



City of Saint Paul

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Minutes - Final

Legislative Hearings

Marcia Moermond, Legislative Hearing Officer
Mai Vang, Hearing Coordinator
Joanna Zimny, Executive Assistant
legislativehearings@ci.stpaul.mn.us
651-266-8585

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House/Remote

9:00 a.m. Hearings

Remove/Repair Orders

- 1 **RLH RR 25-22** Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 1623 MAYWOOD STREET within fifteen (15) days after the August 20, 2025, City Council Public Hearing.

Sponsors: Kim

Remove within 15 days with no option to repair.

No owner appeared o/b/o property

Neighbor appeared o/b/o District Council, but did not testify

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: The building is a two story, wood frame, single-family dwelling with a detached two-stall garage on a lot of 5,140 square feet. The property was referred by Fire C of O to Vacant Buildings with files opened on June 22, 2022 (no revocation letter in records). The current property owner is Ann M. Kemper, per Amanda and Ramsey County Property records.

On April 23, 2025, an inspection of the building was conducted, a list of deficiencies which constitute a nuisance condition was developed and photographs were taken. An Order to Abate a Nuisance Building was posted on April 28, 2025, with a compliance date of May 28, 2025. As of this date, the property remains in a condition which comprises a nuisance as defined by the legislative code. Taxation has placed an estimated market value of \$60,000 on the land and \$238,200 on the building. Real estate taxes for the second half of 2023 and all of 2024 are delinquent in the amount of \$14,222.48, which includes penalty and interest. Property is scheduled for tax forfeiture July 31, 2027. The vacant building registration fees are currently due and owing. Fees were last paid by assessment on August 2, 2024. The vacant building fee for 2025 is due and owing in the amount of \$4,918. As of July 14, 2025, a Code Compliance Inspection has not been done. As of July 14, 2025, the \$5,000 performance deposit has not been posted.

There have been nine Summary Abatement notices since 2022. There have been eight work orders issued for: Boarding/securing, Tall grass/weeds and Snow/ice. Code

Enforcement Officers estimate the cost to repair this structure exceeds \$100,000.
The estimated cost to demolish exceeds \$30,000.

Moermond: I just asked Ms. Zimny to see if Ms. Kemper is alive or not.

Zimny: I found no obituary.

Hoffman: from the time this was opened as a Vacant Building I've had no contact with anyone interested in the property.

Moermond: I was also interested in why the tax forfeiture is 2027. I'm thinking they're counting from 2024. That's kind of odd. There's also a law firm listed and they signed for certified mail. If she isn't paying the taxes we're probably looking at a foreclosure on this as well. No bank is listed though, but the firm is. No communication from the owner. We have a building that was found to be vacant with Code violations, opened as a Category 2 with no effort to fix in the last 3 years.

Hoffman: correct.

Moermond: I will recommend this is ordered removed with no option to repair within 15 days. I'd like to note that Ann Kemper and Elbert VonSpreckelsen were sent the hearing notices by certified mail and no one signed for them.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

Making Finding on Nuisance Abatements

- 2 [RLH RR 25-17](#) First Making finding on the appealed substantial abatement ordered for 887 CHARLES AVENUE in Council File RLH RR 24-17.

Sponsors: Bowie

Layover to LH July 29, 2025 at 9 am to see if building permit has been pulled and discuss time to completion.

Kyle Runbeck, owner, appeared via phone

Moermond: looks like we have one hurdle left and that's the building permit. All the others have been finalized. I'm curious, what's the plan on that?

Runbeck: I need to get down there and get it taken care of ASAP. I haven't been able to do that yet, I should be able to do that soon.

Moermond: I want you to know this is costing you real money. You got a letter saying we would forfeit Performance Deposit. You have money on the line. Get that pulled and inspected. You'll be losing money \$1,000 at a time. There was a letter June 12th. It is highlighted in yellow about the forfeiture of the Performance Deposit. I'd love to see this turned around quickly and not have us in that place. Get on top of this and make it a priority. You're very close and the only tool I have left is to take money away and I'd like to avoid that if possible, I'm sure you would too.

Runbeck: yes, definitely.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 7/29/2025

- 3 [RLH RR 25-20](#) Making finding on the appealed substantial abatement ordered for 674 MAGNOLIA AVENUE EAST in Council File RLH RR 24-34.

