

Written testimony  
opposed to sidewalk

**Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul)**

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**From:** Brian Alton <brian@mcclay-alton.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 2:43 PM  
**To:** Close Associates; Spong, Amy (CI-StPaul)  
**Subject:** RE: Davern House

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Amy,  
Please take into consideration Gar's comments in the process of review of the PW application. After our meeting on Monday we can discuss the process further, including the manner and timing for the property owner to provide additional information.

See you Monday. Have a nice weekend.

Regards,

Brian

Brian D. Alton

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**From:** Close Associates [<mailto:gar@closearchitects.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 1:23 PM  
**To:** Amy Spong  
**Cc:** Brian Alton  
**Subject:** Davern House

For 5.22.14

Hi Amy,

Brian Alton tells me you are preparing a preliminary report about the Davern House, Davern Street situation. He has asked me chime in so here are my two cents. I've copied Bob Mack (on vacation until the 16th), Bob Roscoe, and Larry Millett for their opinions. I know from e-mails last week with Larry that he concurs. If you want their "votes", they can be sought. Perhaps your take on this will be for approval?!

Testimony

"The Saint Paul HPC should resist efforts by the City Public Works Department to install a sidewalk along the west side of 1173 Davern Street, the east side of the historic Davern House site. There are many practical and financial reasons why installing this sidewalk is very questionable, but our first concern is it's effect on this State and Nationally designated site. My years of serving on the St. Paul HPC and working with historic

structures has taught me that a property's site characteristics are integral to its value as a designated property. Because Davern Street has no sidewalks along this stretch and there are many trees on both sides, there is a bucolic feeling that helps present the house as the pioneer farmhouse it once was. The clearing and paving that Public Works proposes will open the property up and expose it in a very unnatural way. The owners may be forced to add privacy elements where now the screening is as it probably was in 1862. We can all name historic houses and buildings that have lost much of their grace and historic value by alterations to their sites. Please support maintaining the integrity of this site.”

Please call with questions or if I can help in any way. Good luck with yet another interesting review!

## Gar

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Testimony  
Support of sidewalk

April 29, 2014

To: St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission

Re: May 22 hearing on the proposed Davern St. sidewalk

I am writing in response to articles in the Highland Villager newspapers. I have also previously sent my opinion to Councilman Chris Tolbert.

I have to walk up and down the Davern St. hill several times a week. As a senior resident I find it not only tricky and unsafe for myself but also for all the students who must use Davern to and from the Highland schools. Without a sidewalk, pedestrians have to walk in the street alongside all the car, truck and school bus traffic. The picture of Davern in the current Villager is not typical of the number of vehicles I usually encounter. There is a blind spot at one point on the hill in both directions where you can't see the vehicles coming until they are right by you. In the winter you can't hop up on the curb to get out of the way because the curb is buried in snow. Now you have to watch out for tree branches.

I suspect that the homeowners objecting to the sidewalk don't want the assessments nor the job of shoveling snow. Sidewalks are typical in residential areas and are present from Colvin north on Davern. The historic house mentioned in the article is set back further from the street than other homes nearby and is fenced in and landscaped so I don't see how a sidewalk would detract from their property. There certainly must be many historic homes in the city, along Summit Ave. for example, and they have sidewalks.

I was excited to see Councilman Tolbert's response to residents' safety concerns and had been hopeful that construction of a sidewalk would happen in the near future. I do hope your Commission will see the importance of safe walking conditions for St. Paul residents and that a couple of people objecting to the sidewalk won't prevent that from occurring.

Sincerely,

*Kathleen Young*

Kathleen Young (1725 Graham Ave. Apt. 215, St. Paul, MN 55116)

Cc: Councilman Tolbert

Rev 5-1