

Neighbors for Livable Saint Paul
PO Box 16058
Saint Paul, MN 55116



OPEN LETTER TO THE SAINT PAUL CITY COUNCIL

November 20, 2017

BY PERSONAL SERVICE TO CITY CLERK

Saint Paul City Council Members
C/o Shari Moore
City Clerk
15 Kellogg Blvd. West 310 City Hall
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Saint Paul City Council Members:

Today we submit a Petition for a Referendum to repeal what is commonly known as the “Ford Site Zoning Plan.” Our petition contains 391 pages and 3327 notarized signatures.

The petition is in full accordance with the stringent requirements of the City Charter and contains hundreds more valid signatures than required to put this on a referendum ballot. We look forward to a Repeal Referendum being placed on the ballot for either a special election or the next general election, bringing the vote back to the people whose concerns have been ignored by the City Council in relation to the Ford site development.

The Petition is the result of a little more than three weeks of work by over 100 volunteers from across the city, who came together to ensure that the community’s voice would be heard related to the Ford site development. No paid canvassers or advertisers were involved in this effort.

This petition is consistent with the City Charter’s plain language which states that we are required to obtain 8% of the total number of votes cast in the preceding Mayoral election at the time the ordinance was passed and published.

The preceding election was 2013 and based upon the total number of votes cast in that election, (31,175), we conclude that 2494 valid signatures represents 8% of the total number of certified votes for Mayor from 2013.

We are aware that Ramsey County Election Manager, Joseph Mansky, has publicly stated an alternative interpretation of the City Charter as to the number of signatures required for this Petition.

While he has never personally communicated his opinion on this topic to representatives of our organization, we know that he has shared his thoughts with others, including the media. Mr. Mansky has

suggested we must provide signatures in the amount of 8% of votes cast in the 2017 Mayoral election, or that we turn in our petition prior the November 7, 2017 election and thus lose two weeks of the 45 days allowed pursuant to the City Charter.

Be advised that we fundamentally disagree with this interpretation of the City Charter's language which governs this matter. A refusal to accept our Petition as sufficient raises constitutional and due process concerns given the moving target of such an interpretation.

To the extent that our petition is refused for above reasons, the Saint Paul City Council will need to explain to the residents of St. Paul why they believe they are entitled to interpret the Charter to fit within their personal agenda.

Furthermore, the 2017 St. Paul Mayoral election has not yet been certified. According the Minnesota Secretary of state, election results are not official until they have been certified.

This petition should make it clear to St. Paul City leadership that community residents believe they have not been fairly represented in the Ford Zoning process. We will continue to aggressively defend the community's rights to seek a referendum on this issue and be heard. We are prepared to bring this issue to the highest level if necessary to obtain justice and obtain a more balanced and reasonable plan that represents the needs and desires of Saint Paul residents.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Hoppe
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Charles Hathaway
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Enclosure – Original Petition

Cc: Joseph Mansky w/o enclosure
Ramsey County Election Manager
90 West Plato Blvd
Saint Paul MN 55107