footage of this footprint more efficiently and have three floors in this location—a cafeteria on the lowest floor, two gyms on the main floor and more classrooms and small group space on the upper floor. St. Paul and Minneapolis are both forward thinking cities and have made vocal commitments to increase density in areas where it makes sense. Adding a useful level in the existing footprint and protecting green space around the school near Lake Como is compatible with the city’s forward-thinking goals.

The request for historic designation is hurting our school. We DO NOT want this. The neighborhood organization (Save “Historic” St. Andrew’s) is using this to fight our school’s existence. We cannot afford to use public education funds to maintain an old religious building we do not want and that has been never been considered “historic” in the past, even when it was functioning as a church. It is financially draining our school that operates on a tight budget. Fighting the “historic” designation is taking time away from adults that should only be focused on making the school the best it can be. It has been significantly altered from its time as a church. The “historic” designation is an opportunity for neighbors to look at the

outside of an old building, while my children that are currently INSIDE the building have overcrowded spaces, work in the halls, unsafe gym space, too few toilets and unsafe nooks. It is appalling to consider prioritizing bricks over children and I hope that the city of St. Paul would agree.

The city of St. Paul needs to do the right thing and put the needs of children before demands of a few loud and aggressive neighbors. We cannot afford to maintain the exterior of this building for the neighbors at the expense of our students. Since this building is no longer a church and is owned by the building company for TCGIS, it is time for our school to have the ability to use our budget for designing and building a structure for the future of TCGIS, instead of fighting historic designation. Please reject the designation of the former church building as “historic” and support the future of an excellent public school located in a lovely area of St. Paul.

Sincerely,

Linde Althaus
Minneapolis, MN

From: Denise Guelker Braus <denisebraus@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 9, 2019 2:01 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: support for TCGIS

Denise Braus
1471 Iowa Ave.
Falcon Heights, MN 55108

City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council Member Day Thao:

As a parent of a student at the Twin Cities German Immersion School, I oppose the historic designation of the former church that is currently part of TCGIS.

Although I live outside of Saint Paul (by 1 city block), I decided to have my child attend school in Saint Paul because of the academic reputation TCGIS has in the Twin Cities and beyond. Many families like ours enjoy what the City of Saint Paul has to offer. We have a vested interest in the development of the city as the school brings us to Saint Paul every day. We have several friends who send their children to SPPS, my children participate in various activities through our neighborhood St. Paul Rec Center, I participate in a community orchestra in St. Paul, we go shopping and do several freetime activities within the city. We support businesses, the arts and visit museums in downtown Saint Paul. Many students at TCGIS will also attend Saint Paul's Central High School, which will continue to bring in families like ours to spend time in the City of Saint Paul. Before moving back to the Twin Cities in June 2018, we lived in Rochester, MN for 4 years. We were so excited to have our son start Kindergarten at TCGIS this year. Before living in Rochester, my husband and I lived in St. Paul (Hamline-Midway neighborhood) and I worked as a St. Paul Public Schools special education teacher for 7 years before taking time to raise my children. Our family is highly invested in the growth and success of St. Paul.

TCGIS reaches out into the world, as well. Every year the 8th graders go to Germany for a few weeks and receive young people from Germany as visitors. Saint Paul becomes a place to visit for many from around world. The German Consulate has also come to visit the City of Saint Paul because of TCGIS.

I ask that the Saint Paul city council oppose historic designation as this issue would likely cause the school to suffer insurmountable financial hardships and drive families away from Saint Paul.

Most respectfully,

Denise Braus

Send to: ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us

City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council President Amy Brendmoen,

As you may know, the issue of historic designation of the former St. Andrew's church will be before you in the coming weeks. **As a resident in your ward, I ask for your opposition to the historic designation as historic designation is not the will of the majority of neighbors in District 10, where the former church resides.**

On December 14, 2018, the Saint Paul Planning Commission already voted 12 - 1 not to recommend historic designation of the part of the building that used to be a former church based on a number of factors, including concerns that the designation process had been "weaponized" by the group Save Historic Saint Andrew's (SHSA). District 10 and its Land Use Committee voted to support the Twin Cities German Immersion School in its project to improve its own facilities. A historic designation would ignore the votes cast by the neighbors at the Land Use Committee meeting and those by the members of District 10 Community Council.

Additionally, the Land Use chapter of Saint Paul's 2030 Comprehensive Plan includes a policy that the City "**collaborate** with public and private elementary and secondary schools in conjunction with construction or major remodeling." LU 1.55. **By definition, the Comprehensive Plan directive to "collaborate" is defeated where the City acts to designate the school building against the property owner's strong objections.** Historic designation would clearly go against any "collaboration" from the City of Saint Paul with its own Comprehensive Plan.

I request that you vote against historic designation of the former church currently owned by the Twin Cities German Immersion School.

Best regards,

Jennifer Ohland
470 Wheelock Parkway West
St Paul MN 55117

Dear Council Member **Brendmoen,**

As a parent of a student at Twin Cities German Immersion School, I oppose the historic designation of the former church of St. Andrew's that is currently part of TCGIS.

We have two daughters, the older one of which is a 2016 TCGIS graduate. Our younger daughter will be graduating this year. So even though the decision whether the former church will become a historic designation will most likely not affect our family for much longer, I feel it is my duty and responsibility to fight for the wellbeing of a school that has had an immense positive impact on ours and our children's lives.

Its great parent community has helped tremendously to make me, a German immigrant, feel truly at home in Minnesota. TCGIS enabled our daughters to stay bilingual. One of my daughters receives special education services and has thrived at TCGIS beyond our expectations. Everyone is welcome and appreciated at TCGIS. Its devoted and diverse staff, and its challenging curriculum have shaped our kids into who they are today – young people with a great work ethic, tolerance and politeness towards others, and a positive and curious attitude towards learning.

