

West 7th/Fort Road Federation

974 West 7th Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

651-298-5599
FortRoadFederation.org

August 28, 2014

Dear Zoning Committee:

The West 7th/Fort Road Federation District Council has voted unanimously to oppose the application for reestablishment and change of nonconforming use for an indoor rental storage facility at **543 James Avenue**.

Reasons for opposition:

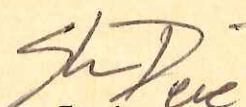
Section 62.109(e) Staff report states that "warehousing and storage are part of the area's existing development character". The Schmidt Artist Lofts have been open for less than a year and are no longer a warehouse or storage facility but rather a residential development.

Section 62.109(c) Staff report states that "proposed use is consistent with the comprehensive plan". The comp plan designates the site as both a Neighborhood Center and Mixed Use Corridor. The proposed use does not meet the aims of either designation.

Section 62.109(e) "The proposed use will not be detrimental to the existing character of development in the immediate neighborhood or endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare". The Great River Passage Master Plan encourages better connection with the river from the adjacent neighborhoods and redevelopment along Randolph Avenue. The proposed storage facility is detrimental to the existing character of the neighborhood and the newly redeveloped Schmidt Brewery.

The Federation worked from 2004 to 2008 to change zoning from I2 General Industrial District to the T3 Traditional Neighborhood classification. The Federation supported the T3 rezoning because it was future orientated. We feel it is extremely short sighted to reverse the zoning just as the neighborhood is beginning to see the positive influence of the Schmidt rehabilitation.

Respectfully Submitted,


Shawn Devine
President
West 7th/Fort Road Federation

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Candace Nelson <candy@ccbr.umn.edu>
Sent: Thursday, August 21, 2014 4:36 PM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Cc: Thune, Dave (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Self storage proposal for the Schmidt Brewery site

Regarding the proposal to place a self storage site at the base of the brewery complex.

As a member of the neighborhood that lives in the area, I would like to voice my strong opinion that a self storage unit not be placed at the Schmidt brewery site. I am completely against this proposal for many reasons including:

- The fact that it will be an eyesore.
 - That it does not contribute/add anything to the community around it.
- West seventh needs business to build up the community and not hinder the community around it.
- I'm disappointed that the original plans that were voiced to the public are not being used and I strongly believe that the neighborhood would do much better with a development like originally planned (i.e., a brew pub/brewery space).
 - As a member of the community we need businesses like brewpubs to attract spending in the neighborhood (for an example just look at how well Shamrocks fairs, It's always busy and provides jobs and nightlife that is lacking).
 - I believe it will deter artist and renters from renting space in the rental lofts because you are taking away the ability for a hip young environment that will provide economic stability to the neighborhood and replacing it with an eyesore.

I am extremely disappointed that the city would consider this proposal as it is detrimental to the neighborhood surrounding it.

Please do not allow this to go through and be built in my neighborhood.

Sincerely,
Candace Nelson
779 Jefferson Ave
St Paul, MN 55102

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Ted Beverly <tedb@threecedarfarm.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 21, 2014 4:51 PM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul); Thune, Dave (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Self storage off W 7th

Please do not allow the creation of self storage units behind the Schmidt brewery. This is the exact wrong direction for an area poised to become a vibrant hub on W 7th

Thank you

Ted Beverly

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Denise Wickiser <denisewickiser@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2014 8:53 AM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Cc: Thune, Dave (CI-StPaul)
Subject: 543 James Ave

Hello,

My name is Denise Wickiser and I am writing today about the non-conforming use application for the warehouse at 543 James Avenue, on the Schmidt Brewery property. I live one block from the back corner of the warehouse, at 354 Duke Street. I lead the Brewery Neighborhood Block Club, I am the Co-Chair of the Schmidt Brewery Redevelopment Task Force group, and also serve on the Board of the Fort Road Federation District 9 District Council. Full disclosure: my husband is Dave Wickiser, who is on the Planning Commission and serves on the Zoning Committee.

