

To Whom it may concern,

This letter is in response to the appeal document that was filed by the volunteer committee that represents the Summit Hill Association.

My name is Chris Carlson. My wife Jessica and I reside at 210 Victoria Street south. I previously lived at 1272 Jefferson Ave. St. Paul. I have been an employee at the Teachers Retirement Association in St Paul for the past seven years. Jessica is employed at Securian Financial Group in downtown St. Paul.

I would like to point out some key issues and concerns I have with the way the Summit Hill Associations current representative filed the appeal. There are statements that are simply untrue and fabricated.

The following are what I feel are a misrepresentations of facts. I tried to answer in order of which they are listed in their summary. "Errors in Fact" in which I believe are not errors at all.

1. Staff did inform the BZA of the findings on 208 Victoria. It is also clearly not an Identical application. 208 Victoria is a detached garage. You can also see that 208 is placed about 5 feet back from the sidewalk. Completely different since my garage is attached to the home and sits 14 feet back from the sidewalk.

208 Victoria currently does have a parking stall to provide them with off street parking.

2. If the association would have taken ten minutes to ask me about the history of why I put the house up for sale this would not even be a concern. It was not intended to profit. The truth is I purchased the property and immediately moved in. After living there for a week I developed an allergic reaction due to the home being infested with mold. I moved back to my parent's home completely distraught. I know I bought an "as is property" but I did not think it was as bad as it was and wanted to get out of the deal. A Realtor recommended to trying to market the property as a teardown because that was popular in the area. That way it may have been possible to get my money back. We had no prospects or interest at the higher number. After a while a prospect did have some interest. They took 6 months to plan a home. The cost was \$679,000. The interested party decided it was too much money for the neighborhood and backed out. I put the property back on the market for \$679,000 because I knew new construction could be built for that price. Again no interest. I then decided to remodel the home and eventually move in. I took a year because I did most of the work myself. The Home now has all new plumbing, Electrical, etc...
3. Yes, the house was built in 1909. Variances exist because the environment changes over time. The home was built in the time of horse and buggy. There was no traffic or safety concern at that time. Everyone that lives in the area knows that Victoria being a North to South Street is a main thoroughfare between Grand Avenue and St. Clair. As a matter of fact, in the associations own bylaws under the heading " P4 Traffic Management" Manage traffic flow and street capacity to discourage increased volumes and speeds, provide safe and convenient access to properties, protect pedestrians. They categorize Grand, St Clair, Dale, Lexington and **VICTORIA** all in the

same category. I was also told by neighbors there has been a traffic incident in front of my home in the past. It seems Victoria in the associations eyes is a cause for concern.

I would also like to point out that the Association should read and abide by their own principles.

In the 79-page Neighborhood plan document that was drawn up in 2005. I have read the articles and have a lot of respect for the people that volunteer their time to deal with concerns they have in the neighborhood, but if there is a document that the current association is following as a guideline to living a better quality of life. Why don't they follow the ideas that were implemented in the first place? I will refer to a few that I have found.

1. Page 2 on the VISION STATEMENT.

One goal is to address persistent traffic and parking problems in the neighborhood, enhance pedestrian safety, reduce the parking deficit, and have "a feeling of Safety and Belonging". This is a failure on their part in reference to my property. I don't feel safe at all getting in and of my car.

2. Page 4, H10 HOUSING-RELATED PARKING.

Create new off-street parking or GARAGES WHEN POSSIBLE. This does not seem to be of interest to my property.

3.

Page 7 Off Street Parking

"Adequate off-street parking shall be provided for ALL residential and commercial uses, in a manner that respects the historic character of the neighborhood.

Our design easily respects the character of the neighborhood. My next door neighbor has a flat top garage and there are also many in the area. The majority of people that have seen my concept agree it is a well thought out design, and fits in nice with the property.

There are quite a few references to pedestrian safety and parking issues in the Neighborhood Plan, it seems to be a priority, yet my point is I believe it is being ignored in my case.

Every time I get out of my car I must check for oncoming traffic. There have been many times when traffic has had to stop, or swerve to avoid incident causing a very uncomfortable feeling. One I'm sure the association members do not have to be concerned with as they pull off the street into the safety of their driveways. We believe as property owners in the city of St Paul we all should be able to enjoy our home the same way as the rest of the residents. The associations appeal is a hypocritical view and has no merit.

I would like the city and the committees involved to know that I appreciate the time and hard work that has been spent to carefully consider and approve my application for the minor variance. Please uphold the approval it is the right decision for me and the city of St. Paul. Thank You Chris and Jessica Carlson.