

From: [sharon.lynch](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)
Subject: Fw: File #21-309-362 Rezoning Hearing for 83 Douglas Street
Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 6:41:42 PM

January 11, 2022

Sharon Lynch
63 Douglas Street
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To: Saint Paul City Council members

I live at 63 Douglas Street, two doors north of 83 Douglas Street. This neighborhood is referred to as Little Bohemia.

I am strongly opposed to the zoning change, from R4 to RT2, being requested by Charles Stephens. I am also opposed to the cluster of small homes to be used to house homeless veterans. The program would be funded and managed by Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV). While this session is to decide the rezoning of this property, the issue of housing homeless veterans has interfered with the rezoning issue. Charles Stevens is under no obligation to veterans, but can do as he wishes, within the zoning code, if 83 Douglas is rezoned.

The Little Bohemia neighborhood had many homes in foreclosure after the 2008. With vacant homes came squatters, vandalism, break-ins, theft, drug use, trash, etc. The Fort Road Federation was able to purchase many of the homes and successfully rehabilitate them. Neighborhood residents also worked hard to bring Little Bohemia to the vibrant neighborhood it is today.

About 10 years ago, this neighborhood was rezoned in an effort to return it to its original state, which was mainly single-family, owner-occupied homes. This is why I am so opposed to the zoning change. While the property is an empty lot at this time, there was a single-family home on the property that burned down some time ago. It is a part of the area that was rezoned and could again house a single-family home.

I would like to point out some issues concerning this property

- Charles Stephens has repeatedly referred to being across from a parking lot. This is the lot for DeGidio's restaurant, a restaurant that has been in operation at that site for 88 years! DeGidio's has been very supportive of the Little Bohemia neighborhood.
- The west side of Douglas is entirely residential. All homes to the north on that side of Douglas are single-family, owner-occupied homes. One is in the process of being rehabilitated, brought to its original, 1880s footprint.
- The neighborhood to the west of 83 Douglas is residential, mostly single-family homes.
- The alley Charles Stephens refers to is actually an access for utility vehicles. If the MACV program, with parking spaces on the long side of the property occurs, would there not have to be an upgrade to that access? It would not be right for other homeowners to be charged for an upgrade for the use of

those temporarily housed at the 83 Douglas homes.

- Parking is a significant problem on Douglas. On many evenings, you can see autos circling, looking for a non-existent parking spot.

- If this program did develop, the short-term residents would not have supervision/support on the property.

- Because of the proximity to Dorothy Day center, Freedom House, Salvation Army, there is fear that temporarily housing homeless individuals in the neighborhood would bring more such programs and/or increase the number of homeless individuals to the neighborhood. And, again, there would not be support staff on the premises.

- Per Mr. Nguyen, the MACV representative, the homes would be the property of Charles Stephens at the end of 10 years. Stephens has offered no plans for the end of the program if it occurs. In fact, despite repeatedly talking about the MACV program, he is under no obligation to proceed with the MACV program if the property is rezoned. The MACV program would be 10 years; rezoning is for a lifetime.

- Stephens could back MACV's program providing the same services on a smaller scale (2 homes) without rezoning the property.

In closing, we neighbors feel rezoning of the property at 83 Douglas Street from R4 to RT2 would be the first step to an undesired and unwanted change of our neighborhood. We also feel our opinions/voices have been totally ignored to date concerning the rezoning of 83 Douglas Street. We hope that you will hear us in making your decision.

Thank you,

Sharon Lynch

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