

Dear City Council Members:

We own a home just off Grand and Cleveland and one block away from St. Thomas University. We have lived in this wonderful neighborhood for three years. During this time, we have observed four residences (yes - four) along our block or alley be purchased and used for student housing. This has resulted in increased traffic in the alley, more student-owned cars parked in the street or alley, and most annoying, many overflowing garbage cans and dumpsters.

In fact, just recently, a group of students moved into a house next door to an existing student rental. The house purchase was made before the moratorium as a short sale. No improvements were made to this abandoned house before the renters moved in. Between the two houses, there are approximately six student cars and perhaps eight student residents. They do not seem to care for the neighborhood; their cars fill the alley (often diagonally), and their garbage overflows the cans. Debris that does not fit in the cans often ends up along the garage or alley.

We do not mind a few student rental houses; it adds to our neighborhood diversity. However, too many student rentals impacts the appearance of our street, alley, and value of our homes. Please vote to restrict any new student homes in the Macalester Groveland area.

Thank you.

Joe and Marn Frank
1977 Lincoln Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105

Dear Council Members,

I have lived on the corner of Finn and Fairmount since 1966. I am in favor of Councilman Russ Stark's proposal concerning student rental property. I urge you to support this ordinance. Thank you.

Cathy Wick
161 South Finn Street
St. Paul, MN 55105
651-699-0506

City Council members,

I am writing in support of the student housing ordinance and attaching a letter re this issue.

Thanks very much for your attention to this and the work that you do to support our neighborhood and the city of St. Paul.

Respectfully yours,

Yvonne Jonk

Yvonne Jonk, PhD
Senior Research Associate
University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center
2520 University Avenue SE Suite 201
Minneapolis, MN 55414
Ph: 612-623-8312
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Dear Council Member

I ask that you SUPPORT Councilmember Russ Stark's proposed ordinance creating a student housing concentration limitation overlay district in the Macalester Groveland and Merriam Park neighborhoods. As you know, the student rental problem in these neighborhoods is more severe than in other sections of the City. To wait to act on this matter further jeopardizes the viability of these neighborhoods.

The ordinance is fair to investors and to residents of other districts. Since there is a good deal of available property for other investment purposes in these neighborhoods, there are still investment opportunities for investors.

I would greatly appreciate your support.

Thank you.
Scott Banas
1926 Ashland Ave.
651.276.4911

June 25, 2012

Re: The Student Housing Neighborhood Impact Overlay District Ordinance

Dear President Lantry and City Council Members: Dan Bostrom, Amy Brendmoen, Melvin Carter III, Russ Stark, Chris Tolbert , and Dave Thune:

I am writing you in support of the above stated Student Housing Ordinance. This ordinance will be instrumental in stabilizing and preserving the residential character of our long established neighborhood. In addition, I am pleased by the recent additions to the Ordinance which clarify and establish the rules of enrollment as well as enforcement procedures.

I am well aware that this Ordinance and its enforcement is only one arrow in our quiver and will not make the behavior problems we encounter with students in our neighborhoods go away. Thus, I want to assure you that as a neighbor, as an owner-occupied duplex owner for the past 49 years, and as a board member of the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee (WSNAC), I will continue in my efforts at improving neighbor/student relations through dialog, initiatives and programs supporting positive change.

In closing, I am very much in support of this Ordinance as a tool to preserve the stability of our neighborhood. As a member of this community for going on 51 years, I personally want your help in maintaining for my neighbors what I have been privileged to have over these many years.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rachel M. Westermeyer

Rachel M. Westermeyer

1935 Summit Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55105

651/644-3770

Dear Council member

I ask for your support of Councilman Stark's ordinance for an overlay district with distance requirement in the Macalester Groveland/Union Park neighborhood. As you know, the student rental problem in this area is more severe than in other sections of the City and Council has been dealing with it for over twenty years. It is finally time to take decisive action.

The ordinance is fair to investors and to residents of other districts. Since there is much property outside the 150' limit, there are still investment opportunities and, thus, no rational danger of many students being "pushed" outside the district.

We would appreciate your support.

Thank you.

Joel Clemmer
2154 Fairmount Avenue
Saint paul

Dear St. Paul City Council Members:

As a Merriam Park resident for the 11 years, I am writing to express my support of the Student Housing Ordinance. When we first moved here we were excited about living near a college campus and welcomed the diversity of students. We had enjoyed a community neighborhood of people of all ages who took care of their homes and respected their neighbors. We were so thrilled about our neighborhood we invested in a two-story addition and imagined we would live here through our retirement. However, this community climate has changed significantly over the past three to five years. Our family has seen a 50% increase in single family homes flipping to student rental within two blocks of our home in the past three years. The steady increase in the number of student houses around us has altered our quality of life on a regular and persistent basis. Our community is no longer peaceful, it is no longer predictable, it is no longer a place we recognize as the home and the community we moved into 11 years ago.