Sponsors: Yang

Recommendation forthcoming pending submission of more detailed schedule/work plan.

Kevin Vu, purchaser, appeared via phone

Moermond: just following up with you on 674 Magnolia. We got your materials and they look good except for one thing, which is a more fleshed out work schedule. Right now, I just have a start date of February 1 and completion date of October 15. That I accepted before, but since we're at the making finding, we need more detail.

Vu: I can do that.

Moermond: that would be great. We'll finish up by email.

Vu: I'm at the house now and I will talk to the contractor about it.

Moermond: the Council Public Hearing is next Wednesday, so we need that wrapped up with a bow by then. Get that in soon, we'll review it and get back to you.

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/23/2025

- 4 [RLH RR 25-19](#) Third Making finding on the appealed substantial abatement ordered for 401 ROSE AVENUE EAST in Council File RLH RR 25-14.

Sponsors: Kim

Forfeit \$1,000 of PD and continue CPH to August 6, 2025 and if still not completed forfeit an additional \$1,000 every 2 weeks until project is complete.

Jay Mitchell, contractor, appeared

Moermond: from the last time we talked there appears to be no change in permit status.

Mitchell: yes.

Moermond: this has Council Public Hearing tomorrow and I was hoping you'd finish. You thought you'd be done quickly but that didn't happen.

Mitchell: I hoped so too, but we had 2 break ins. I don't know why it is so liked by vagrants but it is.

Moermond: at the Council Public Hearing tomorrow I need a plan for getting done. I am going to recommend the Council start forfeiting Performance Deposit now. Deliver a work plan by next Tuesday the 22nd and then I'll ask them to forfeit 1,000 on the 23rd and another \$1,000 every 2 weeks until it is done. We've been in this for over 18 months. That is a long time for an order to remove. We've given a lot of grace. If you want to sign up to testify by phone you need to do so by noon today.

Mitchell: can I ask for 3 weeks instead of 2? We've already lost quite a bit of money in

the break ins.

Moermond: and if you would have done more quickly you wouldn't have had the break ins. Tomorrow I'll ask them to forfeit \$1,000 and continue the case to August 6.

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/16/2025

10:00 a.m. Hearings

Special Tax Assessments

- 5 **RLH TA 25-306** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 992 ARCADE STREET. (File No. J2511B, Assessment No. 258111)

Sponsors: Yang

Approve the assessment.

*Nenghue Moua owner, appeared via phone
Mai Vang interpreted (Hmong)*

Moermond: the daughter will not be participating

[Mai Vang gives background of appeals process]

[Staff report given by Mai Vang]

Moua: I want to know who calls for the boarding.

[Vang summarized police report]

Moua: why wasn't I notified of the boarding and I want to know everyone involved. I feel I wasn't notified to have a chance to do the boarding. When the fireman was there was when I was notified and when I got there all the broken windows on the second floor, there was a big hole cut into the second floor, but all the broken windows mentioned were not even boarded.

Moermond: so, you would have preferred to do the boarding?

Moua: I wasn't aware because I wasn't notified, but when I got there I spoke to someone there about the boarding cost if the contractor were to do it and I said I would do it. I said I didn't want it; I would board myself.

Moermond: we had both St. Paul Fire Department and St. Paul Police Department on the scene and they can't release the building until it is secured, so my concern is they had open windows and the boards were removed. Smoke was coming from the second floor and needed ventilation. I suggest you speak to your insurance company for recompense. It was an emergency that needed action before police could leave the scene.

Moua: I don't feel me or my insurance should be responsible because I had a conversation with AJ. Two doors were boarded, but the second floor was open and were boarded by me.

Moermond: the invoice indicates four doors were boarded.

Moua: there was nothing wrong with the doors, all they did was put screws in.

Moermond: they needed to close the building; it was open upon arrival. This was the cost of the emergency callout. If you want to testify to Council further you are welcome to do so. My recommendation is approval of the assessment. We will provide an interpreter if he wishes to do so. The Council Public Hearing is August 20th.

Moua: is it not normal to call the owner before its boarded? It was already boarded when I arrived.

Moermond: yes, it is because it is an emergency situation and they can't leave the scene until it is secured.

