

1370 Charles Ave
RLH VO 15-17

City of St Paul.
Department of Safety and Inspection
375 Jackson Street, Suite 220
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1806

From:
Allen A. Slaughter, Sr.
Human and Civil Rights Advocate

This is a response to a Notice of Condemnation under St. Paul City ordinances, Section 34.23, Sub-Section 6. for property 1370 Charles Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104.

Under Section 200.17, Mr. William E. Davis has requested an appeal regarding this recent notice of condemnation.

Mr. Davis was quite ill and did not immediately have the necessary resources or strength to address this issue of condemnation, despite earlier offers of assistance. On March 15, Mr. Davies shared this information with the Bible Study group at Jehovah Lutheran Church.. The group immediately responded with an offer to assist him to remove all items identified for removal, by the City of St. Paul Housing Inspector. Currently we are on schedule to eradicate all items that are dangerous or harmful as instructed by the City Inspector.

By the time you receive this appeal, all the items that the City Inspector had mentioned will have been removed and taken care of and with the continuous input of the Jehovah Lutheran Support group, Mr. Davies health and property will be looked after from this point on.

Attached are statements from several members of the Support Group stating what has been completed and, as mentioned above, what can be personally and professionally shared on a continuing basis.

We are asking for additional time to complete the necessary clean-up. It would not be humane nor productive , but rather counter productive at this time, to condemn the home that will be ready for habitation by the time you receive this letter.

In closing, we are looking forward to hearing from you and at the same time will be continuing with the final small details of homemaking for Mr. Davies and the community.

Sincerely yours,

Allen A. Slaughter, Sr.

Shirley and Maynard's comments re Bill and his house:

An earnest attempt has been made since the home was placarded to meet code requirements. Since the details were not understood by volunteers until just last Monday -- though they could see much needed to be done and were working steadily at some of these very goals --- we feel a further extension of time to be in compliance would be in order.

We certainly feel that the house should remain under Bill's key and not be declared VACANT with whatever consequences this may bring. This is Bill's home to decide what is to become of it if the day comes he needs to leave it.

About Bill: we believe he could live in his home, which is very dear to him -- the home where his mother lived with him, the home he has known for many years himself -- once the house is basically clear and clean IF he hires a housekeeper who comes weekly to keep the house clean and clear. Bill agrees to this readily. He drives, he pays his bills, he attends several social groups, he does his laundry and folds it all neatly, he is a good vegan cook and is very knowledgeable about foods. He suffers with a bad back and other physical aging signs, but he is still able to perform personal care quite well, and he thinks well.

Also, Bill was quite ill and had some surgery over the past year or two. In his stubborn persistence he came home, after a short stay at Episcopal Homes, to take care of himself. Some of the worst clutter and debris came from this period of time.

My name is Lydia Volz and I have been working with the group from Jehovah Lutheran Church helping William Davies clean his home and remove unnecessary and hazardous clutter. I have known Bill for several years since he has been attending the Sunday morning Bible Class at Jehovah Lutheran Church.

I am a Parish Nurse, now retired. Besides volunteering my services for the Jehovah Congregation, I was employed for 6 years at Luther Seminary and previously, three years at Roseville Lutheran Church, as a Parish Nurse. My last full-time position was Director of Nurses at Bethesda Care Center in St. Paul.

As a Parish Nurse, one of my objectives is to promote healthful living by giving information, listening to individual concerns, and directing people to the many resources available in the public sector, including their private physician or clinic.

Working in the context of the faith community, I encourage individuals to be aware of the integration of body, mind and spirit and show how a balance of the three contributes to healthful living.

In addition, I often act as advocate for the individual, making sure they understand the orders issued by professionals, interpreting the consequences of their actions and helping them to make decisions that support a healthy life style. I believe that every person is to be respected as an individual of worth.

Bill is facing some difficult decisions and changes in his situation at this time. Along with the other members of the Bible study group, our goal is to support him to the best of our ability and resources.

What Is Being Appealed and Why?

Attachments Are Acceptable

- Vacate Order/Condemnation/Revocation of Fire C of O
- Summary/Vehicle Abatement
- Fire C of O Deficiency List/Correction
- Code Enforcement Correction Notice
- Vacant Building Registration
- Other (Fence Variance, Code Compliance, etc.)

A small group from Jehovah's Lutheran Church began helping to clean-up at Wm. Davis' house. Mark later finding out the day before that he a vacate order in 2 weeks.

We began with removing clutter from the living areas, porch, living room, dining room, kitchen, removing a dumpster full of accumulation.

On Nov. 27 we met at his house and for the first time were made aware of the stigmatization pertaining to the basement and bedroom (2nd floor).

Since then we have concentrated on those areas. The S.W. has ^{more} taken an active role in engaging professional help which takes time for assessment as well as actual work.

