

Written Testimony all against proposal presented for City Council:

1. John Mannillo, February 8, 2013
-Testimony against the proposal for City Council appeal
2. Terry Henry, Lowertown resident, February 8, 2013
-Testimony against the proposal for City Council appeal
3. Andy Singer, Saint Paul Bike Coalition, February 15, 2013
-Testimony against the proposal for City Council appeal
4. Jeanne Hall, Lowertown resident, February 18, 2013
-Testimony against the proposal for City Council appeal
5. Joan & John LaVine, Lowertown resident, February 27, 2013
-Testimony against the proposal for City Council appeal
6. Karen Tell Skwira, Lowertown resident, February 27, 2013
- Testimony against the proposal for City Council appeal

Updated: 2/27/13 cb

Boulware, Christine (CI-StPaul)

From: John Mannillo <john@mannillowomack.com>
Sent: Friday, February 08, 2013 8:59 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward7; #CI-StPaul_Ward1; #CI-StPaul_Ward2; #CI-StPaul_Ward3; #CI-StPaul_Ward4; #CI-StPaul_Ward5; #CI-StPaul_Ward6; Farrell, Jesse (CI-StPaul); Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul); Boulware, Christine (CI-StPaul)
Cc: 'Melo, Frederick'; kduchschere@startribune.com; mcclure@mailstation.com; burl.gilyard@finance-commerce.com
Subject: Sixth Street Sidewalk Extension

City Council President Lantry and Council Members,

The Public Works proposal to allow metered parking on the South side of Sixth Street in Lowertown, while a step in the right direction, still needs to be a plan that works for the long term. This is after all a permanent change to Lowertown's streetscape. Once the concrete sidewalk is widened to 18 ft., that sidewalk and utilities, will not realistically be removed again. So if traffic flow, and truck loading on Sixth Street is hindered as most people who oppose this expansion believe, and that is most of the people, the next and only change would be the removal of all the metered parking. There needs to be assurance this won't happen. Even with morning rush hour restrictions on parking, the YMCA will lose their handicap parking not to mention that parking for their early morning customers.

As you know parking and traffic are not the only reasons so many people object to this experiment on this now very healthy patient, Mears Park. The historic streetscape will be lost as well as the pedestrian flow that now works quite well. While I've said all along this project will end up costing half a million dollars (not \$270,000), the assessment agreements now reflect \$484,000. This is where the whole project doesn't pass the smell test. How is it possible for the building owners to make economic sense for handful of additional tables, for a few months of the year, justify this expense. What don't we know about?

State law only allows seating for alcohol consumption compact and contiguous to the establishment selling and serving the customers. This actually eliminates much of the Bulldog and all of the Bin Wine Café from use of any outside seating. Minneapolis was able to get the state to allow seating across a sidewalk but not beyond the extent of the storefronts. Ironically, the Bin and Bulldog would lose seating because those tables near the corners would disappear. The concrete extension would not start and end at least 10 ft. from the street corner. When you add these problems onto the new SAC, permitting, and dram shop insurance costs for the specific bars, staffing and security and noise restrictions, it is possible they will never use the sidewalks, or discontinue after a few years. This is assuming they are still even tenants.

At last Wednesday's public hearing, Chuck Repke said that most people supported this concrete extension in May of 2010.

As chair of the citizen committee that heard the proposal, I can tell you that at best it was fairly evenly split regarding approval. Chuck wasn't even hired by the building owners and was not present in the beginning. Any support early on was before the negatives were identified and before alternatives were developed. Since then all the organizations and committees who have addressed this issue have **not** supported or opposed a concrete extension.

There has never been any adequate time at any City Public hearing (Planning Commission, HPC or City Council) to hear all the concerns, no less alternatives for what most people think is a bad idea. Even these concerns are just a part of the problems identified. Please enter this into the formal record.

John E. Mannillo
651-292-8306

2.

Boulware, Christine (CI-StPaul)

From: Terry Henry <lauraplusterry@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 08, 2013 3:22 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward7; #CI-StPaul_Ward1; #CI-StPaul_Ward2; #CI-StPaul_Ward3; #CI-StPaul_Ward4; #CI-StPaul_Ward5; #CI-StPaul_Ward6; Farrell, Jesse (CI-StPaul); Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul); Boulware, Christine (CI-StPaul)
Cc: Fred Melo; kduchschere@startribune.com
Subject: Expansion of the Sidewalk on 6th Street
Attachments: Lowertown Image.jpg

Dear City Council President Lantry and Council Members;

During the past several months, my spouse and I have heard much discussion on the proposed expansion of the sidewalk on the north side of Sixth Street between Wacouta and Sibley Streets in Lowertown. This is important to us as we, with the encouragement of the political leaders in the City of St. Paul, purchased our condominium to spend our golden years of retirement. We live in River Park Lofts building, on the corner of 6th and Wacouta Streets. Thus, we live extremely near to the area that some political leaders and private interests want to change in a radical manner.