[Note: Mr. Moua talked loudly over the interpreter the entire hearing, causing difficulty in interpreting and taking accurate minutes]

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

- 6** **RLH TA 25-305** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1083 CHATSWORTH STREET NORTH. (File No. VB2511, Assessment No. 258819)

Sponsors: Kim

Reduce assessment from \$2,618 to \$1,309.

Jon Nevin, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: this is the annual Vacant Building fee. The file was opened September 17, 2024, fee waived 90 days due to fire. Sent Warning letter on January 2, 2025. The Vacant Building file was closed March 21, 2025 Six months in the program, with a 90-day waiver.

Moermond: 6 out of 12 billable months.

Nevin: I wanted to see if we could waive the fee. I'm not familiar with the program. There was a fire in the garage that impacted the main building. We got it open the end of February.

Moermond: I'm going to say no to waiving the fee entirely, but I will recommend it is reduced by half for the 6 months you were in the program. Down to \$1,309. It was in the program that six months. The Council could of course look at it differently than I do.

Nevin: that sounds fair.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

- 7** [RLH TA 25-308](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 857 LAFOND AVENUE. (File No. J2505C, Assessment No. 252005)

Sponsors: Bowie

Make payable over 10 years.

No one appeared

Moermond: recommend this is made payable over 10 years.

Referred to the City Council due back on 7/16/2025

- 8 RLH TA 25-304** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1032 MINNEHAHA AVENUE EAST. (File No. J2511B, Assessment No. 258111)

Sponsors: Johnson

Approve the assessment.

Jason LeFerve, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: St. Paul Police Department requested a boarding, metal fastener for one door at 7:45 pm on February 6, 2025. Total assessment of \$474.

LeFerve: February 5 we had six people break in through an upstairs balcony door. They bust through the frame. We have an alarm system for all our properties for sale. They destroyed the alarm in the process, but it did go off. The St. Paul Police Department came, they ordered the board up. I spoke with the police officer and they said they'd ordered it and being secured. Boarding in the landlord world means an actual board so no one can do it again. They arrested 2 of them, the rest they let go. The very next day they went back to the same day, bumped it lightly, and back in because "securing and boarding" was done with a metal clip which was fully insufficient under the circumstances. In 27 years of owning and managing a property expecting a metal clip to secure a building. We had 14 of our properties leased to Evergreen Recovery, this was one of them. the St. Paul Police Department are aware that people have a list of those properties and breaking in to set up house. They were at another property formerly leased by Evergreen, were kicked out, and then breaking in. Putting a clip on the door would be fully insufficient because more than likely you'd have people come back in. I'm being charged for putting a clip on the door that did nothing. I had to pay a crew to go in and properly board the door until we could replace the door, which we did within a couple of days. I was charged a board up fee, and a metal clip was put on which was insufficient under the circumstances. I don't think I should have to pay for something I had to pay another contractor to do properly.

Moermond: the type of tax assessment is Boarding AND securing. I'm happy to look at this further. I will say the police report notes the door was damaged, not broken down. I'm happy to ponder this further but my initial take is it was secured to the same level it was secure before. You always have the option to go in the next day and secure more. But again, I will reread this report and see if there's anything in there that makes me change my mind after hearing your testimony. We'll follow up by email.

LeFerve: let me read into record exactly what the police told me because I have a text message to my contractor from February 5 at 10:34 pm. This is what I was told; a text

to DeMario who is one of our technicians: "I heard back from the Police from the break in at 1032 Minnehaha. There were 5 people who busted in the second-floor rear door jam and got into the building and tripped the alarm. The police caught 2 of the 5, the other ran out the back door and got away and they're still looking for them. The police officer said they broke the rear jam, but the door seemed ok [so they didn't break the door, they broke the jam which obviously a lot goes into the jam, so it is unsecure]. The alarm system isn't working. They did have a board up service and board the rear come door upstairs and secure everything else. So that's what I was told. These were homeless people that were former Evergreen clients which made it a target. I'll go over tomorrow to see if the alarm system still works or they broke that too, see what needs to be repaired on the door jam to put it back into good shape or we will have to replace the door."

