



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

Tuesday, February 25, 2025

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House/Remote

9:00 a.m. Hearings

Special Tax Assessments

- 1 [RLH TA 25-113](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 463 FOREST STREET. (File No. VB2504A, Assessment No. 258813)

Sponsors: Johnson

Approve the assessment.

Lisa Proechel, property manager, appeared via phone
Scott Fergus, Brick by Brick, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: this is the annual Vacant Building fee. No returned mail. Total assessment of \$2,618. Opened in May 2023. July 17, 2024 we sent the warning letter to CAG MN Fund, LLC. It was left unpaid and went to assessment.

Proechel: why was it in the Vacant Building program in the first place? That's what we're appealing. We don't believe it should be on the Vacant Building list. We don't want it on the Vacant Building list. The original letter was sent somewhere else, and yes we did get the warning letter, but that's really what the conversation is as to why it hasn't been paid.

Moermond: you didn't appeal the warning letter. We're 8 months into the year being billed. It is a Category 2 Vacant Building. It was opened as a preliminary file after a neighborhood complaint. Didn't find it terrible, kept an eye on it for a while. That was the end of May. Come October it was changed to a Category 2 Vacant Building when found open to entry. I think you were on site, Ms. Proechel?

Proechel: I have issue with that. We had someone break into the property so I called the police for assistance and because I called the police for assistance, I am made a Category 2 Vacant Building? That just doesn't seem fair. Should I have dealt with the situation myself to avoid it becoming a Category 2?

Moermond: I wasn't in the decision-making role on that. At the same time the answer

you're looking for may be embedded in the Code defining the Vacant Building.

Martin: this was vacant since May. Still unoccupied in October, vacant and wasn't secured. Clearly it is still a Vacant Building. We'd already sent letters and no one reached out. We've been monitoring it for 8 months as a Category 2.

Proechel: as have we. As far as being unsecured: they broke in. It wasn't we had it unlocked and said please come in. They were attempting to move in saying they had a lease. We didn't give them a lease. Then we asked them to leave and move out. The next day we went back and they had moved in with their things. Then we called the police. They broke in. That doesn't seem fair, first of all.

December 2 I received a notice from Joanna saying "it appears that 463 Forest already has a file put together to delete the Vacant Building registration which will be on the agenda through January 15 and in working through that with her she realized that was a mistake but you also said why has it taken so long to deal with that?"

Zimny: I did send that email, amongst many others about many other properties, it was later corrected. That was for either a boarding or cleanup that was deleted.

Proechel: that is correct but I guess I'm attesting to you saying we haven't done anything for 8 months. We were working through this and I was under the impression this was being deleted. That's why we let it go. [NOTE: the email was in December, and this fee was assessed in AUGUST of 2024, so the misstatement in email had no impact on them or any appeal procedures related to Vacant Building status] I have another email from a "Tanya" I thought was in regards to this Vacant Building.

Moermond: you have three assessments on today. One of them is being deleted, for the cleanup. The other two are in play that is the Vacant Building fee and the boarding costs.

Martin: this is one we did do a cleanup on, cut tall grass and weeds and removed some rotting composting bags so clearly no one was watching the property if we're still cutting the grass.

Proechel: that's not true.

Moermond: I know you're enthusiastic about the conversation but let her finish please.

Martin: then we have an emergency boarding to secure three doors and three windows. Total assessment of another \$874.

Moermond: you're saying things aren't true, please expand.

Proechel: that letter for the cleanup was either never sent or went to the old owner.

Moermond: and I said it was being proposed for deletion.

Proechel: my understanding that letter is how it went on the Vacant Building list.

Moermond: no, the timing is off. It became a prelim Vacant Building May 30, 2024, then June 14, 2024 was put into the Vacant Building program.

Proechel: when did that letter go out saying there were weeds to be cleaned up?

Moermond: no letter was generated by the computer so it is being deleted.

Proechel: my guess is that is why it is being put into the Vacant Building program. The same thing happened at 911 Sims. You said to the inspector this isn't why we put things on the Vacant Building list, due to trash. It is because they're unsecured, nuisance, whatever. That's my concern there. Our people were also there June 11, unfortunately I don't have the camera proof from our crew. You were there earlier in the day and our people were there later in the day. We have been maintaining this property. We didn't know we were supposed to clean up by the garage because we didn't get the letter. My concern is that is what prompted it getting into the Vacant Building program.

