



City of Saint Paul

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Minutes - Final

Legislative Hearings

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651-266-8585*

Tuesday, May 27, 2025

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House/Remote

This hearing will start at 1:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. Hearings

Vacant Building Registrations

1 **RLH VBR** Appeal of Gladys Igbo to a Vacant Building Registration Fee Warning
25-21 Letter at 385 UNIVERSITY AVENUE WEST.

Sponsors: Bowie

Waive the VB fee for 90 days (to August 6, 2025).

No one appeared

Voice-mail left at 1:18 pm: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling Gladys Igbo about 385 University Avenue. We tried to reach you last week as well. Call Clint Zane at 651-266-9029 and was also in the most recent letter you received. Call with any questions.

Moermond: waive fee for 90 days for her to get sign offs to get permits squared away. If she needs new permits she will have to do that as well. That's to August 6, 2025.

Referred to the City Council due back on 6/11/2025

2 **RLH VBR** Appeal of Otto Hiller to a Vacant Building Registration Fee Warning
25-24 Letter at 1331 STILLWATER AVENUE.

Sponsors: Yang

Grant the appeal and release the property from the VB program.

Otto Hiller, owner, appeared via phone

Moermond: I've had a chance to review this file and it looks like there is agreement the building has been demolished. I see it was demolished in December 2024 and hole filled April 2025.

Staff report by Supervisor Matt Dornfeld: that is correct.

Moermond: Department of Safety & Inspections hasn't closed the demo permit because they were looking for some work to be done, I think curb cuts, but I'm separating that issue from whether this should be a Vacant Building. I'm referring back to chapter 43.02 and the definitions of a Vacant Building and they exclusively refer to building and structures. I'm going to grant your appeal and remind you that you do need to close out that permit. For today's purposes though, good news.

Hiller: that's great. Seemed to me like you had to have a building to have a Vacant Building. I'm in the process of trying to sell the land, we'd plan on rebuilding the house and we kept having contractor issues and then February someone deliberately set fire to the house which changed our plans about rebuilding. I am trying to end the project by selling. That's great and I'll work with the inspector about the curb cuts and disclosure of the sale.

Referred to the City Council due back on 6/11/2025

1:30 p.m. Hearings

Orders To Vacate - Fire Certificate of Occupancy

3 RLH VO 25-8 Appeal of James Parker, tenant, to a Revocation of Fire Certificate of Occupancy and Order to Vacate at 1220 SHERBURNE AVENUE.

Sponsors: Privratsky

Grant to June 23, 2025 to have electrical permit finaled and to October 1, 2025 for orders related to window repair/replacement.

Voicemail for James Parker left at 1:31 pm: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council trying to reach James Parker about the appeal for 1220 Sherburne Avenue. You aren't in the room or on the phone so I'm assuming you're ok with where things are at. You received a letter from staff here, so reach back to them with questions. You'll also receive a follow up letter

Staff update by Supervisor Der Vue: May 22 an inspection was conducted, all deficiencies were abated in unit 6. Only the remaining item is the windows throughout the property. She's received a few bids. The outside of the windows the electrical permit is still open.

There was work done, the contractor did the installation, but the City inspector was never contacted to do a final inspection to confirm the work was done to Code. The outlet was part of it, but the big piece were the electrical panels.

Moermond: Jason McGrath electrical.

Valmyr: I misunderstood; I will contact them right away.

Moermond: this could be a deadline this construction season deadline?

Valmyr: they've started and replaced 3.

Moermond: I'm thinking October 1, 2025 for the windows. Let's say June 23rd for the electrical permit final.

Referred to the City Council due back on 6/11/2025

4 RLH VO 25-9 Appeal of Dayana Valmyr to a Revocation of Fire Certificate of Occupancy and Order to Vacate at 1220 SHERBURNE AVENUE.

Sponsors: Privratsky

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Referred to the City Council due back on 6/11/2025

5 RLH VO 25-11 Appeal of Connie Baehr to a Fire Inspection Correction Notice (which includes condemnation) at 961 ARCADE STREET.

Sponsors: Yang

Layover to LH June 10, 2025 at 1:30 pm for discussion of deadlines after fire inspector visit.

Connie Baehr, owner, appeared

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Mitch Imbertson: this is a 2000 square foot mercantile occupancy commercial building that had its Certificate of Occupancy renewal inspection. It had a condemnation of the building due to standing water and moisture issues, along with 9 other issues. We couldn't pinpoint a location of the leak but it appeared to be a foundation repair issue noted on the report and possibly related to a

2019 incident where a vehicle hit the building. It may be related to that repair allowing water into the building. We had a few other more typical issues such as recharging fire extinguisher and repairing floors and ceilings.

Baehr: the basement I understand. He did write down here one foot of water. That isn't true. It was a "ream" of water. That needs to be repaired. I've got quotes to fix the basement leakage. They'll be fixing it from the outside. I absolutely agree with that. The fire extinguishers I do have a proposal on my phone, they wanted to wait until the first so I have a full year warranty. That will be done right away.

