



City of Saint Paul

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Minutes - Final

Legislative Hearings

Marcia Moermond, Legislative Hearing Officer
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651-266-8585

Tuesday, July 25, 2017

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House

9:00 a.m. Hearings

Remove/Repair Orders

- 1 [RLH RR 17-18](#) Ordering the razing and removal of the structures at 675 AURORA AVENUE within thirty (30) days after the July 19, 2017, City Council Public Hearing.

Sponsors: Thao

Coretta B. Walker Rinehart, owner, appeared.

Ms. Moermond:

-you had intended to sell this property to Daisy Houg and that fell through; she was going to pay you to demolish the property before the transaction concluded; and I understand through phone messages, which may not be accurate, that you want to rehabilitate the property now (?)

Ms. Walker Rinehart:

*-yes; because if I don't, it would be a loss to the estate
-I'm prepared to pay the \$5000 performance deposit today and the \$480
-Booker Construction will rehab the property; he said that 6 months was doable
-I have more than \$100,000 to pay for that work through other assets; I'm working with the IRS to release the lien that will allow me to sell properties; taxes have been completed; IRS is processing all of the returns; the State of MN has processed all of the returns; they have a lien against the property in Hennepin Co*

Ms. Moermond:

*-I have a tighter timeline on this than you might be able to manage
-get the code compliance inspection application made today & the \$5000 perf dep posted today
-you need to demonstrate that the liens are clear on the properties
-you need to demonstrate that you have at least \$100,000 to do the rehabilitation; must be in an account, escrow or otherwise specified for use rehabbing this property alone-could be an affidavit
-maintenance must be taken care of*

Steve Magner, Code Enforcement Manager:

-we are kind of behind the 8 ball on this for doing the code compliance inspection - probably 3 weeks out

Ms. Moermond:

*-I will ask Steve Ubl to expedite the code compliance inspection on this property
-have Booker put together a Sworn Construction Statement with a fair level of detail & timelines*

-by Aug 8, I'd like to see that you have the money available to do the work; we need liquid funds; I'd like to see the Work Plan & timelines; and at that time, I'd like the code comp insp report done so that there could be changes made to the Work Plan, as needed

-City Council Public Hearing - Aug 16, 2017

Need the following conditions by close of business on Friday, July 28:

- 1) post the \$5,000 performance deposit; and*
- 2) apply for the code compliance*

NOTE: the above conditions were done on 7/25/17.

Need the following conditions by August 8:

- 1) a work plan or sworn construction statement, with timelines, for the completion of the rehab of the building; and*
- 2) financial documentation indicating the amount of \$100,000 to do the rehab (line of credit, construction loan, personal bank account); if using personal bank account, provide an affidavit indicating the dedication of \$100,000 to be used for the project.*

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 8/8/2017

2 [RLH RR 17-27](#)

Ordering the razing and removal of the structures at 899 HYACINTH AVENUE EAST within fifteen (15) days after the August 2, 2017, City Council Public Hearing.

Sponsors: Bostrom

Remove the building within 15 days with no option for repair. (no one appeared)

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/2/2017

3 [RLH RR 17-11](#)

Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 855 LEXINGTON PARKWAY SOUTH within fifteen (15) days after the June 21, 2017, City Council Public Hearing.

Sponsors: Tolbert

Gary Johnson, Emeritus Investments LLC, owner, appeared.

Ms. Moermond:

*-we received a letter a week ago from the company doing the mold remediation indicating that they were partially done with it; it sounded as if they weren't going to do the 2nd level of the house because of rot & instability; that letter was, subsequently, revised to say that they hadn't done it yet but they did end up doing it, so now, the entire place is certified as having been remediated of its mold
-it's ready to be inspected; it's clean; it's safe*

Mr. Johnson:

-yes; I've been asking for DSI to go out & do the inspection; Jim Seeger is in charge

of that; I thought that I'd sent a copy of that Revised letter to Mai Vang, my attorney & DSI so that they could go & inspect it

Ms. Moermond:

-that's been communicated to them

Steve Magner, Code Enforcement Manager:

-I'm not sure of that communication as I was not here last week; my assumption is that the letter got to them but I have not heard that the inspection has been scheduled

Mr. Johnson:

-I talked to Mr. Seeger yesterday morning & he hadn't seen the letter; so, my plan is to get the letter & have him go in & inspect (he says it's 2-4 weeks to get an inspection); then, I'll get some bids on it & then, I'll make a decision to rehab or demolish

-I do have someone in place to maintain - mow grass, clean up around the yard, trim the trees, etc.