Moermond: tell me about the condition of the building.

Fergus: we purchased progress residential's entire remaining MN portfolio to assist with the ending of litigation between the AG and Progress Residential. That was 345 single-family homes last year in 2 phases. 73 of them are in St. Paul. 39 are occupied and leased. We have 7 we're holding for a local nonprofit. Our goal is to provide affordable housing whether its sales to an owner occupant or affordable leases. We have 27 properties in various stages of being repaired. We try to be good neighbors and partners. I think we hit a higher standard than most. Our goal is by providing affordable housing, every time we get a Vacant Building assessment or fee it means we have to increase prices in order to continue it's a viable portfolio for everyone.

Proechel: we have been maintaining it. We did the lawn every other week. We do the snow within 24 hours. The day they did a leaf cleanup for the order we never received? We were also there that exact same day. I can show you an invoice. Did they clean up the weeds? No, because your people had already been there. We have someone who goes and checks properties every other week to make sure they're secure. My person shows up and someone is attempting to move in. Then they actually do move in, not because we gave them the code or a key or left the door open, but because they broke the law and broke in. I called the police to get them out. Then the police said the property needs to be boarded. I called my people to come immediately to drop everything and get over here from Minneapolis and get this boarded. The police said, "We've already called somebody." Ok, but in the back of my mind I know this will make it a Category 2. I'm stuck with your rules. It isn't fair it becomes a Category 1 because we have weeds that we didn't get a letter about and then a Category 2 because I called the police for help!

Moermond: I think it needs to be a Category 1 Vacant Building, the TISH does show a few hazardous conditions, but with respect to the nonprofit nature of your LLC's work, I'm going to say it doesn't really matter because the tax assessment process isn't a means to subsidize nonprofits. With respect to the boarding, I do trust you have boarding contractors on the way. If you are onsite my preference is you be given the opportunity to handle it on your own and it wasn't unattended. I'm going to recommend the Vacant Building fee is approved, but I'll recommend deletion of the boarding fee and the cleanup.

Fergus: I won't be objecting.

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

2 RLH TA 25-77

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 463 FOREST STREET. (File No. J2507B, Assessment No. 258106)

Sponsors: Johnson

Delete the assessment.

Lisa Proechel, property manager, appeared via phone
Scott Fergus, Brick by Brick, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

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Zimny: I did send that email, amongst many others about many other properties, it was later corrected. That was for either a boarding or cleanup that was deleted.

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Moermond: no, the timing is off. It became a prelim Vacant Building May 30, 2024, then June 14, 2024 was put into the Vacant Building program.

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Moermond: tell me about the condition of the building.

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Fergus: I won't be objecting.

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

3 [RLH TA 25-78](#)

Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 463 FOREST STREET. (File No. J2504R, Assessment No. 258504) (Amend to delete)

Sponsors: Johnson

Delete the assessment.

*Lisa Proechel, property manager, appeared via phone
Scott Fergus, Brick by Brick, appeared via phone*

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

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opportunity to handle it on your own and it wasn't unattended. I'm going to recommend the Vacant Building fee is approved, but I'll recommend deletion of the boarding fee and the cleanup.

Fergus: I won't be objecting.

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

4 RLH TA 25-118 Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 759 CHARLES AVENUE. (File No. VB2507, Assessment No. 258806)

Sponsors: Bowie

Reduce assessment from \$2,618 to \$1,964.

Hieu Van, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: this is a Vacant Building fee. Quite a few fee waivers given on the property. Quite a few permits pulled, most are finalized Total assessment of \$2,618.

Van: I'm appealing because the first time I got the letter I had already signed for the 90 days. That was in April. During that time it was out of my control. When I realized I had the vacant letter, it was a big amount because there was a lot of damage. I am appealing to get a waiver. I was too late for the appeal date after I received the second letter. I asked Mai Vang and she said I can show up at the Legislative Hearing today.

Moermond: you went in the Vacant Building program March 21. You got an automatic 90 day waiver due to the fire. The Department of Safety & Inspections took it upon themselves to grant another 90 day waiver. Problem is 180 days worth of a waiver takes you to September 21. Not October, which is a bookkeeping problem on their end. It was still another month before finals on your permits. I am going to recommend Council approves this assessment. It was in the program 8 months, so a slight reduction is down to \$1,964.

Van: that's the amount?

