



# 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*

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Tuesday, February 4, 2025

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House/Remote

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#### 9:00 a.m. Hearings

##### Special Tax Assessments

- 1 **RLH TA 25-37** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1133 ARUNDEL STREET. (File No. VB2505, Assessment No. 258804)

Sponsors: Kim

*Reduce assessment from \$5,077 to \$1,675.*

*No one appeared*

*Moermond: we heard this case previously and the question was getting that Code Compliance Inspection Report and confirming it could be prorated. The answer is yes. The permits were finalized and Code Compliance certificate issued. Reduce to \$1,675, which is one-third the annual fee.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025**

- 2 [RLH TA 25-27](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 355 COOK AVENUE EAST. (File No. VB2505, Assessment No. 258804)

Sponsors: Kim

*Layover to LH February 18, 2025 at 9 am for discussion after Inspector visit.*

*Moermond: we also wanted to look at proration and take into account where he was getting his Code Compliance Inspection Report which is scheduled for February 7 so it makes sense to let him get that before coming to a conclusion about timelines before we discuss. We'll ask Clint for a write-up on that.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 2/18/2025**

- 3 [RLH TA 25-70](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 733 FAIRVIEW AVENUE NORTH. (File No. VB2506, Assessment No. 258805)

Sponsors: Jalali

Layover to LH March 4, 2025 at 9 am (unable to reach PO).

No one appeared

Voicemail left at 11:20 am: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling you about your appealed Vacant Building fee for 733 Fairview. I'll put this on the calendar again for March 4. We'll hopefully connect then.

Moermond: wanting to note there was a request we not call during the regular period between 9 and 11. It is 11:20 so we have to move on to other cases.

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 3/4/2025**

**4 RLH TA 25-26** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 912 FRY STREET. (File No. VB2506, Assessment No. 258805)

Sponsors: Jalali

Reduce assessment from \$2,618 to \$1,310.

Francis Crowley, owner, appeared

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: opened as a Category 1 Vacant Building after a fire. Fees waived 90 days to allow permits. Currently it is pending Certificate of Occupancy approval with corrections as of December 12, 2024.

Moermond: I have he is out of the Vacant Building program now?

Hoffman: Vacant Building file was closed March 1, 2025.

Moermond: he was in the program 8 out of the 12 billable months. Mr. Crowley, why are you appealing?

Crowley: I pulled a permit, and it was so rainy we worked inside. The neighbor called me and said someone is walking around the house looking up to no good. By the time I got there the fire was going and he'd called the fire department already. There was a car outside on fire. The car was burning and the windows blew up and it went up the side of the vinyl siding. I pulled a permit and got enough material to replace that siding. The inspector said he wanted to see it when the wrapping was on. AT the time it was raining every day, so we worked on the inside. A letter was sent during that time, that I never got, saying I was past the deadline. I'm 86 years old, I can't do things myself. I got it done and then I had to have an inspection and they passed everything. It is rented now. We were down there every other day on average, but I never saw an inspector come. I called and they said they drive by. I was working there at midnight sometimes; you'd think someone would check to see what was going on. Lights on. Neighbors watching it close. No problems or anything. We went past our original deadline. I'd like it prorated or something.

Moermond: the delay was because it rained and because the contractor would work intermittently?

Crowley: yeah.

*Moermond: you were in the Vacant Building program 8 months. I will recommend they cut it in half. Like you were in the program for six months. Down to \$1,310.*

*Crowley: ok.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025**

- 5 RLH TA 25-54** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1452 HAZELWOOD STREET. (File No. VB2505, Assessment No. 258804)

**Sponsors:** Yang

*Reduce assessment from \$2,618 to \$655.*

*Armando Esquivias Perez, owner, appeared via phone  
Spanish interpreter appeared in person*

*Perez: supposedly the company who did the repairs to the house are the ones who did the permits and supposedly they took care of all of that and did the payments.*

*Moermond: this is a fee they didn't pay. Your arrangement with that contractor means you need to figure out with them how this fee would be paid. The time period for this fee covers July 25, 2024 through October 16, 2024 when you got out of the Vacant Building program. That's 3 months out of the billed 12 months. I'd like to recommend the fee is decreased down to \$655. You are welcome to look for a different outcome from the Council, we can provide an interpreter for that. Right now, the fee is one-fourth of what it was. Would you like the fee divided over a couple of years to have time to deal with the company who should have paid the fee?*

*Perez: the one who did the repairs were the ones who were in charge of all of this. I will call them right now, today.*

*Moermond: you should have received a packet from our office January 17 with all the background paperwork, that should be helpful in your conversation with the contractor. There is one more document that may be helpful that we don't have yet which is the invoice for the tax assessment that would be forthcoming after the Council Public Hearing February 19. You should have that invoice before March 1. We can also provide the notes from the hearing which should help explain this assessment.*

*Perez: having them in English is fine. Can I get your contact information so I can have them call you directly?*

*Moermond: you should have received an email from Mai Vang, she'd be the best contact. We will send you another copy of the packet.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025**

- 6 RLH TA 25-63** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1458 JULIET AVENUE. (File No. J2506B, Assessment No. 258105)

**Sponsors:** Jost

*Delete the assessment.*

*Moermond: we have an assessment for a boarding that was the result of a welfare*

check by the St. Paul Police Department at the property. They did that and it was a tragic outcome. We have a practice of not assessing for welfare checks since we don't want to discourage people from calling them in.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025**

- 7      **RLH TA 25-56**      Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 685 MINNEHAHA AVENUE EAST. (File No. VB2505, Assessment No. 258804) (Refer to March 18, 2025 Legislative Hearing)

**Sponsors:**      Yang

*Refer back to LH March 18, 2025 at 10 am for Fire C of O findings. Approve the assessment. Continue CPH to March 26, 2025.*

*Sean Ryan appeared via phone  
Robert Clapp appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: this opened as a Category 2 Vacant Building August 2010. It has been in the program ever since.*

*Moermond: and this fee applies from August 2024 to August 2025. So, we're basically six months into the billable year now. Why are you appealing?*

*Clapp: this was purchased as part of a redevelopment for the brewery site in 2021. We have participated in the process with the HRA and weren't awarded that but the redevelopment and pending historic designation have delayed plans until we have clarity on those. Since then, we've been maintaining the property. We do utilize it for storage for the adjacent businesses. There is cold storage at the site. The main part of the building requires investment to current code so we are only allowed to use proportion of the building.*