I would like to express my personal opposition to the rental storage business going in there. This use does not fit with the neighborhood vision for the redevelopment of the property. Many millions in private and public dollars have been invested in the brewery property overall, and this rental storage use seems to bring us backwards. While I know some neighbors did sign off on this change, I have heard from many more who are very uncomfortable with this use for the property. The first phase of the development, the Schmidt Artist Lofts, just completed this summer, with the last residents moving in this June. It has only just begun. We can do better for this property.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with questions. I cannot be at the zoning committee meeting on August 28, but I would like to have my written comments submitted. Thank you for your consideration.

Denise Wickiser
Brewery Neighborhood Block Club, President
Schmidt Brewery Redevelopment Task Force, Co-Chair
District 9 Fort Road Federation, Board Member
354 Duke St
St. Paul, MN 55102
651-343-6875

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Kris Kautzman <kautzfrau@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2014 4:45 PM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul); dave.thune@ci.stpaul.mn
Subject: 543 James Ave should NOT become a rental storage facility

Dear Mr. Dermody & Mr. Thune,

Please do not approve the request to turn the warehouse at 543 James Ave into a rental storage facility.

The only good thing I've heard anyone say about the proposal at hand is that "self-storage facilities are quiet."

Yes, they are quiet. They're quiet because they are tombs for possessions. This project would add no human value to our neighborhood, and it is not consistent with any of the other development that's happened here in recent years:

- Our new firehouse, with its beautiful, sustainable rooftop garden, has drawn national attention;
- The Peter J. King Family Health Center is an amazing facility, training the next generation of young doctors to care for an increasingly diverse population in challenging times;
- New businesses like the Bearded Mermaid, Supatra's, Scarborough Fair & Mojo Monkey are generating interest in our community, and also generating good press;
- The residents of the Schmidt Lofts have the potential to create a whole new, vibrant culture in our neighborhood.

Where in this vision does building a giant tomb for possessions fit in? Approving this plan would be shortsighted. "Quiet" does not equal meaningful or valuable development.

Self-Storage facilities are good fit for land that has no other obvious value. Have all other options been exhausted? Have other options been explored? Please don't be shortsighted. Our community doesn't need another dead zone.

Thank you both for your time, and for your service to our gem of a city.

Kris Kautzman

Homeowner

408 Erie Street, St. Paul, MN 55102

Voice

Flute

&

Nonprofit Operations

You are not here merely to make a living. You are here to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, and with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world. You impoverish yourself if you forget this errand. - Woodrow Wilson

August 23, 2014

St. Paul Zoning Committee,
1400 City Hall Annex,
25 W. 4th St.,
St. Paul, MN 55102-1634

Dear Sir or Madam:

I have heard that a self-storage facility is planned for the Schmidt Brewery project.

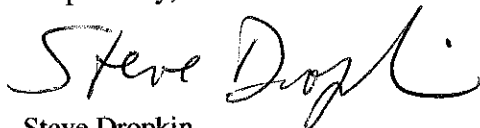
As I understand it, the idea behind redeveloping Schmidt was to make it a place where people -- residents, neighbors, and (we hope) others -- want to be. The presence of people lowers crime, adds to the local economy, and should offer the neighborhood something it does not have now.

I don't understand how those goals can be achieved with a warehouse. A good chunk of the Schmidt site will be turned over to a business which likely will see a flurry of activity a few days a month and will just sit there the rest of the time. It's not like they could be successful and enlarge the business by taking additional space on-site (there is none) or by increasing sales volume, so the revenue self-storage provides when it opens pretty much will be all the revenue it will ever provide. And there already is a self-storage facility a mile or two down West 7th from Schmidt, so it's not like the neighborhood is being denied this service.

I have to think there is a higher use for this part of the Schmidt site. I'm disappointed that the powers that be do not seem to be holding out for that higher use before capitulating to ... storage. At this point it seems like someone showed up, cash in hand, and the folks planning the project just said, "Well, umm, okay."

