

Dear Councilmembers,

We are residents of the Pointe of St. Paul and work in downtown St. Paul.

We would like to write in support of the sale of the police annex to Ackerberg for development into office space and improvements of the existing Pedro Park.

Thank you,
Tina Cassler & Courtney Chandler

Sharing what I sent to the CIB Committee.

I support Rebecca Noecker's alternative proposal for twice the park for half as much money and keeping the dream alive for a full block park and amazing neighborhood to rival Lowertown.

Kati Berg
Downtown resident

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kati Berg** <katiannberg@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Oct 5, 2018 at 7:35 PM
Subject: CIB Pedro Park Testimony for Oct.
To: <abdiwahab.ali@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

I hope this message will find its way to all the members of the CIB Committee before the discussion of Pedro Park this coming Monday:

Our neighborhood is at a crossroad. The city will choose to keep its vision to create a 3rd great downtown park square to anchor an often overlooked St. Paul urban village - Fitzgerald Park Precinct - or it will abandon this vision sacrificing promised parkland in favor of office space.

In the discussion on Pedro Park and selling the Annex Building next to it, please remember:

- In 2016 the stated goal of CIB funding the new Police Training Center was in order to demolish their old building - The Annex - to create a park.
- The stated goal of Park and Rec in their System Plan is to 'Seize opportunities to add green space to downtown'.
- The stated goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to create a full block, Pedro Park at the site of the Annex.
- A general goal of the MET Council in their 2040 Park Plan is to provide communities with a population of 4000+ people with between 1 acre and 25 acres of parkland.

Demolishing the Annex Building for park space is hugely popular and has been long anticipated with excitement in our neighborhood. We are 4000+ people who have been living on the dream of more park than the .45 acres donated by the Pedro family.

Our Council Member supports its demolition for park space.

The Capitol River Council of downtown supports its demolition for park space.

Yet, city staff is recommending it be sold and will ask for supplemental funding that will in effect kill any hope for our neighborhood to have a larger park. Without vacating the alley prior to selling the Annex, any promises about a future larger park are meaningless.

I purchased and renovated a condo in 2016 after the demolition of the Annex was announced to the public believing downtown had a future for families, for my kids - not just millennials and senior citizens.

I'm afraid for our neighborhood should the dream of a 'Mears Park' or 'Wacouta Park' equivalent die. For us, it becomes harder to justify keeping our kids downtown without the park and recreation amenities we originally anticipated. It may be too late for our family to enjoy a larger park, but we shouldn't take away that potential for future generations.

Sincerely,

Kati Berg

Council members Thao, Tolbert, Stark, Brendmoen, Bostrom and Price,

I am a resident of Ward 2. The promise of Pedro Park is one of the huge reasons I chose some five years ago to purchase a condo in the Fitzgerald Park neighborhood. I attended planning meetings and blueprint options the city had drawn up for the block bordered by Minnesota, 9th 10th and Robert. I was crestfallen last year when these plans were set aside.

I urge you to vote against selling this designated park land to private interests. My reasons are as follows:

***OFFICE NEEDS ARE BEING MET**

Downtown residents need additional Park and Recreation space and amenities. Business leaders need more creative class A office space.....Must one be sacrificed to promote the other? Of course not. Yet, that is what selling the Police Annex Building will do.

Are there affordable and executable alternatives to park expansion outside the city-owned Annex building? No.

Are there viable alternatives for creative, class A office space? Yes.

Business leaders can find creative, class A office space at 370 Osborn, 428 Minnesota or Treasure Island Center to name a few. Renovation opportunities exist in the 15-20% vacant office spaces downtown.

Per the Comprehensive Plan and Donation Agreement with the Pedro family, the Police Annex Building is designated parkland meant to serve the residential Fitzgerald Park neighborhood surrounding it.

We can have our cake and eat it too only if we keep the Annex Building.

*PARK AND RECREATION NEEDS

The police Annex Building must remain a city owned asset. The Park and Recreation needs of downtown's growing residential base are not being met. Public picnic tables, playgrounds dog parks, sport courts, and pavilions are essential to all communities, and for a community without backyards, it an emergency. There is only one plan to expand parkland downtown. We cannot allow it to be sabotaged by special interest. We have one shot at cheap parkland downtown! Do not sell it.

*ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The role of Mears Park as a central green, cannot be understated in Lowertown's success.