*Moermond: has Fire inspections been out to see the cold storage?*

*Clapp: we haven't, but we could if it helps delay the fee.*

*Moermond: it is just part of the building for cold storage?*

*Clapp: yes. Portions of the building are not vacant.*

*Ryan: I understand the program's purpose to eliminate blight and make sure properties aren't a blight or a nuisance to the community. This is going to be such an expensive building to rehab and part of the Hamm's historic property. We have a professional crew and hopefully the City would agree we keep this maintained, safe and secure. I don't believe we've received any complaints from neighbors. We take care of graffiti immediately. We use it on a daily basis for storage and staging and the main business is right across the street.*

*Moermond: not thrilled it is being used for cold storage without Fire Certificate of Occupancy approval, that is a use. There are still fire code expectations around that use. I'd want to have a conversation with them. I'm not sure I'd count that towards getting out of the Vacant Building program. I'd want to think about that. The other thing is the community has had this in the program for 15 years now. That is a long time and*

though you maintain the property the purpose of the Vacant Building program fee is to cover the cost of running the Vacant Building program. That means we have inspectors going by too. I'm glad you're taking care of business. Part of this fee is to hopefully provide incentive to get out of the program. I will talk to the Fire inspectors about it and get their take. I'm feeling pessimistic about it. Your Council Public Hearing is February 19, what I'd like to do is push that out to March 26. In that time Fire Inspections should be able to connect with you and look at things. I'd like to connect with you March 18 and get status from Fire and you guys and use that to develop my recommendation for Council.

Clapp: we purchased in 2021 with the intent of using the City's RFP for redeveloping the entire complex. We thought maybe it would be vacant a year or two. Essentially the redevelopment only has tentative development status, so we're waiting on the City to finalize its development status before we can move on. We need to do that before we can take advantage of the historic tax credits.

Moermond: you're asking for a public subsidy to move forward with your private investment. While I appreciate it, you are also in that business. A speculator if you will. It is a risk you take on. I do hope this works out, and the Council may look at it differently. I'd like to learn more from Fire inspection and then figure out a path forward.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025**

8 [RLH TA 25-53](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1540 MINNEHAHA AVENUE EAST. (File No. VB2506, Assessment No. 258805)

**Sponsors:** Johnson

Layover to LH February 18, 2025 for further discussion after file review by DSI. (CPH 3/19).

Jenny Xiong, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: opened as a Category 2 Vacant Building June 2022 per a referral from Code Enforcement. Code had had several work orders for items in the yard. Summary Abatement Orders to secure garage. There was a sale July 2024 and here we are.

Xiong: wondering if the fee can be waived?

Moermond: why?

Xiong: when we bought the house we weren't notified it was a Vacant Building. It wasn't disclosed to us.

Moermond: I would suggest you contact them about disclosure issues. That's a private matter between you and the seller to which you and the City were not a party. This bill covers June 7, 2024 through June 2025. By the time it hits Council it will be in the program 9 months of the program. You've been in the majority of the year.

Xiong: the paper says March 1 to August 4, 2024. We purchased in July 2024.

Moermond: the waiver the seller got delayed the bill going out. It was a 90-day waiver which is standard.

Xiong: the letters from Matt Dornfeld says there has to be a Certificate of Occupancy or Code Compliance Inspection certificate prior to sale of the building. I was confused why were able to purchase without one.

Moermond: is someone living there now?

Xiong: yes, I am.

Moermond: it was condemned in 2022. It never stopped.

Hoffman: I need to have a conversation with Matt Dornfeld. Looks like Clint has done a couple walk throughs so they are in the process of straightening this out.

Moermond: your Council Public Hearing is March 19. I think Department of Safety & Inspections needs time to figure out what is going on on their end. Let's talk February 18.

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 2/18/2025**

**9 RLH TA 25-76**

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1141 UNIVERSITY AVENUE WEST. (File No. VB2506, Assessment No. 258805)

Sponsors: Jalali

Continue CPH to April 2, 2025 and if CC certificate is issued reduce assessment from \$2,618 to \$1,310, otherwise approve in full.

Chinedu Ezirike, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: this is a Category 1 commercial property opened on August 30, 2023 due to Fire Certificate of Occupancy revocation August 16, 2022.

Ezirike: when I purchased I wasn't aware of any of these issues. It was all a surprise. As a first-time property owner I've been learning and bumping my head through the process. When I purchased it was already under some type of something I wasn't aware of. None of it came up during our sale. When we had applied for a permit it wasn't brought up there were any issues. It was just furthered along us not being aware of it. I have spoken with Department of Safety & Inspections Vacant Building program, I think his name is Robert, he's been very helpful in giving the opportunity to resolving it. We are in the process of working with a contractor and pulling permits.

Moermond: what's your estimated time to get it back online? Six weeks?

Ezirike: I wish I had my contractor on the line. Robert said the next fee would not be until August; we'll be done before then. We're hoping to be done in the next month or two here. Hopefully by the end of March, early April we'll be done.

Moermond: this fee runs August 30, 2024 through August 30, 2025. We're 5 months

into the billable year now. What I'm hearing is maybe by the 7-month mark be ready to have it occupied again. That puts us over half the year. By asking how quickly it would be done it was to assess whether or not it would be a good candidate to have it prorated. The faster you are done the better candidate it is. Your Council Public Hearing is March 19th. I will ask the Council then to put this on April 2 and if you have your Code Compliance certificate and permits finalized, I'll recommend this is cut in half. If you aren't done, I'll recommend approval. My threshold is 6 months, I'm pushing it to 7 months for you. Hopefully you can be done by then.

*Ezirike: is there any consideration for the fact I purchased not knowing this status?*

*Moermond: that is something you'd bring up with the seller. If they didn't disclose it that is a private matter. The City won't subsidize that transaction, it is up to you to follow up with them on that.*

*Ezirike: sure. Not a whole lot I can do. It just seems like with the fee as high as it is, my property taxes are a lot less than the fee.*

*Moermond: that may be something you'd want to speak with Council about. As it sits right now I'm saying the fee is owed and you're lucky in your property tax bill.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025**

**10 RLH TA 25-55**

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1549 UNIVERSITY AVENUE WEST. (File No. VB2505, Assessment No. 258804)

**Sponsors:** Jalali

Reduce assessment from \$2,618 to \$1,310.