Moermond: that's the recommendation I'll give to Council. If you want something further you can talk to Council about it. There were two waivers, one which shouldn't have been given, and then it still wasn't done in that period. The building permit was finalized November 19. All of this puts you well into November with your finals.

Van: can you waive more of the fee?

Moermond: no, I'm trying to give some consideration because Department of Safety & Inspections staff went further than they should have, normally I wouldn't recommend any reduction at all for this long in the program.

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

5 RLH TA 25-115 Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 686 EDMUND AVENUE. (File No. VB2507, Assessment No. 258806)

Sponsors: Bowie

If CC cert is issued by April 9, reduce assessment from \$5,077 to \$2,538 and make payable over 5 years; otherwise approve in full and make payable over 5 years.

Somdy Kong, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: Category 2 Vacant Building fee from September 5, 2024. Opened October 4, 2020. Code Compliance Inspection Report on file and active permits. Some garbage complaints, 15 Summary Abatement Orders sent and 3 work orders.

Kong: I just pulled the permits as Ms. Martin said. Doing what I can at this time. Right now, I'm working super hard on it and the reason I'm coming here is because there is a lack of funds at this point in time on it. What can I do or is there some source of funding I can apply for? What can I do? I'm trying so hard to get my Code Compliance certificate. Doing what I can to get the building up and running.

Moermond: as far as assistance in the rehab, I'd refer you to the Planning and Economic Development department. I don't have anything to do with that. If they don't have anything they may know of other sources. With respect to the Vacant Building fee I can't take into account your financial situation. I can't turn the fee into a subsidy for finishing the rehab. I'd like to give you a chance on this and say your Council Public Hearing is April 9 and it will be in the program 6 months out of the billable year. If you're done by then, I'll recommend it is reduced by half and make it payable over 5 years either way.

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

- 6 RLH TA 25-122** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1024 MINNEHAHA AVENUE EAST. (File No. VB2507, Assessment No. 258806)

Sponsors: Johnson

Delete the assessment.

No one appeared

Moermond: this assessment should be deleted. The Council granted the appeal to be released from the Vacant Building program previously, November 6, 2024 under file VBR 24-59.

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

- 7 RLH TA 25-116** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 2060 FOURTH STREET EAST (2060 4TH STREET EAST). (File No. J2511R, Assessment No. 258519)

Sponsors: Johnson

Delete the assessment.

Amanda Lathrop, executor of trust that owns the property, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: Summary Abatement Order was issued to dispose of tires and wood from property. September 20, 2024 with a compliance date of September 27. Rechecked September 30 so it was sent to work order. By the time the crew went out October 11, 2024 it was done. This is a trip charge, total assessment of No real history on the property.

Lanthrop: my mother owns it, we got the letter, my mother sent me a photo showing it wasn't on our property. She's on disability so I know she didn't pick it up. We did call the number on the letter, we didn't hear back from them.

You can see in the original photos it is more flat and has pine trees. Her property runs downhill and doesn't have pinetrees.

Moermond: looks like a miscalculation of the address Ms. Martin?

Martin: 2062 has the pine trees.

Moermond: and 2068 has regular trees.

Lanthrop: the house next to her has 2 lots.

Moermond: I'm wondering if the inspector saw an 8 and it was really a 0. A visual error. I'll say this should be deleted.

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/2/2025

10:00 a.m. Hearings

Special Tax Assessments

- 10 RLH TA 25-104** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 58 LAWSON AVENUE WEST. (File No. 2502T, Assessment No. 259001)

Sponsors: Kim

Approve and make payable over 10 years.

No one appeared

Moermond: we'll grant the request of the owner to spread payments over 10 years.

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

- 8 RLH TA 25-121** Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 725 CHARLES AVENUE. (File No. J2507E, Assessment No. 258306)

Sponsors: Bowie

Delete assessment if PO updates address with RC by April 9, 2025.

No one appeared

Moermond: we did have a conversation with him about changing his address on a different appeal. Recommend deletion if Mr. Roach updates his address Ramsey County ad we'll check on that April 8 before the Council Public Hearing.

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

9 RLH TA 25-119 Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 263 CURTICE STREET WEST. (File No. J2507T, Assessment No. 258515)

Sponsors: Noecker

Continue CPH to August 27, 2025 and if no same or similar violations reduce assessment from \$365.25 to \$183, otherwise approve in full.

