

John Sularz & Dan Chouinard
550 Portland Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55102

November 17, 2020

Saint Paul City Council
City Hall
15 West Kellogg Blvd West
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

Re: Appeals of BZA and HPC decisions re. proposed 540 Portland development by Sullivan Property Investment LLC

Dear members of the City Council,

As neighbors living within 75 feet of the property in question, we submit this letter in support of the above-referenced Appeals by William Garman Hargens and Mary Missy Staples Thompson regarding the proposed development at 542 Portland Avenue.

Our letters from September and October are now part of the HPC Packet (as "Additional Testimony Letter") and the BZA Letters of Opposition, attached to the City Council's November 17 meeting agenda. In them we outline in detail our strong objections to the project, namely:

- The development is substantially oversized for its location.
- The Summit Avenue-facing design is seriously detrimental for many reasons including safety.
- The development would further exacerbate an already serious shortage of on-street parking.
- The development makes insufficient provision for green space.
- The pattern of negligence on the part of this property owner inspires little faith in the benefits of the project.

To these concerns, we add our expression of profound dismay to those of many other neighbors who, like us, have felt stymied in our attempts to participate in the deliberative process regarding this project. Most egregiously, the scheduling of both the BZA and HPC meetings at precisely the same time on the same day (October 5) was frustrating in the extreme, a situation in which it became impossible to monitor both meetings simultaneously, much less participate in any meaningful way. This, coupled with the lack of communication with the neighborhood from February to mid-September 2020 that the project was even under way, amounts to what is clearly a failure of this vitally important process by which the concerns of residents can be heard.

We urge the Council to acknowledge that neighbors were not given a proper hearing in this matter, that this proposed development is unsuitable in its present state, and to grant the appeals in question.

Respectfully,

John Sularz and Dan Chouinard