To see a school that puts so much effort into providing great education, both academically and emotionally, into being a good neighbor and foster community among parents, children and staff, be burdened and possibly ruined forcing historic designation on it really breaks my heart. Money and mental capacity that should continue to benefit kids and staff now has instead to be poured into fighting for our right to use a property we own in a way we think best for our kids. Coming from Europe, I understand the significance and importance of preserving history. I understand the neighbors' sadness at losing a beloved landmark that some of them have been looking at for a large part of their lives. But appreciation for history and sentimental attachment to a building cannot be more important than the need for a school to provide an appropriate learning environment where kids can thrive. Historic designation would happen on the backs of our kids and staff - forcing everyone to teach and learn in a building that is increasingly becoming overcrowded and not conducive to focus and constructive work. It would force us to pour money into repairs that will still never make the space appropriate for our growing school.

We have been with TCGIS throughout three moves to different locations, and know how hard it is to find a suitable location for a growing, successful school. Historic designation might very well be the end for TCGIS through its financial burden and the inability to shape the building to our growing needs. I wonder what situation the neighborhood will be faced with once the school fails, and leaves behind a building saddled with historic designation.

I implore you to vote against historic designation of the former church of St. Andrew's.

Kordula Coleman

From: Angela Schneider [<mailto:angela.l.schneider@gmail.com>]
Sent: Saturday, February 9, 2019 11:35 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: TCGIS Support

Angela Schneider
978 Barrett St
Saint Paul, MN 55103

City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council President Amy Brendmoen:

As a resident of the City of Saint Paul, the Como neighborhood and a parent of a Kindergartener at the Twin Cities German Immersion School, I oppose the historic designation of the former church that is currently part of TCGIS.

I am proud to have TCGIS in Como because of the reputation this school has in the community of the Twin Cities and beyond. Many families have chosen to move closer to the school over the years; we were fortunate enough to live here before the school arrived. We purchased our home on the south side of the lake in 2010. Although we live only 13 blocks from the school, I was barely aware of the vacant building in our neighborhood. I remember passing it only once or twice and thinking how sad and lonely the building was. I never once thought: what a beautiful landmark! When the school moved into the building, I was delighted: as a German speaker, as a parent of a toddler, but also as a Como resident. I was happy to see new life brought into the property and an investment in our neighborhood. I am especially proud of the focus the school has on helping protect our lake and gardens. Now TCGIS wants to further invest in our neighborhood and I fully support that.

Historic designation of the former church would likely lead to financial ruin for TCGIS, which would have a negative impact on the community and the City of Saint Paul. The former church has been adaptively reused for the past 6 years; however, the nearly 100-year old building requires substantial maintenance. Estimates for basic repair of the building exceed \$1.2 million. If historic designation is granted, these costs would greatly exceed the \$1.2 million due to the requirements specified by the HPC's preservation plan. This is beyond what a school should spend to maintain a structure not built for education, but moreover I find it very problematic that a public school could be forced to maintain a structure with religious iconography. The primary purpose for a public school is to educate children, and funds diverted to historic designation would impede this purpose.

Although I understand how hard change can be, I know that the demolition of the former church does not erase it's history. Personal memories are sacred and the community that used to exist at Saint Andrew's should be remembered, but not at the cost of the community that is currently bringing new life and new memories into our neighborhood. We are to learn from the past, but not live in it.

I implore you to vote against historic designation so that TCGIS can continue to exist. It's a good school and an asset to our neighborhood. I am very hopeful that our second child will be able to start Kindergarten there in two years and continue to walk and bike to school in our neighborhood through eighth grade graduation in 2029. Please, allow TCGIS to continue to thrive at this current and forever home.

Sincerely,

Angela Schneider

From: Sara Armstrong-Nathan [<mailto:saraarmstrongnathan@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 11, 2019 2:23 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward3; #CI-StPaul_Ward4
Subject: German Immersion School Building

City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council Members Mitra Jalali Nelson and Chris Tolbert,

The question of historic designation of the former church of St. Andrew's will likely be put to you in the coming weeks. **As a homeowner in ward 4 and a resident in ward 3, I would like you to oppose this historic designation due to the enormous financial impact this would have on a public school that does not even desire the designation.**

The former church now belongs to the Twin Cities German Immersion School and is physically connected to the rest of the school building after a 2014 addition. The former church has been adaptively reused as a makeshift gymnasium and cafeteria for the past 6 years; however, the building is costly to maintain and does not meet the programming needs of the school.

The nearly 100-year old building requires substantial maintenance. Estimates for basic repair of the building exceed \$1.2 million. If historic designation is granted, these costs would greatly exceed the \$1.2 million due to the requirements specified by the HPC's preservation plan. The maintenance alone is beyond what the school can afford, not to mention the implications that this facility has on the educational experience of TCGIS students. The primary purpose for a public school is to educate children, and funds diverted to historic designation would impede this purpose.

The proponents of historic designation commonly mention that there are grants to maintain such a facility, although the proponents themselves do not offer financial support or search them out in support of a school in their own community. Furthermore, local designation only offers tax relief, which is of no benefit to a tax-exempt public school. Moreover, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) letter from December 2018 strikingly omitted any mention of eligibility for state designation or national registration. HPC commissioner, Casie Radford, publicly stated that in her experience, the alterations already done to the former church would prevent it from earning a spot on the national registry of historic places.

I implore you to reject the request for historic designation of part of the Twin Cities German Immersion School building.

Best regards,

Sara Armstrong-Nathan
1323 Sherburne Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104
(home owned)
And
2248 Sargent Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105
(residential address)

City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council Members Mitra Jalali Nelson and Chris Tolbert,
As you may know, the issue of historic designation of the former CSt. Andrew's church will be before you in the coming weeks. **As a homeowner in ward 4 and a resident in ward 3, I ask for your opposition to the historic designation as historic designation is not the will of the majority of neighbors in District 10, where the former church resides.**

On December 14, 2018, the Saint Paul Planning Commission already voted 12 - 1 not to recommend historic designation of the part of the building that used to be a former church based on a number of factors, including concerns that the designation process had been "weaponized" by the group Save Historic Saint Andrew's (SHSA). District 10 and its Land Use Committee voted to support the Twin Cities German Immersion School in its project to improve its own facilities. A historic designation would ignore the votes cast by the neighbors at the Land Use Committee meeting and those by the members of District 10 Community Council.