Mr. Magner:

-based on the condition of the property (beside mold there's some severe rot), take the opportunity to have a licensed contractor go through it & give you an estimate, which will be fairly close to where our code compliance inspection is; generally, when a bldg has been gutted, any existing deficiencies of the code that would have been grandfathered-in previously, are now long gone; so any repairs to the structure now must meet 2017 code - a licensed contractor should be able to go through & made a good estimate

Mr. Johnson:

-I haven't done that because I was told that I had to do the code compliance inspection first

Ms. Moermond:

-because the city has been waiting a long time, we want you to have ordered the code compliance inspection & in the meantime, go ahead & contact contractors to put Work Plans & bids together; those Work Plans can be revised after the code compliance inspection report has been completed

-I also want to see that you have the capacity to finance this rehab (\$100,000+)

-those 2 things I want to see by Aug 8, 2017

Mr. Johnson:

-it's not very long to get all that donemaybe another week or two

-I can take care of the financial responsibility

-I don't want to have to pay for a bid 2 or 3 times

-is it customary in this state to pay for contractors to come in & give estimates?

Mr. Magner:

-it's not a common practice to have to pay for bids

Ms. Moermond:

-whomever you hire should be someone who's familiar with the expectations in a code compliance inspection report (general contractor licensed in St. Paul)

-will send you a sample of a Work Plan with timelines

-we will try to have the code compliance inspection report done by Aug 8 but it may not be done by then

-this will go to City Council Public Hearing Aug 16, 2017

-I'd like to talk on Aug 8 to see what you can come up with by then

Provide the following condition by the close of business on August 8:

1) financial documentation to do the rehab (line of credit, construction loan, personal bank account); if using personal bank account, must provide an affidavit indicating the dedication of \$100,000 to be used for this project.

Provide the following condition by the close of business on August 15:

1) a work plan including timelines for completing the work, including general contractor and subcontractor bids.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/16/2017

4 [RLH RR 17-13](#)

Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 666 MINNEHAHA AVENUE WEST within fifteen (15) days after the August 2, 2017 City Council Public Hearing. (Amend to remove or repair within 180 days)

Sponsors: Thao

Mai Lee Vang appeared. (Mai Vang interpreted.)

Ms. Moermond:

-the only thing that we were waiting for was a Work Plan consistent with the code compliance inspection report; the report came out last Thu; I don't see a copy of it here in my paperwork

-Mr. Magner, have you seen this statement?

Steve Magner, Code Enforcement Manager:

-yes; I have a copy of that

-we originally estimated rehab between \$70,000 - \$80,000; they have some numbers down here for some of the bigger items; but this is not as complete as it could be; it's fairly close - gets us in the \$60,000 range; I'm OK with accepting it at this point; I just don't know that these rounded numbers are exact; my expectation is that it's going to be a little more

Ms. Moermond:

-a separate account was set up to manage the rehabilitation; \$75,000 was put into that account so if it costs more than \$57,500, they have the balance

-City Council Public Hearing Aug 2, 2017; at that time I will ask them to make a grant of time of 180 days to complete the work

-continue to maintain the property

Ms. Vang:

-asked when she could start

Ms. Moermond:

-technically, she could pull the permit right now but we recommend against people doing that until the Council votes to grant the time, to be on the safe side

Mr. Magner:

-I'm putting into the system that she can pull permits tomorrow

Ms. Moermond:

Remove or repair the building within 180 days.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/2/2017

- 5 RLH RR 17-29** Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 1426 DESOTO STREET within fifteen (15) days after the August 16, 2017, City Council Public Hearing.

Sponsors: Brendmoen

Greta Bjerkness, Attorney, appeared o/b/o Ocwen Loan Servicing LLC.

Ms. Moermond:

-has the foreclosure process been completed?

Ms. Bjerkness:

-yes, it has; it's currently in REO status & is being maintained by Safeguard Properties

Steve Magner, Code Enforcement Manager:

-The building is a one-story wood frame single-family dwelling with a detached two-stall garage on a lot of 5,663 square feet. According to our files, it has been a vacant building since June 3, 2014.

-The current property owner is Ocwen Loan Servicing LLC per AMANDA and Ramsey County Property records.

-On May 2, 2017 an inspection of the building was conducted, a list of deficiencies which constitute a nuisance condition was developed and photographs were taken. An ORDER TO ABATE A NUISANCE BUILDING was posted on May 15, 2017 with a compliance date of June 14, 2017. As of this date, the property remains in a condition which comprises a nuisance as defined by the legislative code.

-Taxation has placed an estimated market value of \$13,600 on the land and \$66,400 on the building.

-Real estate taxes are current.

-The Vacant Building registration fees were paid by check on May 24, 2017.

-A Code Compliance Inspection was completed on January 3, 2017 & is attached

-As of July 24, 2017, the \$5,000 performance deposit has not been posted.

-There have been eight (8) SUMMARY ABATEMENT NOTICES since 2014.

-There have been eight (8) WORK ORDERS issued for:

-Garbage/rubbish; Emergency boarding/securing; Grass/weeds; Obstructing public right-of-way (overgrown vegetation)

-Code Enforcement Officers estimate the cost to repair this structure is \$60,000 to \$70,000. The estimated cost to demolish is \$12,000 to \$15,000.