That's what I was told by the police, which is why I didn't have DeMario go over there at 10:30 at night, because I was literally told it was boarded up. We wouldn't have had the second break-in if I'd have been told they were going to put a metal clip on the door and call it good. My contractor did look at it and his professional opinion said there's no way that clip would have secured the door in those circumstances and anyone could have bumped it with any amount of force.

Moermond: sounds like the deadbolt was similarly situated. Again, I will take another look at it and get back to you by email.

LeFerve : to clarify, the deadbolt wasn't broken, it still clicked, it was put into a frame that was completely gone. The frame was busted through.

Moermond: the police report I just read said "I saw the door was forced open; I saw the upper deadbolt had been damaged. I also saw the door jam had some fresh damage." At least one deadbolt. I here where you are coming from and have committed to reviewing the record on that. The type of securing that happened and mentioned in the statement you received simply says "secured" on the March 4 letter.

LeFerve: the point here is, and I want to make sure this is very clear, the frame was damaged beyond it being effective to even hold a deadbolt. The deadbolt itself wasn't completely wrecked; you could turn it. But it is turning into an empty opening. Imagine a door frame, if you're familiar with that, the part of the frame on the inside of the house that keeps the deadbolt from being pulled through the frame, provided there is a frame. The deadbolt was locked but there was no frame there.

Moermond: sir, I understand how doors work.

LeFerve: let me finish my statement. The fact you emailed or mailed me something a week after with more specifics is very different than what the St. Paul Police Department told me. I read to you the exact information I wrote down when the police gave it to me, which I put in a text message to my representative.

Moermond: so, you wrote the text, it wasn't the police?

LeFerve: I had a conversation with the police. They called me back at my request. I spoke with the individual who was there and got very detailed information on what had happened. They told me just before 10:30 that night exactly what they did and the status of security because my concern was for the building and someone coming back in. They told me they ordered a boarding. The text message I sent to DeMario was a verbatim discussion of what the police told me so HE would be aware of what

the police said they did. And what the police said they ordered and what was done was very different. We found that out after the fact, after the second break in. I'm being charged for securing a door that was not properly secured. That's the bottom line.

Moermond: understood. I hear your perspective and we will get back to you on that.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

9 RLH TA 25-307 Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 664 PLUM STREET. (File No. VB2511, Assessment No. 258819)

Sponsors: Johnson

Reduce assessment from \$5,077 to \$1,270.

Majorie Pitz, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: unpaid Vacant Building fee for February 16, 2025 to February 16, 2026. Renewal letter went out January 17. Warning letter on February 17. Went to assessment March 3, 2025. Vacant Building folder was closed June 24, 2025. Total assessment of \$5,077.

Pitz: it wasn't vacant for 12 whole months.

Moermond: that's where I was going. Sounds like 7 months?

Pitz: yes.

Moermond: based on that I'm happy to recommend the Council half this assessment, down to \$2,538. Would it be helpful to be made payable over a couple of years, or just all on your 2026 taxes?

Pitz: I'd like it dismissed entirely.

Hoffman: the initial file was opened 12/17/2025 as a prelim and then changed to a Category 2 in 2022.

Pitz: during that time I had 2 years of cancer and a lot of problems during Covid obtaining materials. It was a big struggle we didn't expect.

Moermond: I appreciate this took you a while. The fee is 2025-2026. This went into the program in 2018. That's a long time. I'm happy to decrease this further, you were in the program 4 months, I will round down to 3 months and I'll reduce further to \$1, 270. You are welcome to appeal further.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

10 RLH TA 25-316 Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 515 SNELLING AVENUE NORTH. (File No. J2511B, Assessment No. 258111)

Sponsors: Privratsky

Approve the assessment.

Bollent Oumer appeared

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: emergency board up service call one door secured with one board. Orders 2/2/25 at 11:06 am called in by St. Paul Police Department. Total assessment of \$474.

Oumer: I'm appealing because I wasn't the owner at that time. I purchased March 3. This should go toward the previous owner. When I called to find out what was going on, they told me it happened February, when I wasn't the owner. I don't know how the title company didn't catch that, I'll talk to them too. They keep saying they sent letters, but this was the first letter I got. I didn't get the previous \$310 bill.

Moermond: your seller should have disclosed this at closing. Talk to your title company or realtor. Tax assessments go with the property, not the individual. A dispute about who should pay this is a private matter that the City isn't involved with. I will recommend approval.