Additionally, the Land Use chapter of Saint Paul's 2030 Comprehensive Plan includes a policy that the City "**collaborate** with public and private elementary and secondary schools in conjunction with construction or major remodeling." LU 1.55. **By definition, the Comprehensive Plan directive to "collaborate" is defeated where the City acts to designate the school building against the property owner's strong objections.** Historic designation would clearly go against any "collaboration" from the City of Saint Paul with its own Comprehensive Plan.

I request that you vote against historic designation of the former church currently owned by the Twin Cities German Immersion School.

Best regards,
Mike Nathan
2248 Sargent Ave
St. Paul, MN 55105

From: Natalie French <olson.natalie.m@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2019 4:13 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: TCGIS Historic Designation

Council member Thao,

As a member of the St. Paul Hmong community, you are keenly aware of the plight of people struggling with a place to call home. TCGIS shares common ground with you here. This is our school's third location and we find ourselves the new kids on the block once again, longing for a permanent home and acceptance by community. Forced historic designation of our school would have a catastrophic impact on our ability to maintain our high caliber immersion program. Please vote against this forced historic designation.

Thank you,
Natalie French
1082 Hague Ave
Saint Paul, MN 55104

From: nicole bechtold [<mailto:ntmartens@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, February 18, 2019 8:44 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: oppose the historic designation of the former St. Andrew's Church

Nicole and Kevin Bechtold
981 Hoyt Ave W
St Paul, MN 55117

City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council Member Brendmoen:

I am writing to oppose the historic designation of the former St. Andrew's Church.

The church was de-sanctified by the Catholic Church in 2010 and merged the parish with another local parish. The building has not been used as a sanctuary since then. When the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) purchased the property over six years ago, the school adaptively reused the former church building as a makeshift gym and cafeteria. With the maintenance costs and need for pedagogically usable facilities, TCGIS needs to reconstruct part of its building.

The desire to historically designate a portion of the TCGIS building goes against the will of the school and has not received any form of consent. If historic designation is approved, the owner will not only have to deal with the added costs of maintenance of a decaying building but also with the strict regulations that are required of historic designations.

The Heritage Preservation chapter 4.5 states that the City should "acquire key threatened historic properties until a suitable owner can be found." St. Paul Senior City Planners have opined that this

provision suggests that the will of a property owner should receive consideration. George Gause, Heritage Preservation Supervisor, has publicly stated that it is almost unheard of for a St. Paul property to receive historical designation status without the consent of the property owner.

I ask you to vote against historic designation of the former St. Andrew's church that is now a part of the TCGIS building.

Sincerely,
Nicole and Kevin Bechtold

Saint Paul City Council
C/O Amy Brendmoen, City Council President
15 Kellogg, Blvd. West 310 City Hall
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Ms. Brendmoen & City Council Members,
As your constituent, and Saint Paul resident of the Como area (half a block from TCGIS) and taxpayer for more than 35 years, I oppose the expansion of the charter school and specifically the demolition of the former St. Andrew's Church, the iconic building of our neighborhood, a building of immense architectural and historical value.

I moved to this neighborhood attracted by the charm, quietness and beauty of the narrow winding streets, which were crowned by the lovely structure of Saint Andrews Church, an architectural jewel in the Como neighborhood. After years of witnessing the positive involvement of the Church with the community, my husband and I decided to become members of Saint Andrews Church.

Throughout the years, parishioners of Saint Andrews were very good stewards of the neighborhood and the Church, until TCGIS took possession of the Church and school and severed all connections with the neighbors who live around the school. There are so many unresolved issues with the neighborhood that TCGIS has created and are not resolved yet.

My family, and so many neighbors around me are opposed to one of the largest parking variances ever requested because we have to live with the daily traffic nightmares. Unfairly, TCGIS has hired a PR firm lobbying the city council on their behalf, against us neighbors who are trying to protect the identity and residential character of this neighborhood. There have also been some related irregularities at the Planning Commission recently that caught the attention of the city attorney's office. I feel it is like a battle between David and Goliath. However, we have faith that a good solution will arrive as we want TCGIS success and also respect to the values and residential character of this neighborhood.

Concerned about global warming, pollution and energy waste, we must consider that if the former Church is demolished, over 2,000 tons of debris would be dumped to the landfill and

have a huge impact on the neighborhood. This is unacceptable!

It's worth reading the article in the Progressive magazine, "The Charter School Next Door, What Happens When Public Education Becomes a Market place?" by Sarah Lahm that discusses the negative impacts public charters have on neighborhoods and traditional public schools. It's worth noting that in Minnesota, public charter schools are exempt from anti-segregation laws. TCGIS' plan creates safety and traffic issues, adversely changes the character of the neighborhood, doesn't promote diversity (the school is 87% white vs. 29% for neighborhood schools), is opposed by the St. Paul Federation of Teachers and NAACP, and-out of lack of empathy – destroys the symbolic heart of Warrendale, the former St. Andrew's church. Designed in 1927 by St. Paul's first city architect, author of St. Paul's first building code, and noted progressive, Charles A. Hausler. The neighborhood is small, so their plan to destroy the historic St. Andrew's church would have an outsized affect. This does not align with Mayor Carter's initiatives of inclusivity & equity.

TCGIS is not a neighborhood school, it does not offer enrollment preference to those who live in Saint Paul, essentially, it's a commuter school where most students are driven to school by parents.

We hope our elected officials will take seriously the commitment to equity that's at the forefront of Mayor Carter's initiative to reduce citywide disparities – and not bow to pressure exerted by TCGIS or its controversial Ten Square

Your constituent,
Rosario Greenwood-Sánchez

German School of Madison, Inc.

