

Robert and Kathy Patrick-Seligman
1571 East 7th Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55106

June 18th, 2013

Re: Response to the Legislative Hearing Advisors attending the June 19th, 2013 Council Meeting regarding Vacant address property at 1565 East 7th Street

To those addressed: Rich Singerhouse (Richard.Singerhouse@ci.stpaul.mn.us) Legistar Approval List and City Council (legislativehearings@ci.stpaul.mn.us) Steve Magner (steve.magner@ci.stpaul.mn.us) Joe Yannarely (joe.yannarely@ci.stpaul.mn.us) Marcia Moermond (Marcia.moermond@ci.stpaul.mn.us) Amy Spong (Amy.Spong@ci.stpaul.mn.us) Christine Boulware (Christine.Boulware@ci.stpaul.mn.us) Vicki Sheffer (Vicki.Sheffer@ci.stpaul.mn.us) Mai Vang (Mai.Vang@ci.stpaul.mn.us)

My family has lived in our home since April 1st of 2010. When we moved in, the home next door to us (said vacant property 1565 East 7th Street) was vacant and in dire need of repair and maintenance. Shortly after moving into our home, a home that we purchased for \$175k, we met David L Meyer. Immediately we were asked to contact him before contacting the City of Saint Paul if there were ever any issues regarding the vacant property in his name.

Initially, Lou and I contacted David when there were issues. We believe this was approximately three (3) times. These calls included notifying him that there were individuals trying to break into his home, letting him know that we, along with another neighbor, had chased away three more individuals before they broke into the property and before the Saint Paul Police showed up. Another phone call to David L Meyer was to ask him to please place a light bulb on the front porch as several individuals were spending time on his front porch. After three years of police reports, tall grass, looking at broken windows, watching rodents come out of the cracks in the basement foundation, leaning structures, garbage, shoveling his portion of the sidewalk and fearing the safety of our children, we have reached our boiling point.

After a few unanswered attempts at reaching out to someone at the City of Saint Paul, finally, changes were noticed when we saw a long overdue "Order to Abate Nuisance Building" sign on the door. Our entire family was elated knowing that maybe someone finally understood that our responsibility of babysitting a vacant home just may become someone else's problem and hopefully, no longer ours.

Timeline from our perspective:

April 1, 2010 – We move in with our family. In meeting neighbors, they mention the abandon property at 1565 E. 7th Street had been vacant at least eight months prior to us moving in.

August 1, 2012 – The following email is sent to the City of Saint Paul with pictures stating: *"This property has been vacant and appearing the same way since we moved in three years ago. The deck is now falling off and the roof of the home is also starting to cave in the back. This property needs to be bull-dozed over. It is dark, it is dirty and it is attracting vagrants that we continue to chase away. We have kids and are constantly worried for their safety!!!! CAN SOMEONE PLEASE DO SOMETHING! This is the ONLY bad looking home in our block - the rest of us CARE!!!!!"*

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August 3, 2012 – The following email was received from Christine Voyda stating: *"Thank you for contacting the City of Saint Paul. I have entered the information you have provided and it has been sent to our Code Enforcement division to take further action. If you have any questions or comments in regards to this issue please contact Rich Singerhouse, the assigned Registered Vacant Building Inspector, at [651-266-1945](tel:651-266-1945)."*

Have a great day."

Our response to her was: "Thank you - Please also let him know that we believe the owner has the home homesteaded, of course, that would be incorrect. We appreciate your help!"

A phone message was received from Rich Singerhouse stating that things can take time but that a notice had been sent to the home owner stating things needed to be brought up to code by February 1, 2013.

February 10, 2013 – We sent the following email to the City of Saint Paul stating: *Hello - It has been another six months and still no change to the vacant property that we live next to. We have lived here a total of three years now chasing vagrants away, calling the police, and safe guarding our home from the unwanted traffic that comes in and around this vacant property that has been unchanged since we moved in. When does the City of Saint Paul start taking care of issues that we have with vacant homes? How do you plan on taking care of this run down, mouse infested, falling apart structure that we live by? Last year our taxes were \$2400 dollars, our home has been remodeled from top to bottom, we have children in our home, and we work hard to maintain our property to be left with looking at the eye sore next door. When can we expect some resolution for once and for all???*

*Sincerely,
Lou and Kathy*

February 11, 2013 – The following email was received: *Thank you for contacting the City of Saint Paul.* I have forwarded the information you have provided to the Vacant Building Inspector assigned to 1565 7th St E, Rich Singerhouse, to respond. If you do not receive a response in a timely manner please contact Rich directly at [651-266-1945](tel:651-266-1945), the best time to reach him over the phone would be during our inspectors' office hours of 7:30a-9a, Mon-Fri. Have a great day. Christine Voyda City of Saint Paul

March 8, 2013 – A Building Deficiency Inspection Report was compiled and a multitude of conditions were observed in the report. The items addressed can be found on your document PDF file online with Interior and Exterior corrections necessary to be corrected no later than **March 27, 2013**.

April 12, 2013 – NOTICE of PUBLIC HEARINGS has been posted to the front door of the unoccupied and abandoned property at 1565 East. 7th Street. Public Hearing before the Legislative Hearing Officer is scheduled for Tuesday, May 14, 2013 at 9am.