Jeremy Arneberg, owner, appeared via phone

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Arneberg: I was just mostly confused and wanted to verify that I wasn't dinged for the empty lot next door.

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: a Summary Abatement Order was issued for tall grass and weeds issued July 11, 2024. Compliance date of July 15. We did do a recheck July 24. Rechecked again July 25. We also had orders on the neighboring property and did rechecks there. Work order was sent for a total assessment of \$365.25. History on the property: July 9, 2024 exterior, same thing. January of 2022 garbage, no action. July 15, 2020 some animal issues.

Moermond: you are right, they also had overgrown vegetation and also got orders. So both of your houses got that.

Arneberg: the crew of 3 young men they sent were probably working for 20 minutes in my yard. I see they have a minimum charge.

Moermond: looking at the photos, the crew charged .75 "man hours". 3 people for 15 minutes or one person for 45 minutes. I'm looking at photos and it does look like both your property and the neighbor's had significant overgrowth happening. Are you having trouble taking care of your hard? Would you like some information about services that may be able to help?

Arneberg: potentially. I was assaulted last winter and I have [medical condition] and I was going through a hard time and I didn't receive the initial letter. It got misplaced, it was unopened when I found it. I apologize, I won't let it get like that again.

Moermond: are you on disability?

Arneberg: disability, yes.

Moermond: do you have a CADI waiver for services?

Arneberg: no.

Moermond: we'll send you contact information for someone with Ramsey County public

health and she may be able to help with some services to manage moving forward. The crew did go out, I understand you're having difficulty taking care of this. I'll recommend this is divided over 5 years.

Arneberg: I have a small yard; I should be able to maintain it. Any information would be welcome though.

Moermond: in further review, if we could go with no same or similar violations through September 1, we'll cut this in half.

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

- 11 RLH TA 25-117 Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 2026 SPRINGSIDE DRIVE. (File No. J2507P, Assessment No. 258406)

Sponsors: Johnson

Delete the assessment (waiver on file).

No one appeared.

Moermond: this is an assessment for graffiti removal, there is now a waiver on file.

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

Special Tax Assessments-Rolls

- 12 RLH AR 25-23 Ratifying the assessment for Collection of Vacant Building Registration fees billed during March 20 to September 24, 2024. (File No. VB2507, Assessment No. 258806)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

- 13 RLH AR 25-24 Ratifying the assessment for Securing and/or Emergency Boarding services during October 2024. (File No. J2507B, Assessment No. 258106)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

- 14 RLH AR 25-25 Ratifying the assessment for Demolition services from September 2024. (File No. J2503C, Assessment No. 252002)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

- 15 RLH AR 25-26 Ratifying the assessment for Demolition services from September 2024 (C.D.B.G.Funds). (File No. J2504C, Assessment No. 252003)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

- 16 **RLH AR 25-27** Ratifying the assessment for Excessive Use of Inspection or Abatement services billed during August 22 to September 20, 2024. (File No. J2507E, Assessment No. 258306)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

- 17 **RLH AR 25-28** Ratifying the assessment for Graffiti Removal services during August 21 to October 8, 2024. (File No. J2507P, Assessment No. 258406)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

- 18 **RLH AR 25-29** Ratifying the assessment for Removal of Diseased and/or Dangerous Tree(s) service during October to November 2024. (File No. 2502T, Assessment No. 259001)

Sponsors: Jalali

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

11:00 a.m. Hearings

Summary & Vehicle Abatement Orders

- 19 [RLH SAO 25-17](#) Appeal of Shein Yang to a Vehicle Abatement Order at 724 CASE AVENUE.

Sponsors: Yang

Reschedule to LH March 11, 2025 at 11 am per owner's request (CPH March 12).

Moermond: this is a Vehicle Abatement Order and we had a request to schedule further out. We offered them 2 other dates, and they took March 11 with a Council Public Hearing March 12.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 3/11/2025

1:00 p.m. Hearings

Vacant Building Registrations

- 21 **RLH VBR
25-13** Appeal of Michael Born, owner; and Michael O'Neill, attorney from Martin & Squires; to a Vacant Building Registration Renewal Notice at 120 LYTON PLACE.

Sponsors: Bowie

Waive VB fee for 90 days (to June 13, 2025).

Michael O'Neil, attorney, appeared via phone

Michael Born, owner, appeared via phone

Patrick Bower, attorney, appeared via phone

Moermond: we have a couple of things on the agenda for you, a Vacant Building registration appeal, and then an assessment appeal for last year's Vacant Building fee.