*David Tolchiner, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: Certificate of Occupancy was revoked after a fire July 2021. Opened as a Category 1 commercial Vacant Building. Few minor graffiti complaints.*

*Moermond: what is your use at the building?*

*Tolchiner: I've had this building for nearly 20 years. Over that time, it has gone through a number of changes. Last it was home to nonprofit groups, all was well. July 2021 there was a fire and at that time it was supposedly going to be about a year to get it renovated and back up and running. When I think of a Vacant Building I think of something that is not tended too. Through the entire 3-and-a-half-year period it has been under renovation and due to a number of circumstances with the older building the timeframe has extended exponentially. While I understand the City's parameters aren't predicated on my financial wherewithal, we've funded it a long period of time. When this charge would be implemented, over the last six months, the building has been in the tail end of completion. The only set back was a vent that needed to be redone and the Certificate of Occupancy is being issued. The final inspection was done. My office is in that building and has been prior to this difficulty. I'm sure you know it's a challenging area. We made the bobber for the bobber drop this year in that building. It wasn't completely vacant. I plan to resume officing out of there again. We*

recently put up for lease signs again. If we could end some of these ancillary fees so we can get it back online. We've paid the fee last few years.

*Moermond: looks like the building permit was finalized January 21, 2025. I'll recommend this is reduced by half, since it was about six months into the billable year. That's down to \$1,310. We'll send you the contact information for the Fire Certificate of Occupancy Supervisor, Mitchell Imbertson.*

*Tolchiner: I know Mitch. I appreciate the gesture. I was hoping to have it alleviated in full. It has been extensive. Is it possible to make the recommendation to delete it in full?*

*Moermond: I'm not willing to do that. The Council may look at this differently. This is based on my precedent in similar cases.*

*Tolchiner: I only ask since we've paid it the last 3 years. I understand the need, but we haven't had any issues. This area has created challenges well beyond what anyone would have anticipated. We own the Midway Saloon, which during Covid and the riots has been very difficult to continue to forge ahead. I think various people within the City, right up to the Mayor, have acknowledged what we've done for the area. I've not asked St. Paul for anything in the 20 years. I'm just asking for a little bit of leniency beyond what you've offered.*

*Moermond: I understand and respect that. I don't think I personally can do that, but the Council certainly can. I would encourage you to attend the Council Public Hearing and they often do look at things differently. It isn't a situation where I can break precedence but they don't have to worry about that.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025**

**11 RLH TA 25-86**

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1033 MARYLAND AVENUE EAST. (File No. VB2506, Assessment No. 258805)

**Sponsors:** Yang

*Approve the assessment.*

*Javonna McCoy-Barber, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: May 2 a Category 1 Vacant Building file was opened after a fire. There's been 3 or 4 permits issued. No other activity at the property.*

*Moermond: the previous hearing on the Vacant Building registration we did talk about fire damage.*

*McCoy-Barber: I want this fee removed. My insurance company won't pay for it. I can't afford it. The house is being worked on. I feel like my situation is totally different than what your rule was intended for. I'm trying to actively put this house back together. It would have been done by now but we had to find a new contractor. Our water and electric are back on. They have permits pulled. They are getting the walls back up. It should be done next month.*



*Moermond: I have to say, it should be in the Vacant Building program since it had significant damage and isn't livable. I'm looking at the file being opened May 2, and today is February 4. We're already 9 months into a billable year. By the time it goes to Council March 19, which will be 10.5 months in. I'm going to recommend approval and make it payable over 5 years. The Council may look at it differently. I don't see a case where I can prorate or forgive. The Council may look at it differently.*

*McCoy-Barber: that's the stop I'll make next. I can't afford to give St. Paul or Ramsey County any more money. My taxes went up again this year. They removed my homestead credit.*

*Moermond: did you talk to the County about decreasing the value?*

*McCoy-Barber: yeah, they told me I need to go to court and pay a court fee and lose more money by missing work. To lose my homestead credit, I don't know who it is but someone wants us to be homeless. I work 3 jobs; I can't afford this. It is just crazy. I work for the County. They know they don't pay us good. Where am I supposed to get money to pay for all this stuff?*

*Moermond: I understand. It sounds like Council is the logical next step.*

*McCoy-Barber: again. Missing my wages again. Which really only puts me further behind. We'll probably have to testify from a homeless shelter then.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025**

**12 RLH TA 25-65**

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 754 PAYNE AVENUE. (File No. J2506B, Assessment No. 258105)

**Sponsors:** Yang

*Approve the assessment.*

*Michael Buelow, BB Housing, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor James Hoffman: emergency boarding requested by St. Paul Police Department on September 15, 2024 at 4:45 pm. Board was secured with metal fasteners. Total assessment of \$474.*

*Buelow: I thought it was unnecessary, first of all. It was a small one-foot fire. It has been repaired. Permitted. Be that as it may, securing the door, it was a door from the kitchen to the porch which had a lock on it. If they did need to screw an L bracket onto the door it would have maybe taken 10 minutes. I thought the fee was exorbitant and unnecessary.*

*Moermond: the St. Paul Fire Department was out there and it looks like they called the contractor. They don't secure it themselves. A majority of that fee is the emergency call out. That's \$250 right there. The St. Paul Fire Department kicked the door in to confirm no fire in the unit. I don't know I can help on this one, the Fire Department made that determination.*

*Buelow: I'm just pushing back. They kick down a \$500 door and put screws into*

another \$500 door and for a small incident. I didn't know the tenant wasn't home at the time. Who reported the fire? The tenant?

Moermond: it was a smoking incident.

Buelow: couldn't be, there's no smoking in the unit.

Moermond: they were smoking on the deck. The floor above, I assume that means the second-floor deck tossed a cigarette butt down. I get it isn't cheap to deal with. I don't know who you have as a contact person locally posted so they could call them.

Buelow: where would that be posted and how would they know to call me?

Shaff: we have Chelsea at 651-270-8800.

Moermond: that's what fire inspection's has over at Department of Safety & Inspections, do you know what the St. Paul Fire Department has in terms of firefighters in the field?

Shaff: it looks like there may be another number which is L&M at 651-375-1157.

Moermond: that's the same.

Buelow: that's not L&M, that's the fire inspector.