Ms. Bjerkness:

-Ocwen is requesting a 60 day continuance of any action

-in speaking with my client & Safeguard, they hope to being repairs within the next couple of weeks; then they will make a determination

-they do want to repair it but they're not ruling out demolition

Ms. Moermond:

-this will be going to City Council Aug 16, 2017;

-by Aug 8, I will be looking for Work Plans for the rehab as well as evidence of financing of at least \$60,000 to do the work; if your client chooses not to do the rehab but remove the bldg, then, you won't need to show that

-your client will need to post the \$5000 performance deposit & maintain the property during the interim

*-I'd be happy to recommend the time requested if those things are forthcoming
-the code compliance inspection has been done*

Ms. Bjerkness:

-asked for a sample work plan

Ms. Moermond:

Need the following conditions by August 8:

- 1) post the \$5,000 performance deposit;*
- 2) provide a work plan, including timelines, for completing the work;*
- 3) provide financial documentation indicating the amount of \$60,000 to do the rehab (line of credit, construction loan, personal bank account; if using personal bank account, must provide an affidavit indicating the dedication of \$60,000 to be used for the project; and*
- 4) the property must be maintained.*

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/16/2017

6 RLH RR 17-30

Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 1106 HAWTHORNE AVENUE EAST within fifteen (15) days after the August 16, 2017, City Council Public Hearing.

Sponsors: Bostrom

David Mortensen & Jessica Salyers, Attorneys, Shapiro & Zielke, appeared o/b/o Caliber Home Loans Inc, servicer for the mortgage

Steve Magner, Code Enforcement Manager:

-The building is a one-story wood frame single-family dwelling with an oversized detached one-stall garage on a lot of 4,792 square feet. According to our files, it has been a vacant building since August 6, 2015.

-The current property owner is Caliber Home Loans Inc. per AMANDA and Ramsey County Property records.

-On May 9, 2017 an inspection of the building was conducted, a list of deficiencies which constitute a nuisance condition was developed and photographs were taken. An ORDER TO ABATE A NUISANCE BUILDING was posted on May 23, 2017 with a compliance date of June 22, 2017. As of this date, the property remains in a condition which comprises a nuisance as defined by the legislative code.

-Taxation has placed an estimated market value of \$16,700 on the land and \$48,300 on the building.

-Real estate taxes are current.

-The Vacant Building registration fees for 2017 are due on August 6, 2017.

-As of July 24, 2017, a Code Compliance Inspection has not been done.

-As of July 24, 2017, the \$5,000 performance deposit has not been posted.

-There have been six (6) SUMMARY ABATEMENT NOTICES since 2015.

-There have been seven (7) WORK ORDERS issued for:

-Garbage/rubbish; Boarding/securing; Grass/weeds

- Code Enforcement Officers estimate the cost to repair this structure exceeds \$40,000. The estimated cost to demolish is \$12,000 to \$15,000.

-DSI received a referral that this property was vacant with possible squatters; we went out & opened a Cat 2 VB - was referred by Supervisor Paula Seeley, Code Enforcement

Mr. Mortensen:

-the foreclosure process is not complete; sale was held Mar 22, 2017; because it was

vacant property, we took steps to reduce the redemption period; however, the borrower of this loan & the owner of the property is deceased; no probate had been commenced; therefore, there's no personal representative; the standing policy of the county.....states that we cannot reduce the redemption period because there is no personal representative; so we had to cancel our request & process to reduce the redemption period; at this point, redemption expires on Sep 22, 2017

-my client is interested in repairing this property; I have informed them of all the city's requirements, including the code compliance inspection, performance deposit; my client did approve work to be started at the property for the cosmetics & aesthetics on the exterior & clean-up; I have before/after photos

-the inside has not yet been junked out but I've informed them that in order to do the code compliance inspection, they will have to do that; they have cleaned up the exterior & painted & replaced rotting wood to get started; cost: about \$11,000

Ms. Moermond:

-was there a bldg permit pulled for that work?

Mr. Mortensen:

-not that I'm aware of because it was non-structural & it was replacement & maintenance

Ms. Moermond:

-the work requires a permit at that value (\$11,000)

Mr. Magner:

-if you're just doing minor repairs for a broken window, broken sash, etc. & not doing a full replacement - that's not a permit activity but the code also has a dollar amount that triggers the necessity of a permit; I don't know the break down but if your client has already spent \$11,000, it clearly seems to be above the scope of general maintenance

Mr. Mortensen:

-my understanding is that the money was spent on smaller tasks that totaled up to \$11,000

Mr. Magner:

-it seems like a lot of tasks for that kind of money

Ms. Moermond:

-the bldg code would clearly indicate that work of that value would require a bldg permit & in the future I know that you will pull one; not sure how they will handle that in terms of reviewing the work that has been done; there's no code compliance inspection ordered or completed at this point; so, we don't know if the work that was done covered up previous violations or problems so if siding went up over exposed electrical or..... without having that code compliance inspection report in place, the inspectors are not positioned well for this next step

Mr. Mortensen:

-my client is trying to show that it is interested in making the necessary repairs to get things going

-my request, in light of our inability to reduce the redemption period & in light of my client's desire to repair, I'd like to pull it back here to a meeting in 4-6 weeks; I can have the code compliance applied for; I can have the performance deposit posted; I will remind my client of the Aug 6 renewal of the VB fee, which will get us close to redemption & also allow us to gear up for the repairs by starting on the Work Plan

Ms. Moermond:

-this is scheduled to go to Council on Aug 16, 2017

-by Aug 8, let's get the junk out done, the code compliance inspection ordered, the performance deposit posted; if those things are done, I will recommend on Aug 16, that Council Lay the matter Over & send it back to LH on Sep 26, 2017; at that point, we'll review your Work Plan, evidence of your financials & I'd like to close the book on it Oct 4, 2016 at City Council; & obviously, maintain the property in the interim -and, no more work without permits

Need the following conditions by August 8:

- 1) clean out the interior of the property;
- 2) apply for the code compliance inspection;
- 3) post the \$5,000 performance deposit;
- 4) pay the vacant building fee due August 6, 2017

If the above conditions are met, on August 16, 2017 at the public hearing, she will ask the City Council to refer the matter back to Legislative Hearing on September 26 at 9:00 a.m. where the following conditions must be provided and will be discussed:

- 1) a work plan, including timelines for the rehabilitation of the building; and
- 2) financial documentation indicating the amount of funds to do the rehab (line of credit, construction loan, personal bank account; if using personal bank account, must provide an affidavit indicating the dedication to be used for the project.

NOTE: the property must be maintained.

Public hearing will be continued to October 4, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/16/2017

11:00 a.m. Hearings

Summary Abatement Orders

- 7 [RLH SAO 17-64](#) Appeal of Dave Ward about a Notice to Cut Tall Grass and/or Weeds at 871 HOWELL STREET NORTH.

Sponsors: Stark

Order withdrawn by DSI. The grass issue has been resolved.

Withdrawn

Correction Orders

- 8 [RLH CO 17-15](#) Appeal of Ann Torseth to a Correction Notice at 1468 HOLTON STREET.

Sponsors: Stark

Ann Louise Torseth, owner, appeared.

Supervisor Paula Seeley:

-we've heard this appeal on Jul 11 at LH; but we got a complaint & Inspector Martin went out on Jun 8 & wrote Orders on the eaves, paint, roof of the shed
 -an email sent Jul 14, 2017 from Building Official Steve Ubl states: We had an inspector review the accessory structure at 1468 Holton. The rafters are deteriorating to a point where there is no longer structural connectivity to the wall top plates. Additionally, roof boards are rotting with diagonal stability compromised. I would suggest immediate repair or removal. (attached)

Ms. Moermond:

-are you planning to repair it or removing it?

Ms. Torseth:

-when the inspector talked about removing it, I was able to reach & talk to Mike ____, the inspector of the garage; so I'm a little confused; I know he gave the report to Mr. Ubl; Mike mentioned that he saw that the work needed to be done from the roof plate on but he did not say, to my knowledge, that I needed to remove the garage completely

Ms. Moermond:

-as far as I'm concerned, almost any building can be rebuilt & stabilized; it's whether or not you want to spend the money to do it properly; sometimes it makes sense, financially, to repair a bldg & sometimes it doesn't make sense; you need to make that decision

-the inspector issued a Correction Order with a compliance (repair or removed) date of Aug 31, 2017; is that date doable for you?

Ms. Torseth:

-I definitely need an extension on that date because I live in State Fair Grounds territory (6 blocks away); so, for someone to be able to come in & do the work from Aug 24 - Labor Day will be an impossibility for them

-I would like to have an extension to at least the end of Sep 2017

Ms. Moermond:

-to Ms. Seeley: I'd like to have a Summary Abatement Order issued for the repair/removal of this garage by Sep 30, 2017; if you don't do it, the city will remove it in Oct

Grant an extension to September 30, 2017 on the condition that there is compliance with the Summary Abatement Order with the same deadline.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/16/2017

- 9 [RLH CO 17-21](#) Appeal of Christopher D. Carter to a Correction Notice at 1183 BRADLEY STREET. (Legislative Hearing to be held August 1)

Sponsors: Brendmoen

Rescheduled per owner's request to August 1. Public Hearing is August 2.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/2/2017

- 10 [RLH CO 17-22](#) Appeal of Prentiss Hamilton to a Correction Order at 686 IGLEHART AVENUE.

Sponsors: Thao

Prentiss Hamilton, owner, appeared.