Oumer: you were sending letters to the different owner.

Moermond: two pieces of mail that went out. First was February 7, prior to your purchase. The second was the letter about this hearing, that was addressed to you. I did notice when I reviewed this because it was open to entry and found by the police it was considered an emergency board up. They can't leave a building open to entry.

Oumer: let me talk to my title company and see what they say. I'm not against paying, but it doesn't make sense putting on me. Before it was not me.

Moermond: it is put on the property, actually, not you. It goes with the property not the person. Your title company should help you with this. Share the police report with them to help pursue this.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

Staff Reports

- 11 [SR 25-88](#) Review Request of Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1350 HAGUE AVENUE adopted by Council on May 15, 2024 under File RLH AR 24-25. (File No. VB2407, Assessment No. 248806)

Sponsors: Bowie

Reduce (refund) assessment from \$5,077 to \$2,537 and make payable over 5 years.

*Ashley Taylor, owner, appeared via phone
Bradley Taylor, owner, appeared*

Moermond: we should be able to wrap this up today. I just had one more piece of information to look up which is your 2024 property tax statement. The Vacant Building fee isn't appearing on the tax assessment. Did you pay that before it went to Ramsey

County? Do you remember?

Ashley Taylor: we didn't pay any Vacant Building fee, but we always pay our taxes on time.

Moermond: the 2023 – 2024 Vacant Building fee showed up on your 2025 taxes. That's where it went and that's where it is getting paid. Because you got out of the Vacant Building fee March 1, 2024 I'm going to recommend this is prorated to half of what it was before. That's 7 months into 12 months. We'll have to go back and create a resolution to do that. We'll send a letter giving you the dates and resolution. After reviewing a couple of times that's the conclusion I'm coming too based on the magical date you were officially out of the Vacant Building program.

Ashley Taylor: \$2,500 owed, \$2,500 refunded. Is there any way to testify to Council about the whole amount?

Moermond: of course, of course. Would it be helpful if they made it payable over 5 years in case you don't get what you're asking for. It does accumulate interest.

Ashley Taylor: yeah, that would work.

Received and Filed

Special Tax Assessments-ROLLS

- 12 RLH AR 25-68** Ratifying the assessment for Collection of Vacant Building Registration fees billed during September 16 to January 22, 2025. (File No. VB2511, Assessment No. 258819)
- Sponsors:** Noecker
- Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025**
- 13 RLH AR 25-69** Ratifying the assessment for Securing and/or Emergency Boarding services during February 2025. (File No. J2511B, Assessment No. 258111)
- Sponsors:** Noecker
- Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025**
- 14 RLH AR 25-70** Ratifying the assessment for Demolition services from December 2024 to February 2025 (C.D.B.G. Funds). (File No. J2506C, Assessment No. 252006)
- Sponsors:** Noecker
- Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025**
- 15 RLH AR 25-71** Ratifying the assessment for Demolition services from March to April 2025. (File No. J2507C, Assessment No. 252007)
- Sponsors:** Noecker

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/20/2025

11:00 a.m. Hearings

Summary & Vehicle Abatement Orders

16 RLH SAO
25-48

Appeal of Adam Dullinger to a Summary Abatement Order at 1345 KENT STREET.

Sponsors: Kim

Grant the appeal.

Adam Dullinger, owner, appeared

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: a Summary Abatement Order went out to cut tall grass and weeds with a compliance date of June 28th.

Dullinger: is there more detail in the complaint. Any specifics? There's an alley with overgrowth. I was gone for 2 weeks for work and wasn't able to trim which is when the notice went out. I immediately did that since it encroaches the alley. The majority of my yard is a bee lawn I installed 4 years ago. All the grass was removed and replaced with Dutch clover and a fescue grass, which is longer but stays low when it folds over. There are some other grasses encroaching from the neighbor's yards and part of the issue is to trim them to below 8" I'd have to clear cut all the grass in my yard. There's milkweed out there, a lot of the pollinator flowers grows over 8". Aside from plucking individual, I'd have to cut it all down.

Martin: the first letters are sent automatically, before an inspector goes out.

Moermond: looking at photos I see a lot of grasses.

Dullinger: I paid \$3,000 to have this done. All the grass was removed. The only thing is the neighbor's grasses encroaching.