Moermond: no.

Buelow: it should be Chelsea at L&M.

Moermond: L&M property management at 800 Rice street. 651-375-1157 is what the records show.

Buelow: I don't recognize that number.

Moermond: that would have been what was on the Fire Certificate of Occupancy Responsible Party form. Looks like we have ongoing inspections and that's how was billed for your Fire Certificate of Occupancy. Not sure, but I will say the St. Paul Fire Department has to decide when they're onsite about how to manage it and need to leave the scene secured. I get this isn't a cheap door, and I'm sorry for that, but it is an expense that happens from time to time. I'll recommend approval of the assessment. It was a tenant issue.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025**

## 10:00 a.m. Hearings

### Special Tax Assessments

- 13 [RLH TA 25-74](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 754 PAYNE AVENUE. (File No. CRT2506, Assessment No. 258205)

**Sponsors:** Yang

Layover to LH March 4, 2025 at 10 am for further discussion. (PO to be sent Fire

orders & photos).

Michael Buelow, BB Housing, appeared via phone

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

Staff report by Supervisor Leanna Shaff: Fire Certificate of Occupancy fees for a six-unit building. Total assessment is \$819. Revocation letters August 6, August 26, September 6 and September 9 of 2024. Approved with corrections October 1, 2024. Billing dates October 3 and November 4, 2024. No returned mail. Mail sent to Chelsea Ruane c/o L&M Management at 800 Rice Street, St Paul 55117.

Moermond: and when left unpaid it goes to assessment. Why are you appealing?

Buelow: I know we've been in contact regularly with fire inspectors when there were issues or concerns. The property is in good condition. I'm not aware we missed any appointments; we may have rescheduled. I don't think there's any case where someone was left standing outside waiting to get in.

Moermond: I wasn't hearing that; I heard multiple inspections.

Shaff: the prior Fire Certificate of Occupancy was approved with corrections but the corrections didn't get done in a timely manner—it took about six months-- so we took enforcement action and opened up a new Fire Certificate of Occupancy.

Buelow: what were those delinquent items?

Shaff: you should have all of those letters. I'm not prepared to go back years with all of this.

Moermond: you want records about what was expected and what wasn't done. That can be sent to you. You're saying you shouldn't have been charged reinspection fees because you think the work was done?

Buelow: yeah. And when work orders were sent there was communication with the fire inspector as far as scheduling. You can't just call the fire inspector, I know they're busy. I know it is a month out.

Moermond: we'll get that information to you. We have dates for them having been there that Ms. Shaff just went through. Sounds to me like that was standard. What is being billed today is unrelated to that.

Buelow: the building is in good very condition. I don't want to give the impression it's a fire hazard. Its sprinkled and has smoke detectors and doors and windows, etcetera.

Moermond: I have some notes from September through January, but the bill is before that, Ms. Shaff?

Shaff: this is the Fire Certificate of Occupancy approved last October. It was pending revocation at that point because the previous items hadn't been done. This is quite an involved file with a history of work not being done in a timely manner. There was exterior work that had been approved with corrections the winter before. It wasn't done.

Moermond: can we just get the letters for this and any inspector notes? It looks like

there's quite a number of inspections and communication and the work wasn't done, as you said, and it continues past this billing cycle.

Buelow: my frustration here is the fire inspector—there may have been a board with peeling paint—I understand you don't want raw wood, but—

Shaff: those aren't the only problems in the building. You interrupted me. I will supply you with that paperwork & photos of the incomplete work.

Moermond: let's wrap this up four weeks out, March 4.

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 3/4/2025**

14 [RLH TA 25-71](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 89 ATWATER STREET (File No. CRT2506, Assessment No. 258205)

**Sponsors:** Bowie

Layover to LH March 4, 2025 at 10 am for further discussion. (PO to be sent Fire orders & photos).

Michael Buelow, BB Housing, appeared via phone

Staff report by Supervisor Leanna Shaff: this is a duplex. Total assessment of \$859. Appointment letters sent April 30, May 20, May 28 and June 13, 2024. Deficiency letter June 28, 2024. Revocation letters August 4, August 20, September 6 and September 9, 2024. Compliance date of October 1, 2024. Billing dates are October 4 and November 4, 2024. We received no returned mail. The original billing included one \$89 no entry fee, which we cannot assess and was removed from the original bill. All mail sent to the Responsible Party Chelsea Ruane L&M Property Management 800 Rice Street, St. Paul 55117

Buelow: my understanding is we were in communication with the fire inspector regarding concerns. Again, it is a handsome duplex in great condition. If we received multiple notices we replied multiple times to the inspector. What were the incidents of concern?

Moermond: we aren't going to go through the correction orders again, we're happy to provide those although your Responsible Party should have them in their possession already. I'm seeing quite a few correction orders and photos associated with the property. I also see lots of notes from your people asking for rescheduling of inspections and back and forth communication. I'm not sure what your ask is here.

Buelow: I don't know. It sounds like if I ask what were the requested repairs you don't want to get into that. I tell you what, I don't know why you don't know that already. We can send those to you but it sounds like you should be communicating with your property manager if it's a chronic issue with you not having basic information. Am I wrong? I don't know why you don't have it.

Buelow: yeah, I don't.

Moermond: 10 orders and 2 bills. That's 12 pieces of mail sent to your Responsible Party. You're being billed only for 3 reinspections. The original fee plus 3 reinspections, which considering there are 10 sets of orders on the file isn't a lot. That

can be sent to you and you can review it before I make my recommendation. We'll continue this four weeks as well.

