

From: Brian & Cheryl Fogarty []
Sent: Monday, June 18, 2012 9:09 PM
To: Stark, Russ (CI-StPaul)
Cc: Henningson, Samantha (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Please support the student rental ordinance.

To Councilman Stark

Dear Councilman,

I write in strong support of the ordinance to limit student rental housing in the neighborhood south of the UST campus—my neighborhood.

I went to college as a young man in the 1960s and early 70s, and like many students then and now, I was keen to move out of the dorm into a place with a few friends of my choosing. It was more expensive (then), more trouble, and less comfortable than living on campus, but it was a chance to make my own rules, drink beer, and entertain guests when I wanted. It was freedom.

I moved into what had previously been a lovely middle-class neighborhood. It was obvious that the homes were built with care, probably in the early 20th century, and had been occupied by a variety of people: some were large enough to have housed big families, some were meant for singles or couples starting out, some had side entrances for patients or clients. There were duplexes and multi-family residences as well. It was clear that the street had at one time been some distance from campus, too—all the campus buildings that were nearby were modern structures, probably built in the college boom of the postwar era.

I moved into one of four apartments that had been hacked into a nice Victorian style home. My bedroom had once been a parlor, separated from the former dining room by short bookcases and gingerbread bric-a-brac on the ceiling. A bathroom had been tucked in under the stairs, a kitchen was where a sunporch had been, the water heater stood in the corner of the living room. In short, it was squalor, but it was mine.

Walking down my street, I could see that pretty much every house had become a student rental like mine. All but the smallest had been divided up—you could tell by the extra entrances and exterior staircases that had been tacked on. And it was clear that it was a student ghetto: lawns had turned to weeds and hardpan, shrubbery hadn't been pruned or maintained in years, screens were torn and falling off.

Even at my young age I noticed all these things, but I didn't think through the process by which this once pleasant neighborhood had declined. I didn't care, because I knew my stay there would be short—a year or two, until I graduated. I knew also that someday I'd be living in a nice neighborhood, like that one had been a generation earlier.

And now I do. My wife and I have been on Lincoln Avenue for 18 years, and we have poured a great deal of effort into maintaining and improving the property. I've seen

elderly folks move out and move on, replaced by young and growing families. I've had student neighbors, too, and while I haven't gotten to know them in the short time they've lived nearby, I've found them to be pretty much like I was 45 years ago, and pretty much like the teens my other neighbors have raised—loud and fairly self-centered, but generally decent kids.

I love my neighborhood, students included. I don't want it to become like the street I lived on in Lafayette, Indiana. I don't want to see all my neighbors leave and be replaced by transients. And I don't want my beloved house to be stripped and chopped up into apartments when I'm gone.

Please support and encourage your colleagues to support the ordinance.

Sincerely,

Brian E. Fogarty
2166 Lincoln Ave.
Saint Paul