

## Vang, Mai (CI-StPaul)

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**From:** Michael Roessle <michael.roessle@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 26, 2019 10:49 PM  
**To:** Bistodeau, Travis (CI-StPaul); Carter, Melvin (CI-StPaul); rep.kaohly.her@house.mn; info@senatedflcaucus.com; #CI-StPaul\_Ward1; #CI-StPaul\_Ward2; Zimny, Joanna (CI-StPaul); nicole.kaplan@senate.mn; Moermond, Marcia (CI-StPaul); Vang, Mai (CI-StPaul)  
**Cc:** Tincher, Jaime (CI-StPaul); Rider, Chris (CI-StPaul); Kelly Convery; Lori Brostrom; Justin Windschitl; Michael Hartoonian; Patricia M. Thornton; Douglas D. Strandness; Cervantes, Ricardo (CI-StPaul); Wiese, Angie (CI-StPaul)  
**Subject:** Re: Legislative Hearing 5/14

**Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.**

I noticed that only one-third of the documents I provided at the Legislative Hearing were actually entered into the public record ( <https://stpaul.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3944913&GUID=2B128DE3-954F-4DAB-AAFC-3128F66DEB4C>). I'm wondering why the letter from the Cass Gilbert expert was omitted (realizing it was submitted in 2017, but has even more relevance now due to the continued deterioration mentioned in the letter). Also wondering why my comparison of the the 2017 DSI inspection report to the 2019 report pointing out nearly 20 of the same deficiencies that remained from the 2017 report to the 2019 incomplete report was not entered? This selective admission of evidence is incredibly concerning.

Michael Roessle

On Sun, May 26, 2019 at 8:21 PM Michael Roessle <[michael.roessle@gmail.com](mailto:michael.roessle@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Ms. Zimny,

I noticed you forwarded a copy of my email (attached) to Marcia Moermand re this problem, with the incredibly flippant comment "I have no idea why I was included on this". Well, let me refresh your memory with the other attached correspondence that was sent directly to you, to which you directly responded (see attached PDFs).

Perhaps if our city representatives and their aides didn't have such a complete and total disinterest for their constituents, you or the habitually absent Councilman Thao could've reached out to myself or any of our neighbors directly for answers or a memory refresh to your detailed response.

Are you not the executive assistant to the councilman who allegedly represents me? Your email in the public record further proves our city representatives and staff have no interest in their constituents. A complete embarrassment that you entered into the public record.

As Thao mentioned in his only comment at our November 2018 meeting, "I need to leave early to go to a fundraiser". Pay to play seems to be the only way to get your and his attention and advocacy. I will not participate in that.

This is one of the many reasons I am reaching out to our State representatives for oversight and to clean up the negligence and corruption of this city.

Michael Roessle



705 Summit Ave.Bistodeau-Roessle Email.pdf

On Thu, May 23, 2019, 3:47 PM Michael Roessle <[michael.roessle@gmail.com](mailto:michael.roessle@gmail.com)> wrote:

All,

While I appreciate your response, it failed to address any of the concerns I raised. To be frank, it read as "stop bothering us about this, nothing to see here." So I would agree we are at an impasse. If St. Paul did not have a history of having safety inspections removed by the state, I would not have felt the need to involve our state representatives. I imagine you are aware that in July 2013, the state departments of health and agriculture took over a wide array of responsibilities for the city of St. Paul. The state said that the city had done an inadequate job with the frequency and quality of inspections.

That being said, I do feel badly for DSI as the city administration from has completely neutered the department's ability to hold habitually offending, compulsively lying slumlords accountable for, well, anything. The law-abiding citizens continue to be viewed as nothing more than an unlimited pool of money in St. Paul who have little to no recourse to ensure a decent quality of life. That this city has essentially no regulations or licensing for landlords for basic protections of tenants and neighbors is unconscionable. Installing a new handrail in this neighborhood has more regulations and oversight than landlords entrusted with human lives. The lack of common sense regulations from city legislators prevents DSI from properly serving the citizens. If they put as much time, energy and passion into protecting their constituents from actual and immediate danger as they did in their battle against Styrofoam, we'd all be in a much better place.