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 3/4/2025**

**15**     [RLH TA 25-73](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 49 MANITOBA AVENUE. (File No. CRT2506, Assessment No. 258205)

**Sponsors:**     Bowie

*Layover to LH March 4, 2025 at 10 am for further discussion. (PO to be sent Fire orders & photos).*

*Michael Buelow, BB Housing, appeared via phone*

*Staff report by Supervisor Leanna Shaff: this is a duplex. Assessment is for unpaid Fire Certificate of Occupancy fees totaling \$859. Appointment letter sent May 10, 2024. Deficiency letters sent June 6 and July 3, 2024. Revocation letters sent August 5, August 20 and September 9, 2024. Compliance date was October 9, 2024 and I'd like to note the water heater permit is still open. Billing dates of October 11 and November 11, 2024. No returned mail. All mail sent to Responsible Party Chelsea Ruane L&M Property Management at 800 Rice Street, St. Paul 55117*

*Moermond: is this another case where you don't have the orders?*

*Buelow: I do know the plumber should have closed out that permit.*

*Moermond: doesn't even look like they got a rough-in.*

*Buelow: it was an existing heater. It wasn't roughed in.*

*Moermond: it is an active permit, no one has been there. You need to get someone out there. The Fire Orders can't be closed until that is dealt with.*

*Buelow: I'll follow up on that.*

*Moermond: we'll send the letters on this. Set up the same time on March 4. I'll put my recommendation on the record after you've had time to review.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 3/4/2025**

**16**     **RLH TA 25-23**

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 287 EDMUND AVENUE. (File No. J2506T, Assessment No. 258511)

**Sponsors:**     Bowie

*Reduce assessment from \$451.50 to \$125.*

*Poncho Rua-Torres, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: June 14, 2024 a Summary Abatement Order was issued to remove and dispose of plant growth and vegetation over the City sidewalk to a height of 7 feet. Rechecked June 21. Not in compliance. Work was done July 17, 2024 for total assessment of \$451.50.*

*Rua-Torres: I'm the only person who lives here and I travel for my job and I did take a look at some of the photos taken. The vines around the gate, this is my first home, but it's a lot on my plate. Due to the City streets I'm constantly fixing my vehicle. It is just one thing after another. I just got some hedge trimmers donated. Some of those bushes he took photos aren't even mine. The one where he's standing on the Edmund side. Half of those are my neighbor's. I understand blocking the sidewalk, I didn't realize. I don't remember it getting that bad because my brother comes around every so often.*

*Moermond: did you make an attempt to clean it up at all?*

*Rua-Torres: absolutely. My brother is a landscaper and he comes when I call when I'm gone for a while.*

*Moermond: when I look at the photos from when the inspector first wrote the orders, it covers at least 3/4th of the sidewalk. I see it is trimmed back to a point where we're mostly looking at some grape ivy dripping over but the worst of the brush was removed. I want to give you credit for that. What may have helped is there was some time between when orders were issued and the crew showing up in terms of having some time to get this done. I'd like to reduce to reflect the work done. If you stay on top of maintenance things like shoveling and mowing I'll recommend it is reduced to \$125.*

*Rua-Torres: I believe I can swing that. You have my word as far as maintaining the property.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025**

- 17 RLH TA 25-62** Deleting the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 494 BARCLAY STREET. (File No. J2505E, Assessment No. 258304)

**Sponsors:** Johnson

*Delete the assessment.*

*Supervisor Lisa Martin: no Vehicle Abatement Order was sent, so it should be deleted.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025**

- 18 RLH TA 25-69** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 471 HATCH AVENUE. (File No. J2506E, Assessment No. 258305)

**Sponsors:** Kim

*Approve the assessment.*

*Noor Ali, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: July 11 2024 a Correction Notice was issued for all vehicles on the property must have current tabs, must be registered to the property, fully operational, cannot be missing any vital parts, cannot be open to entry and must be parked an approved surface. Compliance date of July 24. We did a recheck and they were still in the yard. An Excessive Consumption was issued. This is an ongoing*

file. Total assessment of \$169.

*Ali: I was working with another Code inspector. The first thing you have to understand, Lisa Martin never replies to emails, she's copied when I speak to Richard. Never any communication was rude or misbehaving. All our neighbors park their vehicles in the backyard. St. Paul is the number one place for stealing Catalytic converters. We have had four vehicles have them stolen. We aren't a wealthy family and only have third party liability. In order to keep them safe. We had no choice but to park in our fenced area. I would request you to pull up the notices from 2023. When I spoke with the officer, the first notice we received--they're combined parcels. That wasn't fenced but we had the fence covering from garage to the house. There was only one trailer and two vehicles parked there. He said you have to remove or apply for the parking pad surface approval or whatever. I asked him, we'll remove the trailer, but is that ok if I park inside the fence? He said they didn't care about what happened inside the fence. That was our understanding. Now my question is, I'm not lying. Honest to God I'm not giving false information, I have the name on the file. We put the fence up and park our vehicles inside because of that understanding. He said we don't look inside the fences. It is our privacy. We have very good relations with our neighbors. One of them isn't happy with us. Before we put up the fence we were still getting all the dumping because it was City owned before and they'd remove it for free. It was a legal dumpster for the residents. Smoking weed. We have photos and everything. As soon as we acquired the lot we put the fence around. Before we put the fence up we were getting lots of dumping still. If you ask anyone why they were dumping they say, "we pay taxes". We had to fence the property overnight because there was too much garbage. It still happens today. I have shared all those pictures with Lisa Martin, and I've called the police, they have never given a solution. As soon as we parked the vehicles the inspector shows up. We are in a tough spot. I've applied for the parking surface permit months ago. The first application was sent October 30, 2024. It hasn't been approved. When I email Frances, I just send another update and they said I have to do better drawings.*

*Moermond: it looks like the fence was built without a permit and is six foot in the front, which can only be 4 feet. You got orders to shorten the fence to the legal height. You pulled a permit for the fence in December but there are still orders to complete that work. In terms of parking in the yard that isn't allowable whether or not you have a fence. Inspector won't climb a fence but they can certainly see inside of it. I'm looking at an aerial photo from 2024 that has 8 cars parked outside. You're telling me you got different information but you have this order from Richard Kedrowski July 11 saying it had to be dealt with. If you thought it was ok it was a good point to have a conversation. That order was also appealable.*

*Ali: to be honest, I think you know, you send the letter for the appeal and I spoke with the Department of Safety & Inspections and they said you can't appeal because it was closed already. You can see the notes over there. To be honest my job is like 24/7. Only my family, my wife and 2-year-old and 3 month old, they live there. Most of the week I'm traveling nationwide because my job is automation. We're shorthanded. I don't want to bother anyone. I'm the most obedient person. I've never seen the jail. Sometimes I ask my wife, hey we should see if someone can volunteer to show us around the jail. I've never been involved in drunken driving or speeding, I'm the most obedient my whole life. My whole family is like that. We've never seen any violation. I want to follow the rules but I need some time.*

*Moermond: I appreciate you're a good citizen, but this isn't anything related to drunk driving or jail, it is simply the vehicles weren't taken care of in a timely fashion. They*

asked you to do something, issued orders, and came back 2 weeks later and it wasn't done by deadline. They charged you for the inspection. I hear you disagree with the vehicles could have been there. I don't know when you called Department of Safety & Inspections but there is a 10-day window to file an appeal. The order itself does say that. I would really like to hear about why you shouldn't have to pay for these follow up inspections.