Ms. Moermond:
-you've got the gas service out

Ms. Hamilton:
-just for a couple of days
-I get paid today & tomorrow and then, I have Emergency Assistance helping me right now; my father has dementia & I do his care for him
-I need just a couple weeks time
-I have an electric stove; water heater & furnace are gas
-I just found this mail; it was tucked under in a dresser somewhere; I didn't even realize it until that day
-time until the end of the month

Ms. Moermond:
-how about until the end of next week, Aug 4, 2017

Grant an extension to August 4, 2017 to restore the gas service.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/2/2017

11:30 a.m. Hearings

Orders To Vacate, Condemnations and Revocations

- 11 **RLH VO 17-22** Appeal of Maria Denison to a Condemnation and Order to Vacate at 1990 HOYT AVENUE EAST.

Sponsors: Bostrom

Maria & Matt Denison, owners, appeared.

Inspector Sean Westenhofer:
-we inspected Jul 14 at 9:20 am; the dumpster had not yet been delivered; however, it must have shown up after that; subsequently, it's been emptied once; haven't talked with Erica
-the violations weren't completely taken care of; however, the egregious ones were (blocking egress windows, smoke/CO detectors, etc.).
-while I was going through the house & the Orders, there was some stuff in the Orders that didn't have code sections listed; we apologize & will take care of that
-I felt that we could lift the Condemnation & we did; the owners are working on getting rid of the trash, the clutter and the storage from the garage & the house
-I do believe, from walking through the house & listening to the owner talk about their money situation, that in order for them to be in full compliance, they may need a general contractor for plumbing & electrical to get those things squared away

Ms. Moermond:
-things are underway; the condemnation is lifted
-what are your thoughts on finishing the list

Mr. Denison:
-we can do the things that don't take a lot of money; that's pretty easy
-if the electrical & plumbing requires specialists, that's beyond our financial capability; we weren't aware that we had those violations
-my brother is a constructional electrician; so, I'll probably have him come by; he's

licensed

Ms. Moermond:

-noted that as a homeowner, he could pull an electrical permit to do that work but that's not true of plumbing

Ms. Denison:

-3 years ago, my water did not go thru the sink, I called the city; an inspector came & said that's because the tube is too old; so, I called somebody to ask how much they'd charge to change 3 tubes; he said, it's almost \$1000; we don't have \$1000

-almost 4 weeks ago, I had a tumor removed; I have cancer & I have so many bills to take care of first

-our house is over 60 years old & right now, everything is working good; I called a friend to fix something in the roof; it was \$80 to change couplers; I used the \$100 extra that my family keeps for my kids birthdays

Mr. Denison:

-about the plumbing, was is considered so bad that it would make the house uninhabitable?

-we have hot/cold water & there's no dripping that I know of

Ms. Moermond:

-no; it wasn't because your condemnation was lifted

-I don't see plumbing in this set of Orders that was issued before

Supervisor Paula Seeley:

-when the inspectors went back on Jul 14, I looked at the photos, there's no major electrical

-got a lot of open junction boxes; we still have a lot of octopus & extension cords

-Inspector Suon has not been an inspector very long; I wasn't even sure about what he was talking about

Mr. Westenhofer:

-opposite the furnace, there's multiple PVC pipes going in multiple directions & I'm not sure where they're all going; it's run from the furnace towards the east side in the storage; some divert back towards a bathroom in the corner; some go around the room; I would have to trace them to find out

Ms. Moermond:

-I'm really uncomfortable with that & we don't have an Order on plumbing; if we had a specific violation....

Ms. Seeley:

-then, maybe we need to get a plumber inspector out there; one of our guys

Mr. Westenhofer:

-based on Jul 14, 2017 inspection:

-have a licensed contractor inspect connections from the furnace & water heater; now, multiple diverters in the east storage room

-the front storm door latch doesn't latch; it's too far forward so the door doesn't secure

-the parents' bedroom door doesn't open all the way (stuff behind the door); also, they had an oversized bed in their bedroom along with big furniture

-SE corner kid's room door doesn't open all the way; shelf or something blocking it

-small chest/cabinet in the hallway along with other stuff; not a huge obstruction

Mr. Denison:

- we've resolved those issues except those connections in basement*
- there's plenty of space around the furnace & water heater*
- all doors can open fully*
- the unnecessary furniture has been removed; the hallway is just a hallway now*

Ms. Denison:

- I have a 2nd dumpster; the first one is full & gone*
- yesterday, Stephon came to my house to inspect progress*
- I'm cleaning out the garage*
- I appreciate everyone's help*
- my family has a problem keeping everything in the right place*
- I told the inspector that I will work really hard - the best I can do; the thing is I'm tired; it's really hard for me; my Dr. said that I need treatment for cancer - need to start chemo; I told him that I didn't want to start the chemo before this was cleared up; I told him that I need to do this first*

Ms. Moermond:

- the electrical work hasn't been done*

Mr. Westenhofer:

- we still have multi-plug adaptors & extension cords; these things just need to be unplugged; the washer & dryer need to be plugged into a wall outlet; the panel looks fine; you need to take down the power strip that's on the wall in the storage room; these things don't need an electrical contractor*
- I think that Erica, House Calls, might be able to help them out with little projects that need to get done*
- you don't need electrical permits for the majority of the stuff*
- Mr. Denison can have his brother come take a look, if he wants to*

Ms. Moermond:

- now that the condemnation is lifted, I want to make sure that Ms. Denison is taking care of herself*
- I need to figure out a deadline on what's left*

Mr. Denison:

- the electrical is mostly the extension cords, cover plates, etc. & has been taken care of*

Ms. Denison:

- brought out her photos of the laundry room - cleaned up*

Ms. Moermond:

- Erica will be able to help you identify emergency repair funds to do things that aren't in the budget; it may be that funds aren't immediately available but might be in a couple of months*

Ms. Denison:

- I told Erica that I asked Ramsey Co for help with the energy bill of \$3000 because my kids use a machine for asthma; the county said that they didn't have any money for that; so Erica helped with \$500 for energy this month; she said that every one of their programs are closed except for old people*

Ms. Moermond:

- Nov 1 will be your deadline*
- Erica will be your best resource for connecting to money*

Mr. Westenhofer:

-because of the way House Calls is funded, they have a program where they have a contractor come out & inspect the entire house; then, they set up the time to fix everything all at once; but there again, it's if they have that funding (that's one of House Calls' Programs)

-another program has separate contractors; it just depends on what is available when they talk with Erica

Ms. Moermond:

-so, now we'll have a Correction Order with a Nov 1, 2017 deadline; if that deadline isn't met, we'll deal with it at that time

Grant the appeal on the condemnation and order to vacate as the life safety issues have been addressed; grant to November 1, 2017 for compliance on the other items.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/16/2017

12 RLH VO 17-27

Appeal of Bob Stein to a Condemnation and Order to Vacate at 1152 BURR STREET (basement bedroom only).

Sponsors: Brendmoen

Bob Stein, owner, appeared.

Fire Supervisor A.J. Neis:

-Fire Certificate of Occupancy Inspection Correction Notice issued by Fire Inspector Brian Schmidt for this side-by-side duplex; was given a Class D grade based on the numerous code violations

-Insp Schmidt found 2 illegal basement bedrooms; they do not have legal escape windows leading directly to the outside, which is extremely dangerous for the occupants (each unit has a basement bedroom)

-there is a window in the basement utility room that opens directly to the outside; it is not legal for a bedroom to pass through a utility room; a possible 2nd means would be to go through the garage, which is also not a legal means to escape

-photos

Mr. Stein:

-I'm appealing both basement bedrooms

-I got into an argument with one of the inspectors about 6 months ago; I've since apologized; I have 9 houses under inspection right now; I've been doing this myself since I've owned the properties

-it's very interesting when he says it's extremely, extremely dangerous; it's been inspected about 4 times since I owned it & the bedrooms were fine; the first time we got inspected, I had to put ladders into the egress window wells for people to climb out; so, I got 2 ladders; now, it's a problem; how is it alright with the last inspectors? Were all those inspectors wrong?

-in 2001, it was up for sale as a 2-bedroom; it did not sell; the same owner then got a permit for the egress window, installed it & sold it in 2002 as a 3-bedroom; the new buyer rented out Section 8 & it was approved for Section 8 (kids in the basement)

-not only is there an egress window, you've got the garage door & you can go up the stairs (3 exits)

-then, it was sold in 2005 to another home owner; I'm sure it got inspected again

Mr. Neis:

-looking at the record, it looks like it was inspected by our office only once in 2010; these window wells that you're referring to that were required to be put in, I'm not

seeing on the Orders; so, I don't understand where this was coming from

Mr. Stein:

-I'm going by what the owner said

Mr. Neis:

-I'm not seeing anything where our office would have called that
-but when it comes to extremely dangerous? Absolutely! You can't pass through a garage - explicit in the code; you can't pass through the utility room for escape
-people are very disoriented when they are trying to escape out of a place where they have to go through doors or pass through another space; there's a reason why that's specifically & implicitly in the code

Mr. Stein:

-how did it pass in 2010 then?