The idea alone of a similar park north of 7th St sparked a flood of economic activity. The Rossmor, Produce Exchange, and Fitzgerald Condominium conversions, The Penfield and Lunds Grocery Store, restaurants and bars opened to border the new park. I purchased a condo across the street from the park site!

What will an actual full size park bring?

Let's follow in Lowertown's footsteps, a proven model for economic growth.

I hope you will visit www.savepedropark.com to learn more. I urge you to vote not to sell designated park land to private interests.

Sincerely,

Linda Letts

Don't sell promised Pedro parkland! Fulfill the vision of this park to anchor downtown's urban village. If you break promises to people who donate their land to the city for a purpose agreed upon, then there will be fewer donations.

Martha Sheppard
445 Wacouta Street, #406
St.Paul 55101

PLEASE vote to approve councilwoman Rebecca Noecker's proposal to expand Pedro Park.

Dear councilmember,

Saint Paul's tagline is "the most livable city in America."

If that's truly our aim, I can't imagine why we'd sell valuable parkland to a corporate developer and break up a thriving neighborhood with a new office building.

Yet, that's exactly what's being threatened on October 24th.

You'll see a pitch for a pretty looking, tiny little "park." Don't be fooled. What us neighbors see is an office lawn next to evidence of the city mortgaging our community's future. That, and a broken promise to the Pedro family.

Decades of planning have always referred to block 10 as "Fitzgerald park" "Pedro park" and "a park at the heart." Land was donated. Resolutions were passed. A police annex was relocated. Designs were drawn.

This neighborhood was a part of that entire process.

We have no part in this.

Please, do not destroy our vision for our community with your vote.

Respectfully,
Matthew Volenec

My wife and I have owned a condo in Rossmor for 10 years. We love our home. We love the location of Rossmor. And, we are eager for the Pedro Park that was promised after years of community work, discussions, needs assessments, and planning. We understand that the Promised Park will increase the value of our property. We understand that our taxes will go up. And, we understand that our quality of life will rise. We understand that green spaces are good for community. Good for public safety. Good for a shared quality of life.

Please do the right thing. Build the promised park. This is a financial no brainer.

Derek Peterson
Rossmor #403
500 Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

there has been no new public park in downtown Saint Paul since 1850. Yes, 1850. Pedro Park if implemented as has been promised for the last several years (not a shared postage stamp) would be the FIRST new public park in downtown Saint Paul since 1850.

In 1850 the TOTAL population of Minnesota was under 6,100. Today Saint Paul's downtown population totals 23,952 with a total of 12,772 households.

These 23,952 cannot crowd into the two small public parks in downtown Saint Paul. Each month more rental units are being built with more people living in downtown Saint Paul. They too will find no place to enjoy grass, trees, flowers in what is otherwise a concrete metropolis.

Saint Paul needs more downtown green space. You've promised this for several years. Now perform.

Carol and Doran Levy
CityWalk condominium owners
Saint Paul, MN

Dear Council Members,

A more basic, but larger, park i.e. one with trees and grass, will be much preferable to a \$3 million postage stamp size park with water feature, etc. What our neighborhood needs is green space. Please vote (on the 24th) to stay with the original plans for Pedro Park and to remove the Police Annex Building. Part of what makes a park a community park is the neighborhood's involvement in it's maintenance and upkeep. Those of us who live at The Pointe are not likely to have much to do with the postage stamp size park that we cannot even see from our homes due to the intervening large concrete monster.

Gary Stoos
78 Tenth Street East, #2601
Saint Paul, MN 55101

We were told there would be a park. I want a park.

Hello council members. My name is Paul Corydon and I have lived at Tenth and Minnesota for 13 years. We need a large park in our neighborhood. The proposed park is a tiny, half-assed version of what we were promised by the city for many years. We do not need this development by Ackerburg. Please vote to support demolishing the Police Annex Bldg., and to give us the park we want. Thank you.

Dear council member,

I am writing to voice my concern about selling the Annex building and allowing the Ackerberg group to rehab the building.

We need green space!!!! I am a resident at 78 10th Street. I purchased with the understanding that the Pedro family donated land for a full city park. While I understand the logistics in a full park, I don't agree with the changing of the plan, from demolishing the building to a full sale and rehab of the Annex.

The selling of the Annex completely changes the neighborhood that I bought into.