Moermond: Mr. Imbertson, could you pull up the previous inspection on this. It seems to me this isn't the first report where water shows up in the basement.

Imbertson: that is correct.

Moermond: the photo document shows March 12.

Imbertson: the March inspection was part of this same inspection process. There was a delay in issuing the correction orders.

Moermond: it didn't appear in those photos to be a full foot deep.

Baehr: this issue just started. The back of the building has blacktop from the parking lot and it has separated. It has been probably a year with the water in the basement. I don't really use it for anything but it is still my building. I am going to have it addressed. There were a couple of items, I wasn't sure if he was referring to the floor in the basement. There's no damage to that floor, it is a "rosselyn" floor.

Imbertson: item 9 doesn't specify basement. I'd imagine it refers to upstairs.

Baehr: there is no problem to any of the floor on the main floor. It is perfect.

Imbertson: I meant the basement floor wouldn't have been able to be observed since it was partially covered. There is no water standing on the main floor.

Moermond: It seems to me standing water isn't sewage but still isn't great in terms of bacteria. It does need to be dealt with. Thoughts on that? You gave a timeline; orders went out May 15 with a reinspect June 12. Is that too soon for you?

Baehr: yes, I have to get a couple proposals. One man came out. I want like 3 months to work on this. I own this myself and have owned it 47 years. I'm not flowing in money and don't want to take out a loan. I'm trying to afford this—and I'm going too—I've worked there all my life. I am going to fix it. I wanted to have like 3 months to work on this.

Moermond: sure, sure. It may be helpful to see if the City has any money to assist in this case. We'll send you the link to Business resources.

Baehr: I go down a couple times of week to do a wet vac and have a humidifier down there.

Moermond: 3 months isn't a problem but I'd like you to commit to continue to do that remediation.

Baehr: *I do it every 2 days. I check it every day. I do it immediately when it needs it. I completely shop vac it dry.*

Moermond: *Inspecting every third day and shop vacuuming any water there, does that work for you Mr. Imbertson?*

Imbertson: *I would agree if that plan is being followed and inspected regularly. It would be reasonable. I do have concern about the amount of water we were seeing from the photos in March. I understand that's one snap shot in time or the exact circumstances, but the water in the photos is quite a lot. Not sure whether that it is an accumulation from a period of time or maybe it was one rainfall.*

Moermond: *I was curious about May 15 orders but relying on photos from 2 months earlier. Lacking fresh photos, I can only assume things improved in the interim.*

Imbertson: *I would hope that's the case based on the statement from the appellant. I understand the Inspector stopped out during business hours and wasn't able to get in and did the orders based on the original inspection.*

Moermond: *Let's say September 3, 2025 for a deadline for the basement. Reach out to the Business resource folks. They likely will need bids.*

Baehr: *There was something about the basement ceiling. It is an old building. It has been there 90 days. I don't understand why I'd have to fix that. It is just old. It was a metal ceiling that has corroded away. No leak or anything.*

Moermond: *That's number 3, and another ceiling order for the main floor which is 10.*

Baehr: *I want to explain that. Upstairs it is just cosmetic. I've never had anyone say anything about that ceiling. I have pictures on my phone.*

Moermond: *Could you connect over the next two weeks.*

Imbertson: *Can we stop in during business hours or do we need an appointment?*

Baehr: *I'd like to know when they're coming.*

Moermond: *That seems reasonable.*

Imbertson: *It would be easiest to talk to the inspector to schedule.*

Moermond: *We'll talk again June 10th and figure out any remaining deadlines.*

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 6/10/2025

2:00 p.m. Hearings

Fire Certificates of Occupancy

6 RLH FCO 25-28 Appeal of Rosa Gomez to a Correction Notice-Reinspection Complaint at 1123 PAYNE AVENUE, UNIT 2.

Sponsors: Yang

Grant to July 9, 2025 for compliance.

Rosa Gomez, owner, appeared via phone

Moermond: I'm here with Supervisor Der Vue who you've been working with. We just were looking over your material and reached out to the building official. What we're thinking is that for some reason the City reached out to the contractor who also didn't respond to the City, which is a problem. When talking with the Building Official he thought it would work for you to call to get the plumbing inspection. Der Vue is going to help you as an intermediary in all of that and help coordinate.

Der Vue: I want to thank you for your patience I know we've pushed this a couple times. I'd like to personally oversee that you get in touch with the plumbing inspector, to coordinate a date for that inspection to make sure everything was installed correctly. Then I will reach out to you to coordinate that to get this permit closed.

Gomez: that would be great.

Vue: the permit doesn't expire until July 9, 2025. I'd like this wrapped in the next 2 to 3 weeks if it works for inspector chute's schedule as well as plumbing inspector. Let's aim for the next week or so and we'll hope he can do that inspection and sign off on that permit.