Ali: a couple letters for the notices we have not received. Otherwise, as soon as I receive a letter my first job is communicating through email rather than sending a letter. I am sometimes on the east or west coast. The email is for me. I have replied to all the letters via email to Lisa Martin and Richard Kedrowski. Maybe I didn't receive the letter and go for the appeal. That's the reason. This was the worst time, I was out for a month, but we did remove most of them. there was maybe 2 left. If you have a photo maybe you can send it. Otherwise, you can ask Richard, I always try to phone and email them. I never ignore any City order.

Moermond: the photos were sent you by my staff January 22 2025 so you would have them for today's hearing. I can see in this photo at least 5 vehicles in the back. That's a lot. That's not in compliance with the order. While I appreciate you're out of town, I can't make exceptions for that. You are still responsible for maintaining your property. I am guessing that all of these vehicles are associated with not just you but others who could assume some responsibility as well. I'm not hearing a reason in your testimony I can decrease or delete this assessment. Future cases may have different outcomes. Looks like you have history of noncompliance with vehicles and assessments.

Ali: I didn't receive the July 11 notice. That's what we're missing. You can ask Richard; we always take care of things when we receive the letter.

Moermond: that isn't what I see in the record at all. I see you repeatedly didn't get the work done. There was no returned mail. You also said you were out of town for extended periods which makes it hard for me to accept that the mail wasn't delivered but rather that there are great lengths of time—

Ali: my wife is always there. Just I travel. My children are always there. That's our home. July my wife was in and out of the hospital so many times because we had a new baby in September. July was hard because she had six miscarriages in the past so like every other day she's visiting the doctor. Maybe every other week she goes to the gynecologist. She was stressed at that time. I always apologize. There are no other vehicles at the property aside from 2. I don't want to lose the catalytic converter.

Moermond: for this assessment I'm going to recommend approval. It wasn't in compliance on deadline.

Ali: is there any way you can take any off? It was a one-way thing. I explained everything and not having taken care of the matter I think the City has to make a case for the City then. We are paying taxes on time. If we are losing catalytic converters and creating more harmful emissions for the environment what is the City doing?

Moermond: the City lobbied the State of Minnesota for the precious metals to be regulated differently at scrap yards and catalytic convertor theft decreased significantly at the end of 2023. I don't know where you got the statistic that St. Paul was the worst for that type of theft; it is a national problem. I won't look at decreasing this but we can discuss future assessments as they come forward.

**Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025**



**19**     **RLH TA 25-75**     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 815 HOLTON STREET. (File No. J2503R, Assessment No. 258502)

Sponsors:     Jalali

*Delete the assessment.*

*Michael Norby, owner, appeared via phone*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: This was a Summary Abatement Order to remove or dispose of bags of leaves from behind the garage. Orders were sent May 15, 2024, compliance date of May 24, rechecked May 24 and work was done by the contractor May 29 for a total assessment of \$369. No returned mail and no history at the property.*

*Norby: first, I never received a letter that explained anything. I'm a real estate agent and I know the rules. It is my fault; I did have bags of leaves back there I use for my raised garden in the spring. I didn't think it was a big deal; I probably should have. If I got the letter I definitely would have moved them in my garage. My second thing is, I just thought that was a bit excessive. For 3 bags of leaves, that's a lot of money. It is kind of crazy to me. Last, I clean up everyone's area in my alley so I'm not asking for a pat on the back but I'm the last person who would want something looking bad in their yard. The main thing is yeah, I wish I would have got the letter, but I didn't so I just think there are a lot of other things going on that aren't 3 bags of leaves for \$400, you know? It is what it is. I know I'm in the wrong. Just wish there was a way to rectify before being assessed \$400.*

*Moermond: what do you have growing back there? Thistle?*

*Norby: that's my neighbors, not mine. I did clear it all out this fall, with their permission. I ran my tiller and put down the weed-proof matting and plant hastas and mulch this spring. I also did the neighbor's across the street. I cut down their branches, I know the guy. My neighbors did get a notice, and they didn't have the equipment and aren't physically capable of doing it so I volunteered.*

*Moermond: I trust every once in a blue moon something weird happens to the mail without getting returned mail, based on the good history I'm going to recommend it is deleted and call it in your favor with regards to the notice.*

*Norby: thank you.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 2/26/2025**

**20**     [RLH TA 25-34](#)     Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 104 IVY AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2501E1, Assessment No. 258309)

Sponsors:     Kim

*Layover to LH March 4, 2025 at 10 am.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 3/4/2025**

- 21 [RLH TA 25-30](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 104 IVY AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2502E, Assessment No. 258301) (Refer to March 4, 2025 Legislative Hearing)
- Sponsors:** Kim
- Layover to LH March 4, 2025 at 10 am.*
- Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 3/4/2025**
- 22 [RLH TA 25-31](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 104 IVY AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2503E, Assessment No. 258302) (March 4, 2025 Legislative Hearing)
- Sponsors:** Kim
- Refer back to LH March 4, 2025 at 10 am.*
- Referred to the City Council due back on 2/5/2025**
- 23 **RLH TA 25-32** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 104 IVY AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2504E, Assessment No. 258303) (Refer to March 4, 2025 Legislative Hearing)
- Sponsors:** Kim
- Refer back to LH March 4, 2025 at 10 am.*
- Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025**
- 24 **RLH TA 25-33** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 104 IVY AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2505E, Assessment No. 258304) (Refer to March 4, 2025 Legislative Hearing)
- Sponsors:** Kim
- Refer back to LH March 4, 2025 at 10 am.*
- Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025**
- 25 [RLH TA 25-64](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 104 IVY AVENUE WEST. (File No. J2506E, Assessment No. 258305)
- Sponsors:** Kim
- Layover to LH March 4, 2025 at 10 am.*
- Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 3/4/2025**

**Special Tax Assessments-ROLLS**

- 26 **RLH AR 25-13** Ratifying the assessment for Collection of Vacant Building Registration fees billed during March 1 to August 14, 2024. (File No. VB2506,