I had the opportunity this summer to garden at the park and in doing that I had dozens of conversations with people who would visit the park. 99% of them had no know idea that the Annex building was even up for sale which was disheartening to hear that the public is so unaware. I did attend the two brief meetings one at Tin Whiskers and one at the History theater and I took away that the building was already well under way to being sold. The mayor ran so fast out of Tin Whiskers it is now a joke among us.

In this time green space is so so so rare. It is such a great opportunity to preserve it or capture it when you have the chance. Imagine that block with out the Annex Building it would be incredible to have that space green with or without the full park.

I hope you really consider the long term vision of the land. You will never have this opportunity again in that area. You the city can come out on top by just staying with half the plan and tear down the Annex and revisit the park plan full or not.

We have lived without a real park for so long and that is fine but please don't burden us with a short sighted vision on a trendy building with a park that looks like it belongs to the building.

Again having a full block park is not what I am so focused on but the chance to have beautiful green space (or a park) would make our city shine.

Imagine it right as you come in from the freeway, train, capitol etc. RARE! It would be incredible! I hope you consider doing what is really best for the city, it's people and it's future.

TEAR DOWN THE ANNEX!

Thank you,

Jane Lynch

Dear council members,

I live in the Rossmor building that borders block 10. That block has been called "Fitzgerald park" "Pedro park" and "a park at the heart." and the Pedro family donated their land with the expectation that a full park would eventually go in there. The police annex has been relocated and park designs were drawn up. Many of us bought our places with the knowledge that this park would eventually happen. Now it seems that the city has gone back on their promises and sold out to a new office building with a tiny little park.

What we see is an office lawn next to another office building that Saint Paul doesn't need.

Saint Paul's tagline is "the most livable city in America."

If that's truly our aim, please consider Council Member Noecker's option (attached) that gives us twice the park for half the cost and opens the door to greening the parking lots. I can't imagine why we'd sell valuable parkland to a corporate developer and break up a thriving neighborhood with a new office building.

Please, do not destroy our vision for our community with your vote.

Respectfully,
Patricia McKee

Dear St. Paul City Councilmembers,

Saint Paul's tagline is "the most livable city in America."

If that's truly our aim, I can't imagine why we'd sell valuable parkland to a corporate developer and break up a thriving neighborhood with a new office building.

Yet, that's exactly what's being threatened on October 24th.

You'll see a pitch for a pretty looking, tiny little "park." Don't be fooled. What we neighbors see is an office lawn next to evidence of the city mortgaging our community's future. That, and a broken promise to the Pedro family.

Decades of planning have always referred to block 10 as "Fitzgerald Park" "Pedro Park" and "a park at the heart." Land was donated. Resolutions were passed. A police annex was relocated. Designs were drawn. This neighborhood was a part of that entire process.

Please, do not accept this proposal and destroy our vision for our community with your vote. I understand there is a much better alternative proposal for a full block park at half the cost. Details on this alternative are attached after this letter.

Thank you for reading this.

Respectfully,

David and Judy Heberlein
78 10th Street East
St. Paul

One of the reasons people are mad at government is that you no longer represent US. I don't hear any cries for more office space in the Fitzgerald area. You DO hear cries that WE want the promise of a larger Park. Republican or Democrat I will work to vote anyone who votes for this plan to get you out of office because you have forgotten your job is a privilege to work for the people, not to get re-elected! Please consider doing the right thing and representing us that live in the area. This is a fair compromise for the time being.

https://lookaside.fbsbx.com/file/Alternative%20Pedro%20Park%20Proposal.pdf?token=AWzu7XxWXS4YEzew11zeBuhLmYrp7HURP0R9bOrpc8npy5bTZd_F1fcghZm416Bi0e_m4qqbyQlpWHO-tmu_Eu_SpDeQkn-IgrjN0jkJOEclpkZlXo9IRt4SngtST3PXRvA0L7B5jEwv_672gX0dEgLRcGglqxtx-bAsENWrWVpPL-tR6NzjQDjg_H0kUN-DpeDi6wDRsToV698tX7vCmjn7

Please vote to expand Pedro Park. It would be a much needed improvement to the area. Kate Engels, Citywalk

From: rod halverson [<mailto:halvorrod@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, July 18, 2018 12:25 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Pedro Park and the Police Annex, 5 affirmative votes for conveyance to HRA

Dear Rebecca, Dai and Jane,

We are writing today for two reasons. The first reason is to say thank you again. The Friends of Pedro Park Expansion are extremely grateful for your support and NO vote last November 8, 2017. We truly believe a three quarter block or full block park at the center of our neighborhood, as promised by the grassroots process leading to the Comprehensive Plan, will be an asset to those living nearby and to the whole city. Thank you for sharing that view and your continued support since November.