If the concentration of student rentals continues to increase, this will no longer be a community of families but an area full of student rentals with liquor bottles on boulevards and abandoned couches on front lawns to say the least. It would be in the interest of the city to ensure that its tax-paying residents are listened to and relied upon as a trusted and valued source of information and concern in this matter.

Please recognize and support our concerns and our investment by passing this ordinance and helping us preserve our neighborhoods. We are deeply concerned about our community and **we are turning to you to help us by passing this ordinance so that our community will remain balanced, viable, and intact.**

Thank you for taking the time to review these concerns and to consider what you would want if it were your own neighborhood. We support this ordinance.

Sincerely,

Sarah Smith

1906 Laurel Avenue

To: Council President Kathy Lantry

Dear Kathy,

It was gratifying to observe how well you run a difficult meeting such as the public hearing on the balance of student housing. Not surprising, of course. You've proven yourself on the score long ago.

I appreciate also that you, of course, consider all the neighborhoods in Saint Paul.

You know me well enough to realize I too have fought for good neighborhoods all over our city. The issue of balance in housing stock does not pit one neighborhood with this problem—or any other issue—against another. The proposed extension of a balance of housing addresses a particular problem in our neighborhood, one that is documented as being much more out of balance around UST than any of our other campuses. (An excellent article by Jane McClure in the Villager includes this documentation—over 400 houses with more than two students renting etc.)

We do enjoy students across the street from our house—the south campus of St. Thomas. Our dog even enjoys them. What we do not enjoy is a block—such as Lincoln Ave. east of Cretin—with three for-sale signs up. What we do not enjoy is when unsupervised clumps of student occupied housing overwhelm the night atmosphere for both us seniors and sleeping children.

A vote for the extension is a vote for continued family living.

With continued gratitude for your work,

Kathleen
Kathleen Vellenga

> Dear City Council Representatives,

> As a resident of Merriam Park, i am writing to urge you to pass the
> proposed ordinance that resulted from the Student Housing Zoning
> Study. As I testified in the May hearing on this matter, I think the
> key issue is that the University of St. Thomas does not provide
> adequate housing for it's undergraduates. The idea that 18, 19 and
> 20 year olds will behave well and respond to behavioral interventions
> is not reasonable based on the science we know about the adolescent
> brain. I sreved for several years as the Assistant Medical Director
> for Boynton Student Health Center at the University of Minnesota;
> there is a reason that college dormitories have trained residence hall
> staff and don't let a building full of undergraduates do as they
> please.

> At the May hearing, a Vice President from UST was asked if UST would
> build more dorms or ever consider requiring freshmen and sophmores to
> live on campus as Macalaster does. He replied that UST could not
> consider obtaining a bond to build a new building. This past
> weekend I attended an outside event that was held at St. Thomas; it
> was impossible not to see the millions of dollars that were spent n
> the new Anderson Student Center and the new Anderson Athletic
> Complex. I was disheartened that the same vision isn't applied to
> providing appropriate student housing.

> As a result of UST not providing adequate housing, the spill over goes
> into our neighborhoods and changes the character of the neighborhoods
> and the livability.

> When I first moved into the Merriam Park neighborhood in 1999, there
> was a much lower percentage of student rental housing. The character
> of the neighborhood was definitely one of single family homes,
> apartments and rentals peppered with some student occupied properties.
> Over the last 13 years, I have seen many homes flip from single family
> homes to student rentals. In fact, a study by WSNAC showed a 30%
> higher rate of flipping to rental than the city average.

>

> I am not against rental properties. In this tight rental market,
> landlords would still be able to find tenants despite passage of this
> ordinance limiting student rentals. The ordinance does not preclude
> anyone from renting their property, simply limits the density of
> student rentals.

>

> The proposals in the ordinance are clear and take a systematic
> approach to the problem. I urge the city council to adopt the
> ordinance as soon as possible.

>

> Some argue that we should work with the University near us; our
> neighborhood has taken several measures to do this, but in the end,
> the problems continue.