I listened carefully to Mayor Carter this meeting at a conference. He said the city's core mission is public safety, as without that, no other initiatives can be realized. He also said that ensuring people are living in dignity is a large part of that. Well, at 705 Summit, there is a failure by the city on both accounts. The police have been searching the property nearly every night this week and are seemingly growing tired of being misled by the owner and property manager in their repeated searches. While I appreciate the diligence of the police, I'd prefer not to have a chronic danger next door that necessitates their near constant presence.

The city of St. Paul continues to fail this neighborhood, spanning two wards, in the interest of protecting the continued profit of a wealthy slumlord in what, DSI and the St. Paul PD have characterized as a "problem property", while putting lives in and around this property at risk. To say that the incredibly extensive use of extension cords plugged into multi-plug adapters drawing current from ranges and ovens, dishwashers and much more into the one working outlet in a unit presents no immediate danger to the tenants or neighboring houses is the definition of negligence.

There was a major fire at 705 Summit Ave in 2011 due to lack of maintenance of the electrical system. That fire sent members of the St. Paul Fire Department to the hospital. That the city did not require the electrical system be brought up to code and properly functioning in the 8 years since is appalling. How many more St. Paul FD members are you willing to send to the hospital to protect the owner's perverse profiteering on the backs of the tenants living in squalor? Not to mention the malfunctioning toilets leaking human waste and lack of basic life safety protections such as functioning smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, functioning egress windows, disconnected fire escape ladders and on and on. Since there were nearly 20 deficiencies on the 2017 inspection report that remained on the 2019 inspection report, I have no confidence the city is capable of enforcing the law and protecting lives, including those of the young children living at 705 Summit. That the city is willfully complicit in subjecting the tenants to these conditions is disgusting.

Inspector Shaff mentioned three units were vacant. Living 15 feet away from the property and closely observing it everyday, I can tell you with with certainty, and will sign an affidavit affirming, that the owner Ken Doyle and property manager Dan Sullivan live in Unit 1. The violent felon Kevin Guns, who the owner invited back to continue his crime spree here as well as in Wisconsin, lives in the basement unit with his girlfriend and several children and dogs. So, if three units are vacant, only 1 additional unit would be occupied as only five units have a C of O. However, also living there is a single woman with two dogs whose boyfriend stays with her on the weekends, two young women roommates with two dogs, a young single man with a dog, and a young man and woman couple with a dog. So all of

those unrelated strangers to each other and their dogs would have to be sharing one unit. The city seemingly couldn't care less about the truth about occupancy and relies instead on the word of habitual liars.

I don't think the photos of absolute disrepair and crumbling conditions of the windows and complete lack of a moisture barrier on the entire roof that I provided have been shared or taken seriously by anyone at the city. There was no mention of the roof leaks that were admitted by the property manager at the recent Legislative Hearing in the inspection report. There was no notation of the crumbling exterior window frames. Two decades of water intrusion on both the roof and basement surely has created mold issues within the walls. Again, ignored.

If DSI is prevented from protecting the vulnerable citizens of this city, then all of our city officials up for re-election this year will be held fully accountable. Voters deserve a full and transparent accounting of the lack of interest by Dai Thao and Rebecca Noecker in protecting the citizens of their districts. This city is being run like a fiefdom where no city employee is accountable to any constituent. As one astute observer pointed out, "the legislative process in St. Paul is not radically different from Tammany Hall in 19th-century and early 20th century New York City. It's fundamentally corrupt in the sense that the public, even the politically-involved public that follows public issues and votes whenever the opportunity presents itself, is almost entirely shut out of the process of making laws. Only political insiders know what's going on, and that's pretty much the antithesis of what every government textbook I ever saw in 30 years of teaching social studies says should be happening in a government and society that purports to be "democratic" with a small "D."

I have been more than willing to help, sharing photos, offering to be available to point out first hand the conditions in the photos and crumbling exterior, offering Director Cervantes an invitation to my home to view for himself what I and the rest of the city see. No interest. When the conditions of the interior and exterior of this property fail the common sense test of the entire community, yet send no immediate alarm to the city, there is a total disconnect and failure of city officials that were elected or appointed to represent the members of our city neighborhoods.

Michael Roessle

On Tue, May 21, 2019 at 1:24 PM Bistodeau, Travis (CI-StPaul) <[Travis.Bistodeau@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Travis.Bistodeau@ci.stpaul.mn.us)> wrote:

Michael,

I sincerely apologize for the slow response.