Moermond: one thought is a sign.

Dullinger: I had a sign, but it got stolen.

Moermond: maybe a cheap one. The other thing I notice is you have tall weeds closer to the house.

Dullinger: it is managed. I am intentionally letting it grow taller to help keep the house cool.

Moermond: I think that's part of why your property is looking overgrown. I understand where you're coming from, but the root systems are undermining your foundation.

Dullinger: I don't think so. I'm an engineer. Plants follow water. The foundation isn't leaking, so if there's not water at the base of the building they go out. That's why you

leave the rest of the yard uncut because the cutting harms the plants. If you give them the space to grow they don't affect the building.

Moermond: we're going to part ways on this one. It was a suggestion, not code.

Dullinger: I know its public appearance. But someone else's aesthetic appeal shouldn't affect mine.

Moermond: I think you are covered under state law as a managed natural habitat, but what you're going to end up with since people are seeing dandelions they will see as overgrown lawn. Maybe signage and some trimming will decrease the appearance of being a nuisance situation versus more intentional work. Anything to make people think you DO care. I would encourage you to pull some of those dandelions.

Dullinger: there are no dandelions in there. I was surprised how few there are this year.

Moermond: they are yellow flowers, not dandelions.

Moermond: I'm going to recommend the Council grant your appeal, but I can't say we won't find ourselves in a similar situation down the line.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/6/2025

Making Finding on Nuisance Abatements

- 17 RLH SAO 25-45** Making finding on the appealed nuisance abatement ordered for 1119 EDGERTON STREET in Council File RLH SAO 25-41.

Sponsors: Kim

Then nuisance is abated and the matter resolved.

No one appeared

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: the inspector went out and said this is in compliance. We are now in compliance and the file closed.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/6/2025

- 18 RLH SAO 25-47** Making finding on the appealed nuisance abatement ordered for 2125 AMES AVENUE in Council File RLH SAO 25-43.

Sponsors: Yang

The nuisance is not abated.

Carlos Block appeared via phone

Moermond: I'm calling about the orders to clean up the brush in your yard. The deadline has come and gone. I understand from the inspector it hasn't moved and is still there.

Block: I had some back problems. There's actually new stuff. I'm working on it as we speak. It will be gone by tomorrow morning.

Moermond: this goes to Council July 23 and I'll note now it hasn't been abated but we'll ask an inspector to drive by next Monday and if it isn't done I will ask the Council to approve a work crew to go out to abate it.

Block: the stuff he saw was new stuff. You know what I mean? I'll try to have no old or new stuff when they come again. It is in a little designated area. The pictures are misleading. It is in my yard quite a way. I'm cutting it up into the same pile. I'll have everything out, ok.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/6/2025

1:00 p.m. Hearings

Vacant Building Registrations

- 19** [RLH VBR 25-29](#) Appeal of Zoltan Pusenyak to a Vacant Building Registration Notice at 1024 MINNEHAHA AVENUE EAST.

Sponsors: Johnson

Layover to LH July 22, 2025 at 1 pm (unable to reach PO).

Voicemail left at 1:16 pm: This is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling Zoltan Pusenyak about your appeal of the Vacant Building registration for 1024 Minnehaha. We'll try you back in just a little bit.

Voicemail left at 1:39 am: this is Marcia Moermond again trying to reach you. We'll try you against next Tuesday between 1 and 3 and if you aren't available we'll send a resolution to Council denying your appeal.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 7/22/2025

- 20** **RLH VBR
25-21** Appeal of Gladys Igbo to a Vacant Building Registration Fee Warning Letter at 385 UNIVERSITY AVENUE WEST.

Sponsors: Bowie

Layover to LH August 5, 2025. Recommendation forthcoming pending status of permits on 8/5. CPH 8/6.

Gladys Igbo, owner, appeared via phone

Moermond: you got your 90-day waiver and Council referred it back to today with the expectation you'd be working on those permits and getting this done.

Staff update by Supervisor Mitch Imbertson: this still has revoked Fire Certificate of Occupancy and monitored as a Category 2 Vacant Building. Some progress with a finalized building permit. The Code Compliance certificate can't be issued until all trades permits are closed. We still have a warm air and mechanical permit that need final inspection. I'm told they recently came and weren't allowed access to all areas they needed to inspect. We also need an additional permit for an AC that was found to be installed without permit by the mechanical inspector.