We are therefore appealing for additional time to complete the clean-up and removal of unneeded items from the house.

Inside

Tile Wood Stone Deck
Patio Bath Laundry Kitchen

Trim

Cabinets

Doors

Windows

Walls

Safe and Sound

Roof to Ground

Remodel or Repair

Start

Lights Switches Outlets Paint

Sheetrock Locks Screens

Out

Faucet

Lav

Disposal

Sink

Tub

Finish

Steve Cooley

a handy man

helping you

keep your home maintained and up to date

612-280-0130

HOW FAR HAVE WE COME IN REACHING CODE REQUIREMENTS?

Monday, March 30, was the first time we saw a full explanation of what "Vacation of Structure or Unit" actually meant. It is also the first time we saw a listing of "Principle Violations" of City Code. This has helped us see specific requirements and clarify goals as follows:

Taken point by point of "Principle Violations": how much has been done so far.

1. Smoke detectors: Two are now installed and one more ready to install.
2. Carbon monoxide alarm is being purchased and will be installed 3.
3. Pathways through former "extreme clutter" have been cleared and are now wide enough for emergency workers and others to enter. Clutter around edges of DR-LR and upstairs is being removed daily as the volunteers work with Bill.
4. Same as 3, and entrance to bathroom is no longer blocked.
5. Refuse on stairs leading to sleeping have been cleared totally.
6. Paper products on stove have been removed totally.
7. No evidence of fresh rodent droppings have been found; mice are no longer active; all mouse droppings, traces of mice activity have been removed regularly as persons work at de-cluttering and sweeping, vacuuming. Compost pile and areas harboring rodents in hard will all be removed in yard clean up scheduled for Thursday, April 2.
8. Food is all adequately stored; no fruit flies.
9. "Inadequate interior maintenance" is recognized as a problem to be addressed after house clean up by Bill's having a regular housekeeper. This is been part of plan which Bill and VA social worker talked about. He has list of housekeepers given to him by the VA social worker, and he has called one.
10. All combustible materials will be removed totally or to a distance of 30' from the furnace and gas water heater by the professional cleaners coming today for assessment and very soon to complete the job. Bill agreed to pay for this in discussions with the county social worker on March 31.
11. Garbage pick up service will be restored. A list of licensed companies has been printed from the City of St. Paul website. An approved container is/will be in place.

Taken point by point of "Other Violations":

1. Composting: Thursday, April 2, the yard work will include removing the compost pile as now standing. If Bill wishes to continue composting an enclosed container will be used and placed the required 20 feet from habitable buildings and 5 feet from lot ones. Since Bill is a vegan, the food materials not allowed are not a problem. Doesn't have a pet, so no waste.
2. Sanitation: All accumulated trash/junk/ etc will be removed in the planned yard clean up thus making the exterior property areas in compliance.

Log of engagement with Bill Davies by the Jehovah Lutheran Church Support Group (JLCSG)

Sunday, 3/15 – After Bible Class Bill mentioned he had received notice to VACATE his house by March 26, and he was distraught. Jehovah's Care Ministry was willing to help him, and he invited them to come to his home.

Monday, 3/16 – Five members of Care Ministry went to Bill's home at 1370 Charles, could see that the home needed an immense amount of attention, and began work. Bill showed us a document he had prepared telling of a life-long project he wished to preserve and was worried that it would be lost in the clean up. Group agreed to save any architectural drawings/papers for Bill to assess. The past group that cleaned up his house evidently took items, stole money he had saved in big jars, etc, and he is leery of workers in his home. We all agreed Bill would need an extension of time to get house to City code. The Care Ministry will discuss how to move forward as a support group at our upcoming meeting

Hours: 4 people from 3 – 5; 1 persons from 4-5; = 10 hours

Accomplished: Began sorting clutter which was piled high and covered every available surface in the living-dining room, porch, hallway, bedroom and kitchen. (Bathroom was clear)

Removed a huge pile of old food, cans, jars from kitchen; began sweeping up mice droppings which were found throughout the house; dead mice also found. None seemed recent, and Bill said he had tried to close all the entries mice may have used. Began washing kitchen shelves.

Plan: box up papers and books which Bill wanted yet to see, and put them either in the garage or the back bed room for Bill to go through later, in order to make pathways for working.

Tuesday, 3/17 – Bill's VA social worker called to advise Bill to immediately seek an extension of time. She will seek out a housekeeping helper. But, while at Office Max copying his document to send to his VA doctor about his project, Bill met Mr. Allen Slaughter, a pro bono lawyer, who was touched by Bill's story and offered to help him, especially as Bill is a veteran. Bill will rely on Mr. Slaughter to seek the extension and removal of VACATE order.

