

**From:** [Mary Speer](#)  
**To:** [CouncilHearing \(CI-StPaul\)](#)  
**Subject:** Historical Iglehart  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025 9:33:13 AM

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**January 15,2025**

**ATTN:** SAINT PAUL CITY COUNCIL

**SUBJECT:** [1905-1913 IGLEHART AVENUE](#)

My family has lived on Iglehart Avenue for 40 years. I was a longtime parishioner at Saint Mark's Catholic church and all of my children attended (the now shuttered) Saint Mark's school. We are proud to live in Saint Paul and are deeply concerned with the destruction of its beautiful neighborhoods.

The continued efforts of various nefarious entities to construct smaller, more densely-populated housing in Merriam Park is both disheartening and disgusting. The plats at 1905-1913 have been a "sensitive" issue for 7 years now. The history of these properties is sad. The house at [1911 Iglehart Avenue](#) (which was constructed in 1900) was demolished in 2018. The plat it occupied remains vacant. The historic house at [1905 Iglehart Avenue](#) was shifted east around the same time.

Ever since then, real estate developers have been trying to figure out a way to pack these lots with as many dwelling units as possible. These developers don't care about public safety, equal access, or the "character" of the neighborhood. They are here solely to suck every last penny out of the properties and to enslave residents with rent, fees, and miscellaneous charges. They are vampires who are focused on profiting off of lower income families that are forced into unfair, quasi-legal, and one-sided contracts.

By allowing the variances listed to be applied to these parcels, the developer will be able to create 4 housing units per lot. That means 20 units total could [will] be created, all in the name of maximizing density [profits]. That adds up to at least 20 new residents where there were previously something like 4. 20 new residents who all need to park their cars somewhere because the developers are not required to construct garages for them. That means 20 new cars parking on our street. This will add to the already congested street traffic and parking situation (the Triune Masonic Temple across the street at [1898 Iglehart Avenue](#) is already creating congestion on weekends / event days). No alley access for the newly-created lots also presents garbage/recycling collection issues.

Another concern within this community is public safety. I would like to make it clear that density does not equal safety. Indeed, as many residents of the nearby Hamline, Midway, and Frogtown neighborhoods know, the people in a community matter. Specifically, the type of people. Complexes like the Kimball Court apartments on Snelling Avenue

(described as a “hub of narcotic trafficking” in a recent police report) are a good example of what projects like this can become. Slumlords like Jim Eischens (whose property management company Millenium Management owns the house next to mine) don’t care about their tenants or their safety.

The original plan for this area of the city of Saint Paul laid out a grid of single family detached homes. Most of these homes were constructed before or around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many have distinct architectural character not found in today’s construction. In other words, they are “of a time” and, in a sense, irreplaceable. Together, they form distinguished neighborhoods not found very many other places in the country. It isn’t about “landmark” buildings, “historic” status, or anything like that- it’s about these buildings coming together as a cohesive whole; a beautiful and varied fabric that we call a “neighborhood.” I am not opposed to denser developments: I am saying that they have a proper place. These lots are not that place.

I would also like to voice my frustration with the overall public hearing process: a letter was sent with details of potential zoning variances with no mention of the entities responsible for requesting the variances. The lack of transparency surrounding this is truly astounding. My research indicates that the owner of the properties at 1905-1913 Iglehart is based in Roseville and is associated with the Minneapolis law firm Winthrop & Weinstine, PA. What or who is “August Corner”? Who is trying to develop these properties? Why are they not clearly identified in the notice? Why is there a smokescreen that is complicating what the city would deem a “good” housing development project? The city council should be more upfront and truthful with its own residents. Otherwise, they are complacent in the developers’ and slumlords’ collective crimes.

As you can probably tell from the above comments, I am opposed to the variances listed in the public hearing notice. This plot should be re-zoned to be an H1 residential district and developed into a pocket park. The least the city could do is give an amenity back to the neighborhood after destroying one of its homes.

Respectfully,

Mary Beth Speer

Andrew Speer

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