I often heard and read the word "improvement" in the promotional pieces -- I prefer to call this proposal the "destruction" of Lowertown.

Sixth Street is a major connector to Minnesota's interstate system. As depicted by the attached GoogleEarth Image, three interstate highways flow into Lowertown and ultimately to the rest of downtown St. Paul. Westbound I-94 connects directly with the one-way Sixth Street. Drivers traveling east on I-94 who wish to enter Lowertown will use the 7th Street exit, drive south on Wall Street and turn right on to 6th Street. Meanwhile, vehicles traveling south on I-35E will alight on Wacouta Street and often turn right on to 6th Street to travel to other parts of the downtown.

From our vantage point in our home, we observed heavy morning (plus at other times during the day) traffic traveling west on 6th Street. Considerable car and some truck traffic arrive from Hudson, Wisconsin; Woodbury, Lake Elmo, etc. We see and hear cars tractor trailer trucks, busses and fire trucks seem to travel south on I-35E during much of the day and evenings on Wacouta Street and carefully and slowly negotiate the difficult turn on to 6th Street. Typically, such long vehicles require two lanes to make the turn. Meanwhile. Busses and cars typically dominate the traffic on Wall Street and many turn on to 6th Street.

Please note that we have used all three interstate entrances to arrive at our home in Lowertown from visits to family, friends and shopping.

Finally, during the past seven years, we observed an abnormally large number of accidents at the corner of 6th and Wacouta Streets. The unnatural lane weaving and curving caused by the sidewalk expansion on 6th Street does seem to increase the risks of accidents, injury, and traffic congestion and fire safety dangers.

Finally, on a personal note, my spouse and I are troubled by the apparent lack of concern by the City's leadership over the welfare of the thousands and thousands of people (and voters) who live and work in Lowertown. I am also thinking about the St. Paul Farmers Market, the YMCA plus numerous existing businesses operate in comfortable relationships with the beautiful Lowertown. I have traveled through much of

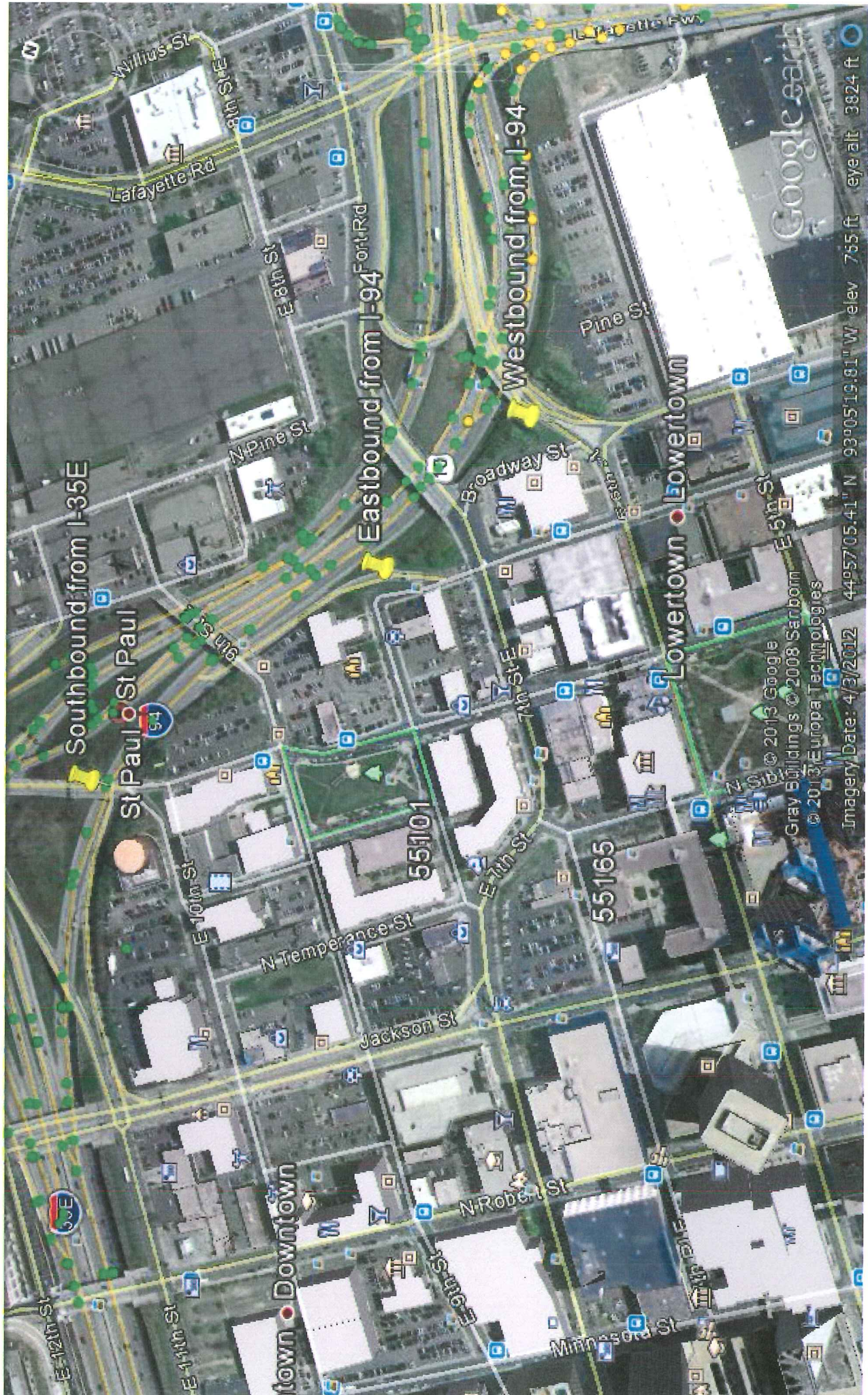
Europe, eastern Canada and nearly every U.S. state and never saw the lack of city government outreach that we now experience.