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Matt Dornfeld: 120 Lyton Place was made a Category 1 Vacant Building March 13, 2024 per a referral from the St. Paul Fire Department. Form 4 says "garage burned down and damage to rear of house. Garage burned and partial collapse. Electrical service to house damaged by fire. All utilities are shut off. Resident Randy Schwartzbauer and Connie Ford and Randy's elderly mother lived there. Randy and Connie admittedly have mental disability and will need assistance in getting the home repaired. The home may not have insurance. Three windows and a door on the rear of the house were damaged and need to be replaced. Family may need financial assistance with repairs. That was from St. Paul Fire Fighter Arthur Baumeister III. We opened a fire file due to that referral. We did hold the Vacant Building fee starting April 3 2024 for 90 days and then a second waiver was given for another 90 days. Total of 180 days. That fee did go on to assessment. July 2, 2024 this file was upgraded to a Category 2 Vacant Building due to lack of progress on repairs. We felt a Code Compliance Inspection report was needed. The Vacant Building for 2025-2026 will be coming due March 13, 2025.

O'Neil: Michael Born is an owner of Born's Bar in St. Paul. His father owned it before him, bought it in 1972.

Born: been here 52 years.

O'Neil: they're a large family and one of his uncles, James Born owned the property at 120 Lyton Place. James owned that and died and then allowed a son by adoption who is disabled who never changed the title of the home into his name. It was 2003 when he died and then was lived in by Mr. Schwartzbauer and his girlfriend and his mom had never changed the title. When this fire happened, he was living government check to govt check and didn't have insurance. He didn't have any ability to remodel or repair the damage. He contacted Michael Born who is the nephew of James Born. Michael does live next door and did sustain property damage himself. He had a choice: let the property go or try and do something about it and try to make it a valuable property to the City instead of a blight. We did a decree of descent petition to get the title into the name of someone who will take ownership. Michael new what would be involved if he got title to the property but he did take it on. The court did say the property of James born goes to Michael Born, it was signed in June and filed in July. We'd been working with the City during this process and didn't think it was proper to assess Michael for the Vacant Building but we don't know who is going to be the owner as of now. We found out in June and after that we spoke to the City. The Department of Safety & Inspections was in contact with us and Michael came down and filed for the appropriate permits to begin the rehab. He had the Code Compliance Inspection Report done, this "do gooder" is trying to take over and get this done not knowing if he's going to spend 10's of thousands of dollars. Department of Safety & Inspections told him he couldn't do anything until that inspection was done. We found ourselves into September and October. Michael was patiently waiting for the information. There was a letter dated

October 25 that Michael only found out about within the last weeks that was evidently prepared but never sent to him. I don't know what the issue was. He's been waiting to do the repairs but it was never possible.

Michael said he'd been down to the Department of Safety & Inspections and asked about the status and doing some demo and was told by someone there he isn't able to do that and get any permits. This October 25th letter wasn't given, but last week when he went down again and I was on the phone, then they finally gave him this letter. Then he WAS able to get a demolition permit. He has started and paid people to begin the demo work. This hasn't been an inexpensive project for him. Right now, he's at \$17,121.24 including attorney fees, paying off a lien on the property, water assessment, building permits, taxes, City Code Compliance and garage cleanup. We have someone very invested in St. Paul and wants to make it a better place. I don't think the fee is appropriate to put on someone when you'll get it back 10-fold once he can repair and pay taxes that will increase. Paying a Vacant Building fee that exists through no fault of his own. I know in some instances some people are doing nothing may need the Vacant Building fee to cause them to go faster, Michael is going to do everything he can to get this house up and running. For that reason, it isn't appropriate he has a Vacant Building assessment. I think the City would want to encourage investments into the City of St. Paul and its housing stock.

Born: he covered everything thoroughly. No additional comments.

Moermond: we have the fire happening in March of 2024. It goes into the Vacant Building program as a Category 1 Vacant Building. That means it is turnkey but with fire damaged structures most of the time insurance companies are involved and have much higher expectations on the rehab. It doesn't sound like with the lack of insurance it applies here. That's why it was turned into a Category 2 Vacant Building not too long after. Department of Safety & Inspections gave the traditional 90-day waiver. They also gave a second 90-day waiver at the same time you acquired the structure.