Assessment No. 258805)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025

- 27 RLH AR 25-14 Ratifying the assessment for Securing and/or Emergency Boarding services during September 2024. (File No. J2506B, Assessment No. 258105)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025

- 28 RLH AR 25-15 Ratifying the assessment for Collection of Fire Certificate of Occupancy fees billed during September 7 to October 24, 2024. (File No. CRT2506, Assessment No. 258205)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025

- 29 RLH AR 25-16 Ratifying the assessment for Excessive Use of Inspection or Abatement services billed during July 23 to September 21, 2024. (File No. J2506E, Assessment No. 258305)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025

- 30 RLH AR 25-17 Ratifying the assessment for Graffiti Removal services during August 8 to 14, 2024. (File No. J2506P, Assessment No. 258405)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025

- 31 RLH AR 25-18 Ratifying the assessment for Towing of Abandoned Vehicle(s) services during April to July 2024. (File No. J2502V, Assessment No. 258001)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 3/19/2025

## 11:00 a.m. Hearings

### Summary & Vehicle Abatement Orders

- 32 RLH SAO 25-2 Appeal of JoAnn Lorvig Tsoumanis to a Summary Abatement Order and Excessive Consumption Order at 1400 CHARLES AVENUE.

Sponsors: Jalali

*Grant to following dates for compliance:*

*March 1: all items removed from boulevard, unlicensed trailer removed from public ROW (cannot be stored on property unless on proper surface and licensed or in garage);*

*April 1: removed/dispose garbage and refuse, gazebo frame, household boxes near garage, interior furniture stored outside;*

*May 1: removal of ALL wood including pallets, scrap wood, construction grade;*

*June 1: balance of items including cinder blocks and any remaining construction material.*

*JoAnn Lorvig Tsoumanis*

*Moermond: we were just reviewing your proposed plan. I'd like to get some comments from MS. Martin on where she is at. Hear from you and then we'll finalize deadlines.*

*Martin: one of the biggest concerns is getting everything off the boulevard sooner than April 1. We would not allow you to put things on the boulevard that says free. Any structure you need to go through zoning and make sure permits are pulled. We definitely would not allow shelving or drop shelves for work stuff. No exterior storage. In the home, in a garage, in a shed if a site plan is approved.*

*Moermond: you put together this plan, dated today. Tell me what you're thinking.*

*Lorvig Tsoumanis: I don't know how to put my thoughts into words. You said the first deadline was April, May & June 1. I can get the gazebo frame down and remove household stuff and go through piles. See what I have so I know what I can do with it. That is going to take most of the time between now and April 1. I'll get the stuff off the boulevard also. I do need to build some type of shed to keep work stuff in. I know I need permits.*

*Moermond: by April 1 is I'd like to see the garbage to be addressed. Getting the gazebo frame out. the boxes and so on. I am not happy with the wood pile furniture statement that says decide what to keep and not to keep. It seems to me we need to focus on when it is done, not making judgment on what you've decided. I need the actual work product. In terms of the exterior building materials. If you want to build a shed and store things there, that's sensible, but this needs to be done sooner vs. later. March 1 everything off the boulevard. It cannot be used to store materials, period. I see a trailer associated with this in the street and it doesn't appear to be licensed. It seems to have Waste management bags in it and that needs to go. That's a referral to police parking enforcement.*

*Furniture on the outside, May 1.*

*Lorvig Tsoumanis: I agree. When I say go through and keep or not, I mean right in that moment. I'll keep what is appropriate for yard furniture in the yard.*

*Moermond: it says your goals are to be done on deadline. And again, this isn't a goal, this is about it being done or not. You have a LOT of building materials. If the City removes them it is going to be extremely expensive. It would be well served to take care of it by deadline. The yard is mostly building materials all over; cinderblock and scrap wood, actual wood.*

*April 1: removing gazebo frame, household boxes near house, and the furniture. Wood can be May 1. June 1 for cleaning up the rest of the yard, getting rid of or using the building/construction materials under permit.*

Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025

33 RLH SAO  
25-11

Appeal of Jason Syverson to a Summary Abatement Order at 1004 FULLER AVENUE.

Sponsors: Bowie

*Grant to March 1, 2025 for compliance, including cutting down unfrozen shrubbery in barrel to allow lid, buckets without lids properly stored including ones not in use, removal of interior furniture including folding chairs and barrels labeled if used for garden material.*

*Jason Syverson, owner, appeared*

*Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: a Summary Abatement Order was issued January 9, 2025 to remove and properly dispose of plastic buckets, totes, and cardboard located in the alley and near the garage. Compliance date January 16. Photos in the file. Current photos taken yesterday.*

*Moermond: I read your appeal and looked at some photos. Looks like some of the buckets are in use, others are hanging out.*

*Syverson: the furniture is gone; it was dumped there. The buckets are for my garden. They aren't in current use, but I moved the empty ones in my garage now. I can definitely see why it would be mistaken for refuse, not utility items. I won't let that happen again. I have an extensive garden and they're used as above ground planters. I do a blend for my soil due to led concerns for carrots, lettuce, those types of things so I try to avoid those being directly in the ground. It definitely wasn't being stored tidily. I've rectified that I hope.*

*The blue barrels, some have mulch. Some have bark. I tried calling the inspector and was never able to reach him. The first notice didn't have a number. The second did but he didn't call me back. I called here and they said they'd email him about it but he never called me to talk about it. There are mulch in the plastic ones and soil in the metal ones. I had to tip them over to roll them, but when it warmed up I was able to free them to stand them up.*

*Martin: typically, 55 gallon drums are covered as outside storage, and should be stored in the garage. There's a couple folding chairs, but it is considered exterior storage. The buckets don't have covers so come spring they collect rain and get mosquitoes. We typically don't allow those outside.*

*Moermond: so one with a cover wouldn't be an issue. You are saying the containers out there have lids.*

*Syverson: there are a couple with plants in them they don't have lids. The ones on the northeast side of garage all have lids. There are a few more on the Northwest sides without lids. One has my tomato cages inside. There are two one has soil and mulch, without lids at the moment. But a majority of extra buckets have been moved inside.*

*Moermond: I don't have a problem with mulch in a bucket as long as it has a lid. Then the public health portion is under control. The most recent photos show one of the blue barrels looks like it has weeds.*