Mr. Neis:

-I can't speak to that & I can't even say that those rooms were used as bedrooms back then

Mr. Stein:

-I purchased it in either late 2010 or early 2011

Ms. Moermond:

-so, this is your first Fire C of O inspection
-that was being used as sleeping rooms in 2010 & if it was approved then, it was done in error

Mr. Neis:

-there's been a lot of inspections on your property but they were complaint inspections from code enforcement - nothing to do with fire safety

Mr. Stein:

-both units are set up the same; they have tuck under garages; when they got the permit to install the egress windows, the only place they could install them is exactly where they are
-the laundry room is big & long; the furnace is far away; there's plenty of room to get out

Ms. Moermond:

-the code says you need 2 ways out: 1) egress window; and 2) through the garage or stairs; one of the ways out has to go directly out of the room in which someone is sleeping
-now, you have to go through the utility room to escape

Mr. Stein:

-my idea is to eliminate the door on the bedroom & create a walled-off area for the furnace

Mr. Neis:

-that may be a possibility but you'd need to get a permit to put a door on the furnace room
-the code says you can't have a bedroom in a mechanical room

Ms. Moermond:

-moving forward:

-remove the doors to the bedrooms; create a walled-off area for the furnace/water heater with a door
-the bedroom walls have to be half-open (work done under permit)
-deadline: Sep 1, 2017 and an inspection will be scheduled after that

Mr. Neis:

-if you need additional time; if you are overwhelmed with other inspections; you can call & ask for extensions on the other properties
-this deadline is Sep 1, 2017

Grant to September 1, 2017 to bring the two basement bedrooms into compliance by 1) vacating the bedrooms; or 2) enclosing the furnace/water heater area and opening bedroom walls to exit areas noting at least 50% of the wall must be removed and all work done under permit.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/16/2017

**13 RLH FCO
17-128**

Appeal of Robert Scott to a Fire Certificate of Occupancy Correction Notice at 1182 HAWTHORNE AVENUE EAST

Sponsors: Bostrom

Robert Scott, owner, appeared.

Fire Supervisor A.J. Neis:

-Fire Certificate of Occupancy Inspection approved with Corrections (peeling paint on house)
-speaking with Supervisor Shaff, the Appellant just wants additional time to get this done, which we would not be opposed to
-the Order that was written by Inspector Thomas was written in error; it says that the inspection of your building was made August 31, 2017; the date of the letter was Jul 12, 2017 & today is July 25, 2017

Ms. Moermond:

-realistically, can you get this done during this construction year?

Mr. Scott:

-this started as an inspection every 5 years
-I had completed everything that was on the list; he came back to re-inspect & I said, "We'll see you in another 5 years;" he goes, "What are we going to do about the exterior?" I pointed out that he did not have that on the original list; then, he said that it was a complaint notice vs. a regular routine inspection - he just dropped it on my lap at the last minute; it's kind of a big deal to try to find a contractor to do the whole house now; I don't have a problem doing it but I called 3 contractors & I've had one give me an estimate so far
-it's kind of an overwhelming thing when I thought that I was done

Ms. Moermond:

-can you have it done by Nov 1, 2017?

Mr. Scott:

-sure
-Mr. Thomas told me that I had a neighbor who came over & took pictures while the renters were sleeping; he submitted them to the city as a complaint
-he initially said that it was part of the original inspection when it wasn't on the list; he said that he forgot to put it down; then, he said it was a separate deal because one of your neighbors complained; then, I was a little confused

Mr. Neis:

-reviewing the Order, it looks like on the initial inspection, this exterior was never called by the inspector; so, I'm wondering about the severity of.. ..

Ms. Moermond:

-looking at the photos, sees a big crack in the stucco
-eaves & soffit look pretty rough; there's no paint to speak of

Mr. Scott:

-I'm not arguing that it needs paint
-is it necessary to repair the stucco?

Ms. Moermond:

-no; just the trim around the roof & fixing the crack in the stucco
-deadline: Nov 1, 2017

Grant extension to November 1, 2017 for repair and painting of the house.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/16/2017

1:30 p.m. Hearings

Fire Certificates of Occupancy

- 14 **RLH FCO** Appeal of Yer Yang Syhaphom to a Fire Inspection Correction Notice
 17-119 at 341 JENKS AVENUE.

Sponsors: Brendmoen

Yer Yang Syhaphom, owner, appeared.

Fire Supervisor Leanna Shaff:

-Fire Certificate of Occupancy Inspection conducted Jun 30 by Inspector Brian Schmidt
-12 deficiencies on the list; not sure what's being appealed
-photos

Ms. Syhaphom:

-#4 is being appealed: 2nd floor SE bedroom egress

Ms. Shaff:

-the Fire Code requires that you not have to exit thru another room for exit in an emergency situation
-the room on the 2nd floor cannot be used as a bedroom if you're using the 3rd floor as bedrooms; you need to have 2 ways out
-you can use the 2nd fl room for a use other than sleeping

Ms. Moermond:

-you can keep 2 out of 3 bedrooms

Ms. Syhaphom:

-diagrammed the layout for staff
-then, I need time to fix the attic room - maybe 2 months because I work 2 jobs full time

-the major reason I need time is for the siding; it's a lot of work
-the tenants will move their bedroom to the attic

Ms. Moermond:

-have them move from the SE 2nd floor bedroom to the attic by Aug 1, 2017; then, I'll give you until Oct 15, 2017 to finish the list

Grant to August 1, 2017 to discontinue the use of the room on the 2nd floor, southeast bedroom as a sleeping room noting all bedding must be removed; grant to October 15, 2017 for the remaining items to come into compliance.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/16/2017

**15 RLH FCO
17-125**

Appeal of Jeffrey Cromett to a Fire Certificate of Occupancy Correction Notice at 1463 LAFOND AVENUE.