Hours: 1 person tel calls, e mails: 1 hour

Wednesday, 3/18 – Telephone call from Bill. He has several appointments at the VA tomorrow, Thursday, so we cannot work at his house then. He is excited about a pro bono lawyer he met who will help him.

Jehovah Lutheran's Care Ministry met @ 5:30 p.m. at the church; Mr. Slaughter, the lawyer, came to the meeting. Many questions surfaced. More complete report available if needed. After much discussion it was decided that Mr. Slaughter will visit the City Inspector and ask for an extension/consideration for Bill's house, and the JLCSG will draw up expectations for our work and for Bill. Lydia and Shirley D. will meet to do that.

Hours: 8 persons each 1 hours = 8 hours

Thursday, 3/19 – Lydia and Shirley drew up tentative agreement to be shared with JLCSG folks.

Bill called wondering about the meeting. We told him we will begin work at his house this Friday and Saturday at 2 p.m. each day. He is missing some items since we sorted; we directed him where to look and promised to help look for them.

Hours: 2 persons each 1 ½ hours – 3 hours

Friday, 3/20 – 9 persons came to work. The men helped Lydia and Bill sort out and clear the front porch so that boxes can be put out there as clutter is packed up. Lydia vacuumed porch area. The men gathered and hauled trash and took a load to Goodwill. The others continued with de-clutter, boxing, trashing, recycling and kitchen cleaning. Porch is place to gather recyclables before putting them out each Wednesday evening for Thursday pick up.

Hours: 9 persons at 2 ½ hours each = 22 ½ hours

Saturday, 3/21 – 4 persons continued the work as above. Cleaning the main section of the refrigerator took most of 2 hours; there were bags of decayed food and much outdated food. There is no light in refrigerator; we think he cannot see what is in there. The box with Bill's good shoes seems to have been misplaced. We have ascertained that it did not go to Goodwill, is not in the garage and is not in the dumpster. Bill has 5 pillowcases full of laundry which he says he will do soon. His home washer is broken; he uses a Laundromat now.

Hours: 4 persons, each 3+ hours – 13 hours

Monday, 3/23 – Bill called to say that the plumbers were working in both the upstairs and downstairs bathrooms. There was no water; we did not go to work.

Tuesday, 3/24 – 4 people continued working. Lydia is working piece by piece with Bill in sorting his clothes and the downstairs bedroom. Whoever helped Bill "clean" before dumped everything in the back bedroom in order to clear out other areas, so there is much sorting to be done of clothes, linens, kitchen items, books, etc. etc. JaNell is putting some packed up boxes of books in this room for Bill's future attention/sorting. Other packed up boxes of papers are going to the garage for Bill's future attention/sorting. We can now walk through the living room. Kitchen continues apace with throwing out expired, unuseable food, sorting out pots and pans, scrubbing shelves, cupboards, pans; cleaning window area and shelves. Bill as yet has no trash removal company. He composts food and has been taking other items elsewhere to slip into their trash. M & S took 7 boxes of items to rummage sale storage at church.

Hours: 4 people at 3+ hours = 13 1/2 hours

Wednesday, 3/25 – 4 people continued working. Bill did part of his laundry; Lydia assisted him in putting it away and took remaining 3 bags of laundry to his car for him to take to Laundromat sometime. Lydia vacuumed Bill's clothes closet in downstairs bedroom (he sleeps upstairs but keeps his clothes downstairs). JaNell tried to clean venetian blinds on windows in kitchen; caked thick dirt. Removed boards and tools from kitchen to garage. Shirley scrubbed and sorted shelf of food items in kitchen and frying pans in oven. Maynard vacuumed sofa and whatever rug areas are clear. All are quite dirty. Maynard and JaNell stacked many boxes on front lawn for recycling tomorrow – 50-60 cubits, mostly paper from clutter.

JaNell and Shirley dragged 2 more big bags of trash to garage area for a total of 5 bags there now waiting to be removed. Bill received a call from Mr. Slaughter. Bill said Mr. S. was coming by to remove the VACATE signs, but to wait until he got there to do that. Maynard and Shirley took 6 more boxes of items designated by Bill for rummage sale at church. Bill was noticeably more tired today.

Voice mail at M & Sh's from Mr. Slaughter announcing a meeting he arranged. Mr. S, Bill, the City Inspector, the Ramsey County social worker and our JLCSG people are all to meet at Bill's home on Friday, March 27, at 1:30 p.m. This information sent to all our team workers.
Hours: 4 people at 3+ hours = 14 hours

Thursday, 3/26 - Telephone call from Mr. S. reaffirming the meeting tomorrow at Bill's. Talked in person and assured him we would be there. Lydia and Shirley re-worked the agreement; she will bring that and photos she took "before." Shirley will bring an account of work done and suggestions for the "housekeeper" we hope to see put in place. Mr. Slaughter called again to confirm meeting tomorrow and to mention Bill said he had passed certain VA tests "with flying colors." Shirley suggested Mr. S. verify with Bill's doctor and VA Social worker.
Hours: 3 people preparing for tomorrow: 4 1/2 hours of e mails, typing, phone calls.