2132 E.
Dayton
St.

Madison,
WI 53704

<https://germanschoolofmadison.org/>

<germanschoolofmadison@gmail.com>



City Council of Saint
Paul 15 Kellogg
Blvd. West Saint
Paul, MN 55102

Re: Twin Cities German Immersion School

Expansion Date: 02/10/2019

Dear Members of the St. Paul City Council,

I am writing you in on behalf of our Board of Directors in support of the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) expansion plans and urge you to oppose the historic designation of part of their building – which would cause insurmountable costs to the school and make their planned expansion impossible.

In the German-American community TCGIS has a reputation of excellence, not only in the Saint Paul area, but across the nation and the world. The school attracts staff and families from around the state and the world. Just last year two of our former GSoM

employees – much to our regret - have become teachers at TCGIS and now live within a block radius of the school. In addition, every year between 15 and 30 interns from Germany, Austria and Switzerland student-teach at TCGIS, live with host families and call the Twin Cities their second home.

TCGIS shares our school's vision of a multicultural community and global citizenship - in addition to providing high quality instruction in the German language. TCGIS is a true asset to the St Paul community and deserves your support.

We respectfully ask you to support the school in their expansion plans and to oppose historic designation.

Sincerely,



Axel Junker, President, Board of

Directors German School of

Madison



We are recognized by the Central Agency for Schools Abroad ([Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen](#), ZfA) as a school authorized to administer tests that lead to the German Language Diploma ([Deutsches Sprachdiplom](#), DSD).

Amy Brendmoen, Council President
City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Amy,

My entire family opposes the expansion of the Twin Cities German Immersion Charter School (TCGIS), and specifically the demolition of the former St. Andrew's church.

I am rallying to oppose the school administration's choice to expand and demolish Saint Andrew's, which I find disrespectful and harmful to the health and history of my St. Paul neighborhood. Saint Paul's own comprehensive plan states that the greenest building is the one left standing. Demolition is not consistent with Mayor Carter's initiative to become a carbonneutral community by 2050.

- Demolition of St. Andrew's would forever alter the character of a small, historic neighborhood and destroys a significant St. Paul historic landmark.
- In Saint Paul, there are examples of former churches reused for performance spaces, homes, and a charter school. There is a better plan. The environmental rewards of adaptive reuse are significant. The greenest building is the one already standing.
- St. Andrew's deserves to be valued, not leveled. In the AIA Guide to Twin Cities Architecture, retired Pioneer Press writer Larry Millet called out St Andrew's as one of the best local examples of period revival.
- According to the National Historic Preservation Act, "A place's owner, a preservation organization, or a member of the community who values the resource usually initiates the application for historic designation". Citizens can nominate important buildings for historic designation—that's the law.
- The TCGIS choice to expand its enrollment is opposed by the St. Paul Federation of Teachers and NAACP. Public charter schools are exempt from the same anti-segregation laws that public schools such as SPPS must follow.
- One of Mayor Carter's initiatives is to combat inequity. Both the St. Paul Chapter of NAACP and St. Paul Federation of Educators submitted letters in opposition to the variances and site plan, objecting to the expansion of a charter school that is nearly 90% white and far more affluent than other St. Paul schools.
- The Saint Paul chapter of the NAACP states "expansion of such a predominantly white and relatively wealthy charter school in the heart of the city would frustrate efforts to desegregate St. Paul schools and contribute to further racial and socioeconomic segregation".
- The demolition of St. Andrew's violates the city and neighborhood comprehensive plans. The legacy of the demolition of an eligible historic site would be permanent and sets a terrible precedent. St. Andrew's is irreplaceable. If St. Andrew's is needlessly lost, so is opportunity for collaboration and compromise.

Sincerely,

Marietta McCullough
1251 N. Victoria St.
St. Paul, MN 55117

Cc: St. Paul City Council Members
20 February 2019

City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council Member Mitra Jalali Nelson,

In the issue of historic designation of the former church of Saint Andrew's, I ask you to vote against the historic designation, which would ultimately leave no viable option for the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) to continue to thrive.

If historic designation is approved, it would force unnecessary financial hardships upon TCGIS, a very successful school within our community. The proponents of historic designation commonly mention that TCGIS did not explore all the options. However, TCGIS investigated numerous alternatives to their campus improvement project, including more re-modeling to continue adaptive use of the building, and selling the building and moving to another location. Ultimately, the school determined that these were not viable alternatives because the school (1) requires additional and more functional space for its existing student body; (2) would incur a substantial bond penalty if the school acted to sell the building and move elsewhere; and (3) alternative sites were more costly and created risks to the school's success, which is due in part to its location.

Historic designation of the former church would likely lead to financial ruin for TCGIS, which would have a negative impact on the community and the City of Saint Paul.

Additionally, it jeopardizes the school's global footprint restricting its capacity to adequately host young people from Germany as exchange students into already overcrowded classroom. This global exchange initiative is key to Capstone, a program of educational outreach at TCGIS. At the heart of the program: TCGIS 8th graders go to Germany for a few weeks and in return the school receives young people from Germany as visitors. Saint Paul, the greater beneficiary, a destination spot for many from around world. TCGIS proudly notes, The German Consulate has also come to visit the City of Saint Paul because of this initiative.

Therefore, I request that you oppose this issue for historic designation.

Most respectfully,

Gloria E Bengtson
Resident of Ward 4
Three-year expat to Slovakia, teacher in residence in Bratislava 2014-17

Kersten Reich
1822 Jefferson Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55105

Council Member Chris Tolbert
City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

February 18, 2019

Dear Council Member Tolbert:

As a resident of Ward 3, and a parent of a student at Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS), I am writing to oppose the historic designation of the former St. Andrew's Church.