Sponsors: Stark

Jeff Cromett, owner, & Susan Danowit, Mr. Cromett's sister, appeared.

Fire Supervisor Leanna Shaff:

-Fire Certificate of Occupancy Inspection conducted Jul 6, 2017 by Inspection Dan Klein

-14 Orders

-the appeal is that it should not be in the Fire C of O Program

-Ramsey Co lists Mr. Cromett as the property owner; I did not see that Ms. Danowit had any legal ownership interest; if they have a Contract for Deed, it hasn't been registered with Ramsey Co

Ms. Danowit:

-we have a contract between us (entered in record)

Mr. Cromett:

-my sister & I grew up 3 houses away from this property; she has always wanted to live in St. Paul; in 1996, she got a house about 6 blocks away on Thomas Ave and in 2007, she lost her home in the housing crisis; before she lost it, she was directed to ACORN, which hooked her up with some people, who said, "If you pay us \$2000 a month for 2 years, you'll get your regular mortgage back;" so, she paid the \$2000 for 2 years; worked 2 jobs; then, when she went to get a new mortgage, they said, "No; we want \$5000 right now;" she didn't have \$5000; then, I got involved and found that it was a scam; she then moved to Dayton's Bluff & was paying \$900 rent; she called me up in Jan 2011, and said, "The house 3 houses down from mom's where we grew up is for sale;"

-I had her meet me with a realtor at the house; the house had been sold; I told the realtor that we'd pay cash for the house right now, as is, so that she would have a place to stay; it had been a foreclosure; miraculously, it all happened; my the next Mon, the deal was done

-I had/have no interest in being a landlord or owning this house

-I wrote up an agreement between her & I; I loaned her \$72,500; she'd pay me the interest, \$250/mo & she pays all the bills, tax, insurance, assessments; I've not put in one penny since the \$72,500

Ms. Danowit:

-we also have a joint bank account that is just for the house

Mr. Cromett:

-she puts in \$250/mo to cover interest

-whenever she can get financing for it, I get \$72,500 back & she'll have the title (transfer the ownership)
-we didn't register anything with Ramsey Co but we signed the agreement in 2011; we amended it one time

Ms. Moermond:

-basically, Ms. Danowit has an interest only loan

Ms. Danowit:

-last year was the first time an inspector came out; I asked him if anything had changed because I never had a house inspector come out before; he said, "No, we've always done this;" I told him that it was not a rental property, that I owned it with my brother; he said that they didn't know & he asked to see some bills then, he said, "We don't even have to inspect it;" but I had him go thru the house anyway just so I knew everything was OK

-this year, we were trying to figure this out before the inspector came out; we really didn't understand that we have apparently, been paying \$50/year for the prior inspector

Mr. Cromett:

-I own it outright - no mortgage
-we have a joint checking account

Pause taken while Ms. Moermond read the agreement.

Ms. Shaff:

-it looks like it needs to be recorded with Ramsey County as a Contract for Deed to get it out of the Fire C of O Program; it has been in the program since 2011; Inspector Heitman was out there in 2015 & it the file was closed in error
-it was re-opened this year as a non-owner occupied home

Ms. Danowit:

-we just don't know how to register it as Contract for Deed; we didn't know that we had to do it

Ms. Moermond:

-it would be good to make this loan agreement official; you may want to consult an attorney or get a generic form from the Internet; you've got it all set up; it may take a little bit of money to register it as a Contract for Deed
-I'll give you 2 months to set it up; then, you'll be out of the C of O Program

Grant the appeal to be released from the Fire Certificate of Occupancy Program provided that appellants register Contract for Deed with Ramsey County by October 1, 2017.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/16/2017

2:30 p.m. Hearings

Vacant Building Registrations

- 16 **RLH VBR 17-28** Appeal of Chris Inwards to a Vacant Building Registration Requirement at 892 CONWAY STREET. (To be referred to Legislative Hearings on July 25)

Sponsors: Prince

No one appeared.

Ms. Moermond:

-this is a Category 2 Registered Vacant Building

-this was a Lay Over; they had a 90-day waiver on the Vacant Building fee, which has elapsed

-the Council had sent it back into LH, thinking it might be sold or other plans coming forward

-the owner is not present today

-90 days was a long enough of a waiver; therefore, I will recommend to the Council that they grant no further extension on the VB fee but allow it to go to assessment

Deny the appeal on the Vacant Building Registration status.

Referred to the City Council due back on 8/16/2017