Whether or not this belongs in the Vacant Building program, 43.02 is the Vacant Building definitions and what I'm looking at is whether this appropriately a Category 2 or even defined as a Vacant Building. What I'm seeing is we have unoccupied, secured by other than normal means, unoccupied and has multiple housing and building code violations. At this point we're coming up on one year. When Mr. Born acquired it I'm sure he did the math whether the existing liens and use of attorneys would balance with the necessary expenses to get it back online. The 2024 tax statement has a value of \$151,000. The property tax records for the transfer in June shows no cost in the transfer. Whether the Vacant Building fee can be waived because investment is happening that may or may not result in increased property tax value isn't something I can consider because property taxes can't be used as a subsidy for rehab.

Looking back, I have a Vacant Building fee that covers 11 months out of 12 that were billed. Mid-March 2024 through Mid-March 2025. We will past that before the April 9 Council Public Hearing. Looking forward I can try to get the next Vacant Building fee more under control so there can be less of a fee. I see the Code Compliance was issued October and the first building permit was pulled February 20th. No trades yet. Bottom line I can recommend the Council waive the Vacant Building fee for 90 days and if it he work isn't done the Vacant Building fee if left unpaid goes to assessment. When it is considered as an assessment I recommend its prorated if done in six or fewer months I'll recommend it is prorated. Hopefully you can get it done within that time period. After six months I recommend it is approved as a matter of standard practice.

O'Neil: if he gets it done within the next 3 months the recommendation is no fee. If he's not, there would be a prorated fee. Would that also incorporate the fees going backwards are prorated?

Moermond: it would not.

O'Neil: we'd have to appear before the Council if we wanted those fees waived.

Moermond: correct, that is April 9th. The Vacant Building registration bill, which hasn't gone to assessment yet, would recommend a 90-day waiver which takes you to mid-June.

O'Neil: can you put dollar numbers on those?

Moermond: last year's fee is 2618 that's been assessed. 2025 through 2026 bill is \$4,918.

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

22 RLH TA 25-120 Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 120 LYTON PLACE. (File No. VB2507, Assessment No. 258806)

Sponsors: Bowie

Approve the assessment.

Michael O'Neil, attorney, appeared via phone

Michael Born, owner, appeared via phone

Patrick Bower, attorney, appeared via phone

Moermond: we have a couple of things on the agenda for you, a Vacant Building registration appeal, and then an assessment appeal for last year's Vacant Building fee.

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Matt Dornfeld: 120 Lyton Place was made a Category 1 Vacant Building March 13, 2024 per a referral from the St. Paul Fire Department. Form 4 says "garage burned down and damage to rear of house. Garage burned and partial collapse. Electrical service to house damaged by fire. All utilities are shut off. Resident Randy Schwartzbauer and Connie Ford and Randy's elderly mother lived there. Randy and Connie admittedly have mental disability and will need assistance in getting the home repaired. The home may not have insurance. Three windows and a door on the rear of the house were damaged and need to be replaced. Family may need financial assistance with repairs. That was from St. Paul Fire Fighter Arthur Baumeister III. We opened a fire file due to that referral. We did hold the Vacant Building fee starting April 3 2024 for 90 days and then a second waiver was given for another 90 days. Total of 180 days. That fee did go on to assessment. July 2, 2024 this file was upgraded to a Category 2 Vacant Building due to lack of progress on repairs. We felt a Code Compliance Inspection report was needed. The Vacant Building for 2025-2026 will be coming due March 13, 2025.

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Moermond: last year's fee is 2618 that's been assessed. 2025 through 2026 bill is \$4,918.

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/9/2025

20 [RLH VBR 25-4](#)

Appeal of Ozzy Zachran, O.I.G. Holdings, to a Vacant Building Registration Notice at 383 TORONTO STREET.

Sponsors: Noecker

Layover to LH March 4, 2025 at 1 pm for discussion after reissued orders.

Ozzy Zachran, OIG Holdings, appeared via phone

Moermond: I'm calling you again about orders for this property. I've reviewed the follow up information from the inspection and I had a couple of questions and it turns out the

inspector didn't get these to you until yesterday. Then reviewing with the Supervisor here we're puzzling over a couple things. I'd like her to review them and likely have them reissued with a couple of corrections. The best plan of action is giving you the best information we can. We'll discuss this again next week when you have specifics in your hand.

Zachran: I know we have general orders and the inspector ran us through a few things but nothing on the list seems big enough to keep it a Category 2. Can you provide clarity on that?

