

Except for a 15-year hiatus in Southern Shoreview, I have lived my adult life in SW Roseville. Raising two kids, I did not worry too much about the neighborhood. I was proud to be amongst families who provide and do their best; proud to shop at Setzers and strike up a relationship with the daughter of the owner of the Golden Shear Styling Salon. My husband leans on the guys at Tom's Mobil for peace of mind to keep our family humming.

All these facts and memories swirled around me the spring day I watched a sex trafficking incident in the Walgreens and Burger King parking lot, kitty-corner from Lamplighter. I have no doubt this activity was related to the customer base or possibly the worker base of the Lamplighter. This was heartbreaking to see: a young black girl and her two "handlers," one middle-aged white woman, and one mixed race young man, who was driving the SUV, as the older woman conducted a phone conversation, the young man pulled the girl out of the backseat 'ostensibly' for a viewing from someone driving through the parking lot. She was posed, standing just a few feet away from me. After a brief time, she was led back into the vehicle, doors quickly shut, and the SUV exited; presumably with the 'john' following to an agreed-upon location. I called in the license # to 911, describing things as best as I could, practically gasping for air. One cannot "undo" what I saw in her eyes. Her face and was so close to my own, though through car glass.

It has been said many businesses add to their community in some fashion. I sell marketing services, and as such am tolerant of free enterprise and 'as long as a business is above board and legal,' live and let live. However, in the case of the Lamplighter, its time has passed. I do not want young women to see their sign, especially hundreds of young women every day, Kingergarten through 8th Grade, who are being bused or driven to the "Community School of Excellence". There's no reason they should have to learn what goes on at the Lamplighter or make sense of why it's "OK" for the Lamplighter to exist, just a block away from where they go to learn. Its time has come and gone.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Ingulsrud-Stjern