Finally, you should know that my professional background includes experiences as a field grade Army Officer, city manager and the operating officer of a major non-profit organization. As a retiree, the welfare of my spouse of 53 years and my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren are my highest priority. We are active in our Central Presbyterian Church on Cedar Street. In addition, I served on the Skyway Advisory Committee as part of the Capital River Council and my spouse and I help beautify Mears Park by planting flowers and as members of the Friends of Mears Park.

I ask you to not destroy Lowertown. Please keep the quality of life good in our community.

Sincerely,
Terry J. Henry, PhD

Laura M. and Terry J. Henry
406 Wacouta Street, Unit 208
St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 717-4801



Google earth

Imagery Date: 4/3/2012 44°57'05.41" N 93°05'19.81" W elev 765 ft eye alt 3824 ft

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Boulware, Christine (CI-StPaul)

From: John Mannillo <john@mannillowomack.com>
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2013 4:29 PM
To: Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul); Boulware, Christine (CI-StPaul)
Subject: FW: This Will Interest Everybody Who Loves to Ride Bikes in Lowertown

Take a look at the links as well.

JEM

From: andy@andysinger.com [mailto:andy@andysinger.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2013 10:59 PM
To: Spencer, Joe (CI-StPaul)
Cc: #CI-StPaul_Ward3; #CI-StPaul_Ward2
Subject: 6th Street sidewalk enlargement

Dear Mr. Spencer,

Councilwoman Brendmoen suggested I raise the following issue with you--

I am a volunteer co-chair of the Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition. In our monthly meeting this past Tuesday night, everyone was dismayed at the sidewalk enlargement proposal downtown on 6th street. Except for two blocks of Jackson (which don't connect to anything), there is not a single bike lane in all of downtown. Not one. The shared bus-bike lane proposal (designed to accommodate the sidewalk widening), doesn't satisfy a lot of folks who've nearly been hit by buses. Also there is resentment that bike lanes were recommended in at least two past plans and the mayor/council are willing to throw those plans out (in favor of a more recent one) ...just because 2 businesses want patio seating. If Bulldog and the other bar just enlarged the sidewalk to 13 or 14 feet, there'd be enough room for a bike lane ...but they insist on 18 feet. I don't understand why they don't just get one of those temporary platforms and put it in a couple of their parking spaces with cafe seating like they do in New York and San Francisco. See--

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/sidewalks/streetseats.shtml>
<http://sfpavementtoparks.sfplanning.org/>

6-8 months of the year no one will even be using outdoor seating! Temporary platforms would be better because the two bars would get the parking space(s) back in the winter. Meanwhile, it preserves the possibility of a real bike lane.