May 14th, 2013 - We attend the hearing and voiced our concerns and issues with the property. Unfortunately, the items stated by homeowner David L Meyer did not match ours. Although there are a

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number of neighbors interested in the decision of this property, we are affected the most due to the geography and location of property 1565 East 7th Street and our home at 1571 East 7th Street.

The items Ms. Moermond indicate in her May 15th, letter to David L Meyer were that the following items needed to be met in order to receive another grant of time by **May 24th**. The items required were:

1. Post the \$5000.00 performance deposit;
2. Provide general and subcontractor bids;
3. Provide a work plan, including timelines, for the project and must be in accordance with the Code Compliance Inspection Report;
4. Dedication of amount from Wings Financial to be used for this project;
5. The property must be maintained;
6. And the property taxes must be paid and brought current.

If the aforementioned conditions weren't met, the City Council Public Hearing is scheduled **for June 5th, 2013.**

May 24' 2013 – All items #1-6 are to be delivered and received by Ms Marcia Moermond from David L Meyer.

June 5, 2013 – City Council Public Hearing is scheduled. Due to the birth of our granddaughter, we were unable to attend but sent the following to the council members in our absence. Stated below:

Good afternoon - Unfortunately, Lou and I are unable to attend this evenings meeting regarding 1565 East 7th Street demise due to the birth of our granddaughter. Since our last appearance, we have seen David Meyer around the exterior more often, however, the mowing of the lawn, the elbow grease around the landscaping and raking of a parking pad certainly doesn't constitute the necessities of owning a home in St. Paul when the building shows such sadness. I have uploaded a few photos of me chasing away kids from the abandoned home, along with a Target shopping cart that we have looked at for the past week. I cannot imagine that he has provided you any estimates as we have not seen any additional companies or building contractors around the home. Since we are always home (Lou works nights, I work days), and our home is so close to the aforementioned property, it is difficult to not see the shape of this property nor any visits by wanted or unwanted people. This building has been vacant for more than 3.5 years while other homes in this city has been demolished under less time. Here are photos of the activity in the last week and the appearance of the home as it stood last night. Please stick to your guidelines and do not allow David any more time to try and right his wrong of letting us look at this structure for so long doing nothing, all while our property taxes continue to rise and our nerves reaching the end due to chasing away vagrants, viewing unwanted items, and losing value in our home. Sincerely, Lou and Kathy Patrick-Seligman 1571 East 7th Street Saint Paul, MN 55106

We watched the video of the appearance by David L Meyer and Katherine Hare. Unfortunately, it is not impressive to a neighbor affected by such nuisance to notice Council Members discussing schools that were attended and in common with the Council members. Despite the fact that we were not in attendance, we are still interested in how our future at this address will be affected by your decision.

According to the deadlines mentioned in the last appearance we were at on May 14, 2013, David L Meyer was asked to provide all of the items requested (#1-6) to you by May 24, 2013 and according to

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the video of the meeting on June 5, 2013 the items requested were not complete and in large part, not received until the same day of the hearing on June 5, 2013. The request was made to push out the meeting until June 19th 2013, tomorrow, so that you had time to review the items turned in late by David L Meyer, however a meeting was called with Mr. Meyer for June 12th in which he did not show but rather represented by his daughter, Katherine Hare. She is not the homeowner, she has never been visible seen around the property, she is not responsible for the condition and issues with this home. Allowing her to step in where he left off years ago is ridiculous.

We, as taxpayers and good citizens and homeowners are asking you to stick by your deadlines and remove this property. The condition is deplorable. Come to our side of town, take a look at our home and his home and then take a drive past his residence of 359 Michigan Street. What you see at 359 Michigan Street is what you will bring to our neighborhood. We are not about to settle without a fight. We have children that do well in school, we have grandchildren that visit our home, we have a great neighborhood of caring residents with the exception of this property.

In summary, David L Meyer was given a deadline by Richard Singerhouse of March 27, 2013. Then he was given a deadline by Ms. Marcia Moermond of intentions by May 24, 2013. Another delay was given to June 5, 2013, again to June 12 and now tomorrow, June 19, 2013.

In all honesty, where was the City of Saint Paul between 2009 and 2013, today? Where have you been to support those affected by slum lords that don't take care of their property? If we are expected to care for and change the direction of the East Side of Saint Paul, you, as the City Council need to start right here and now. You have had the opportunity in the palms of your hand while we as the neighbors have been expected to watch out for our family and our own well-being. We truly feel let down by the City and taken advantage of by a deadbeat neighbor not willing to put any effort forth into a property we have been babysitting.

David L Meyer can't be trusted to take care of these issues and the issues at hand should not be allowed to become someone else that has no stake in the property.

We have installed a security camera to protect the West side of our home (the side that attracts the vagrants). Please, do your part and stick up for those of us that take care of our homes, our families, work hard and try to do the right thing while people like David L Meyer continue to take advantage of a poorly run system and using red-tape to buy more time.

Sincerely,

The family at 1571 East 7th Street, Saint Paul, MN

The latest pictures from 1565 East 7th Street can be found at the following link along with a picture of the 100 year old stained glass window David L Meyer broke last September 2012 and admitted to:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/seligmancox/sets/72157627742415072/show/>