Moermond: no, I'd like a cleaned-up list and go from there.

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

23 [RLH VBR 25-10](#) Appeal of Jaswant Teekasingh to a Vacant Building Registration Notice at 159 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE WEST.

Sponsors: Bowie

Layover to March 4, 2025 at 1 pm (unable to reach PO).

Tried calling x 4339 : unable to leave Voicemail; disconnected call.

Voicemail left at x1485 at 2:32 PM: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling you about 159 Pennsylvania. We're trying to reach you about your appealed Tax assessment for 159 Pennsylvania.

Left a Voicemail on x 4339 again at 2:35 pm: this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling you about your appeal for 159 Pennsylvania. We'll try calling your attorney. If we can't get through we'll reschedule next week and if we can't connect then I'll recommend denial of the appeal.

Called Atty Gus Niclo and secretary said he was out for the day. Voicemail left at 2:38 pm: I'm trying to reach Gus Nicklo this is Marcia Moermond from St. Paul City Council calling you to conduct a hearing on Jaswant Teekasingh's building at 159 Pennsylvania. We've tried calling Mr. Teekasingh twice on his cell and once on his business line and been unable to reach him. We're going to lay this over a week.

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

24 [RLH VBR 25-11](#) Appeal of Paul Mulcahy to a Vacant Building Registration Notice at 272 RICHMOND AVENUE.

Sponsors: Noecker

Waive VB fee for 90 days (to May 10, 2025) and allow permits (once CCIR is complete).

*Paul Mulcahy, co-owner, appeared
Nicholas Hall, family friend and realtor, appeared*

Moermond: I'm familiar with the property and its conditions historically, I assume they're much the same.

[Moermond gives background of appeals process]

Staff report by Supervisor Matt Dornfeld: was referred to the Vacant Building program as a Category 2 Vacant Building February 7, 2025 per Supervisor Lisa Martin's referral. She notes the property owner is deceased and the house is now vacant. Inspector Martin had issued a correction notice with 13 deficiencies July 8, 2024. Inspector Martin's report on this file as of today reads as following: property owner was making progress but I wasn't able to verify. Brother Paul was copied on all correspondence and was contacted by Ramsey County House Calls. In January the windows, roof, rear deck and doors had not changed and still a car in the back yard. Due to the property owner's mental illness she would get compliance and something new would happen. We've had plumbing and mechanical issue as property owner thought people were trying to poison her. She cut many wires and took apart many plumbing fixtures throughout the home. As of February 7, 2025 Inspector Hesse issued a Summary Abatement Order for garbage throughout the property and to secure the garage. I understand progress has been made on that Summary Abatement Order but not in complete compliance yet.

Mulcahy: we have a dumpster on the property right now to clean out the yard and house. March 3 that will be gone and we'll get rid of the car on the property. Then we plan to continue upgrading everything. Now my sister has passed I can deal with these issues. Before it was impossible for me to get involved. I just had to wait I guess. I'm engaged with the property now.

Nicholas Hall: family friend and realtor. Basically the biggest issue is apparently Colleen has been here multiple times, she didn't share any information with Paul of what she was going through. After she passed we found the 2024 recommendations. Paul's been dealing with it since then. House Calls got the dumpster. The garage is secure. Many things removed. We need to get it back to habitable. Working on roof issues and House Calls will take time to make it happen. We'd like the fee waived to take care of these issues. End of June if possible.

Moermond: the property tax records have the same address as 272 Richmond, so that's where the letters went to. I don't have control over that. That would have been you talking to Ramsey County about getting that addressed.

Mulcahy: she didn't give me any mail and didn't open most of her own mail, that's what we're finding.

Hall: she had a lot of mental issues and it was hard for her to get out of her own way to take care of things. Paul just needs more time.

Moermond: you know its more than just roof and doors.

Hall: sure, sure.

Moermond: no application made for a Code Compliance Inspection yet. That's the first thing you need to do. Get the four trades through to make a list of what needs to be done before reoccupancy. I'm not going to recommend this is made a Category 1. I worked with your sister over many years and how exactly she undid any progress. It was a gift to let your sister stay there while she worked with social services. We don't know what wires were cut. What pipes were cut. We need them to walk through. How she may have dealt with situations is kind of scary code-wise. I'm happy to look at a 90-day waiver, which takes you to May 10th.

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