>

> The increased density of rentals to mostly undergraduate students has
> resulted in several factors that directly impact the quality of life

> in our neighborhood. These include, but are not limited to, poorly
> maintained properties (not shoveled well and icy in the winter,
> raggedy in the summer), loud parties (broken up by the police on
> several occasions), groups of loud, inebriated students walking from
> party to party late at night on weekends, and vandalism.
>
> With the ordinance in effect, there will be fewer homes flipping to
> student rental and there will be a decreased density of student
> housing thereby maintaining the character of the neighborhood.
>
> I applaud the other measures suggested in the study including creating
> more on campus housing, promoting buy-back programs to convert current
> student rental properties back to single family homes and creating
> alternate housing density areas connected by transit.
>
> We are at a crossroads as a neighborhood; I strongly urge the city
> council to approve this ordinance so that we can continue to have
> thriving neighborhoods that preserve the character of predominantly
> one and two family dwellings.
>
> Thank you
> Sofia Ali, MD, MPH

I have written before, but apparently you haven't received all of them. Please support the housing ordinance to contain the amount of student housing in Merriam Park. I have lived here 25 years and do not mind having students live in the neighborhood, but do not want to become another Dinky town. There are enough apartment buildings and single housing already. I have three student houses in close proximity and have endured late night parties, loud offensive cursing, urination and broken beer bottles. There needs to be a reasonable amount, but not so much to ruin our property values and distinctive positives of this neighborhood.

Marty Von Drasek
2089 Carroll Ave

Dear Council Members:

I am writing to say that I am in favor of the student rental ordinance proposed by Russ Stark. I strongly urge you to vote yes on this ordinance.

Currently the area encompassed by this proposed ordinance is a pleasant place to live that attracts a large variety of inhabitants ranging from young students to retirees. As with all things in life, moderation and balance are key. If this ordinance is not passed, then the neighborhood will surely, slowly, but surely convert into a solely student neighborhood and the balance will be lost. Just as was seen in Stadium Village (now razed or solely student apartments), Dinkytown (now entirely occupied by student rentals), Marcy Holmes (very few owner-occupied properties), and Mpls' Como Neighborhood (6 owner-occupied homes per block), the same will happen here. Each home that goes up for sale will have to become a rental because no quiet, employed, family, community-oriented person would want to buy surrounded by loud parties, beer cups, and poorly-kept lawns.

Go drive through those neighborhoods and look at them. Then please ask yourself if you want our neighborhood to look like those. Is that the kind of area you would like to be your legacy?

You have a chance to keep a great part of St. Paul great. Please protect us from the pressures brought about by the behemoth St. Thomas. Please enable us to keep this a safe, quiet, and clean place to live. Please vote yes on this ordinance.

Thank you for your time,
LeAnn Taylor
2122 Lincoln Ave

Dear Council President Lantry,

As thirty-seven year residents of Lincoln Avenue in St. Paul, we have witnessed the negative impact resulting from the increased number of student rental houses in the neighborhood. We urge you to vote yes in support of the Student Housing Ordinance. Please help to preserve our neighborhood balance!

Thanks

Jim and Loretta Nuessle
2081 Lincoln Avenue
Homeowners at this address since 1975

Thank you for your support of Councilman Stark's rental housing ordinance.

Alyssa Rebensdorf
2096 Lincoln Avenue

26 June 2012

2133 Fairmount, St. Paul, MN

Dear St. Paul City Council member:

I support strongly Councilman Stark's proposed restriction on the density of student rentals in our immediate neighborhood. This is only the first step in preserving the character of our neighborhood as family-friendly.

The experience that my wife and I have had with student housing in our immediate neighborhood began immediately after we closed on our home on Fairmount in May, 1991. During our purchase decision, we were not made aware of a student rental next door, or the student behavior problems related to the residence that had led the previous owners to relocate to Roseville. Before we finally began relying on St. Paul police and late-night phone calls to the absentee-owner of the rental, our evenings from 10 until after midnight frequently involved our long walks west and south of our home to spend some quiet time while student parties and drinking bouts wound down. The problems with this property ended with the renters' leaving and the owner and his family moving in. Later, the house was sold as a single-family dwelling and, over several years, rehabilitated by its owner to mint condition. After the student-renters left, quiet in the evening hours was restored.

Our next experience with student housing involves an owner-absent home for three family-member students that also involved several renters and a rotating array of three-to-four female guests, in clear violation of code. This residence over the past three or four years, has been the stereotypical "animal house," involving overnight stays by men and women unrelated to the owner or his sons, loud parties day and night, public intoxication and urination, broken glass bottles, post-midnight loud arguments and fights, and confronting and attempts to bully neighbors who object. Reports to the St. Paul Police, visits by patrols, and occasional contact with family-members' and renters' University have not been effective, longer-term, in changing behavior.

What will probably work this spring to resolve the immediate issue is the sale of the house. The cooperating realtor is encouraging any new owner to participate in the University buy-back program and to transform this home into a single-family dwelling. Time will tell if this effort is successful.

**Jim Hulbert
2133 Fairmount Ave**

St. Paul, MN

Dear Representative Stark,

I live in Merriam Park and urge you to vote for the student housing ordinance to help preserve neighborhood balance.