The church was de-sanctified by the Catholic Church in 2010 and merged the parish with another local parish. The building has not been used as a sanctuary since then. When the Twin Cities German Immersion School purchased the property over six years ago, the school adaptively reused the former church building as a makeshift gym and cafeteria. With the maintenance costs and need for pedagogically usable facilities, TCGIS needs to reconstruct part of its building.

The desire to historically designate a portion of the TCGIS building goes against the will of the school and has not received any form of consent. If historic designation is approved, the owner will not only have to deal with the added costs of maintenance of a decaying building but also with the strict regulations that are required of historic designations. This combination would create catastrophic challenges for TCGIS today and in the future—challenges that would essentially cause the school to become a stranded asset. The Heritage Preservation chapter 4.5 states that the City should “acquire key threatened historic properties until a suitable owner can be found.” St. Paul Senior City Planners have opined that this provision suggests that the will of a property owner should receive consideration. George Gause, Heritage Preservation Supervisor, has publicly stated **that it is almost unheard of for a St. Paul property to receive historical designation status without the consent of the property owner.** As a St. Paul property owner myself, this potential precedent for obtaining Historic Preservation status against an owner's wishes is deeply concerning to me.

Of additional consideration is the fact that on December 14, 2018, the Saint Paul Planning Commission voted 12 - 1 not to recommend historic designation of the part of the building that was the former church based on a number of factors, including concerns that the designation process had been “weaponized” by the group Save Historic Saint Andrew's (SHSA). District 10 and its Land Use Committee voted to support the Twin Cities German Immersion School in its project to improve its own facilities. A historic designation would ignore the votes cast by the neighbors at the Land Use Committee meeting and those by the members of District 10 Community Council.

Also of note is the Land Use chapter of Saint Paul's 2030 Comprehensive Plan that includes a policy that the City **"collaborate** with public and private elementary and secondary schools in conjunction with construction or major remodeling." LU 1.55. **By definition, the Comprehensive Plan directive to "collaborate" is defeated where the City acts to designate the school building against the property owner's strong objections.** Historic designation would clearly go against any "collaboration" from the City of Saint Paul with its own Comprehensive Plan.

Finally, please know that if historic designation is approved, it would force unnecessary financial hardships upon TCGIS, a very successful school within our community. The proponents of historic designation commonly mention that TCGIS did not explore all the options. However, TCGIS investigated numerous alternatives to their campus improvement project, including more re-modeling to continue adaptive use of the building, and selling the building and moving to another location. Ultimately, the school determined that these were not viable alternatives because the school (1) requires additional and more functional space for its existing student body; (2) would incur a substantial bond penalty if the school acted to sell the building and move elsewhere; and (3) alternative sites were more costly and created risks to the school's success, which is due in part to its location.

TCGIS has no other reasonable alternatives to create facilities to meet the needs of our students. The detrimental financial impact that historic designation would have on TCGIS would not only limit our ability to meet the needs of children in grades K-8, but it would also limit the number of successful students we funnel into St. Paul public high schools—schools like your alma mater, Central High School. Currently, half of TCGIS graduates choose to attend Central for high school, taking advantage of advanced German education, high-caliber academics, and the wide range of extracurricular activities that Central has to offer.

Please prioritize the education of our young people and the bright future of our city by voting to reject the historic designation.

Sincerely,
Kersten Reich

From: nicole bechtold [<mailto:ntmartens@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 9:58 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: My concerns regarding the efforts of Save Historic St. Andrew's ("SHSA") to defeat the Twin Cities German Immersion School's ("TCGIS") campus improvement plans

Nicole Bechtold
981 Hoyt Ave. W.
St. Paul, MN 55117

Dear Councilmember Brendmoen,

I write to express my concerns regarding the efforts of Save Historic St. Andrew's ("SHSA") to defeat the Twin Cities German Immersion School's ("TCGIS") campus improvement plans.

In early 2017 TCGIS, a free public charter school in the Como Warrendale neighborhood, began considering in earnest how it could improve its campus to accommodate the educational needs of its 550+ students, over half of whom reside in Saint Paul. TCGIS's goal is to provide its students with an enhanced educational experience by taking them out of an aging, expensive, and functionally obsolete former church, which has served as a makeshift gym, cafeteria, and performing arts space for nearly 6 years, and putting them into a modern structure that is suited to the needs of a 21st century education. It's nothing fancy, but it would include a regulation gym, a cafeteria with natural light, more classrooms, and additional small group spaces that would allow students to receive interventional assistance in private, and not in a hallway. These are basic amenities that any parent would want their child to receive as part of a modern K-8 program.

In 2018 a small group of citizens formed SHSA to oppose TCGIS's campus improvement plans, which include the demolition of the former St. Andrew's Church that TCGIS's affiliated building company owns. SHSA's sole goal is to save the former church at any cost, without regard for how its actions impact TCGIS's students. SHSA has sent a clear message to TCGIS and its students that they are not welcome in the neighborhood. It has encouraged adjacent homeowners to display lawn signs opposing the demolition of the former church. Thus, each day at drop off, pickup, recess, or any time a student or teacher looks out the window, they are reminded that some in the neighborhood don't want them there. As if the message were not clear enough, in the Fall, SHSA and its supporters staged several protests across the street from student pickup. SHSA has also demonstrated that it is content to sacrifice TCGIS students' education in pursuit of its goal. In seeking historic designation of a former church that it does not own over the objections of the owner, SHSA would force TCGIS to use money intended for education to instead finance the preservation a building that provides no educational benefits whatsoever.

Recently, things reached a fever pitch when on February 19, 2019, SHSA's Facebook page posted (and then deleted) a message that included that following statements:

- "Because if you prevail, your kids' future school will be located in a neighborhood where you are no longer welcome."
- "You will be resented for all the reasons that any conquering 'force' is resented, and your

kids will not escape that resentment."

- "Neighbors will report every traffic violation, monitor every illegally parked vehicle, and blast the school at every chance on social media."

This is blatant online bullying that no children, parents or school should have to tolerate.