While I don't want to sound defensive, I do believe we've reached an impasse. I've personally reviewed the photos and discussed conditions with the Fire Inspector and his supervisor as part of the current inspection. The orders and timelines are in alignment with our long standing protocols which we use to safely certify thousands of properties annually within the city. We will hold the owner accountable for the deficiencies identified during the most recent inspection and as part of the current certification process. If you wish to engage an outside entity or elected official to review this case, you are free to do so and we can provide you any public records that may assist in that review.

Everyone at DSI who has been involved with this property is dedicated to ensure that this property meets the minimum standards spelled out in the Fire Code and the city's property maintenance code. I would recommend we work through the current inspection cycle and see if we can bring this property into voluntary compliance before you or neighbors take any further action.

Thank you,

## Travis Bistodeau

### *Deputy Director*

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Making Saint Paul the Most Livable City in America

***DSI's Mission: To preserve and improve the quality of life in Saint Paul by protecting and promoting public health and safety for all.***

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**From:** Michael Roessle [mailto:[michael.roessle@gmail.com](mailto:michael.roessle@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 6:58 PM

**To:** Bistodeau, Travis (CI-StPaul) <[Travis.Bistodeau@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Travis.Bistodeau@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>; Tincher, Jaime (CI-StPaul)

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**Subject:** Re: Legislative Hearing 5/14

**Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.**

Travis,

Lori Brostrom and myself attended this afternoon's Legislative Hearing regarding 705 Summit Ave. I was concerned by a few things that I wanted to reach out to you about.

After thoroughly reviewing the inspection report and related photos, I strongly disagreed with Inspector Shaff's assertions that none of the issues presented immediate concern to human safety, or that none of the deficiencies were overly critical.

In speaking with and reviewing the report and photos with a retired 40 year employee of the MN State Department of Health, the conclusions were the same as I had. The extensive use of extension cords and multi-plug adapters means the electrical system is in a state of great disrepair, where the few functioning sockets are overloaded. It is a serious danger to human safety. The severe cracks put some interior walls in danger of collapsing within the units. The lack of functional egress windows in case of another electrical fire at the property is a threat to human safety. These are just to name a few.

At our meeting at the Mayor's office, you mentioned all but 1 unit was occupied. Inspector Shaff today stated at least 3 units were vacant. I don't believe that to be true. She also stated that the deficiencies in the units she believed were vacant were of minor concern and shouldn't greatly impact decisions on the C of O. I couldn't disagree more. First, I believe they are occupied. Second, the city has no idea who is living there at any given time so these deficiencies can be allowed to persist when they are occupied between your inspections.

It was also mentioned the inspectors were not granted access to all parts of the units, and nothing was scheduled to inspect those areas ahead of re-inspection. In my understanding, that would make the inspection incomplete, with likely additional deficiencies present.

The 7th mailbox for the 6-unit complex was also coincidentally removed just before the inspection. Based on our visual and security camera observations, there are 6 individual households residing there currently. While not impossible, it seems reasonably unlikely that complete sets of strangers would be sharing the same apartment with each other. This goes back to my overhearing the property manager referring to unit 6 and 6A.

The property manager for 705 also referenced ongoing roof leaks today that they have permits to repair, yet no mention of those or the roof deterioration was mentioned in the inspection report. Again, seemingly another human safety issue.

I do appreciate your transparency in our meetings regarding this property, so thank you for that and your continuing cooperation.

I am however confused and dismayed that while you seem to have serious concerns about the reprehensible conditions that persist at this building, nobody else at DSI seems to share those concerns. A thought I had at the meeting is "would any of the city representatives here feel comfortable with their son or daughter and small grandchildren living in the conditions at 705 Summit". I suspect the honest answer would be "no". The answer shouldn't be, "no, but it's good enough for the tenants there."

Many of the items in the 2019 report would've taken far longer than a year and a half to crop up, which leads me to think the 2017 inspection wasn't overly thorough since they weren't noted then.

Additionally, I compared the 2017 report 29 deficiencies to the 2019 report with 60 deficiencies and found that nearly 20 of the same deficiencies from the 2017 report were on the 2019 report. They haven't been corrected in nearly two years, but no action was taken by DSI. I submitted that comparison of reports at the Legislative Hearing today for the public record.

I'd prefer not to have to take this to State representatives for oversight or pay an engineer and architect out of my own pocket to review the reports and photos and attest that the living conditions are in fact dangerous and the report incomplete.

I'm interested in your thoughts.

Respectfully,

Michael Roessle