The second reason we are writing is to **share an important matter** we have become aware of as we researched the many elements of this complicated decision. We were aware of Chapter 13's requirements about the disposal of parkland. However, we only recently became aware of an Administrative Code that requires ALL "real property" conveyance to the HRA must have FIVE affirmative votes (see below)¹.

We ask the three of you to continue to fight for the expansion of Pedro Park by voting NO on any motion that provides for the "conveyance of the Police Annex to the HRA." The motion will fail to achieve the super majority of FIVE and we can move forward in using the Annex parcel as public parkland. We would also want you to vote against any last minute effort to change the rules of the game by amending the Administrative Code.

Thank you for your support,

Friends of Pedro Park Expansion

Kati Berg

Rod Halvorson

Marilyn (Pedro) Pitera

Patricia Flaherty

Gary Stoos

John Ganey

Good Morning Council Member Nelson,

I'm looking forward to meeting you today at 2pm.

I will be bring information about our neighborhood and past planning efforts, but I want to share a spreadsheet that was created by another resident for you to use as a tool to compare the long term financial benefit to the city through property taxes of selling the Annex vs. creating a larger park.

The majority of property taxes around Pedro Park come from a residential housing and with at least three new residential developments coming serving the needs of those residents in imperative we have the park and recreation infrastructure to maintain and increase those property values.

As you will see from the spreadsheet just surrounding the park residents pay over \$3,000,000 each year in taxes.

An expanded park will make our property more valuable which translates into increased tax dollars for the city.

The \$50,000 per year expected from selling the Annex pales in comparison to percentage increases for the whole neighborhood.

A larger park will support more affordable, quality housing options as people want to be around transit, downtown amenities, and ample green space.

Sincerely,
Kati Berg

 [For Ward 4 Copy of Pedro Residential Tax Base](#)

Hello Council Members,

I'm writing to ask you to please vote not to sell the Police Annex to Ackerberg or any other developer.

I imagine there is heavy pressure to add more business and office space, but I encourage you to remember that the homeowners living downtown, collectively, pay a larger share of taxes than many of the businesses do. Shouldn't their voices be considered strongly as well in the over all picture? As you've heard many times, we have 20% vacancy rates in our office space downtown. Might a wiser decision be to move more in in the direction of restaurant and retail at this point? Those options don't need "Class A" space and won't compete with owners trying to rent their empty office space. With the growth of the residential sector downtown, "riding the horse the way it's going", seems like a reasonable future action. Preserving the original plan for expansion of Pedro would support that thinking. There are, I believe, over 500 new apartments being proposed for downtown. It would be hard to imagine that expanded green space wouldn't be appreciated by new and old residents alike.

At the very minimum, give strong consideration to Rebecca Noecker's proposal for an expanded green space over the sale of the Police Annex. It appears there is rare opportunity for more or future green space in downtown. The city has this parcel in their hands already plus the future expansion of Pedro is impeded by letting Ackerberg have rights to the alley.

Please keep the green space for those living downtown now and for our future occupants as well! Wonderful urban cores have a balance of parks and business. I'm not sure that is the case in downtown St. Paul.

ALL THE BEST!

Peg Ganey

It was a pleasure meeting you today.

Thank you for listening to our concerns and asking great questions.

I've come to understand the reasons for the staff recommendation to convert the building into office space, but selling the only parcel of land that can become added green space to downtown is a sacrifice too large. The effort to convert the Annex into parkland goes back 20 years, has the buy in of the majority of the community, and is technically official city policy.

I have faith the money will be found for our park through private foundations once city efforts are no longer divided.

The 'we tried and failed twice already' argument you mentioned needs to be seriously challenged. As I mentioned - the story I've heard from Darren Tobolt in particular is CIB wants to fund our park, wants to expand the park, took action steps to get there, and to vacate the Annex. But before the building was vacated, the city changed direction and began pushing for office space instead.