SHSA's President has since contacted TCGIS to apologize, and has asserted that although the post stated that it represented "The SHSA Team," it did not. SHSA also stated that the person responsible for the post is not a member of the leadership of SHSA, and has been reprimanded. The obvious implication, however, is that the person responsible was and remains a member of SHSA.

As a constituent, it is upsetting enough that a small group of outspoken neighbors can create so much trouble in an effort force a public school to spend its scarce resources on preserving a former church instead of on educating its students. But a line is crossed when a member of that same group resorts to what amounts to an open threat to TCGIS and its staff and students-and by extension the City Council itself-in furtherance of that goal. Ominous warnings about hostile resentments and vigilante behavior have no place in public schools, or in any civic matter. Such threats are against the law.

Throughout this process, TCGIS's primary focus has been and remains on providing its students with the best educational opportunities possible. TCGIS understands that this will require change, and that change can be upsetting. But TCGIS is committed to achieving its goals respectfully, peacefully, and through the appropriate civic processes. It is my hope that when you have the opportunity to weigh in on these issues, you will side with TCGIS and the future it wants to provide for its students, and reject the fear, threats and divisiveness that SHSA has injected into this debate.

Sincerely yours,
Nicole Bechtold

Amy Brendmoen, Council President
City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

To the City Council of Saint Paul:

I oppose the expansion of the Twin Cities German Immersion charter School (TCGIS), and specifically the demolition of the former St. Andrew's church, a historically significant building in the Warrendale neighborhood of St. Paul that contributes to the architectural richness and charm of our city. If demolished, embodied energy calculators shared by HPC estimate it will send over 2,000 tons to the landfill and have a huge impact on the neighborhood.

Many of us in the neighborhood are opposed to the required variances—including one of the largest parking variances ever requested—but the school has a PR firm lobbying the city council on their behalf. There have also been some related irregularities at the Planning Commission recently that caught the attention of the city attorney's office.

It's worth reading the article in the Progressive magazine, "The Charter School Next Door, What Happens When Public Education Becomes a Market place?" by Sarah Lahm that discusses the negative impacts public charters have on neighborhoods and traditional public schools. It's worth noting that in Minnesota, public charter schools are exempt from anti-segregation laws.

TCGIS' plan creates safety and traffic issues, adversely changes the character of the neighborhood, doesn't promote diversity (the school is 87% white vs. 29% for neighborhood schools), is opposed by the St. Paul Federation of Teachers and NAACP, and—out of lack of empathy—destroys the symbolic heart of Warrendale, the former St. Andrew's church. Designed in 1927 by St. Paul's first city architect, author of St. Paul's first building code, and noted progressive, Charles A. Hausler. The neighborhood is small, so their plan to destroy the historic St. Andrew's church would have an outsized affect. This does not align with Mayor Carter's initiatives of inclusivity and equity.

TCGIS is not a neighborhood school, it does not offer enrollment preference to those who live in Saint Paul, essentially, and it's a commuter school where most students are driven to school by parents.

We hope our elected officials will take seriously the commitment to equity that's at the forefront of Mayor Carter's initiative to reduce citywide disparities—and not bow to pressure exerted by TCGIS or its controversial TenSquare consultants.

Sincerely

Barbara Erickson
1137 Churchill St
St. Paul, MN 55103

From: Theresa Doeden [<mailto:terri.doeden@gmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 4:32 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: TCGIS

Councilmember Brendmoen,

we both know the vibrancy and vitality TCGIS brings to the neighborhood. We recognize that this is a difficult situation for all parties who have vested interests in the Warrendale neighborhood. When it come down to it, TCGIS simply cannot afford the requirements described by the HPC preservation plan if historic designation were approved. Our successful public language immersion school would lose its vitality as a result. We don't think that is in the best interest of the thriving Warrendale neighborhood. Please prioritize the future over the past, recognizing that it is hard, but absolutely necessary. Please vote against historic designation.

Sincerely,
Theresa Doeden

City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RECEIVED
FEB 22 2019
CITY CLERK

To the City Council of Saint Paul:

I oppose the expansion of the Twin Cities German Immersion charter School (TCGIS), and specifically, the demolition of the former St. Andrew's church, a historically significant building in the Warrendale neighborhood of St. Paul that contributes to the architectural richness and charm of our city. If demolished, embodied energy calculators shared by HPC estimate it will send over 2,000 tons to the landfill and have a huge impact on the neighborhood.

Many of us are opposed to the required variances—including one of the largest parking variances ever requested—but the school has a PR firm lobbying the city council on their behalf. There have also been some related irregularities at the Planning Commission recently that caught the attention of the city attorney's office.

TCGIS is not a neighborhood school, as it does not offer enrollment preference to those who live in Saint Paul. Essentially, it's a commuter school where most students are driven to school by parents. In fact, almost half of students are not residents of Saint Paul.

It's worth reading the article (<https://progressive.org/magazine>) "*The Charter School Next Door, What Happens When Public Education Becomes a Marketplace?*" that discusses the negative impacts public charters have on neighborhoods and traditional public schools. It's worth noting that in Minnesota, public charter schools are exempt from anti-segregation laws.

TCGIS's plan creates safety and traffic issues, adversely changes the character of the neighborhood, doesn't promote diversity (the school is 87% white vs. 29% for neighborhood schools), is opposed by the St. Paul Federation of Educators and NAACP, and—out of lack of empathy—destroys the symbolic heart of Warrendale, the former St. Andrew's church. Designed in 1927 by St. Paul's first city architect, author of St. Paul's first building code, and noted progressive, Charles A. Hausler. The neighborhood is small, so TCGIS's plan to destroy the historic St. Andrew's church would have an outsized affect. This does not align with Mayor Carter's initiatives of inclusivity and equity.

We hope our elected officials will take seriously the commitment to equity that's at the forefront of Mayor Carter's initiative to reduce citywide disparities—and not bow to pressure exerted by TCGIS or its controversial TenSquare consultants.