I think St. Paul can do better. And if it turns out, after trying, it cannot, at least there is evidence that the City tried for the best available use before settling.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Dropkin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Dropkin".

Steve Dropkin
489 Michigan Street
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Ken Page <kenpage2@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 24, 2014 4:52 AM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Zoning Change @ Schmidt Brewery Warehouse

I do not think it would be a wise use of the former warehouse property to be converted to a self storage property. I do not believe it would be beneficial to the neighborhood and, though quiet and clean, I think a much better use of the building would be to turn it into a bazaar and market for small business to sell their wares. It would be well supported and goes with the style the artist loft concept originally was intended to become. I believe it would thrive. I can find plenty of storage business' outside of St Paul. We certainly don't need another one on West 7th next to an Artist' Loft colony!

From: e meissner [<mailto:e2meissner@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, September 02, 2014 9:57 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward2

Subject: Storage Unit on Randolph

Dave Thune,

I am writing to express my hope that the storage unit being considered for Randolph Ave. will be challenged. This is not part of the greater plan for this community or the river. I live a block away and when the petition was brought to our household, I was not home but had suggested to my husband that if he had the chance, he should NOT sign it. The petitioner made his case that if my husband were neutral on the subject, he should just sign it. He did not but I understand that many neighbors in River Heights Townhomes did. I can only believe that the clear vision for what will happen on Randolph in the coming years has not been made clear...settling for storage lockers on THE main drag to the river from our community seems inconceivable and boring.

I will write to the Federation as well as I believe they also have the responsibility to hold a vision of the community plan.

Edie Meissner
409 Colborne Street
651-698-4760

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Nancy State <ncstate@iphouse.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 19, 2014 11:22 AM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Subject: 543 James St.

I will not be able to attend the meeting on 8/28 regarding Premier Storage taking over this property. I did meet the owner, and I want to reiterate to you what I talked to him about. I have lived in this neighborhood for 14 years and that property has never been taken care of. It is weedy and extremely overgrown. I have contacted the city regarding this, to no avail. I have even submitted pictures. Nothing was ever done to remedy this problem. When you meet, I would appreciate this being addressed.

I have a husband in hospice at home and cannot get away.

Thank you,
Nancy State
408 Duke St.

Sent from my iPad

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Marilyn Leonard <marilyn.l.leonard@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 03, 2014 8:16 AM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Self Storage Use Application for 543 James Ave

My name is Marilyn Leonard and I live at 1045 Lombard Ave, St Paul, MN. I am writing to voice my support for the Premier Storage Application.

The neighbors want a low intensity use at the building and the proposed project by Premier Storage seems to be the perfect fit. I understand the building has been vacant for 6 years and is in need of a new roof, clean up and other repairs. I would like you to move this project forward.

The City of St Paul should approve this project.

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Garry Davis <garryodavis@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 03, 2014 10:30 AM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Subject: 543 James Ave

I support the application for Premier Storage at the warehouse building located at 543 James Ave.

This warehouse building has been vacant for 6 years and finally a responsible party has come foreword with a plan to make investments in the property and bring this building back to life, which it needs.

All the neighbors surrounding the property support the project. We do not want a different use that generates a lot of traffic and noise. This project is a good fit with the neighborhood and should be approved.

Yours truly,
Sharon Rambo
952 Eleanor Ave
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Garry Davis <garryodavis@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 03, 2014 11:40 AM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Subject: 543 James

Subject: 543 James Ave

I support the application for Premier Storage at the warehouse building located at 543 James Ave.

This warehouse building has been vacant for 6 years and finally a responsible party has come foreword with a plan to make investments in the property and bring this building back to life, which it needs.

All the neighbors surrounding the property support the project. We do not want a different use that generates a lot of traffic and noise. This project is a good fit with the neighborhood and should be approved.

Yours truly,
Garry Davis
952 Eleanor Ave
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Bailey McDonald <bmcDonald0202@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 03, 2014 5:09 PM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Subject: 543 James ave

I am writing to support the application for Premier Storage at the warehouse building located at 543 James Ave.