Thank you so much again,

Sincerely,
Kati Berg

Hello Council Members,

I am writing to express my support for the expansion of Pedro park in keeping with the comprehensive and neighborhood plans for this space. Downtown St. Paul has many office facilities available, but it is rare to have a plot of publicly owned land in downtown that could be converted per the neighborhood's longstanding wishes, to park land. An expanded park is ecologically friendly, and will benefit quality of life for both the residents of the down town area and those who come down town to work each day. Please vote in favor of expanding Pedro Park.

Sincerely,
Kerry Bollman
Ward 4

Councilperson ,

It has been a long and contentious battle to get our community park but I believe my Councilperson Rebecca Noecker's Alternative Plan is a viable option and will be supported by all.

Please support.

Jo Ann Hendricks
78 E 10th St
St Paul MN 55101

From: Eric Wong [<mailto:wong02@gmail.com>]
Sent: Sunday, October 21, 2018 5:41 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Pedro Park Office Space

Dear Councilman Bostrom,

Downtown residents need additional Park and Recreation space and amenities. Business leaders need more creative, class A, office space. Must one be sacrificed to promote the other? Of course not. Yet, that is what selling the Police Annex Building will do.

Are there affordable & executable alternatives to park expansion outside the city-owned Annex building? No.

Are there viable alternatives for creative, class A, office space? Yes.

Business leaders can find creative, class A office space at 370 Osborn, 428 Minnesota, or Treasure Island Center to name a few. Renovation opportunities exist in the 15-20% vacant office spaces downtown. City led new construction developments facing the riverfront or at Central Station are also opportunities to fill this demand without sabotaging existing city plans to bring more parkland to downtown residents, visitors, and workers. Do we really need to reduce property values Downtown any further with more

office spaces taking up green spaces?

Per the Comprehensive Plan and Donation Agreement with the Pedro family, the Police Annex Building is designated parkland meant to serve the residential Fitzgerald Park neighborhood surrounding it.

We can have our cake and eat too only if we keep the Annex Building.

Sincerely,

Eric Wong

From: Ben Hatchett [<mailto:ben.hatchett@gmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, October 19, 2018 9:37 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward3

Subject: HRA and Police Annex

Dear Council Member Tolbert,

I'm deeply concerned about the power Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) has to sell community assets meant to stay as community assets per the Comprehensive Plan.

I'm deeply concerned about the HRA's willingness to break contractual agreements and past promises.

Selling the Annex Building despite it's clear protection as parkland under the [Comprehensive Plan](#) and [Donation Agreement](#) with the Pedro Family is an abuse of power and hurts our democracy.

Let's work to close these loopholes to prevent communities from being sabotaged with 11th hour plans forged behind closed doors.

Please vote no to selling the Police Annex Building.

Sincerely,

Ben

From: Friends of Pedro Park [<mailto:friendsofpedropark@gmail.com>]

Sent: Sunday, October 21, 2018 4:10 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1; #CI-StPaul_Ward4; Thao, Dai (CI-StPaul); Nelson, Mitra (CI-StPaul); Prince, Jane (CI-StPaul); Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul)

Cc: CRC Office; Rod Halvorson City Walk Pres.; Brendmoen, Amy (CI-StPaul); chris.tolbert@ci.saintpaul.mn.us; Bostrom, Dan (CI-StPaul); *CI-StPaul_Mayor

Subject: CM Noecker's proposal HAS THE VOTES! Passed in 5/27/2015

Dear CM Thao and Nelson,

Our respective meetings and concerns expressed led me to dig further. The following resolutions are the most recent resolutions passed by City Council regarding the Public Annex Building.

- One officially brings the Public Safety Annex into Pedro Park. (Giving it Chapter 13 protections - requiring the disposal to be replaced in the community)
- The other is to direct the Port Authority to demolish the building and stabilize the site.

This is exactly what CM Noecker's proposal is. These are the promises our neighborhood and District Council doesn't want broken.

Voting to sell the Annex will be in direct conflict with these resolutions, with the wishes of the District Council, the majority of downtown residents, our Council Member, and the Comprehensive Plan.

RES 14-1861	Resolution	Passed	1/7/2015	Authorizing the naming of the downtown city park, on the half block as Pedro Park . (Laid over from November 12)
RES 15-945	Resolution	Passed	5/27/2015	Granting (i) approval to enter into the necessary documents with the City of Saint Paul and equipping of a new Public Safety Training Facility for the City of Saint Paul and stabilization of such site after demolition; and (ii) preliminary plat to be issued by the City of Saint Paul and authorizing City finance staff to

Keep the Promise,

Kati Berg, Co-Chair Friends of Pedro Park
Freinds of Pedro Park.