Thank you for your Consideration.

Andrew Singer, Co-Chair
Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition
Phone: 651-917-3417

andy@andysinger.com
<http://www.saintpaulbicyclecoalition.org/>
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Saint-Paul-Bicycle-Coalition/133657969979958>

Boulevard, Christine (CI-StPaul)

From: Jeanne Hall <jeanne.hall@mac.com>
Sent: Monday, February 18, 2013 8:42 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward7; #CI-StPaul_Ward1; #CI-StPaul_Ward2; #CI-StPaul_Ward3; #CI-StPaul_Ward4; #CI-StPaul_Ward5; #CI-StPaul_Ward6; Farrell, Jesse (CI-StPaul); Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul); Boulevard, Christine (CI-StPaul)
Subject: 6th street sidewalk expansion

City Council President Lantry and Council Members,

In 2006, we moved from our home of 34 years in the Summit Hill neighborhood to our new home in River Park Lofts. We were among the first residents of RPL and very excited about once again being a bit of an urban pioneer to participate in creating another wonderful neighborhood in St. Paul. As a member of the Summit Hill Association board for 20 years, I am well aware of the challenge posed by the need for both commercial vibrancy and great residential areas: When done thoughtfully, there is terrific mutual benefit.

I was initially supportive of providing space for outside dining along 6th street across from Mears Park. Find me a Minnesotan who does not want to be outside every bit of the nice weather we have! However, I have since changed my mind.

There have been a lot of changes already to the Mears Park area since we arrived. There are more residents in new condos and lofts and more to come. Bulldog, Barrio, and Bin Wine Bar, food trucks, and other establishments, have provided options that we enjoy and patronize regularly and the Saints are on their way. By and large, I commend these businesses for being good neighbors. They have done a pretty good job of containing the potential negatives – noise, parking problems, drunk patrons, smoking, litter, etc. It is certainly on its way to being an incredibly vibrant street and has done so by balancing the diverse needs of both residents and commercial properties. Frankly, the disruption and expense of expanding the sidewalk to accommodate a few diners will contribute little to this very special area. There appears to be little bang for the buck when considered in the overall context of this special area. The free flow of pedestrian and vehicle movement is essential. The draw is the urban mix and the growth of new businesses.

Are you forgetting that there is a beautiful Park right across the street? I would much rather eat and drink indoors and then spill outside for a walk through the park. Spending a half million dollars for a few outside tables seems like a very bad investment. The potential negatives far outweigh the common good. Perhaps an ice cream truck might be better?

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26 February 2013

On the Park
198 E 6th St #704
St Paul, MN 55101

City of St Paul
Planning & Economic Development
1400 City Hall Annex
25 West 4th St.
St Paul, MN 55102-1634

REF: City Council File #AHPC 132 [HPC #13-0112]

Honorable Council Members:

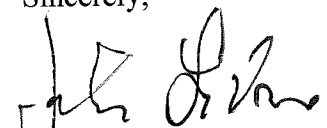
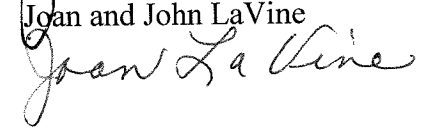
We are writing in support of the Historic Preservation Commission's denying the widening of the sidewalk on the north side of 6th Street between Wacouta and Sibley Streets.

The widening will destroy the historic sense and streetscape geometry within the historic Lower Town area. The beneficiaries of such a widening are three bars/restaurants who seem to believe their viability rests on their being able to serve customers out of doors on an expanded sidewalk during the summer/fall months.

Restaurants come and go. The adage is it's easy to get into the restaurant business and just as easy to end out. What's the hot spot today can change to Deadsaville tomorrow. Such is the nature of the business. But a streetscape change tends to be permanent. And suddenly the city ends up with one block in its historic heart that sticks out like a sore thumb.

Is a public esthetic to be sacrificed for private gain?

Sincerely,


Joan and John LaVine


Karen Tell Skwira

2.26.13

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City Council Members,
 why would you
 widen 6th St. between
 Wacouta and Sibley? It
 would be a loss of
 revenue from parking,
 plus create a traffic
 problem with buses, etc.
 If you do, how about
 the other downtown restran-
 out's heritage? *Heritage?*

168 East 6th Street, Apt. 4503, St. Paul, MN, 55101

Karen Skwira

168 East 6th Street, Apt. 4503
 St. Paul, Minnesota, 55101