Staff update by Supervisor Matt Dornfeld: I have nothing to add to the record at this

time.

Moermond: so specific items they need done. Where are you at with access, permit for AC and finals for permits already pulled for the furnace?

Igbo: they are scheduled and twice no one showed up. I am waiting for Chris Whiskur to contact me because the company doesn't want me calling, they want the inspector's office to call. I'm waiting for him to contact me about when it is scheduled.

The previous ones he scheduled the contractor never showed, twice. I called and spoke with the office manager and she told me I couldn't call, it had to be the inspector's office to schedule it with them.

Moermond: Mr. Imbertson, in my understanding it is the contractor who reaches out to the inspector to schedule for that inspection. Has there been a change in procedure?

Imbertson: that's accurate but there was a note that the inspector left a business card with the building owner and encouraged her to call to get back on the schedule. That was maybe related to not getting access. He also notes the first attempt he was there and was not met by anyone. Not sure if that was confusion about the time or what.

Igbo: I was there because he said 1 to 3. I waited and then got a text from him and said he had time early and now no one was there and he already went to a different site. I arrived at 1:20 but he said he came much earlier because he had time open and no one was there. The building is locked because no one is there unless I meet someone.

Moermond: I hear confusion about expectations. Another time the inspector got in but notes you didn't have keys for the area for where the furnace.

Igbo: I only lease the second level. I don't have anything to do with the ground level. They inspected everything and were asking me some questions and I said this is the place the people worked on, and they wanted to go downstairs, but I told him I didn't get keys to downstairs. It is now all open so no one will be looking for the key. I have a little studio upstairs. The closet was open to the furnace upstairs but they had questions I couldn't answer. The contractor didn't show up. Since they want to see the whole place, it is open now. I'm waiting for the rescheduling so the contractor can answer their questions. That would be helpful. I don't know what they did.

Moermond: I am sure the inspector would agree. Was it the same contractor who did the furnace as the Air conditioning?

Igbo: yes.

Moermond: your contractor would want to be there because they did that work without a permit from the City. They really need to get those permits pulled and present for inspections.

Igbo: I pulled and paid for all the permits. Doesn't that count? I paid almost \$3,000.

Moermond: and there are permits for a lot of things, but not for the Air Conditioning.

Igbo: oh, ok. Maybe that's the only one. I went down and paid for them. Maybe one is pending. They have to let me know; I don't know. It was close to \$3,000. I'm willing to get another permit if that wasn't part of that.

They are the ones that actually did the work. I pulled the permits.

Imbertson: the \$3,000 was for the work, but the permits I am seeing are \$86 for a mechanical permit and \$94.50 for the warm/air ventilation. Wanted to clarify that the permits were not \$3,000.

Igbo: why would I be paying inspectors office then if it was for the work? They printed out all that and told me the total for the permits. I wrote them a check. I'm looking at it now with my receipt from the Department of Safety & Inspections.

Imbertson: there was a building permit separate from those other 2 permits we talked about. The refrigeration permit is the portion that needs to be applied for.

Igbo: this says it is permit for electrical inspection, mechanical inspection, plumbing inspection, warm air ventilation inspection. I paid \$2,401.96. I have the receipt here. If anything is pending I am willing to pay for it.

Moermond: the building permit cost was \$1,963. So that is the majority of what you paid for. That totals that \$2,400 figure. You still need to work on the AC permit. Work with your contractor to get inspectors in. They will want access to the same areas of before which it sounds like is open now. We have a waiver in place until August 6. Let's get this closed out by then, is that something you can do?

Igbo: yes.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/6/2025

2:00 p.m. Hearings

Fire Certificates of Occupancy

- 21 RLH FCO** Appeal of Yia Jef Yang to a Fire Certificate of Occupancy Correction
25-24 Notice at 337 FULLER AVENUE.

Sponsors: Bowie

Deny the appeal. Property cannot be non-owner occupied until Fire C of O is issued.

Voicemail left at 2:15 for Yia Jef Yang: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling Yai Jef Yang about 337 Fuller. We'll try you back in just a few minutes.