From: Jonathan Flory [mailto:jonflory@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, May 11, 2018 8:19 PM
To: Hestness, Andrew (CI-StPaul) <Andrew.Hestness@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; bbartz@srfconsulting.com
Cc: Stewart, Ellen (CI-StPaul) <ellen.stewart@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Two topics related to Pedro Park

Andrew,

I was given the impression that you are the person to talk to about the fate of the annex building at our first Design Advisory Committee meeting just over a week ago. If that was in error and you know who the first half of this email should go to, could you forward it to that person? Thanks!

I may not be interested in taking up time from the Design Advisory Committee meetings for Pedro Park to talk about expanding the park into the current location of the Annex Building, but that does not mean I don't believe the best choice for the neighborhood (and by extension downtown and the whole city) is to refrain from selling the annex building and demolish the building to eventually expand the park into that space. The short explanation is this: assuming the cities goals include eventually creating a park the fills that entire block (and, as far as I can tell, that both has been the plan and continues to be the plan whether or not the building is sold), selling that land is literally moving backwards. The land is already owned by the city, and selling the land means it will eventually need to be purchased back, and most likely at a loss, especially if the building is developed into something better than it is now. Unless the new plan is to build a bigger park around a really nice office building, selling the building seems likely to delay the end goal by decades. Selling the building should come alongside publicly modifying the plan and stating achievable intentions. I am always happy to set up a time to more fully discuss the future of that plot of land, just let me know and we could set up a lunch or a phone call.

Whatever happens with the annex building, I look forward to providing my input (and my neighbor's input) into this advisory process. I continue to have faith that even if the results do not align with my personal opinions, overall the best interests of our community will ultimately be served.

From: Patricia Flaherty [<mailto:zoepatricia@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Monday, October 22, 2018 4:00 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward4
Subject: Pedro Park vote

Hello Council Member Nelson,
Congratulations on your election to the City Council. I hope you enjoy a wonderful career serving the people of St. Paul.

I wrote to all the Council members just a bit ago, but am writing a separate message here because you are new. I know you worked with Russ Stark so you are familiar with the issue of the planned expansion of the current pocket version of Pedro Park vs the development of the Police Annex Building.

I just want you to know how deeply ingrained and anticipated the long-planned and long-supported (by both citizens and the Council) park is in the minds of those in this growing neighborhood. We have many seniors (myself included), young professionals, and a growing numbers of families with young children. All of us would benefit from this missing piece of our neighborhood. Like it or not, downtown is having a population explosion and I hope more business will come. But it is so important to make downtown a good place for those already living here. As the nationwide trend of moving to urban centers continues, there will be even more of us.

Please consider voting NO on Wednesday to selling the Annex building. Keeping building means the end of the long-planned park (so long it feels like a promise).

Thank you.
Patricia Flaherty

From: Jim Crockarell [<mailto:jimcrockarell@comcast.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2018 10:33 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Petro Park

Rebecca:
I want to commend you for your position on Petro Park. St Paul needs more green space and this is a good location for that. Hopefully your fellow council members will recognize the wisdom behind your position.

Jim Crockarell

From: T Wulling [<mailto:t.wulling@earthlink.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2018 10:50 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward4
Subject: Pedro Park - Back Noecker's plan

Dear Councilmember Nelson,

I am embarrassed that the City hasn't followed through on its agreement in accepting the Pedro property.

I support Rebecca Noecker's proposal to tear down the vacant public safety building and make a half-block park.

Green space is important within a downtown. Even without so many residential properties nearby, Pedro Park would be important. Being present is more important than it is for the greenspace to be fancy. The costly amenities are not essential, and certainly not initially.

I suppose the Mayor wants redevelopment of the old public safety property for tax income. The park will increase the values of the area around it. It will indirectly generate tax revenue. That's the concept the City uses in many other projects—tax increment financing. Why not this one, too?

Please promote Noecker's plan among other Council members. I really would like to see the Pedro bequest fulfilled.

Tim Wulling
1495 Raymond Ave.

Mary Merrill re Pedro Park

Mary called C/M Tolbert's office re: Pedro Park. She does not live downtown, but feels some of the solutions being offered are so very minimal. She believes clearing the block and expanding the green park as promised to the family is the only way to go. It is a very depressing spot – clear it and make it green.