Moermond: I'm going to recommend an extension on this to the date your permit expires, July 9th. We're hoping you don't need that much time.

Referred to the City Council due back on 6/11/2025

7 **RLH VO 25-12** Appeal of Lita Fierro to a Correction Notice-Reinspection
Complaint-Condemned at 927 DESOTO STREET. (Refer to September 23, 2025 Legislative Hearing)

Sponsors: Kim

Refer back to LH September 16, 2025 at 2 pm for further discussion and update on status of financial assistance application(s) and probate.

Alida Weidensee, SMRLS, o/b/o occupants
Lita Fierro, occupant, appeared
Tasha Fierro, Lita Fierro's daughter, appeared

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Der Vue: overall progress has been really good. I've been at every inspection with Inspector Bono based on the timeline given and all the immediate fire safety concerns were addressed right away. A few were pushed out and then a majority of the less hazardous exterior items were pushed to May. The last inspection was May 14 and there are things noted on the list that should have been abated. I'll get that corrected. That is item 10, 11, 13, and 14. From the original orders the majority was done and just the exterior items remain. Our next step is enforcement which is why we're here today.

Weidensee: as mentioned, we got most of the items done that was causing the immediate health and safety issues. Remaining items are on the exterior. There were a few items we wanted clarification on. Item 6 says evidence of illegal burning and the Fierros haven't been burning anything back there.

Lita: there used to be a fire pit. My brother-in-law did a bad thing, he was grilling and threw it in the fire pit and then added water. He didn't have time to take care of it, she thought we were burning trash or something. We threw all that in the dumpster including the fire pit.

Vue: that was probably what was noted. In the City open burning is restricted to approved fire wood in an approved fire pit. If it is removed then we could peek at that and check it off.

Moermond: sounds like it was what was in there versus the physical location.

Weidensee: 16, repair to the ceiling. We weren't sure what still needed to happen there.

Vue: is there water damage that still exists?

Lita Feirro: no, you looked at all of it in the kitchen and living room.

Vue: I'll clarify with that inspector as well.

Weidensee: there isn't staining in the living room anymore? I thought there was in one spot.

Tasha Feirro: the roof was fixed; I think there is some staining.

Moermond: so more cosmetic.

Lita Feirro: he took them down and wiped them down well.

Tasha: we had family come help clean the ceiling and walls. It maybe didn't come fully off.

Lita Feirro: it looks clean to me.

Moermond: sounds to me something a little primer or Killz.

Lita Feirro: we should just put new ones up.

Weidensee: item 15 we wanted clarification on areas.

Vue Feirro: it is primarily the kitchen. The board under the sink I think was taken care of. It is throughout the kitchen, the flooring.

Weidensee: I think that were all the items we had questions on. The other things are ongoing, primarily exterior as we discussed. We did make progress on the probate end. Their probate case is set for tomorrow.

Moermond: I know preparation to go to probate is usually the biggest hurdle.

Weidensee: it will actually go into all four siblings' names but as long as one of them is living there they should be able to apply for assistance.

Moermond: out of this list, the only one I feel is more immediate is item 3. Exterior

door frame just regarding safety and security.

Der Vue: the door noted in 3 is actually the front door to an enclosed porch, and there's another door entering the property.

Moermond: so not a security entrance. That makes all the difference.

Weidensee: my understanding the probate process will be resolved fairly quickly, but then it is a matter of applying for assistance through the Tribe and the bank on a home equity loan. It is how long those things may take. When I did research before it was six to twelve months. Not sure if that is still the case.

Lita Feirro: I'm calling the tribe as soon as I get home. The tribe has their own construction company headquartered here in St. Paul. She said as long as it was in my name I could get assistance. I called her after I found out about tomorrow's hearing and let her know and she has quit. I cried I was so defeated; everything just sets me back. So now I have to call another lady and hope she can help.

Weidensee: how long did they say it may take to do repairs?

Lita Feirro: it was tear down and rebuild. I can't do a lot of things, laundry, baking, things like that. I miss doing that. I want to make it handicap accessible. That's what I want.

Moermond: the first event is getting through probate and the other side of that. The next is getting the house fixed so it is accessible throughout. We're worrying about the fixes in the letter and wish you all the best for the more in-depth repairs and changes. The trick is going to come in because you have four people on the title who don't all live there, but maybe it won't be a hassle. I would foresee it is something that may add on some time.

Weidensee: the probate attorney said having all four siblings on the deed made it an easier process. If they are willing to sign it over to you then it would make it simpler.

Lita Feirro: when my mom was alive she told them she wanted me to have it because they can walk and have jobs. I have nowhere else to go.

Moermond: I'm going to recommend the Council and ask them to send it back to me in 3 months. You'll be on the other side of probate and have more conversations with the tribe. Based on that information we can put into account a sensible deadline because you'll have a better idea of what this may look like. Let's chat again September 16th. We'll also get your appeal fee refunded since you are represented by SMRLS.

Referred to the City Council due back on 6/11/2025