Sincerely,

Rick London
2116 Carroll Ave.

I am sending this email to show my support for Russ Starks student rental ordinance, please pass this initiative to maintain our neighborhood balance.

Sincerely,

Michael Hepp
2122Lincoln

Hi-

My name is Tanya Sale, I live close to St. Thomas University and am very concerned about the number of homes in our area that have been converted to student rentals.

I would like you to know that my husband and I strongly support the Student Housing Ordinance to preserve stability and balance in our community.

Sincerely,

Tanya Sale

2078 Iglehart Avenue

Dear Council Members,

As long time residents of the Mac-Goveland neighborhood, we have seen several houses on our block flip from family owned to St.Thomas student rentals. This is very concerning, as it changes the dynamic of the neighborhood from family to frat house. We hope that you will consider the ordinance to bring balanced growth to our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Jill Pavlak and Deb Loch
2139 Fairmount Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55105

Dear Representative Stark,

I live in Merriam Park and urge you to vote for the student housing ordinance to help preserve neighborhood balance. In the fifteen years we have lived in the neighborhood, we have seen a number of houses behind us on Marshall go from single family to student rental, and it has had a significant negative impact on the on our quality of life.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

George L Bounds
2072 Iglehart Ave

City Council members,

I am writing in support of the student housing ordinance and attaching a letter re this issue.

Thanks very much for your attention to this and the work that you do to support our neighborhood and the city of St. Paul.

Respectfully yours,

Yvonne Jonk

Yvonne Jonk, PhD
Senior Research Associate
University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center
2520 University Avenue SE Suite 201
Minneapolis, MN 55414
Ph: 612-623-8312
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I expect City Council to FIX this long-standing problem by voting YES for Russ Starks student rental ordinance.

Thank you!

Barbara Brown

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Dear City Council Members,

As a homeowner near the University of St. Thomas, I hope that the Council will vote to Limit Student Rentals. Although I'm skeptical that much can be done, the following is some of the things I've experienced in recent years.

- Loud parties on even weekdays. I have school children attending St. Public Schools. In the fall and spring there have been numerous times where loud parties occur during school nights. Notifying the the the University or Police doesn't prevent future parties as there are always new students. Also, UST ends it's school year before K-12 school which leads to many May parties.

- I've seen students slide down garage tops

- I've had some student defecate on our front stairs

- I've seen "rental sign" trash on my elderly neighbors yard. When complaining to UST, I received the following: "In 36 years of working with college kids, it's been a constant that the majority have trouble seeing beyond "I" and "me." When that becomes the majority attitude of residents, it will prompt a clearing out of the neighborhood.

- As a resident of Cleveland Avenue, it's not hard to see some students speed in and out of the neighborhood. Again, it wouldn't be an issue if I didn't have school age children.

I could list more issues.

I realize that there are worse off neighborhoods and greater issues to deal with. The University of St. Thomas spend there money on new athletic facilities, but does not have much left for on campus housing. But at the current growth rate in rentals, I'm cautious to invest much into my own property. I do love the city and I'd hope that some balance could be maintained.

Guptan

Hello Council Members,

I'm writing in favor of the student housing ordinance. I watched the city council meeting last week and I want to make sure that you are considering the main purpose of the ordinance, in my mind at least. That purpose is to reduce the density of students in any immediate area. It seems that some are opposed because these students may bleed to other parts of the city, but that is missing the point. The problem in my neighborhood is one of density where too many 19-22 year old college students occupy traditional and majority family oriented housing. If students end up renting in Frogtown or east of Snelling, it is very unlikely that those neighborhoods will reach the density found in our area and therefore will not suffer the ill effects that too much of one thing can cause.

I know college students better than most, having been a college instructor and academic advisor (currently at the U of M) for 15 years. In our neighborhood, we are suffering a clash of cultures where the clash is emboldened by increasing student populations. You hear this when you talk to college students who invariably think that the neighbors should expect late night noise and general irresponsibility and drunkenness as part of living near a campus. But of course the frame should be reversed as we, as the vast majority, expect them to conform to the norms of a family neighborhood, not a college campus. Density again is the issue here. I guarantee to you that as more and more students move into the neighborhood, the norms can and will change and the momentum to treat the area as if it were a college student neighborhood will increase.

I'm saying all this as someone who enjoys college students and is currently working with St. Thomas and the City Attorney on Restorative Justice (I'm meeting with a student and St. Thomas officials on Wednesday). We can coexist quite peaceably but only if we keep the density down, so please support the ordinance.

Kyle Dukart
2117 Carroll Ave
Union Park District Council Board Member
Chair of UPDC Neighborhood Issues Committee