*Syverson: that's the brush, I need to get rid of it. We were trying to figure out how to get rid of it. We've been trying to kill the mulberry growing between the fences. I'd be happy to get rid of it I'm just trying to figure out the best way. It is frozen in there; it may be a spring task. That one wasn't really supposed to be a fixture.*

*Moermond: the folding chairs?*

*Syverson: I didn't know they couldn't be outside.*

*Moermond: a good rule of thumb is if it isn't designed to stay outside it shouldn't stay outside.*

*Martin: they're considered interior chairs.*

*Moermond: what is your ability to go half measure on that brush? Cut it down so a lid can go on?*

*Syverson: yeah, I can do that.*

*Moermond: with all those barrels and that coming out, and then the tall weeds around the barrel. It looks like an extension of the pile of sticks.*

*Martin: put lids on the buckets and make sure they're neatly organized and move anything not currently be used move inside the garage or off the property.*

*Moermond: if it has a lid can it be outside? Technically yes. But you have someone who doesn't like the way this looks, so it will probably be called in again. Labeling the barrels may help. Mulch. Garden Soil.*

*Martin: right, we have no idea if its oil being stored or what is inside and we won't go look.*

*Moermond: signage on the barrels may help. Label barrels which may be tough to do when it is cold. Keep it neatly organized. Buckets without lids put away. Store all buckets not in use. It is fine to use them for plantings. Put the folding chairs away. The barrel with the shrubs trimmed down and put cover on. Neaten it up. Council Public Hearing 2/19 and I'll ask them to give you until March 1 to get it addressed.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025**

### **Making Finding on Nuisance Abatements**

- 34**    [RLH SAO 25-7](#)    Making finding on the appealed nuisance abatement ordered for 1875 NORTH PARK DRIVE in Council File SAO 24-82.

**Sponsors:**        Johnson

*The nuisance is abated and the matter resolved.*

*No one appeared*

*Moermond: we have an update on the cleanup and Vehicle Abatement*

*Martin: the Vehicle was abated but the stuff in the front has not been dealt with and*

*there is a Council Public Hearing on that tomorrow.*

*Moermond: so we can forgo calling him on that.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 2/12/2025**

## 1:30 p.m. Hearings

### Orders To Vacate - Fire Certificate of Occupancy

- 35 RLH VO 25-3** Appeal of Rico Duran, Latino Economic Development, to a Correction Notice-Complaint Inspection (which includes condemnation of Units 202 and 303) at 857 PAYNE AVENUE.

**Sponsors:** Yang

*Grant to May 5, 2025 for compliance.*

*Rico Duran, Latino Economic Development, appeared*

*[Moermond gives background of appeals process]*

*Staff report by Supervisor Leanna Shaff: the St. Paul Fire Department referred this after a fire at the property. Fire Safety Manager Neis responded to the fire and condemned a couple of units due to smoke and fire damage. He responded on January 13, the day of the fire. Unit 303 is condemned, electricity is off. Basically repairs must be done under permit. Unit 202 the same thing. He also has orders to sanitize the walls, ceilings, and floors due to water and smoke damage in the residential hallways. Replace all units door that have been damaged. Then in the grocery store there was an exit sign over the door that is not a functioning exit. Door doesn't open and lead to an exit. That has to change. Typically on a mixed use building like this we're giving it 90 days and a cursory glance at the plan Mr. Duran submitted seems to fall under that.*

*Moermond: when I look at the appeal no one was living in 202 or 303. Tenants were allocated in different units. Are they still there?*

*Duran: they are still in the building; they moved to different apartments in the same building. Those condemned apartments remain as requested.*

*Moermond: we have the apartments, but I'm not seeing a condemnation related to the commercial use. Just the sign?*

*Shaff: just the sign.*

*Moermond: tell me what you are looking for today.*

*Duran: we appreciate the list of recommendations and repairs and wanted to work immediately. We want it functional for everyone, not just physical structure but also the way it is used. This is a nonprofit organization and we assist not just the tenants but also commercial space. My proposal to you was to work immediately on this list but at the same time I'm following insurance who doesn't want me to touch anything yet because it is under investigation. We fixed all the hallways and cleaned the areas. The two apartments we haven't touched yet, I guess that's the main thing. The other thing*

*is we visited a couple stores like Menards to see if we can order those damaged doors and they take 3 or 4 weeks to get. That's why we thought it wasn't possible to fix that immediately. Apartment 303 was directly affected; I'm presenting a plan to remodel the whole unit including replacing windows and electric system. The window vender recommends working March and April to do that room. I started there because it was the most damaged room. The second unit, 202, it is less damaged but the recommendation we follow from our contractors is they can fix it in between now and the end of February. My plan I submitted takes things in different stages. It is important our tenants have a place to stay so we can work freely in those two units.*

*Moermond: we had the Manager out there on January 13. He set a reinspection date of January 30th. It says, "corrected immediately" and reinspecting on the 30th. What would happen to these condemned units?*

*Shaff: I think he was going towards hearing back with a plan for next steps. Usually, the property owners are very communicative with us so we can adjust our orders accordingly. We understand the extent of the damage, insurance would definitely want to look at it and then we'd make time adjustments. In this case an appeal was filed.*

*Moermond: would you want to do an interim progress inspection if we had an in-between deadline? Or just with staffing prefer to do it all at once?*

*Shaff: all at once, but realistically once the permits are closed there's not a whole lot for us to look at. We'd want to confirm the sign to nowhere is taken care of, but I can't imagine the hallway isn't pretty clean by now. I'm not worried.*

*Moermond: the last line in your work plan you say 303 would be the last one worked on. You have beginning March 1 and doing the work in March and April. Would you be done by May 1?*

*Duran: that is what my contractor is saying. They need those 2 months based on ordering materials. Floors, windows, replacing ceiling.*

*Moermond: I'll recommend giving to May 5, 2025 to have the work done.*

**Referred to the City Council due back on 2/19/2025**

## **2:00 p.m. Hearings**

### **Fire Certificates of Occupancy**

- 36 RLH FCO 25-1** Appeal of Casandra and Patrick Bradley to a Correction Notice-Complaint Inspection at 365 BATES AVENUE.

**Sponsors:** Johnson

*Layover to LH February 11, 2025 at 2 pm after plumbing inspector visit.*

**Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 2/11/2025**