Respectfully,



419 Centennial Drive
Roseville, MN 55113

To the City Council of Saint Paul:

I am writing to you in opposition to the expansion of the Twin Cities German Immersion charter School (TCGIS) located in the Como /Warrendale neighborhood. The demolition of the former St. Andrew's church, a historically significant building that contributes to the architectural richness and charm of our city. I am not against TCGIS educating children. I am rallying against a bad plan which I find disrespectful and harmful to the health and history of a neighborhood. The school now smartly uses the building as a cafeteria and gymnasium, of which the purchase and renovation of the building was paid for by public funds in 2013. I urge you to approve the request for local historic designation of the former St. Andrew's church building.

Saint Paul's comprehensive plan states that the greenest building is the one left standing. In Saint Paul, there are many examples of former churches reused for performance spaces, homes, and a charter school. If demolished, embodied energy calculators shared by HPC estimate it will send over 2,000 tons to the landfill and have a huge impact on the neighborhood character. Demolition is not consistent with Mayor Carter's initiative to be carbon-neutral by 2050.

According to the National Historic Preservation Act, "A place's owner, a preservation organization, or a member of the community who values the resource usually initiates the application for historic designation"—that's the law.

In the AIA Guide to Twin Cities Architecture, retired Pioneer Press writer Larry Millet called out St Andrew's as one of the best local examples of period revival churches in Saint Paul.

St. Andrew's former church building is irreplaceable and should be respected for its architecture, historical and cultural history. I strongly urge you to oppose the 3 variances and the site plan that TCGIS is requesting. The traffic and parking situation that TCGIS has created have had a huge negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood will even get worse with any expansion. This situation is contradictory to the City's slogan – The Most Livable City in America.

Thank you,
Michael Connolly
993 Chatsworth St. N
St. Paul, MN 55103

Hello City Council members and President Brendmoen,
Attached is my letter expressing my dissatisfaction with not only the process, but the nature of the variances requested by the applicant and the destruction an eligible historic designation site in the Warrendale neighborhood. I've also attached an article in a national publication that among other things, points out the disconnect that public charter schools have on the neighborhoods they reside in – by design.
Thank you for your consideration

February 22, 2018

City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Saint Paul City Council,

The Warrendale neighborhood has supported education at St Andrew's since its inception, peacefully. However, this has not been the case with the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS). Time after time, problems created by TCGIS's impact on MTC transit, pedestrian, and bicycle safety have been brought to the attention of the District 10 Council. Improvements to neighborhood safety have been marginal at best. Approval of these variances will, in effect, create a mandate for TCGIS, reinforcing the existing impression that the safe and effective circulation of all modes of transportation is a marginal concern among leadership of the city of Saint Paul. The Planning Commission's own Zoning Committee voted 5-1 against the variances sought by TCGIS—agreeing that the TCGIS site is not feasible for the added student enrollment and greater traffic and parking congestion that will result. Commissioners agreed that the residential character of the neighborhood would be altered.

Approved variances will also spell destruction of a historic building designed by renowned St. Paul architect Charles Hausler--and open the door for developers to make similar encroachments on St. Paul neighborhoods, leading to more turmoil at district councils and more politicization of the Planning Commission. In the AIA Guide to Twin Cities Architecture, Larry Millet called out St Andrew's as "*one of the best local examples of period revival churches in Saint Paul*". I'm not alone in my objection, a digital petition has over 360 digital signatures, <https://www.gopetition.com/petitions/save-historic-st-andrews-in-como-park.html>

The core chapters of the City's current 2010 Comprehensive Plan have 436 policies. Of those, 71 policies focus on historic preservation. By contrast, city staff recommendations on the variances could only find one actual policy, suggesting a bias.

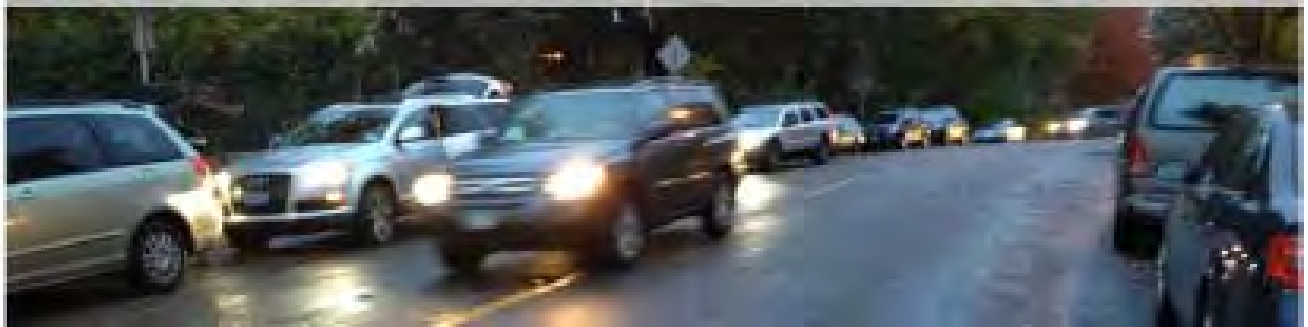
The excessive size of TCGIS enrollment is due to choices made by its leadership. In comparison to other schools, TCGIS supports significantly more students on a significantly smaller site. Once completed, the expanded school intends to support roughly four times the median number of students per unit area of any elementary or middle school located in any R1 through R4 zoned neighborhood in Saint Paul. Also significant is the fact that this site is directly adjacent to thirteen residences. This is overcrowding and undue congestion.

Demolition is not needed for TCGIS to serve its kids. School design experts and architects from the U of MN stated that TCGIS' plan is old school and not aligned with current learning space design concepts. They provided examples last fall and offered to meet with TCGIS to explain in detail. TCGIS said no emphatically. Or the school could cap its enrollment as other schools do.