From: Patricia Flaherty <zoepatricia@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, October 22, 2018 3:41 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Pedro Park

Dear Councilmember Thao,

I just sent a letter to you and the other six council members entreating you to vote NO on Wednesday to selling the Annex building. I am writing to you separately because we had your vote last November but I heard you have changed your mind.

I am wondering why the change of heart. And I also want to tell you how saddened I am by both the potential loss of an adequate park for a growing neighborhood with a growing number of children, but also by the lack of any process for open, neighborhood-wide input. The larger park has been in the

City's comprehensive plan for many, many years and has received unanimous council support over those years. It just feels like a betrayal to have such a big change without any opportunity for you and the other council members to hear from those affected.

I do enjoy your poetry and reflections on Facebook. They seem to come from a thoughtful person. Please put some serious reflection into your vote this Wednesday.

Thank you.
Patricia Flaherty

From: Gmail Steve [<mailto:steveloeding@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2018 8:42 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward3; #CI-StPaul_Ward1; #CI-StPaul_Ward2; #CI-StPaul_Ward4; #CI-StPaul_Ward5; #CI-StPaul_Ward6; #CI-StPaul_Ward7; mayor@ci-stpaul.mn.us

Subject: White Elephants

Hi,

I served in elected office for 14 years. I was pleased to have been involved in numerous innovative government reforms that earned state and national recognition.

During those 14 years, I also got fairly adept at spotting projects that were doomed to failure.

I am very confident the redevelopment of the police annex will be a financial failure. You can not put lipstick on such building and call it Class A office space. The bigger issue is location, location location. As I walk through the city on the streets or in the skyways, I am amazed at the amount of recently redeveloped buildings in the core of downtown that are mostly vacant. I can not understand how anyone can think that a building 3 blocks removed from the core of the city (sitting as an Island in the middle of a sea of surface parking lots) will attract commercial tenants.

I am OK with the plan to turn the current hole in the ground called Pedro Park into nicer space. I am convinced, however, that the remodeled building will be a giant failure.

It pains me to visit a Class A city like Minneapolis with booming commercial activity in polished buildings with clean bustling skyways. Then I come back to St Paul and see a decaying old city with filthy mostly empty skyways that seem hobbled together with no sense of logical order. I see empty office space in just about every building. I see commercial attempts that implode before a brick is laid and major commercial buildings reverting to housing.

I encourage you to look beyond the debate over park vs commercial and focus on logic. Do you really think a redeveloped building this far from the core of downtown has any chance of succeeding? Really? I am convinced you are talking yourselves into a white elephant.



Steve



Hosko Letter
10-24-18.pdf

From: TOM DIMOND [<mailto:tdimond@q.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2018 10:52 PM
To: Prince, Jane (CI-StPaul) <Jane.Prince@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Please support Pedro Park

Tom Dimond
2119 Skyway Drive
Saint Paul, MN 55119

October 23, 2018

RE: Please support Pedro Park - vote no to \$13.6 million taxpayer subsidy of private development

The May 21, 2015 Star Tribune outlines the terms of an \$18 million public expenditure to vacate the Public Safety annex and demolish the existing structure. \$15 million of the funding came from CIB bonding. This allocation of \$15 million to clear this site was to facilitate the implementation of City Council supported plans for park use of this site. The contract included funds for demolition to prepare the site for park use.

Spending \$18 million to advance a full block park is a significant investment to support Downtown housing and recreational opportunities. Spending \$13.6 million to subsidize 50,000 square feet of Class B space is fiscally irresponsible.

Spending \$18 million to make improvements to public property is one thing. Spending \$18 million so you can sell the public property for \$1.4 million makes no sense at all.

Suggesting that selling the property generates \$1.4 million for parks is a real distortion of the truth. The \$15 million of CIB bonding used to vacate the building could have paid the whole cost of current park development proposal and left more than \$10 million for parks elsewhere in the City.

The City Council spent \$15million of CIB bonding to vacate a building and clear the site for park use. If the City sells the property for \$1.4 million it is a \$13.6 million taxpayer subsidy to a private developer. The current proposal would add to the \$15 million of CIB bonding, \$200,000 of park dedication funds, and \$2.23 million of CIB bonding for a total of \$17.4 million to end up with only the corner lot as park.