Voicemail left at 2:23 pm for Yia Jef Yang: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling you again about your appeal on 337 Fuller. In reviewing your case it looks like we'll go with the revocation of the Fire Certificate of Occupancy since there wasn't compliance with the orders. It cannot be occupied by any non-owner until that is addressed. There was another person wanting to be adding to the hearing and we will be calling him to let him know my recommendation is to deny the appeal but that doesn't affect the ability to sell or be occupied by an owner.

Greg Hawkins, interested party, appeared via phone

Moermond: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling about the appeal for 337 Fuller. I understand you wanted to be added to the call?

Hawkins: yes.

Moermond: we didn't get an answer from Mr. Yang, so I'm putting a recommendation on the record to deny the appeal which only means he can't put a renter in there until it has its Fire Certificate of Occupancy. It wouldn't be referred to the Vacant Building program, maybe because no one has got inside. Any questions?

Hawkins: would the City want to?

Moermond: only if it is a rental. Otherwise, the TISH inspection is the disclosure report. The new owner would maybe want one if they aren't living there themselves.

Hawkins: that's through the City? The Fire Certificate?

Moermond: yes, you can find it on the City's webpage.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/6/2025

3:00 p.m. Hearings

Water Bill Appeals

- 22 **RLH WB 25-4** Appeal of Tom Cullen, Grampafixit, LLC, to a Water Service Bill at 926 DALE STREET NORTH.

Deny the appeal noting Cullen agreed to pay approximately \$50 in late fees which were not abated by SPRWS.

*Tom Cullen, owner, appeared
[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

Staff report by Supervisor Derek Olson: this is a commercial property. Mr. Cullen and another group split the building. 2017 the bill was going to modern screen and design, the tenant. There was a sale in 2021 and Mr. Cullen purchased. March 2022 we were informed by previous owner they were no longer the owner so they didn't want any more late notices. We took their name off and found a proper owner name, after that any bill being sent was still going to modern screen and design and anything late went to owner AND Modern Screen and Design [MSD]. May 2025 Mr. Cullen called and said should have been in his name and MSD was just throwing away the bills because they thought he was paying it. He was receiving late notices. Rich Rowland denied removing any late fees beyond the last 2.

Moermond: what is the total of those late fees?

Olson: I will pull it together

Cullen: when we purchased in 2021 from the previous owner we didn't terminate the lease of the current tenant, modern screen, but we were paying all utilities. We incorporated Dave who owns MSD into our business of wheelbarrows and he puts the logos on. I had no idea he was receiving bills. He'd throw them in the circular file, never told me. The post office delivers through his side, then he distributes. Then he brings me a bill that says Grandpa Fix It on it, and I employ a series of kids from St. Agnes who organize paperwork and bills and I write checks. Never thought anything of it. Had

no idea any bills were being delivered to modern screen or I was paying anyone late. May of this year someone came in from the water department to talk about changing the meter. Dave from MSD told him he doesn't have anything to do with it. I was told when there's a past due bill they send it to the building owner. It was my bill. I didn't know. I've looked at the bills, I didn't look at everything, I'm trying to employ kids in the neighborhood. The bills we got in the red in the middle it says past due, I never saw that. I've been paying every month late, but I thought I was paying on time because I never looked at the whole bill. I feel like if I was paying regularly someone from the Water Department should have noticed and helped me out and noticed it wasn't MSD paying. I've always paid it. When I originally called the Water Department they were mad because they thought I was an evil landlord and some tenant landlord relationship they didn't want to get between. That's how we ended up here. I feel like part of this IS my responsibility. Dave should have come to me sure, but he just threw it away. He wasn't vindictive. The series of people I had doing this just told me what I owed to the water company. I'd like some acknowledgement ---I shouldn't have been charged a late fee every time for the last four years.

Moermond: tell me specifics what you are looking for.

Cullen: I think the culpability is 50/50. I'd like half the late fees back. The whole thing infuriated me when I found out what was actually going on.

Olson: The total of late fees from September of 2021 through now is a total of \$50.45.

Cullen: of total late fees? I'm sorry I've wasted everyone's time. I did all this for \$50?

Olson: they were going to MSD in 2017.

Cullen: I feel really embarrassed.

Referred to the Board of Water Commissioners due back on 8/12/2025