All the neighbors surrounding the property support the project. We do not want a different use that generates a lot of traffic and noise.

I believe this project is a good fit with the neighborhood and should be approved.

Yours truly,
Bailey McDonald
2117 Palace Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55105

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Philip M Gagne' <filterroom1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 03, 2014 8:59 PM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Schmidt Brewery Warehouse 543 James Ave.

My name is Phil Gagne', I have worked at the Old Schmidt Brewery since Oct 31st, 1979 as a Brewer and Brewmaster and I currently manage the Well House on West 7th Street and the Warehouse on 543 James Ave.

The warehouse is getting tired and needs a new user. The roof leaks bad and needs a total replacement. The owners have tried to lease or sell to others over the last 6 years with no luck.

I am on site at the Brewery everyday and I have talked to many Well House customers and they think the Premier Storage Project would be great fit for the neighborhood, I have also had many conversations with the residence living in the Artist Lofts, who believe it would be great addition to the community.

I have reviewed the plans and looked at the photos of the other locations Todd has done and I do believe this would be a good project. I hope you approve it.

Thank You,
Philip Gagne'
2935 Hadley Ave N.
Oakdale, Mn 55128

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: timothy warneke <tdub417@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 03, 2014 10:03 PM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Subject: 543 James ave

Bill,

I support the application for Premier Storage at the warehouse building located at 543 James Ave. This warehouse building has been vacant for six years and finally a responsible party has come forward with a plan to make investments in the property to bring this building back to life. All the neighbors surrounding the property support the project and we do not want a different use for the building that generates a lot of traffic and noise. This project is a good fit with the neighborhood and should be approved.

Best,

Timothy Warneke

872 Dayton Ave, St Paul, MN 55104

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Janet Warwick <omajanet@usfamily.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 04, 2014 7:16 AM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Premier Storage Proposal for 543 James Avenue

Dear Mr. Dermody,

I write in support of the proposed Premier Storage Facility at the address 543 James Avenue South, Saint Paul, MN 55102, in the Schmidt Brewery Preservation District.

The recent addition of residential spaces on that site brings new energy to our neighborhood. The proposed storage facility seem a functional addition.

This building has been vacant for six years and desperately needs an owner to assume responsibility for repairing and maintaining the property to enhance the neighborhood. The roof needs immediate repair. Although other development options have been proposed, none seems to have found the right mix of concept and funding. The idea of bazaar, brew-pub, etc., seems inconsistent with the residential concept of the current property usage. Having an entertainment venue with nightly crowds would be unappealing to me as a resident—or a neighbor.

The City Zoning Commission has approved the plan. The project has the required support of nearby residential neighbors. No subsidies, grants or other public financing requests are needed for the project. The proposed buyer has given assurance that “any exterior alterations or improvements will comply with the City’s historic preservation requirements for Schimdt Brewery Preservation District.” Maintaining the historic appearance is critical since preservation was the driving force in repurposing the brewery site in the neighborhood.

Premier Storage states in their proposal that they will begin construction immediately if the project is approved with a new roof being the first job. With opening scheduled for April 2015, the additional property tax revenue will benefit the City of St. Paul’s tax roles as well. The developers suggest that road traffic in and out of the facility should be limited—a significant factor for the neighbors.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal by Premier Storage.

Janet Warwick
399 Superior Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)

From: Janedelage@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, September 04, 2014 2:17 PM
To: Dermody, Bill (CI-StPaul)
Subject: storage facility approval.

City of St Paul,

I hope I am not too late to express my support for the The Self Storage use for the former Bottle House at the former Schmidt Brewery warehouse. I understand the neighbors are supportive as well. This seems like a sensible approach to repurposing the building so that it is no longer vacant and can go back on the tax rolls.

Thank you for approving this sensible use of the property.

Sincerely,

Jane Delage
1310 Osceola Ave.
St. Paul, MN
55105