Minneapolis purchased the property for East Commons Park for \$20 million, is spending \$22 million on development, and budgets \$1.9 million a year for operations. It has been a huge catalyst for residential and commercial development in the area. Compare how Minneapolis spends millions to support public improvements that spur significant new private development with Saint Paul spending millions to subsidize 50,000 square feet of private Class B rehab.

A 2015 commercial real estate report shows Saint Paul's central business district with about 800,000 square feet of vacant Class B space. This is a vacancy rate of 19%. Taxpayer subsidies to add 50,000 square feet of Class B space is hard to justify as a wise use of taxpayer's money.

The City Council spent \$15 million to clear this site for park use. Clearing and site preparation has been paid for. The land should remain public. The City Council should seek State funding for Pedro Park development which frees up \$2.5 million for other parks.

From: J Dough <jdo85746@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, October 24, 2018 12:37 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1-7 <Ward1-7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Carter, Melvin (CI-StPaul)

<Melvin.Carter@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Alemseged, Naomi (CI-StPaul) <Naomi.Alemseged@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Pedro Park Vote

October 24, 2018

To: St. Paul City Council (ward1-7@ci.stpaul.mn.us); Mayor Melvin Carter (Melvin.Carter@ci.stpaul.mn.us); Staff Constituent Outreach Coordinator (Naomi.Alemseged@ci.stpaul.mn.us)

Hello,

We are residents of downtown Saint Paul and live adjacent to the Pedro Park / Public Safety Annex building.

We are choosing to write anonymously to avoid incurring the wrath and shunning of our "Friends of Pedro Park" neighbors. Please be assured that neighbors voicing opposition to the "Friends of Pedro Park" goals are already

experiencing hostility and exclusion because of their differing views and opinions.

We wish to let the City Council and Mayor's office know that not all who reside in the area support the goals of the "Friends of Pedro Park" group. Please be aware that many nearby residents are justifiably concerned with ever-increasing spending, rising taxes and loss of commercial tax base and revenue.

From recent headlines: "2019 proposed city budget is 7.6 percent higher than the 2018 budget and comes with an 11.5 percent increase in the city's portion of the property tax levy." "Ramsey County is eyeing a 4.3 percent increase in its property tax levy for next year." "While property taxes have skyrocketed, we have not seen an increase in city services." "City streets and public safety are substandard."

Like "Friends of Pedro Park," we are also all about parks and green space. But we are also all about not demolishing sound, usable and arguably historic buildings and negating the collection of property taxes, job creation and other benefits from said buildings.

Not everyone can have a park immediately adjacent to them. The inability of "Friends of Pedro Park" group to consider cost-effective options or compromise is both myopic and selfish. Their mass resignation from the Design Advisory Committee and their proposed lawsuit are examples of this.

Pedro Park, Mears Park, a newly revitalized Rice Park, Upper Landing Park, Lowertown Dog Park, Harriet and Raspberry Island, Swede Hollow Park, Vento Nature Sanctuary, the nearby lowertown park with children's play area, as well as the additional abundance of park and green space surrounding our State Capitol are examples of existing parks and green space nearby.

The parks and green space examples above make it hard to justify the "Friends of Pedro Park" argument as not myopic and selfish. Again, not everyone can have a park immediately adjacent to them.

In sum:

We urge the City Council and Mayor's office to save and sell the Public Safety Annex building to the Ackerberg Group or another developer if more advantageous to the city and its taxpayers.

We ask the City Council and Mayor's office to consider the five to seven million dollar taxable value of the Public Safety Annex building if it is saved and developed.

We ask the City Council and Mayor's office to consider the potential of the estimated two hundred permanent jobs to be created by saving, selling and redeveloping the Public Safety Annex building.

We challenge the City Council and Mayor's office to continue negotiating with Ackerberg Group (or another developer if more advantageous) to insure clear contractual language concerning building and park development and measurable time-frames to develop and complete construction of the Pedro Park space.

We challenge the City Council and Mayor's office to clearly identify and publicly communicate what specific amenities the Ackerberg Group Group (or another developer if more advantageous) intends to include in the development Pedro Park.

We further challenge the City Council and Mayor's office to insure there are no loopholes in the Ackerberg Group's (or another developer if more advantageous) commitment to develop Pedro Park and to maintain it as a first-class public space all can be proud of.