Friday, 3/27 – At Bill's home Inspector Ross of the City, a county social worker, a county mental health rep and a county adult protection gathered with Mr. Slaughter, lawyer. Our JELCSG was asked to not be a part of their initial talks; we waited in the kitchen and outside while they interviewed Bill. Our group – Maynard and Shirley, Lydia, Jeanne W. – were called in. They asked about cleaning the basement and we determined that we could not handle that due to large amount of material to be moved, winding steps. They determined that Bill must vacate NOW since the basement makes a strong fire hazard with stuff all around furnace, still clutter upstairs and on stairs and no smoke detectors. We expressed the wish for a detailed list for what was needed to meet their inspection code. Bill commented that it was "unreasonable" to insist he move out in two hours. Where could he go? No relatives, friends, so possibly to VA hospital. Mr. Slaughter will take him there. As Dorows left we expressed our love for him and Bill responded, rather tellingly, "I don't know what to do with love... I and my sister were abused the first ten years of my life by my father." Lydia stayed as advocate through the rest of the meeting.

Hours: 4 people at 2 hours each (meeting)) 8 hours

Saturday and Sunday – no workers. Found out Bill is staying at the Crisis Center at 1593 Hewitt. Adult Bible Class is concerned and prayed for Bill.

Monday, 3/30 - Telephone calls Lydia/Shirley/Mr. Slaughter. Lydia will pick Bill up and we will meet to continue cleaning at Bill's at 2 p.m. Bill was putting up smoke detectors. Bill wants his window fixed with lumber laid out for that purpose and his friend is to come and do that today. (didn't come – tomorrow) Maynard cleared the basement hallway, took garden tools from basement to garage, bagged other trash and worked on clutter. Shirley worked upstairs with Bill in his drafting room/study collecting much paper/cardboard/trash and saving many special drawings, papers per Bill's request. Bill fixed rod in clothes closet upstairs and hung clothes up.

Shirley cleaned off the stairs going upstairs. Lydia continued main floor bedroom clothes organization with Bill and clutter removal. Bill fixed a vegan meal; Crisis Center food not to his taste.

Hours: including phone calls and work, 3 people at 4 hours each = 12 hours.

Tuesday, 3/31 – Lydia busy all morning with lawyer Slaughter trying to arrange for an appeal to the latest order from the City Inspector to vacate by April 3. If code is not met the property becomes designated VACANT PROPERTY and Bill will have no further access. Mr. Slaughter is going to court to stop this order. Lydia picked up Bill and we all worked at the house starting at 2 p.m. County social workers came again and asked why Bill/ Mr. S hadn't called them about dumpster? We all said we understood she was going to call the VA social worker about getting trash removal permission/funding/dumpster. Mr. Slaughter had called Marcia (VA) but she was out of office until today, so of course no action was taken. Social worker gave us a copy of the City Inspector's latest list of Code enforcement expectations which need to be met by April 3. That is a VERY short time to meet all those requirements given how consistently we have been working at them since the first placarding of the house. County social worker feels basement clearing is the main issue; reiterated that the goal was to keep Bill in his home.... not toss him out. Bill agreed to pay for the trash removal from the basement. The County social worker will call Char Ward to come in for assessment as soon as possible and then clean out. County social worker encouraged Bill to contact his niece Laura in Arizona.

Maynard, Shirley and Lydia concentrated on Dining room decluttering making more clear floor space and table space, and vacuuming behind various tables. Bill assisted with decisions of what to keep, where to re-locate items, what to give away, etc. Much of the "to keep" material is boxed for his further attention at a later date. He again cooked a meal to his liking. Lydia drove him back to Crisis Center. Lydia working with Mr. S re meeting tomorrow.

Hours: Lydia – 8 hours; Maynard & Shirley 4 hrs each = 16 hours

Total hours to date: 125 ½ hours by church group. Mr. Slaughter ... many Bill... many

April 1, 2015 – meeting at 1 p.m. with professional to clean out basement.

Persons from JLCSG: Lydia Volz, Maynard and Shirley Dorow, Jim and JaNell Kinsel, Jeanne Watson, Katherine Mennicke, Shirley Miske, Dick Newman, Dick Westphal, Keith Hobbie, and Pastor Bob Benke. Contact Lydia at 651-644-7241 or Shirley at 651-628-4934.

s.dorow
3/31/2015