The term forced designation has been used extensively by TCGIS leadership, staff and parents—that term doesn't exist in St. Paul's ordinance. The public can lawfully designate property for an eligibility determination. It's established law, not dangerous new ground, as some have suggested.

The article "The Charter School Next Door, What Happens When Public Education Becomes a Marketplace?" discusses the disconnect that charter schools have with neighborhoods they reside in. The article also states that Minnesota is the only state that exempts public charter schools from anti-segregation laws that traditional public schools are held to. Data provided by the St. Paul Federation of Educators and the St. Paul Chapter of NAACP are stark in this regard. This is not in alignment with current administration vision of equality and inclusion.

The plan proposed by leadership is a bad one. The school proposes to spend millions of taxpayer funds on a new building project just five years after investing millions of city HRA bond money to help renovate a historic structure that it now intends to demolish.



Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Youngquist
1170 Churchill Street
Saint Paul, MN 55103
Across the alley from St. Andrew's



Charter School Next
Door.pdf

Amy Brendmoen, Council President
City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

I oppose the expansion of the Twin Cities German Immersion charter School (TCGIS), and specifically the demolition of the former St. Andrew's church, a historically significant building in the Warrendale neighborhood of St. Paul that contributes to the architectural richness and charm of our city.

I am not against Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) educating children. I am rallying to oppose the school administration's choice to expand and demolish Saint Andrew's, which I find disrespectful and harmful to the health and history of a storied St. Paul neighborhood. Saint Paul's own comprehensive plan states that the greenest building is the one left standing. Demolition is not consistent with Mayor Carter's initiative to become a carbon-neutral community by 2050.

- According to the National Historic Preservation Act, "A place's owner, a preservation organization, or a member of the community who values the resource usually initiates the application for historic designation". Citizens can nominate important buildings for historic designation—that's the law.
- One of Mayor Carter's initiatives is to combat inequity. Both the St. Paul Chapter of NAACP and St. Paul Federation of Educators submitted letters in opposition to the variances and site plan, objecting to the expansion of a charter school that is nearly 90% white and far more affluent than other St. Paul schools.

The Saint Paul chapter of the NAACP states "expansion of such a predominantly white and relatively wealthy charter school in the heart of the city would frustrate efforts to desegregate St. Paul schools and contribute to further racial and socioeconomic segregation".

- Demolition of St. Andrew's would forever alter the character of a small, historic neighborhood and destroys a significant St. Paul historic landmark.
- The TCGIS choice to expand its enrollment is opposed by the St. Paul Federation of Teachers and NAACP. Public charter schools are exempt from the same anti-segregation laws that public schools such as SPPS must follow.
- In Saint Paul, there are examples of former churches reused for performance spaces, homes, and a charter school. There is a better plan. The environmental rewards of adaptive reuse are significant. The greenest building is the one already standing.

Sincerely,
3--
~~3--~~ Mary Shalhuber
Maple Lane Ct
SP

TCGIS should look into
a larger + more affordable
sites. Parking is a
major issue!

- St. Andrew's deserves to be valued, not leveled. In the AIA Guide to Twin Cities Architecture, retired Pioneer Press writer Larry Millet called out St Andrew's as one of the best local examples of period revival.
- The demolition of St. Andrew's violates the city and neighborhood comprehensive plans.

The legacy of the demolition of an eligible historic site would be permanent and sets a terrible precedent. St. Andrew's is irreplaceable. If St. Andrew's is needlessly lost, so is opportunity for collaboration and compromise.

Cc: St. Paul City Council Members

Mary Thalhauer

Amy Brendmoen, Council President
City Council of Saint Paul
15 Kellogg Blvd West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

To the City Council of Saint Paul:

I oppose the expansion of the Twin Cities German Immersion charter School (TCGIS), and specifically the demolition of the former St. Andrew's church, a historically significant building in the Warrendale neighborhood of St. Paul that contributes to the architectural richness and charm of our city. If demolished, embodied energy calculators shared by HPC estimate it will send over 2,000 tons to the landfill and have a huge impact on the neighborhood.

Many of us in the neighborhood are opposed to the required variances—including one of the largest parking variances ever requested—but the school has a PR firm lobbying the city council on their behalf. There have also been some related irregularities at the Planning Commission recently that caught the attention of the city attorney's office.

It's worth reading the article in the Progressive magazine, "The Charter School Next Door, What Happens When Public Education Becomes a Market place?" by Sarah Lahm that discusses the negative impacts public charters have on neighborhoods and traditional public schools. It's worth noting that in Minnesota, public charter schools are exempt from anti-segregation laws.

TCGIS' plan creates safety and traffic issues, adversely changes the character of the neighborhood, doesn't promote diversity (the school is 87% white vs. 29% for neighborhood schools), is opposed by the St. Paul Federation of Teachers and NAACP, and—out of lack of empathy—destroys the symbolic heart of Warrendale, the former St. Andrew's church. Designed in 1927 by St. Paul's first city architect, author of St. Paul's first building code, and noted progressive, Charles A. Hausler. The neighborhood is small, so their plan to destroy the historic St. Andrew's church would have an outsized affect. This does not align with Mayor Carter's initiatives of inclusivity and equity.

TCGIS is not a neighborhood school, it does not offer enrollment preference to those who live in Saint Paul, essentially, and it's a commuter school where most students are driven to school by parents.

We hope our elected officials will take seriously the commitment to equity that's at the forefront of Mayor Carter's initiative to reduce citywide disparities—and not bow to pressure exerted by TCGIS or its controversial TenSquare consultants.

Sincerely,

Mary Shalhuber

3-1 Maple Lane Ct

SP

The parking variance is a major concern to me. The neighborhood is flooded with cars, both teachers + staff at the school + parents racing up + down side streets to pick up their children. This winter snow has narrowed the streets →

such that two cars cannot pass. My elderly parents time their shopping + appointments so as not to coincide with morning dropoff + afternoon pickup. It is just too difficult to get in + out of their driveway.